

ISTANBUL BILGI UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
MARKETING MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Exploring the Effects of Social Media Influencers to Brand Engagement and  
Purchase Intention: The Role of Consumers' Parasocial Relationship and Desire  
to Mimic

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**ISTANBUL**  
**2021**

**Exploring the Effects of Social Media Influencers to Brand Engagement and Purchase Intention:  
The Role of Consumers' Parasocial Relationship and Desire to Mimic**

**Sosyal Medya Fenomenlerinin Marka Etkileşimi ve Satın Alma Niyetine Etkileri: Parasosyal İlişki  
ve Taklit Etme Arzusu Üzerinde Tüketicilerin Rolü**

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih : .....23.04.2021.....

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı: .....132.....

**Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)**

- 1) Sosyal Medya Fenomeni
- 2) Liderlik
- 3) Satın Alma Niyeti
- 4) Müsteri Etkileşimi
- 5) Parasosyal İlişki

**Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)**

- 1) Social Media Influencer
- 2) Leadership
- 3) Purchase Intention
- 4) Customer Engagement
- 5) Parasocial Relationship

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It would have been almost impossible for me to complete this dissertation without the endless support of many people. Hence, I would like to thank them. First of all, I would like to thank my great advisor Asst. Prof. Dr. Esra Arıkan for her efforts, guidance, and patience whenever I need it. Without her support, this process would have been much harder. Secondly, I would like to express my kindest gratitude to Prof. Dr. Selime Sezgin for her support and guidance at the beginning of the process. She is an excellent role model for me, and I will remember her in every aspect of my life. Rest in Peace...

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my lovely husband, Cem Ildem, for encouraging me even I was too close to give up. I could not have completed this dissertation without his support, help and love.

I am also grateful to my wonderful mom, Vildan Kuzucan, for providing me strength and psychological support during this process. I am so lucky to have you as my mom.

Lastly, but most importantly, I would like to thank my little and only daughter, Güneş, my sunshine, for her endless love. I love you.

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## ABSTRACT

Over the last few years, the usage of social media and the number of social media influencers have risen significantly. Thus, the primary aim of this study is to determine the influence of social media influencers on purchase intention and customer engagement. The proposed model includes 11 different features of social media influencers which are prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic, physical attractiveness from ideality; enjoyability, entertainment value, similarity from relatedness; interaction, informative value, expertise and trustworthiness from competence. This model analyzes the impact of all characteristics of social media influencers on leadership and parasocial relationship and examines the direct effects of leadership to desire to mimic and purchase intention. It also investigates the effect of parasocial relationship and the desire to mimic on customer engagement and purchase intention. Additionally, the direct influence of customer engagement to purchase intention is analyzed in the model.

Respondents are asked to answer the questions on a questionnaire based on their favorite social media influencer. The survey data is gathered from a sample of three hundred eighty-nine followers of social media influencers. The results show that inspiration and physical attractiveness from ideality, similarity and entertainment value from relatedness, informative value, experience and trustworthiness from competence has an influence on both leadership and parasocial relationship. Additionally, prestige from ideality and enjoyability from relatedness, interaction from competence has an impact on the parasocial relationship. Additionally, leadership has an impact on the desire to mimic and purchase intention. Furthermore,

the relationships between parasocial relationship, purchase intention and customer engagement are supported.

*Keywords:* Leadership, Parasocial Relationship, Desire to Mimic, Purchase Intention, Customer Engagement, Social Media, Social Media Influencer

## ÖZET

Son yıllarda sosyal medya kullanımının hızla artması ve sosyal medya fenomenlerinin sayıca artışı göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu çalışmanın esas amacı sosyal medya fenomen özelliklerinin satın alma niyeti ve marka gönderimlerinde müşteri etkileşimine etki eden temel faktörler incelenmiştir. Prestij, ilham verme, görsel estetik, fiziksel çekicilik, eğlenilebilirlik, paylaşımlarının eğlenceli olması, takipçileri ile olan benzerlik, etkileşim, bilgilendirici olması, uzmanlık ve güvenilirlik özelliklerinin liderlik ve parasosyal ilişkiye etkisi analiz edilmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, liderlik kavramının taklit etme arzusu ve satın alma niyetine olan etkisi incelenmektedir. Taklit etme arzusu ve parasosyal ilişkinin, marka içeriği ile ilgili müşteri etkileşimine ve satın alma niyetine etkisine bakılmaktadır. Son olarak, marka içeriği ile ilgili müşteri etkileşiminin satın alma niyetine etkisi analiz edilir.

Önerilen modeli test etmek amacıyla, katılımcılardan en çok takip ettikleri sosyal medya fenomenini göz önünde bulundurarak bir anket cevaplamaları istenmiştir. Anket aşamasında sosyal medya fenomeni takip eden üç yüz seksen dokuz sosyal medya kullanıcılarına ait veri toplanmıştır. Sonuçlar, ideallik değişkeni altında yer alan ilham ve fiziksel çekicilik özelliklerinin; ilintililik değişkeni altında yer alan benzerlik ve eğlence değeri özelliklerinin, yeterlilik değişkeni altında yer alan bilgi değeri, deneyim ve güvenilirlik özelliklerinin hem liderliğe hem de parasosyal ilişkiye etkisinin olduğu belirlenmiştir. Bu özelliklere ek olarak, ideallik altında yer alan prestij, ilintililik altında yer alan keyif ve yeterlilik altında yer alan etkileşim özelliklerinin de parasosyal ilişkiyi etkilediği görülmüştür. Liderlik faktörünün taklit etme isteğini ve satın alma niyetini etkilediği görülmüştür. Bununla birlikte, parasosyal ilişki, satın alma niyeti ve marka içerikli gönderilerin müşteri etkileşimine etkisi arasında ilişkiler desteklenmiştir.

*Keywords:* Liderlik, Parasosyal İlişki, Taklit Etme Arzusu, Satın Alma Niyeti, Müşteri Etkileşimi, Sosyal Medya, Sosyal Medya Fenomeni

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Rapidly evolving technology over the past decades has led to significant changes in people's life. Social media is one of the top emerging fields in which technological developments are influential. People can share photos, opinions and events in real-time thanks to social media (Hudson, 2020). Social media platforms are web-based applications (Wolf et al., 2020), and people could enter social media accounts when they have Internet connections (Hudson, 2020). It is a vital tool for marketing since it is the best platform for connecting people and conducting business (Edwards, 2020). Social media is now used by 3.96 billion live users, and 3.91 billion use their phones to reach their accounts (Digital 2020 July Global Statshot). There are many social media applications that people use. Facebook is the most common social media platform, with over 2.41 billion monthly involved members. After that, there are Youtube, Instagram, Tiktok, Twitter, Twitch, Pinterest and others. Global Web Index reports that 42% of people use social networks to buy products. Since social media users spend an average of 2 hours and 24 minutes a day on the platforms, influencer marketing has popularity due to the social media users are active in an average of two hours and twenty-four minutes a day on social media platforms (Chaffey, 2020).

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy to increase purchasing decisions of consumers while working with influencers and leaders (Lou and Yuan, 2019). In other words, influencer marketing is the journey of marketing and selling goods and services by influential figures (Yodel, 2017). Influencer marketing is

a significant component of digital marketing strategies because it successfully generates high profits (Ki et al., 2020). Mediakix (2020) claimed that the influencer marketing industry would be worth between \$5-\$10 billion by 2020 and 2.28 billion in 2019. According to an industry study (Linqia, 2020), nearly 90% of marketers surveyed used numerous influencer marketing techniques. 57% of digital marketers plan to increase influencer marketing budget in 2020 due to it is useful. Ahmad (2018) indicated that influencer marketing generates more return on investment than conventional ads. IZEA Report shows, 61% of the social media users believe that influencer marketing and the contents of influencers are more beneficial than conventional advertisements such as television, radio, magazines, and newspapers in terms of encouraging them to buy items (GlobeNewswire, 2020).

Influencer marketing could not be thought of without social media influencers (SMIs) who are accepted as content creators. They are experts in a specific field to get attention from individuals who share precious content regularly on social media (Lou and Yuan, 2020). Social media influencers address individuals directly and address large audiences; they act as efficient marketers (Reikainen, 2020). Influencers might have a specialization in gaming, health living, travel, lifestyle, food, pets, parenting etc. (Lou and Kim, 2019), and they post content about their specializations. Quality of content is significant to be effective in social media, and influencers generally share long personal captions to take attention that brings a short blog effect (Mediakix, 2020).

IZEA Research indicated that becoming an influencer in social media is a dream for 67% of social media users (GlobeNewswire, 2020). There are different types of social media influencer tiers, which are no payment, affiliate, nano (up to 5K), micro (5K-100K), macro (100K-500K), mega (500K-5M), and

celebrity (5M +) influencers (Linqia, 2020). The same report claimed that marketing companies prefer working with micro-influencers and then macro-influencers. Ahmad (2018) posited that the more number of followers, the less engagement. Micro-influencers are seen as more trustful, more reachable, more influential for individuals and less costly for the companies (Ahmad, 2018). Therefore, working with micro-influencers is much more sense to catch the target. Nano influencers are getting popular because most nano influencers know their followers personally, which leads to a high level of engagement (Mediakix, 2020). IZEA report mentioned that 56% of the participants buy the items in social media posts shared by an influencer (GlobeNewswire, 2020). Social media influencers are seen as aspirational and effective more than traditional celebrities, teachers, lawyers or movie stars (Reikainen, 2020).

Social media influencers are easily followed, making it indispensable to be affected by them in the marketing field. To reach and attract potential customers online, companies focus on making a business deal with social media influencers. Therefore, this research combines many related studies' variables to examine social media influencers' impact on purchase intention and brand engagement.

### **1.1. SCOPE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Considering the significance of the persuasion effect of influencers in social media to adopt brands, it is important to understand what followers desire to see from social media influencers. As a result, it is not unexpected that there are various new studies in the academic literature about social media influencers. Ki and Kim (2019) and Ki et al. (2020) investigate the personal qualities of

social media influencers. Lou and Yuan (2019) analyze the content value of social media influencers to observe the impact of SMIs on the shopping behavior of customers. Prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic, physical attractiveness, enjoyability, entertainment value, similarity, interaction, informative value, expertise and trustworthiness are mentioned as personal qualities and contents under the name of ideality, relatedness and competence. In addition to the personal qualities and content value of influencers, there are also target attitudinal responses that are seen when an individual sees an influencer as a leader (Ki and Kim, 2019). Analyzing characters and content value of social media influencers reveal the impact on leadership and parasocial relationship. Also, the leadership effect on parasocial relationships is examined. However, social media influencers' characters, content values and leadership genres are not enough to analyze the effect on purchase intention. Therefore, other relevant factors are emerging in the field of social media influencers. Desire to mimic is an individual decides whether or not to desire to look or behave like role models in social media (Ki and Kim, 2019) that leads to an increase in intention to purchase and brand engagement of a brand that SMIs share on their social media channels.

After this phase, researchers also focused on determining the parasocial relationship effect in social media (Reikainen, 2020). Followers have strong emotional bonds with SMIs, and consequently, a parasocial relationship emerges in time. In parasocial relationships, followers see influencers like friends and seek advice from them. Thus, the parasocial relationship has a crucial impact on purchase intention and customer engagement. Moreover, the impact of influencers on customer engagement in social media is very important. A higher level of customer engagement influences consumer

responses on social media, which leads to purchase intention (Shan, Chen and Lin, 2019).

Considering this background, the significance of this research is explained the effects of features of influencers in social media on consumer engagement and intention to purchase through the role of parasocial relationship and desire to mimic and determining the relationship between leadership, parasocial relationship, desire to mimic, customer engagement and purchase intention.

## **1.2. ORGANIZATION OF THE DISSERTATION**

The remaining of the study is structured as follows: In Chapter Two, academic literature is analyzed. In Chapter Three, the proposed model for exploring the effects of social media influencers on customer engagement and purchase intention through the desire to mimic and parasocial relationship is presented; hypotheses, research design and methodology are described. In Chapter Four, data analyses and results of the study are reported. In Chapter Five, the findings of the dissertation are evaluated, and managerial and theoretical implications, limitations and recommendations for future studies are mentioned.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This part examines the existing literature on exploring the effects of social media influencers on the engagement of customers and intention to purchase through the role of consumers' parasocial relationships and desire to mimic. In addition, it seeks to strengthen a theoretical framework for academic research on the effects of social media influencers on customer engagement and purchase intention. This will be followed by the significance of consumers' parasocial relationship and desire to mimic. Then, general overviews of purchase intention and brand engagement are criticized.

#### **2.1. LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is “the accomplishment of a goal through the direction of human assistants” (Prentice, 1961, p.102). It is possible that a leader is not seen as strong, popular and/or colorful; however, a leader has an influence on others (Prentice, 1961). In other words, great leaders inspire and motivate followers to take action (Ward, 2020). Leaders could influence individuals in two different dimensions that are opinion and taste (Ki and Kim, 2019).

Taste is commonly described as an “individual's personal attitude or reaction toward an aesthetic phenomenon or social situation, regarded as either good or bad or the sense of what is fitting, harmonious or beautiful; the perception and enjoyment of what constitutes excellence in the fine arts, literature, fashion, etc.” (Hoyer and Sauer, 2012, p.168). Taste is identified as esthetically pleasing, visually appealing and associated with individual preferences and judgments (Ki and Kim, 2019). Good taste is linked to an individual's aesthetic

sense, and not everyone has it. Consequently, not everyone can make effective judgments and evaluations about taste (Hoyer and Sauer, 2012). Making a taste evaluation is a combination of notions of beauty and the desire to better themselves with aesthetic experiences (Maciel and Wallendorf; 2016). Taste is also about building across five senses, and one person does not have all of the senses in good taste, which means “Just because one person has good taste in art does not necessarily mean s/he has good taste in food” (Hoyer and Sauer, 2012, p.177).

Bourdieu (1984) mentioned that; taste has two different meanings; one is the taste of necessity, and another is the taste of luxury. In social media, taste leadership could be used in both two meanings. In other words, social media influencers create a group who share the same preferences and share content regarding common tastes emerging from necessity; also, social media influencers show status and prestige when they share high luxury lifestyles (Ki and Kim, 2019). In order to capture taste leadership, influencers ask their followers what they would like to see on social media pages (Mcquarrie et al., 2012). Social media influencers also share personal information with followers such as weight, height, religion, and age because followers are curious about the personal life of taste leaders. In order to share common tastes, followers consider that sharing similar personal data is significant (Ki and Ki, 2019).

Furthermore, opinion leaders have a major impact on the decision-making processes and behaviors of others (Casalo, 2020). The same article added that; opinion leaders are considered as an expert and active. Opinion leaders share unknown information with others and discuss in detail with followers; they could communicate with various people and organizations and attend many events. That is why; they could shape the opinions of people (Hwang, 2015).

Opinion leaders have three core characteristics values. First, opinion leaders are self-confident; second, they have an interest in learning new subjects; and third, they are socially active (Farivar et al., 2020). Farivar (2020) added that social media influencers have these features of opinion leadership.

McQuarrie et al. (2012) gave an example to an opinion leader and mentioned that; fashion bloggers prefer sharing branded goods. Also, food bloggers talk about what they cook; they also talk about restaurants that serve delightful meals. In order to be accepted as an opinion leader in social media, influencers engage with a considerable number of individuals to attract a larger audience. (Ki and Kim, 2019). In other words, the more interaction that social media influencers have, the more seen as opinion leaders.

Ki and Kim (2019) mentioned that the power to influence followers' attitudes by word-of-mouth communication is referred to as opinion leadership. Influencers on social media act as WOM communicators (Ki and Kim, 2019). It is different from traditional opinion leaders because, in social media, influencers share knowledge and expertise online. Creating original and unique content and communicating at a high level lead to an increasing number of followers are the reasons for turning the blogger into an opinion leader (Casalo et al., 2020). The higher the level of the social contagious (social influence), the higher impact on the adoption of products (Iyengar et al., 2011).

## **2.2. PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIP**

The parasocial relationship is a face-to-face communication between audiences and media performers (Reinikainen et al., 2020; Horton and Wohl, 1956). Reinikainen et al. added that "Parasocial relationships are imaginary

relationships with media performers that begin with spending time with performer through media consumption.” (2020, p.281). Eye contact through a camera, greeting the audience and speaking directly to the camera provides interaction between the performers and audience; additionally, gestures, facial expressions and conversation increase parasocial relationships (Hwang and Zhang, 2018). Parasocial relationships are generally investigated in television context and in research on sports, blogs, and political issues; however, a parasocial relationship is an essential concept in media studies (Hwang and Zhang, 2018). Social media influencers build parasocial relationships with followers while generating videos and photos highlighting the illusion of closeness (Reinikainen et al., 2020).

Choi (2017) illustrated the parasocial relationship in social media, and she mentioned that Chloe Warfford, who is 20 years old, watches her favorite Youtuber more than other videos, and she feels personally involved in the process. Warfford also said that relationship with Youtuber is much easier because she does not have to try to communicate with them. Therefore, parasocial relationships could aid individuals who fear social rejection and have low self-esteem (Choi, 2017). It can be seen that; individuals watch and feel social media influencers as a friend, which is an effortless and easy way to have a relationship.

Although social media sites allow two-way communication, parasocial relationships are mostly one-sided, which means media performers control the relationship (Lee and Watkins, 2016). It is one-sided communication with media figures and helps individuals feel supported (Paracati et al., 2020). Even though fans have access to reach personal information of media performers on social media, media performers can control the relationship in social media

sites (Stever and Lavson, 2013).

### **2.3. DESIRE TO MIMIC**

Individuals mimic others' behaviors, attitudes, values and skills while modifying their own behaviors accordingly (Bandura, 1977). Desire to mimic is taking a role model that someone likes (Ruvio et al., 2013). Role models are generally attractive, trendiness and popular (Chan, 2008). The role models could be family members, peers, celebrities and social media influencers (Ruvio et al., 2013). In this article, the relationship between social media influencers and individuals is examined. Mimicry can be observed as an automatic behavior or intentional behavior. Automatic behaviors are seen when individuals are unaware of mimicry. Nonetheless, mimicry is a planned and organized activity where a person determines whom to imitate, what product or consuming behavior to copy, and then when the mimicking should occur (Ruvio et al., 2013).

Leaders have a positive influence on followers about following the advice (Farivar et al., 2020). Opinion seekers search for guidance from opinion leaders seen as an expert to imitate the consumption behavior they admire (Ruvio et al., 2013). Therefore, it could be said that leadership has an impact on the desire to mimic consumers.

## **2.4. IDEALITY**

Ideality is defined as the desire of individuals to be like someone who has the characteristics which they believe they feel lack but prefer to have (Karp et al., 1970; Ki et al., 2020). Influencers in social media fulfill the need of the ideality of their followers. That is why people follow social media influencers. Prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic and physical attractiveness of social media content of influencers fulfill the need for ideality.

### **2.4.1. Prestige**

“Prestige is a positive evaluative judgment that is influenced by a unique accomplishment associated with a brand” (Adams, 2011, p.291). In social media, prestige has been seen as a significant criterion that impacts individuals’ esthetic perception (Ki and Kim, 2019). Prestige is related to which social media influencers are perceived as relatively high status (Ki and Kim, 2019; Steenkamp et al., 2003). Prestige products that are a sign of prestige for influencers are similar to luxury products, but they differ. Luxury means anything beyond necessity (Adams, 2011; Berry, 1994). Prestigious products show greater status to consumers than luxury items, and consumers afford to pay more money for prestigious products; therefore, influencers who share prestigious contents, it seems the product in the content has prestige too, and individuals are willing to purchase for the prestigious product (Choie et al., 2016). It could be interpreted that individuals who follow influencers who have prestige have a parasocial relationship with prestigious influencers because they are curious about what influencers share or say.

Moreover, functional and hedonic values are the reasons why consumers today buy goods and services (Choi et al., 2016). Due to the prestigious products being hedonic consumption products (Adams, 2011), individuals give importance to how prestigious is the content that an influencer shares. Thus, it could be said that influencers could be seen as an ideal when they show the hedonic value of the products by using their prestige (Ki and Kim, 2019). Ki and Kim (2019) confirmed that; people have prestige and higher social status, their taste is better. To illustrate, to be recognized as taste leadership in fashion, SMIs have a high level of status to join luxury fashion events and wear top designer brand clothes (Ki and Kim, 2019). Therefore, it can be said that prestige has an impact on leadership.

#### **2.4.2. Inspiration**

Inspiration is a motivational condition that finding a creative idea and then transforming the creative idea into a creative product (Thrash et al., 2010). In the marketing context, inspiration is described as a temporary motivation for the customer, which means the transition from an idea to achieving consumption-related goal (Böttger et al., 2017). Consumers receive inspirational ideas through marketers' efforts (Böttger et al., 2017). Today, marketers work with social media influencers to advertise the goods because individuals admire what social media influencers wear or use (Ki et al., 2020). Social media influencers create an "Aha" moment to sell the product to the individuals meaning that when individuals inspire social media influencers, they intend to purchase more (Böttger et al., 2017). It could be interpreted that, in order to be inspired and having an "Aha" moment, individuals follow social media influencers that enhance the parasocial relationship between an

influencer and an individual. Therefore, inspiration has an impact on the parasocial relationship.

Additionally, social media influencers' taste, fashion, and lifestyle inspire followers and encourage them to like, follow, and model. (Ki and Kim, 2019; Ki et al., 2020). People feel that following the motivating role models encourages them to boost their self-esteem. (Ki et al., 2020). Therefore, individuals are likely to follow inspiring models seen as leaders (Ki and Kim, 2019) to reach their ideality. Hence, inspiration has an effect on leadership (Ki and Kim, 2019).

### **2.4.3. Physical Attractiveness**

Ki and Kim (2019) mentioned that attractiveness is visually or esthetically appealing. Sokolova and Kefi (2019) mentioned that a person's physical attractiveness and visual appearance are measured in terms of how desirable or pleasing they are. In the media, physical attractiveness is highlighted, focusing on substantial thinness for women and hyper muscularity for men (Rodgers et al., 2019). Furthermore, younger people having white skin and European appearance are assumed to be physically attractive (Capodilupo, 2015). Very small proportions of individuals have physical attractiveness; thus, in media, in order to be seen as physically attractive, Influencers are heavily photoshopped to look taller, thinner, and more athletic, as well as more curved and smooth (Rodgers et al., 2019).

According to Mello et al. (2020, p.2), physical attractiveness has an impact on behaviors because people give importance to others' thoughts. In order to prove

that, the acceptance rate of advertising is high when the physical attractiveness of social media influencers is high (Lim et al., 2017). In other words, when influencers are seen as physically attractive, they could gain more followers because they attract people visually and esthetically, and they are seen as taste leaders (Ki and Kim, 2019). Hence, physical attractiveness has an influence on leadership.

Also, physical attractiveness is a predictor of parasocial relationships because while the physical attraction of social media influencers increases, the number of rewarding interactions and repeat viewings increases (Lee and Watkins, 2016).

#### **2.4.4. Visual Aesthetic**

The visual aesthetic is described as a perception of beauty and good taste (Hoyer and Sauer, 2012). When individuals consume aesthetically appealing designs, they enhance their self-image (Ki et al., 2020). Individuals who have a sense of aesthetics make more sophisticated choices about designing things (Hoyer and Sauer, 2012). Aesthetic content has a positive impact on individuals because it expands their creativity and satisfies their need for personality (Ki et al., 2020).

In marketing, visual aesthetics have an essential duty in communicating value and a sense of identity for individuals (Buschgens et al., 2020). In terms of colors, forms, textures, patterns, typography, name, and other key visual elements, visual aesthetic principles are thought to influence consumer opinion of goods and services. (Buschgens et al., 2020). Ki et al. (2020) criticized that influencers provide visual aesthetic content in order to fulfill the idealities of

individuals. Also, Ki and Kim (2019) mentioned; consumers demonstrate positive behavior to the influencers in social media and see them as taste leaders when the content of SMIs is esthetically appealing. Hence, it can be said that visual aesthetic content has an impact on leadership.

On the other hand, when influencers are seen as attractive, they have seen as visually and aesthetically good-looking people (Ki and Kim, 2019). Lou and Kim (2019) mentioned; attractiveness has an impact on the parasocial relationship. Thus, it can be interpreted that parasocial relationship is influenced by visual aesthetics as attractiveness.

## **2.5. RELATEDNESS**

Relatedness is defined as an urge to be socially linked to and have good relationships with others (Ki et al., 2020). People could satisfy the need for relatedness when interacting with others who are enjoyable and similar to them. This is the same for social media platforms because individuals tend to follow influencers who share related content to fulfill their need for relatedness. Enjoyability, entertainment value and similarity are the features that influence the need for relatedness on social media.

### **2.5.1. Entertainment Value**

Entertainment demonstrates the likability of a sharing of social media influencers and enjoyment extracted from the sharing (Dao et al., 2014). The entertainment value that is count as hedonic value is considered one of the core

factors of the effectiveness of a message (Dao et al., 2014). According to Lou and Kim (2019), people consume influencer material because they want to be entertained. Entertainment value fulfills followers' needs for emotional release, diversion and enjoyment while followers benefit from information, experience, music and videos from entertainment value content (Dao et al., 2014).

When an influencer shares entertainment value content, people are more curious about the next content (Lou and Yuan, 2019). Hence, this is an indication that followers see influencers who share entertainment content as a leader. In other words, entertainment has an impact on leadership. Additionally, the entertainment value is significant to build a strong relationship with followers and shape followers' parasocial relationship with influencers; thus, entertainment value has an impact on the parasocial relationship (Lou and Kim, 2020).

### **2.5.2. Enjoyability**

According to the definition from Cambridge dictionary, enjoyable means that an event or an experience that gives people pleasure. Most of the studies measured humor to analyze the impact of enjoyability. Using humor creates an intimacy that seems natural and forges a special relationship between influencers and followers (Nazerli, 2017).

Nazerli (2017) also indicates that hilarious and funny people fulfill the need for relatedness more, which is also valid for online social platforms. Followers admire influencers who share funny, hilarious and enjoyable content; thus, enjoyability is significant to gain intimacy. Ki et al. (2020) mentioned that when a social media influencer's persona is funny, pleasant, hilarious and

enjoyable, s/he could gain more followers. For instance, there is a Youtube channel in Turkey whose name is Kafalar has 6.7 Million followers. Description part of the channel said that welcome to Atakan Özyurt, Bilal Hancı and Fatih Yasin's enjoyable world. Ought to the sharing of enjoyable content on Youtube, they gain a substantive amount of followers. In addition to the Youtube channel of Kafalar, they are also quite popular on Instagram (1.3M) at the same time because followers tend to follow them on a variety of social platforms to feel enjoyment.

Humorous and enjoyable contents are more persuasive than non-humorous content if the prior brand evaluation is positive (Chattopadhyay et al. 1990). If enjoyable content is persuasive for the public, the public could see an SMI as a leader. Additionally, entertainment value fulfills the need for enjoyment while followers benefit from information, experience, music and videos from entertainment value content (Dao et al., 2014). Obviously, entertainment value and enjoyability have a strong relationship; thus, enjoyability has a positive influence on leadership and parasocial relationship as entertainment value has.

### **2.5.3. Similarity**

The similarity is a relationship between two perceptual or conceptual objects (Munnuka et al., 2015). Ohanian (1990) criticized that; similarity calculates the effectiveness of a message. Thus, the higher similarity between an influencer and a follower, the more influenced follower will be (Moon and Han, 2010). The similarity is the reason for positive attitudes toward the advertised brands, and thus similarity has a significant advertising impact (Munnuka et al., 2015).

People tend to build relationships with social media influencers that are already familiar to them and imitate those they engage with (Moon and Han, 2010). Individuals mostly prefer following social media creators that share similar and related content with themselves. According to previous studies, people find people who are close to themselves to be more likable than people who are not. (Munnuka, 2015). The reason behind that is, social media users feel an emotional connection when they have common preferences and tastes similar to influencers (Ki et al. 2020). Hence, followers may see social media influencers as a leader who shares common points.

Similarity also provides emerging parasocial relationships (Lou and Kim, 2020). In parasocial relationships, audiences see media personalities as friends and seek advice from them (Lee and Watkins, 2016). To illustrate, “Soap opera characters are often seen as familiar friends who appear in people’s living room.” (Reinikainen et al., 2020, p.281; Soad and Rogers, 2000). Parasocial relations are increased in time because media users realize similarities with media performers, and they start to see media performers as a trusted source after realizing similarities (Lee and Watkins, 2016).

## **2.6. COMPETENCE**

Competence is an individual’s inherent desire to feel capable or effective (Ki et al., 2020). When social media influencers reflect themselves as competent, followers have a tendency to listen and apply the advice of influencers because competent people show that they know and expert regarding the specific product which followers are curious about. Informative value, interaction, expertise and trustworthiness are the factors that affect competence (Ki et al., 2020).

### **2.6.1. Informative Value**

Information has a significant aspect of the decision-making steps of people (Wu and Lin, 2016). Information is a quality that has an impact on target audiences of influencers who provide beneficial information that attracts the attention of the public (Hwang 2015; Ki and Kim, 2019). Social media are a significant source of information in product choices and purchase intentions (Ki et al., 2020). This indicates that individuals could learn the good and bad features and quality of the products before buying those, which assist people in purchasing the right product. Information about the products obtains from family, friends or other customers and obtains from e-WOM and online consumer reviews (Wu and Lin, 2016). When social media creators share necessary information about products on social media, individuals tend to follow the social media influencers to learn more about the specific product features. Consumers want to know about new products and exclusive offers, so consumer recommendations, feedback, and updates on new products are crucial for staying informed (Ashgar, 2015).

There are many examples that social media are used as an information source. For instance, electronic product brands cooperate with influencers to explain how electronic products work and the features of the products (Asghar, 2015). Especially, reaching the details of information is much more significant for technologic and electronic products because they have much more technical features to customers are curious about (Asghar, 2015). Additionally, educational intuitions share news and information about campus life and events to stay connected with the students and keep them informed about the innovations (Asghar, 2015). Therefore, according to Hwang (2015), if

influencers can provide information that grabs the public's attention, the value of the information could have an effect on leadership.

Additionally, consumers regard social media influencers as reliable sources of knowledge (Ki and Kim, 2019). The reason behind that; influencers not only share knowledge about the product's functionality but also about their personal experiences with the product. Hwang (2015) mentioned that; common interests and valuable information have an impact on gaining followers. Lou and Kim (2019) suggested that the content value of information has a positive impact on the parasocial relationship between influencers and followers.

### **2.6.2. Interaction**

Since social media influencers are seen as public information sources, they engage with large audiences. (Ki and Kim, 2019). That means becoming an information source is accepted as the reason for interaction, so interaction is included in the competence part. Due to the followers are curious about the information that SMIs share, they interact with influencers; hence, the interaction level becomes much higher than other social media users (Wang and Li, 2016). Influencers have high involvement in social media sites to increase online interaction. They give importance to digital marketing campaigns to sustain interaction because campaigns help influencers to gain more followers. When the number of followers is high, the interaction level is also high as the number of followers (Wang and Li, 2016). However, there is a risk in online interaction about losing followers when there is a disagreement about posts and stories that influencers share (Wang and Li, 2016).

Ki and Kim (2019) argued that; interactive social media contents provide individuals to experience social media influencers' opinions. The higher the social media interaction, the more probably a target person can absorb an opinion of a social media influencer (Ki and Kim, 2019). Virtual opinion leaders are mainly chosen based on their interaction level with other participants rather than their backgrounds, socioeconomic status, or lifestyle characteristics; therefore, interaction with followers in social media is the most important to be seen as a leader (Wang and Li, 2016). Thus, interaction has a positive impact on leadership.

In social media, due to the social media influencers interact with their audiences, a parasocial relationship emerges with followers. Individuals closely follow social media influencers and learn from parasocial relationship partners about interacting with and seeing the world from an influencer's eyes (Paravati et al., 2020). The parasocial relationship between an influencer and a follower is deepened and important because followers believe that they predict the behavior of influencers. (Paravati et al., 2020). In addition, technological improvements on social media, such as interactivity, provide a suitable environment for having a meaningful parasocial relationship between influencers and followers; thus, social media interaction has a direct impact on parasocial relationships between an influencer and a follower. (Chung and Cho, 2017). For example, Justin Timberlake and Mariah Carey are known as celebrity influencers in social media who answer the questions from fans and increase the interaction through social media; hence high-level interaction foster parasocial relationship (Chung and Cho, 2017).

### **2.6.3. Expertise**

According to Munnuka et al. (2015), expertise is characterized as a source's ability to make a claim. As Munnuka et al. (2015) mentioned, expertise is a combination of experience of influencers and satisfaction from using the advertised products. It means that when an influencer tries and is satisfied with the experience of the product, consumers are willing to buy more because they believe the influencer experience. More importantly, Ohanian (1990) mentioned that individuals' attitudes shift positively as a result of their expertise. It is an indication that influencers have an impact on the preferences of customers based on the influencer's experience.

Indeed, influencers on social media are content creators who are known as experts in a particular area. (Lou and Yuan 2019). Followers like to see knowledge and experience rather than hearing personal statements when social media influencers share content (Ki et al., 2020). For example, Donna Kim, who is a famous beauty influencer, is known as a beauty expert, and when she shares experiences and tips of makeup products on social media, she looks competent and expert about cosmetic knowledge (Ki and Kim, 2019). Social media influencers who create contents that demonstrate expertise make the followers view the social media influencers as leaders (Ki and Kim, 2019). Additionally, expertise has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship (Ki and Lou, 2019).

#### **2.6.4. Trustworthiness**

The trust framework was described by Ohanian(1990) as the confidence degree of individuals and approval of an influencer's message. "Trust is defined as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence." (Moorman et al., 1993, p.82). It is a conviction that motivates individuals to buy products or services while there is not certain information related to the quality of the products (Chopra, 2020). People are expected that contents are trustworthy and genuine while sharing experiences and knowledge; they see trustworthiness as the most salient dimension about the perceptions toward the products (Wu and Lin, 2017). An opinionated message is more successful when the influencer is seen as highly trustworthy (Ohanian, 1990). Trustworthy generated sources are enough to manipulate people's opinions and persuade them. Hence, trustworthiness has an impact on leadership.

Also, Lou and Yuan (2019) mentioned that; independent product review seems more trustworthy than the same reviews posted on the brand's website. It could be interpreted that posts of influencers are more powerful and trustworthy than the review on a website because posts of influencers seem more realistic than brand website posts. Influencers share the real experiences and knowledge that increase the trust of the individuals toward influencers. However, reviews on a website could not be real in the eyes of individuals because they consider that the firm could decide which reviews are seen on the website of the products, and bad reviews might not be visible on the website. Consumers have recently expressed questions about whether or not they should trust the influence they have on marketing (Suciu, 2019). Suciu added that many studies found; trust is falling in influencer marketing; however, still, a considerable amount of people continues to trust. The article claimed that 30.4% of American consumers do

not trust influencers on social media platforms. Transparency is important to gaining trust because the tech-savvy generation can quickly understand what the fact and fiction are in social media; thus, when influencers market a commodity that they do not like, followers unfollow them when they realize it (Suciu, 2019). Therefore, followers give huge importance to trustworthiness so that trustworthiness is positively influential on parasocial relationships with followers (Lou and Kim, 2019).

## **2.7. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT**

Customers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral actions in direct brand interactions are known as customer engagement (Hollebeek, 2011). Consumer engagement on social media becomes a significant factor to influence individuals with branded content (Schivinski, 2019). This is because consumers use social media to engage with brands. Consumer engagement is affected by emotionality, direct firm actions, product involvement, campaigns and is also highly affected by social media influencer characteristics, including post content and expertise (Hughes et al., 2019).

Brand engagement is driven by three motivations: consuming, participating, and producing (Shao, 2008). Schivinski (2016) change the names of 3 motivations to 'consumption', 'contribution', and 'creation' words to interpret the way of engaging and interacting with the brand. Consumption includes the lowest level of brand engagement, and consumers consume brand-related content without actively engaging in it (Muntiga et al., 2011). The contribution is a kind of participation that means individuals could participate through interacting with the content by posting comments, liking, sharing with others

and saving the favorites (Shao, 2008). Creation is the highest level of interaction (Muntiga et al., 2011) regarding producing and publishing own content on social media accounts (Schivinski, 2016). The interaction levels could change in time, which means an individual act as a consumer, contributor and creative at the same time for the same brand as well as while an individual might consume one brand, contribute to another brand and create for different brands at the same time (Schivinski, 2016). Social media influencers are seen as creators (Lou and Yuan, 2019), and they share brands and products by adding their self-concepts (Shan et al., 2019). Due to the individuals have an urge to mimic influencers (Farivar et al., 2020), engagement with a brand has been impacted positively. Influencers who have congruent image have a positive parasocial relationship with consumers that impact the customer engagement (Shan et al., 2019).

## **2.8. PURCHASE INTENTION**

Purchase intention depends on individuals' personal decisions after many evaluations, customers' intent to buy a good or service (Hwang and Zhang, 2018). Another definition regarding purchase intention is deciding to make an effort to buy an item (Wang, 2015). In order to purchase a brand, consumers face many product types, different brands and marketing activities that impact the decision of what consumers purchase (Hwang and Zhang, 2018).

Purchasing the goods could be realized offline or online channels. While offline channels are physical stores, online stores are on the Internet. Mainardes et al. (2019, p.450) defined online purchase intention as "a factor that foreseeing consumer behavior toward an action to finalize a negotiation using the

Internet”. Online purchase intention has a significant role in increasing electronic purchases, and consumers have more positive behaviors to shop while in online shopping (Halim et al., 2020).

Digital marketing activities strongly influence purchase decisions (Gopee, 2019). Especially, social media influencers augment online purchase intention because they encourage their followers to buy the products. “Social media influencers have a positive impact on visit intention toward the endorsed destination” (Shan et al., 2018, p.4). Influencers always promote sponsored products on their accounts with their followers to increase the interest in related products and ending up with purchase intention (Lou and Kim, 2019). Followers give value to what products or brands are promoted in influencers’ posts (Belanche, 2020). They attract audience attention and persuade them about the feature of products because the leader’s knowledge is regarded as informative and useful (Farivar et al., 2020). Leaders provide adoption of products and increase intentions to purchase the goods; therefore, purchase intention is positively influenced by leadership (Farivar et al., 2020).

Lou and Kim (2019) characterized that; social comparisons with influencers correlate with purchase intentions because they see influencers as a role model. When the image of a social media influencer is similar to the self-image of followers, a positive attitude is observed toward a brand and be affected by purchasing power (Shan et al., 2019). Ruvio et al. (2013) proposed that a customer imitates the consumption habits of individuals he or she considers to be role models. Hence, Chan characterized that; role models have an impact on purchase decisions because individuals have a desire to mimic them (2008). Ki and Kim (2019, p.907) described the desire to mimic as “influencing consumers’ product decisions.” Ki and Kim (2019) also added that people

imitate others' consumption habits because they desire to look like those.

Additionally, due to the followers see SMIs as their friends, they rely on recommendations in parasocial relationships, so followers see SMIs as a convincing source for their purchase decisions (Colliander and Dahl'en, 2011). Literature has claimed the parasocial relationship as an important factor influencing the behaviors of followers because they plan to buy items based on the recommendations of influencers (Lee and Watkins, 2016). Hence, it could be said that there is a positive relationship of the parasocial relationship on intention to buy (Hwang and Zhang, 2018).

Brand engagement is strongly influenced by social media influencers, and it has a strong impact on the individuals' purchase intention (Shan et al., 2019).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

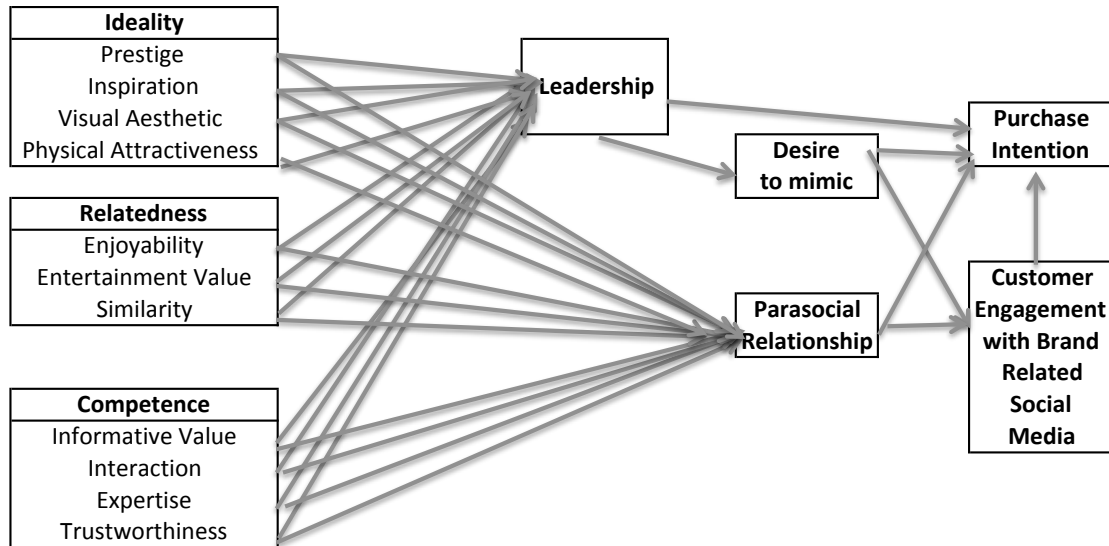
### **PROPOSED MODEL AND RESEARCH DESIGN**

Based on the theoretical background discussed in the previous chapters, this chapter proposes a model on the effects of social media influencers to brand engagement and purchase intention: the role of consumers' parasocial relationship and desire to mimic and creates various hypotheses. This model leads to the formulation of a number of hypotheses, which are identified and analyzed in the subsequent section of this study. It begins with the proposed model and hypotheses. In the second section, the research objective, research design and the operationalization of variables are explained. The third section states questionnaire development, design, questionnaire administration and data collection. In the final section, sampling and data analysis methods are applied.

#### **3.1. PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESES**

A combination of various models is applied to explore the impacts of social media influencers. The proposed model is seen in Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1 Proposed Research Model**



In line with this model, the following hypotheses have been identified to guide this study:

- H1: Prestige has a positive influence on leadership.
- H2: Inspiration has a positive influence on leadership.
- H3: Visual aesthetics has a positive influence on leadership.
- H4: Physical attractiveness has a positive influence on leadership.
- H5: Enjoyability has a positive influence on leadership.
- H6: Entertainment value has a positive influence on leadership.
- H7: Similarity has a positive influence on leadership.
- H8: Informative value has a positive influence effect on leadership.
- H9: Interaction has a positive influence on leadership.
- H10: Expertise has a positive influence on leadership.
- H11: Trustworthiness has a positive influence on leadership.
- H12: Prestige has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.

- H13: Inspiration has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H14: Visual aesthetics has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H15: Physical attractiveness has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H16: Enjoyability has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H17: Entertainment value has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H18: Similarity has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H19: Informative value has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H20: Interaction has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H21: Expertise has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H22: Trustworthiness has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.
- H23: Leadership has a positive influence on the desire to mimic.
- H24: Leadership has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H25: Desire to mimic has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H26: Desire to mimic has a positive influence on customer engagement.
- H27: Parasocial relationship has a positive influence on purchase intention.
- H28: Parasocial relationship has a positive influence on customer engagement.
- H29: Customer engagement has a positive influence on purchase intention.

### **3.2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

The core objective of the study is to explore empirically the effects of features of social media influencers to purchase intention and customer engagement with brand-related content. First, features of the social media influencers are analyzed under three separate drivers, which are ideality, relatedness and competence. Then, the effects of social media influencers in the aspect of leadership and parasocial relationship are investigated. It is followed by both of their impacts on the desire to mimic are investigated. Determining the factors affecting purchase intention and

brand engagement will benefit from both desire to mimic and parasocial relationship. The increase in the parasocial relationship and desire to mimic, on the other hand, increases the chance of purchase intention and brand engagement. Finally, the influence on brand engagement to purchase intention is applied. In the proposed model, the effects of each dimension of social media influencers are hypothesized separately.

### **3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study is descriptive since the relationship between key drivers and purchase intention is determined along with their effects on leadership, parasocial relationship, desire to mimic and brand engagement. A cross-sectional design is applied to provide a snapshot of this relationship at one point in time. Furthermore, survey research is chosen due to the advantage of implementing data from a high number of individuals easily and the chance to apply measures from earlier literature (Kerlinger and Lee, 2000).

### **3.4. OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES**

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that single-item scales are criticized due to their low reliability (Churchill, 1979). Additionally, Cook et al. (1981) say that a minimum of three items per construct should be preferred for a statistical approach. Therefore, in this study, a multi-item scale is chosen. The variables of the proposed model are measured according to participants' self-perception. There are 20 different variables in total, excluding demographic questions in the survey. 18 of the 20 variables are measured through a five-point Likert-type scale (strongly disagree,

disagree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree). Hence, the respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement. Nonetheless, informative and entertainment values are measured by applying sets of five-point semantic differential scales.

All the variables and measurement items are taken from previous studies in related subjects to build on earlier literature. In order to select the measurement items, a couple of criteria are applied. At first, to have a suitable measurement, scales that might have a problem with unidimensionality are excluded (Hattie, 1985). Secondly, to increase reliability and understanding, short and simple scales are preferred (Churchill, 1979). In this section, each of the variables and measures will be covered in detail, along with the previous works on which each scale is based.

### **3.4.1 Leadership**

In order to measure the effect of leadership, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A five-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 Operationalization of Leadership**

Statement	Source
This social media influencer takes the lead in sharing what looks good with his/her followers through social media account.	Ki and Kim 2019
This social media influencer is one of the first people to find the newest trends and designs that other people tend to pass over.	Ki and Kim 2019
When worn or used by this social media influencer, the product becomes a look, a style, an exhibition of taste.	Ki and Kim 2019
This social media influencer shares a great deal of information via his/her social media account.	Ki and Kim 2019
This social media influencer often gives his/her followers advice and suggestions via his/her social media account.	Ki and Kim 2019

### **3.4.2. Parasocial Relationship**

In order to measure the effect of parasocial relationships, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. An eight-item, five-point Likert scale by Lee and Watkins (2016) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Operationalization of Parasocial Relationship**

Statement	Source
I look forward to watching this social media influencer on her/his social media account.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
If this social media influencer appeared on another social media platform, I would watch that video.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
When I am watching this social media influencer, I feel as if I am part of her/his group.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
I think this social media influencer is like an old friend.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
I would like to meet the influencer this social media influencer in person.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
If there were a story about this social media influencer in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
This social media influencer makes me feel comfortable as if I am with friends.	Lee and Watkins (2016)
When this social media influencer shows me how she feels about the brand, it helps me make up my own mind about the brand.	Lee and Watkins (2016)

### **3.4.3. Desire to Mimic**

In order to measure the effect of desire to mimic, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3 Operationalization of Desire to Mimic**

Statement	Source
I aspire to the lifestyle of this social media influencer.	Ki and Kim 2019
Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as stylish as him/her.	Ki and Kim 2019
Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as trendy as him/her.	Ki and Kim 2019
Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to have a lifestyle more like him/her.	Ki and Kim 2019

#### **3.4.4. Prestige**

In order to measure the effect of prestige, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A three-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4 Operationalization of Prestige**

Statement	Source
I find that this social media influencer’s contents are prestigious.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I find that this social media influencer’s contents are upscale.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I find that this social media influencer’s contents have high status.	Ki and Kim (2019)

### 3.4.5 Inspiration

In order to measure the effect of inspiration, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A five-item, five-point Likert scale adapted from Ki et al. (2020) and Böttger et al. (2017) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5 Operationalization of Inspiration**

Statement	Source
This social media influencer intrigues me with new ideas.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer broadens my horizon.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer inspires me to discover something new.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer stimulates my imagination.	Böttger et al. (2017)
I unexpectedly and spontaneously get new ideas from this social media influencer.	Böttger et al. (2017)

### 3.4.6. Physical Attractiveness

In order to measure the effect of physical attractiveness, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale by Lou and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.6.

**Table 3.6 Operationalization of Physical Attractiveness**

Statement	Source
I consider this social media influencer very attractive.	
I consider this social media influencer very stylish.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I think this social media influencer is good-looking.	
I think this social media influencer is sexy.	

### **3.4.7. Visual Aesthetics**

In order to measure the effect of visual aesthetics, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale adapted from Ki et al. (2020) and Ki and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.7.

**Table 3.7 Operationalization of Visual Aesthetics**

Statement	Source
This social media influencer’s content is aesthetically pleasing.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer’s content is attractive.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer’s content is visually appealing.	Ki et al. (2020)
This social media influencer’s content is good-looking.	Ki and Kim (2019)

### 3.4.8 Entertainment Value

This study measured the entertainment value of influencer-generated content by asking the participants to rate influencers' posts/updates on social media on sets of five-point semantic differential scales (Lou and Kim; 2019). These items are provided in Table 3.8.

**Table 3.8 Operationalization of Entertainment Value**

Statement	Source
Concerning this social media influencer whom I am following on social media, I personally think her/his social media posts/updates are:	
Not fun/fun	Lou and Kim (2019)
Dull/exciting	Lou and Kim (2019)
Not delightful/delightful	Lou and Kim (2019)
Not thrilling/thrilling	Lou and Kim (2019)
Unenjoyable/enjoyable	Lou and Kim (2019)

### 3.4.9. Enjoyability

In order to measure the effect of enjoyability, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A six-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki et al. (2020) and Chattopadhyay and Basu (1990) have been applied where 1="strongly disagree" and 5="strongly agree". These items are provided in Table 3.9.

**Table 3.9 Operationalization of Enjoyability**

Statement	Source
I find this social media influencer funny.	Ki et al. (2020)
I find this social media influencer hilarious.	Ki et al. (2020)
I find this social media influencer amusing.	Chattopadhyay and Basu (1990)
I find this social media influencer playful.	Chattopadhyay and Basu (1990)

#### **3.4.10 Similarity**

In order to measure the effect of visual aesthetics, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A three-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki et al. (2020) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.10.

**Table 3.10 Operationalization of Similarity**

Statement	Source
I find this social media influencer to be quite a bit like me.	Ki et al. (2020)
I find this social media influencer to have similar tastes and preferences as me.	Ki et al. (2020)
I find this social media influencer to have a lot in common with me.	Ki et al. (2020)

### 3.4.11. Informative Value

This study measured the informative value of influencer-generated content by asking the participants to rate influencers' posts/updates on social media on sets of five-point semantic differential scales (Lou and Kim; 2019). These items are provided in Table 3.11.

**Table 3.11 Operationalization of Informative Value**

Statement	Source
Concerning this social media influencer whom I am following on social media, I personally think her/his social media posts/updates are:	
ineffective/effective	Lou and Kim (2019)
unhelpful/helpful	Lou and Kim (2019)
not functional/functional	Lou and Kim (2019)
unnecessary/necessary	Lou and Kim (2019)
impractical/practical	Lou and Kim (2019)

### 3.4.12. Interaction

In order to measure the effect of interaction, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale by Ki and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1="strongly disagree" and 5="strongly agree". These items are provided in Table 3.12.

**Table 3.12 Operationalization of Interaction**

Statement	Source
I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I send a private message.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I post a comment.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I send a private message.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I post a comment.	Ki and Kim (2019)
I feel that this social media influencer would allow me to communicate directly with him/her.	Ki and Kim (2019)

### **3.4.13. Expertise**

In order to measure the effect of expertise, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale by Lou and Kim (2020) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.13

**Table 3.13 Operationalization of Expertise**

Statement	Source
I feel this social media influencer knows a lot.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I feel this social media influencer is competent to make assertions about things that he/she is good at.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I consider this social media influencer as an expert in his/her area.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I consider this social media influencer sufficiently experienced to make assertions about his/her area.	Lou and Kim (2019)

**3.4.14. Trustworthiness**

In order to measure the effect of trustworthiness, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A four-item, five-point Likert scale by Lou and Kim (2020) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.14

**Table 3.14 Operationalization of Trustworthiness**

Statement	Source
I feel this social media influencer is honest.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I consider this social media influencer trustworthy.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I feel this social media influencer is truthful.	Lou and Kim (2019)
I consider this social media influencer earnest.	Lou and Kim (2019)

### 3.4.15 Customer Engagement

In order to measure the effect of engagement with brand-related social media content, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media influencers that they have been following most frequently. A five-item, five-point Likert scale by Shan et al. (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.15

**Table 3.15 Operationalization of Customer Engagement**

Statement	Source
I read posts, including texts, pictures, and videos, related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Shan et al. (2019)
I comment on posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Shan et al. (2019)
I share posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Shan et al. (2019)
I ‘like’ posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Shan et al. (2019)
I create posts about the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Shan et al. (2019)

### 3.4.16. Purchase Intention

In order to measure the effect of purchase intention, respondents are asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with each item considering the social media

influencers that they have been following most frequently. A three-item, five-point Likert scale by Lou and Kim (2019) has been applied where 1=“strongly disagree” and 5=“strongly agree”. These items are provided in Table 3.16.

**Table 3.16 Operationalization of Purchase Intention**

Statement	Source
I am likely to buy certain products because of this social media influencer's posts.	Lou and Kim (2019)
It is possible that I will visit some online stores or actual stores because of this social media influencer's posts.	Lou and Kim (2019)
It is probable that I may purchase the products/brands that this social media influencer has promoted if I happen to need one.	Lou and Kim (2019)

### **3.5. QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN**

In this study, the literature was investigated, the information was acquired, and a questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire applied in this study is structured that means a standard form of questions is used for all participants. The questionnaire includes close-ended, fixed alternative questions and some open-ended questions when participants indicate the favorite social media influencers and do not choose one of the fixed alternatives.

The questionnaire consists of five sections and ninety-three questions in total. In the first section, there are two questions to detect whether they use social media or not and which social media platforms they are active on most. In the second section, four questions investigate whether participants follow social media influencers or not, ask the name of the social media influencer they follow most frequently, and which field

they follow (travel, gaming, food, sport, pets etc.). If a participant does not follow a social media influencer, the questionnaire is ended without answering other questions. In the third and fourth sections, eighty-one questions are asked to the participants. It is explored the effect of social media influencers to brand engagement and purchase intention through the role of parasocial relationships and desire to mimic. In the last part, there are six demographic questions (gender, marital status, age, education level, working status, income level) to observe the demographic profile of the participants. Participants are not allowed to skip a question to prevent missing data in the questionnaire. Because the study is performed in Turkey, the questionnaire was first prepared in English and then translated into Turkish by two people. Then, translations were compared to be sure of equivalence. The final version of the questionnaire in English is ensured in Appendix B, and the Turkish version is ensured in Appendix C.

### **3.6. QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION AND DATA COLLECTION**

The study is performed according to the results obtained from the answers given to the questionnaire. The questionnaire form is prepared on a famous survey website, and the link is shared via social media accounts. At the beginning of the survey, participants are informed about the answers will only be used within the scope of this academic study and will not be shared with other people, intuition or organization. Participants' names, surname and contact information are not asked due to privacy. Respondents are provided with an e-mail address to inquire questions to clarify anything regarding the survey. The completion of the questionnaire took 10 minutes approximately. The data were collected in one month.

### **3.7. SAMPLING**

In order to collect healthy and tangible answers to the questions on the questionnaire, respondents should use at least one social media platform and follow at least one social media influencer. Additionally, respondents should be 18-49 years old (Ki and Kim, 2019). The questionnaire is shown on online platforms where respondents eligible for access to social media are targeted. In terms of sample sizes, there are various recommendations that a large sample provides more information related to a topic; nonetheless, reaching a large sample is both difficult and costly. Therefore, sampling size could change based on the type of study (Malhatro, 2010). Snowball sample type is applied in this study. In this study, regression analysis is applied; hence, there are no specific requirements while determining sample size. However, due to the complexity of models that use regression with more factors, a large number of samples brings better results (Malhatro, 2010). Therefore, this study aims to reach a large number of social media users.

During October and November 2020, out of the 481 participants who started to answer the questionnaire, 478 indicated that they use social media, whereas 89 responded that they had not followed social media influencers. Out of 389 successful responses, there are no questionnaires with missing values, so all are retained for data analyses.

### **3.8. DATA ANALYSIS METHOD**

In this study, various statistical analysis methods are used: descriptive analyses, factor analyses, reliability analyses, correlation analyses, and regression analyses. First of all, descriptive analysis was completed to reveal the demographic profiles of the respondents along with their social media usage preferences and social media

influencer preferences. Then, factor and reliability analyses were employed to find factors and analyze whether the measurements are reliable. After that, correlation analyses were applied to indicate the correlations between dependent and independent variables. Finally, regression analyses were completed to discover the explanatory power of independent variables on dependent variables. The data is analyzed using SPSS 20.0 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) computer program; after the questionnaire responses were exported to Excel, the data transferred to SPSS 20.0 to be analyzed.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**DATA ANALYSES AND RESULTS**

This section examines the analyses of survey data and goes into the results in depth. It starts with an overview of the social media usage of respondents before moving on to demographic profiles of them. After that, the results of factor analyses and reliability analyses of all variables are discussed. In the final section, results obtained from correlation and regression analyses are studied, respectively.

**4.1. SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE**

The results of the respondents' social media usage could be seen in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 Social Media Usage of Participants**

<b>Social Media Usage</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Sample %</b>
<b>Do you use Social Media actively?</b>		
Yes	478	0.997
No	3	0.003
<b>Which social media account(s) do you use?</b>		
Youtube	412	0.86
Instagram	452	0.94
Facebook	246	0.51
Twitter	311	0.65
Tiktok	81	0.17
Twitch	40	0.08
Snapchat	95	0.20

Pinterest	127	0.26
<b>Do you follow social media influencer(s)?</b>		
Yes	389	0.81
No	89	0.19
<b>Which social media account(s) do you use to follow social media influencer(s)?</b>		
Youtube	252	0.52
Instagram	333	0.69
Facebook	21	0.04
Twitter	77	0.16
Tiktok	47	0.10
Twitch	14	0.03
Snapchat	12	0.02
Pinterest	1	0.00
<b>In which category your favorite SMI shares contents?</b>		
Travel	169	0.35
Food	134	0.28
Parents (Baby-Child Care)	38	0.08
Make-up and Beauty Secrets	127	0.26
Fashion and Textile	149	0.31
Game	58	0.12
Health	54	0.11
Lifestyle	189	0.39
Pets	37	0.08
Other (Entertainment, Culture, Technology etc.)	87	0.18

481 participants have responded to the survey, and 478 of them stated that they use social media. Thus, three respondents are removed from the sample and continued with the remaining 478 individuals who followed at least one social media influencer. Among 478 respondents, 412 have a Youtube account, 452 have an Instagram account, 246 have a Facebook account, 311 have a Twitter account, 81 people have a Tiktok account, 40 have a Twitch account, 95 have a Snapchat account, and 127 have Pinterest accounts.

Of the 478 survey respondents, 389 (81%) follow at least one social media influencer. Among 389 respondents, 252 follow SMIs at Youtube, 333 follow SMIs at Instagram, 21 follow SMIs at Facebook, 77 follow SMIs at Twitter, 47 follow SMIs at Tiktok account, 14 follow SMIs at Twitch, 12 follow SMIs at the Snapchat account, and 1 follows SMIs at Pinterest.

In terms of in which category does a favorite social media influencer share contents, 35% of respondents follow social media influencers for travel, 28% follow social media influencers for food, 8% for parenting, 26% for make-up and beauty categories, 31% for fashion and textile, 12% for the game, 11% for health, 39% for lifestyle, 8% for pets. 18% also write in other categories such as entertainment, education, science, culture, economy, politics, and psychology.

## 4.2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The demographic profile of consumers participating in the study can be seen in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Sample %</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	221	0.57
Male	168	0.43
<b>Age (in Years)</b>		
18-25	178	0.46
26-33	155	0.40
34-41	49	0.13
42-49	7	0.02
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	117	0.30
Single	272	0.70
<b>Education Level</b>		
Literate	1	0.00
Primary School	1	0.00
Secondary School	4	0.01
High School	32	0.08
University	278	0.71
Master	62	0.16
Doctorate	11	0.03
<b>Working Status</b>		

Public Sector	28	0.07
Private Sector	129	0.33
Own Business	38	0.10
Unemployed / Looking for a job	28	0.07
Housewife	19	0.05
Retired	3	0.01
Student	132	0.34
Not working for old aged or disability	0	0.00
Other	12	0.03
<b>Personal Monthly Income</b>		
Less than 3000 TRY	186	0.48
3000 - 5999 TRY	115	0.30
6000 - 8999 TRY	44	0.11
9000 - 11999 TRY	17	0.04
More than 12000 TRY	27	0.07

Out of 389 followers of SMIs, 43.2% are males, 56.8% of them are females. The respondents' ages vary from 18 to 49; 45.8% were between the ages of 18 and 25, 39.8% were between the ages of 26 and 33, 12.6 percent were between the ages of 34 and 41, and 7% were between the ages of 42 and 49.

Respondents were also asked about their marital status. 30.1 % were married, while 69.9% were single. Education level varies from literate to doctorate with 0.3% were literate, 0.3% had their latest degree from primary school, 1% from secondary school, 8.2% from high school and 71.7% from the university. 15.9% of respondents had a master's degree, and 2.8% had a P.h.D.

In terms of employment status, and if they could not find a suitable response on the list, they could choose "other" and answer an open-ended question. Out of 389 respondents, 7.2% were working in the public sector, 33.2% of them were in the private sector, 9.8% were running their own business, 7.2% were unemployed or looking for a job, 4.9% were housewives, 0.8% were retired, 33.9% were students. 3.1% choose the other option. None of the participants selected the answers “not working for old aged or disability”.

When it comes to participants' personal monthly wages, it differs from less than 3000 TRY and more than 12000 TRY with 47.8% having less than 3000 TRY, 29.6% having between 3000 TRY and 5999 TRY, 11.3% having between 6000 TRY and 8999 TRY, 4.4% having between 9000 TRY and 11999 TRY, and 6.9% having 12000 TRY and above.

### **4.3. FACTOR ANALYSES**

Factor analysis is applied to reveal the sets of highly interrelated variables, known as factors (Hair et al., 2010). In general, factor analysis examines the relationship between the developed content categories and the empirically derived constructs (Gable, 1986) or discover whether the same constructs derived in the previous studies can be derived too.

At the beginning of each factor test, the measure of sampling adequacy is calculated to observe whether the data is appropriate to apply factor analysis or not (Durmuş et al., 2018). Statistics that can represent this adequacy are Keiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. KMO demonstrates that the data used in the analysis is a homogenous collection of variables. The lower limit of KMO is agreed to be 0.50

in general (Hair et al., 2010). On the other hand, Bartlett's test shows the statistical significance of the inter-correlation between variables (Hair et al., 2010). The upper limit for the value of p in social sciences that is generally accepted upon is 0.05 (Malhotra, 2010).

According to Hair et al. (2010), unidimensionality is the existence of a single construct explaining a set of items. It is claimed that unidimensionality is significant when the proposed model consists of more than two constructs (Hair et al., 2010). To ensure unidimensionality, items with factor loadings should be at least 0.50 (Hattie, 1985). When the unidimensionality is ensured, reliability analyses are performed. According to Netemeyer et al. (2003), Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used measure for reliability. Although there is no universal standard about the limits of Cronbach's alpha, Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) recommend that it be at least 0.70.

KMO and Bartlett's tests in this study are satisfactory, and tables for each factor analysis for the studied concepts are provided in the following sections.

#### **4.3.1. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Leadership**

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.782,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)=885.096 p=0.000) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.3 KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for Leadership**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		
Adequacy	0.782	
Barlett's Test of Sphericity		
	Approx. Chi-Square	885.096
	df	10
	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha is 0.845. The explained variance is 62.264%. Consequently, the factor analysis results for leadership are seen in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Factor Analyses for Leadership**

Factor Item	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Factor Loading	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Leadership			62.264	0.845
LEAD5	0.801	0.831		
LEAD1	0.808	0.806		
LEAD2	0.803	0.799		
LEAD4	0.818	0.786		
LEAD3	0.835	0.720		

**4.3.2. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Parasocial Relationship**

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.894,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)=1659.288 and p = 0.000.) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.5 KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for Parasocial Relationship**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.894
	Approx. Chi-Square
	1659.288
	df
	28
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.
	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha is 0.899. The explained variance is 58.789%. Consequently, the factor analysis results for the parasocial relationship are seen in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6 Factor Analyses Results for Parasocial Relationship**

Factor Item	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Factor Loading	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Parasocial Relationship			58.789	0.899
PRS3	0.875	0.856		
PRS7	0.878	0.836		
PRS4	0.879	0.828		
PRS1	0.884	0.789		
PRS2	0.888	0.748		
PRS5	0.889	0.734		
PRS6	0.893	0.691		
PRS8	0.899	0.623		

### 4.3.3. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Desire to Mimic

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.722,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)= 1187.798 and  $p = 0.000$ .) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.7 KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for Desire to Mimic**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.722	
	Approx. Chi-Square	1187.798
	df	6
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha is 0.896. The explained variance is 76.221%. Consequently, the factor analysis results for the desire to mimic are seen in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8 Factor Analyses Results for Desire to Mimic**

Factor Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Desire to Mimic			76.221	0.896
DM2	0.908	0.845		
DM4	0.873	0.865		
DM3	0.869	0.869		
DM1	0.840	0.883		

#### **4.3.4. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Ideality**

Even though ideality constructed by Ki et al. (2020) measure ideality under the two dimensions, which are inspiration, visual aesthetics; there are also two other dimensions are included in the analysis, which are prestige and inspiration. The explanatory factor analysis conducted reveals that the four-factor solution for the sixteen statements is retained after having been tested.

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.904,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)=4274.886 and p = 0.000.) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.9 KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results for Ideality**

KMO and Barlett's Test		Result
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.904
	Approx. Chi-Square	4274.886
	df	120
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded. Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed for sixteen items. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed. The total variance explained is 76.167% more than the recommended criterion of 60% (Hair et al., 2010). The first factor, composed of five items, variance is 44.817%. The items loading on this factor show “inspiration”. The factor loadings of these items range from 0.696 to 0.851, all exceeding the criterion of 0.50 that is considered necessary for practical significance (Hair et al., 2010). The internal reliability of Factor One, based on Cronbach’s coefficient alpha, is 0.907, exceeding the threshold value of 0.70. The four items loading on Factor Two are related to “physical attractiveness”. The variance explained by the factor is 16.809 %. The factor loadings of these four items range from 0.771 to 0.885, all exceeding the preferable criterion of 0.50. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha indicates internal reliability of 0.889, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Accounting for 7.987 % of the variance explained, Factor Three consists of four items related to “visual aesthetic”. The factor loadings of these four items range from 0.624 to 0.853, all exceeding the criterion of 0.50. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha

indicates internal reliability of 0.879, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. The three items loading on Factor Four are called “prestige”. The variance explained by the factor is 6.554 %, with factor loadings ranging from 0.789 to 0.817. The internal reliability of the factor, based on Cronbach’s coefficient alpha, is 0.870, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Consequently, the factor analysis results for ideality are seen in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10 Factor Analyses for Ideality**

Factor Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Ideality			76.167	
Factor1: Inspiration			44.817	0.907
INS3	0.851	0.887		
INS5	0.812	0.878		
INS2	0.797	0.891		
INS4	0.794	0.887		
INS1	0.696	0.885		
Factor2: Physical Attractiveness			16.809	0.889
PA3	0.885	0.876		
PA2	0.876	0.846		
PA4	0.819	0.867		
PA1	0.771	0.839		
Factor3: Visual Aesthetics			7.987	0.879
VA3	0.853	0.849		
VA4	0.808	0.830		
VA2	0.774	0.853		
VA1	0.624	0.808		
Factor4: Prestige			6.554	0.870
PRS2	0.817	.861		
PRS3	0.808	.817		
PRS1	0.789	.770		

### 4.3.5 Factor and Reliability Analyses for Relatedness

Even though relatedness constructed by Ki et al. (2020) measure relatedness under the two dimensions, which are enjoyability, similarity; there is also another dimension is included in the analysis, which is entertainment value. In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.861,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)= 3250.942 and  $p = 0.000$ .) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.11 KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results for Relatedness**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.861
	Approx. ChiSquare 3250.942
	df 91
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig. 0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed. The total variance explained is 66.915 %, more than the preferable criterion of 60% (Hair et al., 2010). The first factor, composed of five items, variance is 41.079%. The

items loading on this factor show “enjoyability”. The factor loadings of four items range from 0.839 to 0.898, all exceeding the recommended criterion of 0.50 that is considered necessary for practical significance (Hair et al., 2010). The internal reliability of Factor One, based on Cronbach’s coefficient alpha, is 0.926, exceeding the threshold value of 0.70. The five items loading on Factor Two are related to “entertainment value”. The variance explained by the factor is 14.602 %. The factor loadings of these five items range from 0.666 to 0.802, all exceeding the preferable criterion of 0.50. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha indicates internal reliability of 0.837, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Accounting for 11.234 % of the variance explained, Factor Three includes three items related to “similarity”. The factor loadings of these three items range from 0.760 to 0.884, all exceeding the preferable criterion of 0.50. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha indicates internal reliability of 0.848, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Consequently, the factor analysis results for relatedness are seen in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12 Factor Analyses Results for Relatedness**

Factor Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Relatedness			66.915	
Factor1: Enjoyability			41.079	0.926
ENJ4	.898	0.893		
ENJ3	.872	0.896		
ENJ1	.866	0.872		
ENJ2	.839	0.898		
Factor2: Entertainment Value			14.602	0.837
ENT2	.802	0.780		
ENT3	.796	0.788		
ENT5	.774	0.783		
ENT4	.697	0.860		
ENT1	.666	0.802		
Factor3: Similarity			11.234	0.848
SIM2	.884	0.735		
SIM3	.880	0.872		
SIM1	.760	0.752		

#### 4.3.6. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Competence

Even though competence constructed by Ki et al. (2020) measures competence under the two dimensions, which are informativeness, expertise; there are also two other dimensions are included in the analysis, which are interaction and trustworthiness.

The explanatory factor analysis conducted reveals that the four-factor solution for the seventeen statements is retained after having been tested.

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.890,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)=5440.934 and  $p = 0.000$ .) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.13 KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results for Competence**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.890	
	Approx. Square	Chi- 5440.934
	df	136
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 were excluded. Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed for seventeen items. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed. The total variance explained is 78.285% more than the preferable criterion of 60% (Hair et al., 2010). The first factor, composed of five items, variance is 41.212%. The items loading on this factor show “interaction”. The factor loadings of five items range from 0.873 to 0.923, all exceeding the recommended criterion of 0.50 that is considered necessary for practical significance (Hair et al., 2010). The

internal reliability of Factor One, based on Cronbach's coefficient alpha, is 0.955, exceeding the threshold value of 0.70. The five items loading on Factor Two are related to "informative value". The variance explained by the factor is 18.969 %. The factor loadings of these five items range from 0.674 to 0.852, all exceeding the preferable criterion of 0.50. Cronbach's coefficient alpha indicates internal reliability of 0.881, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Accounting for 11.524 % of the variance explained, Factor Three consists of four items related to "expertise". The factor loadings of these four items range from 0.697 to 0.856, all exceeding the criterion of 0.50. Cronbach's coefficient alpha indicates internal reliability of 0.877, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. The three items loading on Factor Four are called "trustworthiness". The variance explained by the factor is 6.580 %, with factor loadings are 0.853 and 0.878. The internal reliability of the factor, based on Cronbach's coefficient alpha, is 0.937, exceeding the threshold of 0.70. Consequently, the factor analysis results for competence are seen in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14 Factor Analyses Results for Competence**

Factor Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha if item Deleted	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Competence			78.285	
Factor1: Interaction			41.212	0.955
INT3	0.923	0.941		
INT2	0.919	0.941		
INT4	0.917	0.943		
INT1	0.889	0.945		
INT5	0.873	0.951		
Factor2: Informative Value			18.969	0.881
INF2	0.852	0.836		
INF3	0.828	0.846		
INF5	0.803	0.858		
INF4	0.782	0.857		
INF1	0.674	0.880		
Factor3: Expertise			11.524	0.877
EX3	0.856	0.817		
EX2	0.810	0.845		
EX4	0.803	0.841		
EX1	0.697	0.866		
Factor4: Trustworthiness			6.580	0.937
TR2	0.878	0.880		
TR1	0.863	0.940		
TR3	0.853	0.904		

### 4.3.7. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Customer Engagement

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.868,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)= 1180.008 and  $p = 0.000$ .) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.15 KMO and Bartlett’s Test Results for Customer Engagement**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.868	
	Approx. Chi-Square	1180.008
	df	10
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed, and Cronbach’s coefficient alpha is 0.902. The explained variance is 72.107%. Consequently, the factor analysis results for engagement with brand-related content are seen in Table 4.16.

**Table 4.16 Factor Analyses Results for Customer Engagement with Brand Related Content**

Factor Item	Cronbach's		% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
	Alpha if Item Deleted	Factor Loading		
Customer Engagement w/brand related content			72.107	0.902
CE2	0.870	0.880		
CE3	0.879	0.855		
CE4	0.880	0.854		
CE5	0.884	0.842		
CE1	0.891	0.813		

#### **4.3.8. Factor and Reliability Analyses for Purchase Intention**

In order to test the appropriateness of data for conducting factor analyses, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett test of sphericity tests were performed (Sharma, 1996). Results of the tests (KMO=0.755,  $\chi^2$ Bartlett test (10)=759.707 and  $p = 0.000$ .) were satisfactory.

**Table 4.17 KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for Purchase Intention**

KMO and Barlett's Test	Result	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin		
Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.755	
	Approx. Chi-Square	759.707
	df	3
Barlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	0.000

The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.50, supporting the inclusion of each item in the factor analysis. Factors with eigenvalues over one were retained, and items with factor loadings below 0.50 and items with high cross-loadings were excluded.

Then principal component analysis and varimax rotation to the data sets were employed. In order to test the internal consistency, reliability analysis is performed, and Cronbach's coefficient alpha is 0.899. The explained variance is 58.789%. Consequently, the factor analysis results for purchase intention are seen in Table 4.18.

**Table 4.18 Factor Analyses Results for Purchase Intention**

Factor Item	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Factor Loading	% Variance	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Purchase Intention			58.789	0.899
PI2	0.853	0.925		
PI3	0.867	0.916		
PI1	0.875	0.913		

#### **4.4. CORRELATION ANALYSES**

In order to ensure the strength of the relationship between variables, correlation analyses are performed. That is, to determine which correlations existed between variables, the analysis does not take into account whether variables are dependent or independent. Correlation analyses simply analyze the existence, the level and the direction of a linear relationship. Correlation coefficients change from -1 to +1. When  $r$  is equal to plus one, there is a positive correlation; however, there is a negative correlation when  $r$  is equal to minus one. Also,  $r$  is equal to zero, and there is no correlation between variables (Karagoz, 2013).

If the correlation coefficient value is from 0.00 to 0.25, it indicates a too weak correlation. When the correlation coefficient is from 0.26 to 0.49, there is thought to be a weak correlation. When the correlation value is from 0.50 to 0.69, there is a medium correlation. When the correlation coefficient value is from 0.70 to 0.89, it shows a highly strong correlation (Akgul et al., 2003).

**Table 4.19 Correlation Analysis**

	LEAD	PR	INS	VA	PA	ENJ	SIM	INF	EX	TR	INT	ENT	DM	PR	BE	PI
LEAD	1															
PR	.349**	1														
INS	.410**	.630**	1													
VA	.373**	.492**	.522**	1												
PA	.338**	.315**	.242**	.525**	1											
ENJ	.172**	.222**	.198**	.264**	.238**	1										
SIM	.388**	.333**	.457**	.337**	.286**	.361**	1									
INF	.390**	.414**	.492**	.365**	.092	.103*	.343**	1								
EX	.424**	.518**	.521**	.320**	.058	.193**	.409**	.497**	1							
TR	.464**	.514**	.500**	.269**	.167**	.253**	.435**	.415**	.601**	1						
INT	.251**	.214**	.339**	.110*	.085	.046	.294**	.281**	.235**	.370**	1					
ENT	.337**	.314**	.302**	.441**	.341**	.442**	.430**	.472**	.277**	.331**	.076	1				
DM	.620**	.407**	.321**	.438**	.586**	.275**	.425**	.196**	.254**	.337**	.157**	.388**	1			
PR	.577**	.482**	.509**	.371**	.331**	.380**	.580**	.391**	.499**	.563**	.330**	.445**	.632**	1		
BE	.557**	.293**	.315**	.204**	.401**	.242**	.422**	.209**	.285**	.412**	.230**	.341**	.615**	.650**	1	
PI	.607**	.264**	.304**	.302**	.377**	.142**	.338**	.251**	.257**	.358**	.213**	.282**	.546**	.612**	.611**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix for all variables is given in Table 4.19. All variables indicate a positive relationship with each other; some have a stronger relationship with others. The Pearson correlation matrix above shows that the highest correlation is between parasocial relationship and brand engagement with  $r = 0.650$ .

## **4.5. REGRESSION ANALYSES**

Regression analyses are performed to reveal relations between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Regression analyses also examine the impact of independent variables on dependent variables. In order to test hypotheses in the conceptual model, linear regression analyses are applied.

### **4.5.1. Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Ideality**

In order to understand the relationship between leadership and ideality that includes prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic and physical attractiveness, a multiple regression analysis is employed.

As shown in Table 4.9, in the first stage, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.237, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, inspiration with  $\beta = 0.268$  and physical attractiveness with  $\beta = 0.203$  are statistically significant regarding leadership. Inspiration and physical attractiveness have a positive impact on leadership. According to these results, H2

and H4 are supported.

**Table 4.20 Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Ideality**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.357	.226		5.996	.000		
Prestige	.067	.056	.071	1.199	.231	.559	1.789
Inspiration	.262	.059	.268	4.413	.000*	.539	1.855
Visual Aesthetic	.108	.072	.091	1.502	.134	.543	1.841
Physical Attractiveness	.169	.044	.203	3.853	.000*	.713	1.402

Dependent Variable: Leadership

R Square= 0.237, F=29.867, p<0.05

\*p<0.05

#### **4.5.2. Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Relatedness**

In order to understand the relationship between leadership and relatedness that includes similarity, enjoyability and entertainment value, a multiple regression analysis is employed.

As shown in Table 4.21, in the first stage, this analysis is significant (p<0.05). In the second stage, R Square is 0.188, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10

and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, entertainment value with  $\beta = 0.306$  and similarity with  $\beta = 0.222$  are found to statistically significant regarding leadership. Entertainment value and similarity have a positive impact on leadership. The analysis shows that entertainment value demonstrates a greater effect on leadership than similarity. According to these results, H6 and H7 are supported.

**Table 4.21 Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Relatedness**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.607	.263		6.114	.000		
Enjoyability	-.041	.058	-.037	-.713	.476	.769	1.301
Entertainment Value	.306	.052	.306	5.884	.000*	.778	1.285
Similarity	.271	.066	.222	4.102	.000*	.720	1.388

Dependent Variable: Leadership

R Square= 0.188, F=29.619, p<0.05

\*p<0.05

### **4.5.3. Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Competence**

In order to understand the relationship between leadership and competence that includes informative value, expertise, trustworthiness and interaction, a multiple regression analysis is employed.

As shown in Table 4.22, in the first stage, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.279, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, informative value with  $\beta = 0.183$ , expertise with  $\beta = 0.155$  and trustworthiness with  $\beta = 0.272$  are found to be statistically significant regarding leadership. Informative value, expertise and trustworthiness have a positive impact on leadership. The analysis shows that trustworthiness demonstrates a much greater effect on leadership. According to these results, H9, H10 and H11 are supported.

**Table 4.22 Multiple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Competence**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.032	.217		4.754	.000		
Informative							
Value	.196	.055	.183	3.567	.000*	.714	1.400
Expertise	.154	.057	.155	2.683	.008*	.564	1.774
Trustworthiness	.281	.059	.272	4.766	.000*	.575	1.738
Interaction	.048	.036	.063	1.324	.186	.843	1.187

Dependent Variable: Leadership

RSquare=0.279, F=37.166, p<0.05

\*p<0.05

#### 4.5.4. Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Ideality

A multiple regression analysis is employed to test the relationship between parasocial relationship and ideality that includes prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic, and physical attractiveness. As shown in Table 4.23, in the first stage, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.332, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, prestige with  $\beta = 0.218$ , inspiration with  $\beta = 0.330$  and physical attractiveness with  $\beta = 0.185$  are found to statistically significant regarding parasocial

relationship. Prestige, inspiration and physical attractiveness have a positive impact on parasocial relationships. Inspiration shows a greater impact on parasocial relationships then it is followed by prestige and physical attractiveness. According to these results, H12, H13 and H15 are supported.

**Table 4.23 Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Ideality**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.027	.210		4.886	.000		
Prestige	.202	.052	.218	3.913	.000*	.559	1.789
Inspiration	.321	.055	.330	5.809	.000*	.539	1.855
Visual Aesthetic	-.006	.067	-.005	-.097	.923	.543	1.841
Physical Attractiveness	.153	.041	.185	3.743	.000*	.713	1.402

Dependent Variable: Parasocial Relationship

R Square= 0.332, F=47.766, p<0.05

\*p<0.05

#### 4.5.5. Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Relatedness

A multiple regression analysis is employed to test the relationship between parasocial relationships and relatedness that includes similarity, enjoyability, and entertainment value.

As shown in Table 4.24, in the first stage, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.397, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, enjoyability ( $\beta = 0.133$ ), similarity ( $\beta = 0.194$ ) and entertainment value ( $\beta = 0.449$ ) have statistically significant effect on parasocial relationship. The analysis shows that entertainment value demonstrates a much greater effect on parasocial relationships than enjoyability and similarity. According to these results, H16, H17 and H18 are supported.

**Table 4.24 Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Relatedness**

Model	Unstandardized		Std	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.426	.225		1.893	.059		
Enjoyability	.145	.050	.133	2.937	.004*	.769	1.301
Entertainment Value	.445	.044	.449	10.004	.000*	.778	1.285
Similarity	.235	.057	.194	4.154	.000*	.720	1.388

Dependent Variable: Parasocial Relationship

R Square= 0.397, F=84.500,  $p < 0.05$

\* $p < 0.05$

#### **4.5.6. Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Competence**

A multiple regression analysis is employed to test the relationship between parasocial relationships and competence that includes informative value, expertise, trustworthiness, and interaction.

As shown in Table 4.25, in the first stage, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.279, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, informative value with  $\beta = 0.109$ , expertise with  $\beta = 0.207$ , trustworthiness with  $\beta = 0.348$  and interaction with  $\beta = 0.122$  are found to be statistically significant regarding parasocial relationship. Informative value, expertise, trustworthiness and interaction have a positive impact on parasocial relationships. The analysis shows that trustworthiness demonstrates a much greater effect on parasocial relationships than others. According to these results, H19, H20, H21 and H22 are supported.

**Table 4.25 Multiple Regression Analysis for Parasocial Relationship and Competence**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.633	.199		3.177	.002		
Informative Value	.116	.050	.109	2.304	.022*	.714	1.400
Expertise	.205	.053	.207	3.882	.000*	.564	1.774
Trustworthiness	.356	.054	.348	6.580	.000*	.575	1.738
Interaction	.094	.033	.122	2.799	.005*	.843	1.187

Dependent Variable: Parasocial Relationship

R Square = 0.383, F=59.470, p<0.05

\*p<0.05

#### 4.5.7. Simple Regression Analysis for Desire to Mimic

In order to understand the relationship between leadership and the desire to mimic, a simple regression analysis is applied. As shown in Table 4.26, this analysis is significant (p<0.05). The overall explanatory power of the model is 38.5% (R<sup>2</sup>=0.385). The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range.

In the model, leadership with  $\beta = 0.620$  is statistically significant regarding the desire to mimic. Leadership has a positive impact on the desire to mimic. According to these results, H23 is supported.

**Table 4.26 Simple Regression Analysis for Leadership and Desire to Mimic**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.298	.185		1.615	.107		
Leadership	.783	.050	.620	15.563	.000*	1.000	1.000

Dependent Variable: Desire to mimic

$R^2 = 0.385$ ,  $F=242.192$ ,  $p<0.05$

\* $p<0.05$

#### **4.5.8. Multiple Regression Analysis for Customer Engagement with Brand Related Social Media Content**

Taking customer engagement with brand-related social media content as the dependent variable and desire to mimic and parasocial relationship as the independent variables, a multiple regression analysis is run and both VIF and tolerance values are examined.

As shown in Table 4.27, this analysis is significant ( $p<0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.492, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range. Desire to mimic ( $\beta = 0.341$ ) and parasocial relationships ( $\beta = 0.435$ ) have a positive impact on customer engagement with brand-related social media content. The analysis shows that parasocial relationship shows a greater effect on customer engagement than the desire to mimic. According to these results, H26

and H28 are supported.

**Table 4.27 Multiple Regression Analysis for Customer Engagement with Brand Related Social Media Content**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.206	.156		1.318	.188		
Desire to Mimic	.324	.044	.341	7.280	.000*	.601	1.664
Parasocial Relationship	.526	.057	.435	9.288	.000*	.601	1.664

Dependent Variable: Customer Engagement

$R^2 = 0.492$ ,  $F = 186.991$ ,  $p < 0.05$

\* $p < 0.05$

#### **4.5.9. Multiple Regression Analysis for Purchase Intention**

A multiple regression analysis is run, taking purchase intention as the dependent variable and desire to mimic and parasocial relationship, customer engagement with brand-related social media content and leadership as the independent variables, a multiple regression analysis is run, and both VIF and tolerance values are examined.

As shown in Table 4.28, this analysis is significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). In the second stage, R Square is 0.511, representing the overall explanatory power of the model. The VIF value and tolerance value are equal to 1.00. Since VIF is below 10 and tolerance is above 0.10, it can be concluded that collinearity among variables is within a considerable range. Parasocial relationship ( $\beta = 0.243$ ), customer engagement with brand-related social media content ( $\beta = 0.258$ ) and leadership ( $\beta = 0.288$ ) have a positive impact on purchase intention. The analysis shows that parasocial relationship, engagement and leadership show similar effects on purchase intention. According to these results, H24, H27 and H29 are supported.

**Table 4.28 Multiple Regression Analysis for Purchase Intention**

Model	Unstandardized		Std.	Collinearity			
	Coefficients		Coefficients	Statistics			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.496	.171		2.897	.004		
Desire to Mimic	.052	.049	.055	1.062	.289	.468	2.135
Parasocial Relationship	.288	.062	.243	4.666	.000*	.469	2.131
Engagement	.252	.050	.258	5.068	.000*	.492	2.034
Leadership	.339	.057	.288	5.940	.000*	.540	1.851

Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

$R^2 = 0.511$ ,  $F=100.423$ ,  $p<0.05$

\* $p<0.05$

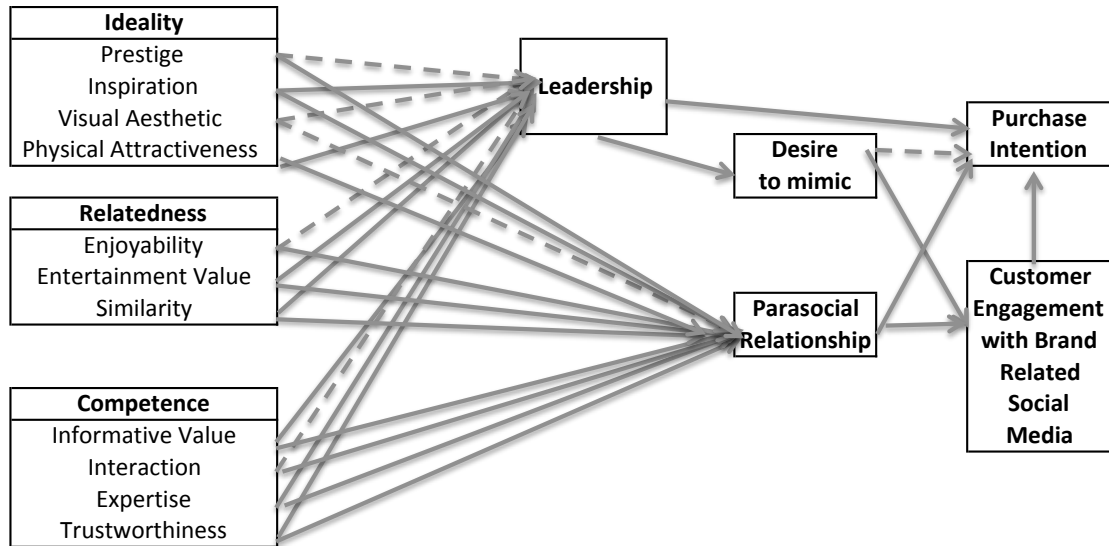
**Table 4.29 The Results of Hypotheses**

H1	Prestige has a positive influence on leadership.	Not Supported
H2	Inspiration has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H3	Visual aesthetics has a positive influence on leadership.	Not Supported
H4	Physical attractiveness has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H5	Enjoyability has a positive influence on leadership.	Not Supported
H6	Entertainment value has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H7	Similarity has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H8	Interaction has a positive influence on leadership.	Not Supported
H9	Informative value has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H10	Expertise has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H11	Trustworthiness has a positive influence on leadership.	Supported
H12	Prestige has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H13	Inspiration has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H14	Visual aesthetics has a positive influence on the parasocial relationship.	Not Supported
H15	Physical attractiveness has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H16	Enjoyability has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H17	Entertainment value has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H18	Similarity has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported

relationship.

H19	Interaction has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H20	Informative value has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H21	Expertise has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H22	Trustworthiness has a positive influence on parasocial relationship.	Supported
H23	Leadership has a positive influence on the desire to mimic.	Supported
H24	Leadership has a positive influence on purchase intention.	Supported
H25	Desire to mimic has a positive influence on purchase intention.	Not Supported
H26	Desire to mimic has a positive influence on customer engagement.	Supported
H27	The parasocial relationship has a positive influence on purchase intention	Supported
H28	The parasocial relationship has a positive influence on customer engagement.	Supported
H29	Customer engagement has a positive influence on purchase intention.	Supported

**Figure 4.1 Revised Model Regression Analyses**



In the figure, it is illustrated that H1, H2, H5, H9, H14 and H25 are not supported. That means that; prestige, visual aesthetic, enjoyability and interaction do not have an impact on leadership. Visual aesthetics do not have an impact on parasocial relationships. Also, the desire to mimic does not have an impact on purchase intention. Nonetheless, other hypotheses are supported, which indicates the variables among them have positive relationships.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the findings, theoretical and managerial implications for all the studies are shown in-depth. It starts with the discussion of the findings. Then, it continues with a general review of the result of the study. Finally, the limitations for this research and recommendations for future researches are explained.

#### **5.1. DISCUSSION**

Social media usage is increasing in recent years, and over half of the population are active in social media (Digital 2020 July Global Statshot). There are various social media applications that individuals spend substantial time on those platforms; hence influencers have emerged on these platforms (Chaffey, 2020). Social media influencers help companies promote and sell products that are a new way of marketing method (Yodel, 2017). Therefore, academic studies focus on the effects of social media influencers in marketing. For the study, existing variables from different studies have been examined to find the effects of influencers in social media and their character features and content values on leadership and parasocial relationship. In addition, the study investigates the effect of leadership, desire to mimic and parasocial relationships on purchase intention and customer engagement.

The findings of the research reveal that leadership results from the four factors under the ideality that are prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic and physical attractiveness. The impact of inspiration and physical attractiveness on leadership is positive. The effect of prestige and visual aesthetics are not supported. Moreover, leadership results from relatedness that include enjoyability, similarity, and entertainment value

demonstrate that similarity and entertainment value positively influence leadership. Additionally, leadership results from competence that includes informative value, interaction, expertise, and trustworthiness demonstrate that informative value, expertise, and trustworthiness value positively influence leadership.

In addition, parasocial relationship results from the four factors under the ideality: prestige, inspiration, visual aesthetic, and physical attractiveness. The impact of prestige, inspiration and physical attractiveness on parasocial relationships is positive. The effect of visual aesthetics is not supported. Moreover, parasocial relationships that include enjoyability, similarity, and entertainment value demonstrate that enjoyability, similarity, and entertainment value positively influence parasocial relationships. Additionally, parasocial relationship results from competence that includes informative value, interaction, expertise, and trustworthiness demonstrate that informative value, interaction expertise, and trustworthiness value positively influence the parasocial relationship.

Moreover, leadership influences the desire to mimic. Furthermore, leadership, parasocial relationship and customer engagement have a positive influence on purchase intention. However, the desire to mimic has not a substantial influence on purchase intention.

## **5.2. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

This study adds to the current literature by providing a fresh viewpoint to social media marketing. Although there are various researches related to social media and social media influencers, this study adds to the literature by integrating the different features of social media influencers. In addition to the features of social media

influencers, this research endeavors to understand the influence of social media influencers' features both on leadership and parasocial relationship. The results indicate that leadership and parasocial relationship are affected by inspiration, physical attractiveness, similarity, entertainment value, informative value, expertise and trustworthiness. Also, the parasocial relationship is affected by prestige, enjoyability and interaction as well.

Secondly, desire to mimic is also included in the scope of the study to provide deeper insight into the literature. This study demonstrates that; leadership has a positive impact on the desire to mimic. Although the desire to mimic has an impact on customer engagement, the desire to mimic has no significant effect on purchase intention, according to the findings. Therefore, this study adds to the social media marketing literature that the effect of desire to mimic is lower than other potential factors on purchase intention. Other potential factors that impact purchase intention are leadership, parasocial interaction and customer engagement.

Finally, along with factors affecting leadership and parasocial relationship and their impacts on intention to purchase, this study also examined whether the desire to mimic and parasocial relationships have an influence on customer engagement. The findings reveal that; they are both positively influential on customer engagement. The impact of the parasocial relationship is higher than the effect of desire to mimic on customer engagement.

### **5.3 MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The findings of this study have significant consequences for marketing executives. First, it provides managers with a broad view about social media users belong to their demographic profiles. Based on the demographic profiles of the participants, companies focus on the similar profile of their customers in their marketing activities. From the managerial perspective, it is beneficial to detect the factors of purchase intention while using social media platforms. The results demonstrate that the most significant factors influencing intention to purchase are leadership. In order to be seen as a leader, social media influencers have the features of inspiration from ideality, entertainment value from relatedness and trustworthiness from competence. According to these results, focusing on the features of inspiration, entertainment value, and trustworthiness of a social media influencer aids social media influencers to increase their leadership features. Hence, companies should work with social media influencers that are seen as the leader to increase purchase intention.

Apart from that, the parasocial relationship is another critical factor influencing purchase intention positively. In order to enhance parasocial relationships, social media influencers should be inspirational, trustworthy and their content should have an entertainment value which are the most significant dimensions for having a parasocial relationship with followers. Another significant factor influencing purchase intention is customer engagement with brand-related content, which refers to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral activities of followers toward a brand that social media influencers share (Hughes et al., 2019).

Considering the factor positively influencing customer engagement with brand-related content, the most significant one is found to be parasocial relationships. Similar to the influential factors affecting purchase intention, when influencers are

inspirational, trustworthy and have an entertainment value, they have a more parasocial relationship with followers that estimated to increase in customer engagement. In addition, the desire to mimic positively affects customer engagement. When social media influencers have leadership features, followers have an urge to mimic them, so engagement is positively affected. From a managerial perspective, increasing leadership and parasocial relationship features of social media influencers might help companies to increase customer engagement with a brand and purchase intention.

#### **5.4. LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This study has some limitations that should be considered. Firstly, all participants are from Turkey, where social media usage is high; thus, the findings could vary when this study is employed in other countries. It is advised that, in future research, this study should be expanded to different countries. The questionnaire contains questions about their favorite social media influencer on a social media site. Nevertheless, each social media site has unique features; thus, social media influencers' contents are also changeable depending on which social media platform they are using. Therefore, in future research, focusing on each social media platform one by one is better to eliminate the influence of different platforms. Especially, Tiktok is an upward trend that should be considered in future researches. Furthermore, this study may repeat with a group who follow social media influencers in the same category, such as travel, to have better results. Each category has unique features for followers.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: ABBREVIATIONS AND RESULTS

<b>Items</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Results</b>
Leadership (LEAD)		
LEAD1	This social media influencer takes the lead in sharing what looks good with his/her followers through social media account	Retained
LEAD2	This social media influencer is one of the first people to find the newest trends and designs that other people tend to pass over	Retained
LEAD3	When worn or used by this social media influencer, the product becomes a look, a style, an exhibition of taste	Retained
LEAD4	This social media influencer shares a great deal of information via his/her social media account.	Retained
LEAD5	This social media influencer often gives his/her followers advice and suggestions via his/her social media account.	Retained
Prestige (PR)		
PRS1	I find that this social media influencer's contents are prestigious.	Retained
PRS2	I find that this social media influencer's contents are upscale.	Retained
PRS3	I find that this social media influencer's contents have high status.	Retained

Inspiration (INS)		
INS1	This social media influencer intrigues me with new ideas.	Retained
INS2	This social media influencer broadens my horizon.	Retained
INS3	This social media influencer inspires me to discover something new.	Retained
INS4	This social media influencer stimulates my imagination.	Retained
INS5	I unexpectedly and spontaneously get new ideas from this social media influencer.	Retained
Visual Aesthetics (VA)		
VA1	This social media influencer's content is aesthetically pleasing.	Retained
VA2	This social media influencer's content is attractive.	Retained
VA3	This social media influencer's content is visually appealing.	Retained
VA4	This social media influencer's content is good-looking.	Retained
Physical Attractiveness (PA)		
PA1	I consider this social media influencer very attractive.	Retained
PA2	I consider this social media influencer very stylish.	Retained
PA3	I think this social media influencer is good-looking.	Retained
PA4	I think this social media influencer is sexy.	Retained
Enjoyability (ENJ)		

ENJ1	I find this social media influencer funny.	Retained
ENJ2	I find this social media influencer hilarious.	Retained
ENJ3	I find this social media influencer amusing.	Retained
ENJ4	I find this social media influencer playful.	Retained
ENJ5	I find this social media influencer dull.	Eliminated
ENJ6	I find this social media influencer boring.	Eliminated
Similarity (SIM)		
SIM1	I find this social media influencer to be quite a bit like me.	Retained
SIM2	I find this social media influencer to have similar tastes and preferences as me.	Retained
SIM3	I find this social media influencer to have a lot in common with me.	Retained
Interaction (INT)		
INT1	I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I send a private message.	Retained
INT2	I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I post a comment.	Retained
INT3	I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I send a private message.	Retained
INT4	I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I post a comment.	Retained
INT5	I feel that this social media influencer would allow me to communicate directly with him/her.	Retained
Trustworthiness (TR)		

TR1	I feel this social media influencer is honest.	Retained
TR2	I consider this social media influencer trustworthy.	Retained
TR3	I feel this social media influencer is truthful.	Retained
TR4	I consider this social media influencer earnest.	Retained
Expertise (EX)		
EX1	I feel this social media influencer knows a lot.	Retained
EX2	I feel this social media influencer is competent to make assertions about things that he/she is good at.	Retained
EX3	I consider this social media influencer as an expert in his/her area.	Retained
EX4	I consider this social media influencer sufficiently experienced to make assertions about his/her area.	Retained
Desire to Mimic (DM)		
DM1	I aspire to the lifestyle of this social media influencer.	Retained
DM2	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as stylish as him/her.	Retained
DM3	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as trendy as him/her.	Retained
DM4	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to have a lifestyle more like him/her.	Retained
Parasocial Relationship (PR)		

PR1	I look forward to watching this social media influencer on her/his social media account.	Retained
PR2	If this social media influencer appeared on another social media platform, I would watch that video.	Retained
PR3	When I am watching this social media influencer, I feel as if I am part of her/his group.	Retained
PR4	I think this social media influencer is like an old friend.	Retained
PR5	I would like to meet the influencer this social media influencer in person.	Retained
PR6	If there was a story about this social media influencer in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.	Retained
PR7	This social media influencer makes me feel comfortable as if I am with friends.	Retained
PR8	When this social media influencer shows me how she feels about the brand, it helps me make up my own mind about the brand.	Retained
Customer Engagement (CE)		
CE1	I read posts, including texts, pictures, and videos, related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Retained
CE2	I comment on posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Retained
CE3	I share posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Retained

CE4	I 'like' posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Retained
CE5	I create posts about the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	Retained
Purchase Intention (PE)		
PI1	I am likely to buy certain products because of this social media influencer's posts.	Retained
PI2	It is possible that I will visit some online stores or actual stores because of this social media influencer's posts.	Retained
PI3	It is probable that I may purchase the products/brands that this social media influencer has promoted if I happen to need one.	Retained
Entertainment Value (ENT)		
ENT1	Not fun/fun	Retained
ENT2	Dull/exciting	Retained
ENT3	Not delightful/delightful	Retained
ENT4	Not thrilling/thrilling	Eliminated
ENT5	Unenjoyable/enjoyable	Retained
Informativeness Value (INF)		
INF1	ineffective/effective	Retained
INF2	unhelpful/helpful	Retained

INF3	not functional/functional	Retained
INF4	unnecessary/necessary	Retained
INF5	impractical/practical	Retained

## APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

### SOCIAL MEDIA SURVEY – OCTOBER–NOVEMBER 2020

   <b>Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi</b>	Survey No	
	Interviewer	
	Date	

Dear Participant,

This survey is carried out for research conducted in the M.A (master of art) in marketing program of Istanbul Bilgi University. The survey will take 10 minutes approximately. Please do not hesitate to contact us if there is any point you wish to clarify in your inquiries.

The answers you give to this questionnaire will contribute to great scientific value. However, it is significant that you respond to all the questions for the efficiency of your work. All information you share will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Thank you for your participation and contribution.

Sena İldem

Istanbul Bilgi University

Department of Management

1) Do you use Social Media?

Yes...          No...

2) Which Social Media Account(s) Do You Use?

Youtube...

Instagram...

Facebook...

Twitter...

Tiktok...

Twitch...

Snapchat...

Other

3) Do you follow Social Media Influencer(s)?

Yes...          No...

4) Which Social Media Sites that you use to follow social media influencers?

Youtube...

Instagram...

Facebook...

Twitter...

Tiktok...

Twitch...

Snapchat...

Other

5) In which category, social media influencers share content?

Travel...

- Parenting...
- Fashion & Clothing...
- Health...
- Pets...
- Entertainment...
- Technology...
- Politics...
- Other...

**Below are some statements about your most favorable social media influencer. Please indicate how strongly you favored or unflavored with these statements.**

**Leadership**

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree						
LEAD1	This social media influencer takes the lead in sharing what looks good with his/her followers through social media account	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD2	This social media influencer is one of the first people to find the newest trends and designs that other people tend to pass over	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD3	When worn or used by this social media influencer, the product becomes a look, a style, an exhibition of taste	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD4	This social media influencer shares a great deal of information via his/her social media account.	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD5	This social media influencer often gives his/her followers advice and suggestions via his/her social media account.	1	2	3	4	5

### **Prestige**

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

PRS1	I find that this social media influencer's contents are prestigious.	1	2	3	4	5
PRS2	I find that this social media influencer's contents are upscale.	1	2	3	4	5
PRS3	I find that this social media influencer's contents have high status.	1	2	3	4	5

### **Inspiration**

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

INS1	This social media influencer intrigues me with new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
INS2	This social media influencer broadens my horizon.	1	2	3	4	5
INS3	This social media influencer inspires me to discover something new.	1	2	3	4	5
INS4	This social media influencer stimulates my imagination.	1	2	3	4	5
INS5	I unexpectedly and spontaneously get new ideas from this social media influencer.	1	2	3	4	5

### Visual Aesthetics

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

VA1	This social media influencer's content is aesthetically pleasing.	1	2	3	4	5
VA2	This social media influencer's content is attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
VA3	This social media influencer's content is visually appealing.	1	2	3	4	5
VA4	This social media influencer's content is good-looking.	1	2	3	4	5

### Physical Attractiveness

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

PA1	I consider this social media influencer very attractive.	1	2	3	4	5
PA2	I consider this social media influencer very stylish.	1	2	3	4	5
PA3	I think this social media influencer is good-looking.	1	2	3	4	5
PA4	I think this social media influencer is sexy.	1	2	3	4	5

### Enjoyability

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

ENJ1	I find this social media influencer funny.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ2	I find this social media influencer hilarious.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ3	I find this social media influencer amusing.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ4	I find this social media influencer playful.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ5	I find this social media influencer dull.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ6	I find this social media influencer boring.	1	2	3	4	5

## Similarity

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

SIM1	I find this social media influencer to be quite a bit like me.	1	2	3	4	5
SIM2	I find this social media influencer to have similar tastes and preferences as me.	1	2	3	4	5
SIM3	I find this social media influencer to have a lot in common with me.	1	2	3	4	5

## Interaction

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

INT1	I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I send a private message.	1	2	3	4	5
INT2	I feel that this social media influencer would talk back to me if I post a comment.	1	2	3	4	5
INT3	I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I send a private message.	1	2	3	4	5
INT4	I feel that this social media influencer would respond to me quickly and efficiently if I post a comment.	1	2	3	4	5
INT5	I feel that this social media influencer would allow me to communicate directly with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

### Trustworthiness

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

TR1	I feel this social media influencer is honest.	1	2	3	4	5
TR2	I consider this social media influencer trustworthy.	1	2	3	4	5
TR3	I feel this social media influencer is truthful.	1	2	3	4	5
TR4	I consider this social media influencer earnest.	1	2	3	4	5

### Expertise

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

EX1	I feel this social media influencer knows a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
EX2	I feel this social media influencer is competent to make assertions about things that he/she is good at.	1	2	3	4	5
EX3	I consider this social media influencer as an expert in his/her area.	1	2	3	4	5
EX4	I consider this social media influencer sufficiently experienced to make assertions about his/her area.	1	2	3	4	5

### Desire to Mimic

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

DM1	I aspire to the lifestyle of this social media influencer.	1	2	3	4	5
DM2	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as stylish as him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
DM3	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to be as trendy as him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
DM4	Inspired by this social media influencer, I want to have a lifestyle more like him/her.	1	2	3	4	5

### Parasocial Relationship

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

PR1	I look forward to watching this social media influencer on her/his social media account.	1	2	3	4	5
PR2	If this social media influencer appeared on another social media platform, I would watch that video.	1	2	3	4	5
PR3	When I am watching this social media influencer, I feel as if I am part of her/his group.	1	2	3	4	5
PR4	I think this social media influencer is like an old friend.	1	2	3	4	5
PR5	I would like to meet the influencer this social media influencer in person.	1	2	3	4	5
PR6	If there was a story about this social media influencer in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.	1	2	3	4	5
PR7	This social media influencer makes me feel comfortable as if I am with friends.	1	2	3	4	5
PR8	When this social media influencer shows me how she feels about the brand, it helps me make up my own mind about the brand.	1	2	3	4	5

### Consumer Engagement with Brand Related Content

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

CE1	I read posts, including texts, pictures, and videos, related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	1	2	3	4	5
CE2	I comment on posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	1	2	3	4	5
CE3	I share posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	1	2	3	4	5
CE4	I 'like' posts related to the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	1	2	3	4	5
CE5	I create posts about the brands that this social media influencer has promoted.	1	2	3	4	5

### Purchase Intention

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree

PI1	I am likely to buy certain products because of this social media influencer's posts.	1	2	3	4	5
PI2	It is possible that I will visit some online stores or actual stores because of this social media influencer's posts.	1	2	3	4	5
PI3	It is probable that I may purchase the products/brands that this social media influencer has promoted if I happen to need one.	1	2	3	4	5

Concerning this social media influencer whom I am following on social media, I personally think her/his social media posts/updates are:

**Entertainment Value**

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree						
ENT1	Not fun/fun	1	2	3	4	5
ENT2	Dull/exciting	1	2	3	4	5
ENT3	Not delightful/delightful	1	2	3	4	5
ENT4	Not thrilling/thrilling	1	2	3	4	5
ENT5	Unenjoyable/enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5

**Informative Value**

1: Strongly Disagree - 5: Strongly Agree						
INF1	ineffective/effective	1	2	3	4	5
INF2	unhelpful/helpful	1	2	3	4	5
INF3	not functional/functional	1	2	3	4	5
INF4	unnecessary/necessary	1	2	3	4	5
INF5	impractical/practical	1	2	3	4	5

### Demographic Questions

<b>1. Gender</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male
<b>2. Age</b>	.....
<b>3. Marital Status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married
<b>4. Education Level</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Literate <input type="checkbox"/> Primary School <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary School <input type="checkbox"/> High School <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor <input type="checkbox"/> Master <input type="checkbox"/> PHD
<b>5. Working Status</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector <input type="checkbox"/> Business Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed / Looking for a job <input type="checkbox"/> Housewife <input type="checkbox"/> Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Not working due to old age or disability
<b>6. Household Income (Monthly)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Below 3000 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 3000 TL - 5999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 6000 TL - 8999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 9000 TL - 11999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 12000 TL and above

## APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE IN TURKISH

### SOSYAL MEDYA ARAŐTIRMASI – EKİM–KASIM 2020

   <b>İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi</b>	Anket No	
	Anketör	
	Tarih	

Değerli katılımcı,

Bu anket çalışması İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Pazarlama Departmanı için yapılan bir araştırma kapsamında gerçekleştirilmektedir. Sizden, sosyal medya ile ilgili olan bu anketteki sorulara cevap vererek araştırmadan daha sağlıklı sonuçlar elde edilmesine katkıda bulunmanız rica edilmektedir.

Bu ankete vereceğiniz cevaplar bilimsel açıdan çok değerli olacaktır. Bu nedenle tüm soruları eksiksiz yanıtlamanız çok önemlidir. Paylaşacağınız bilgiler sadece bu akademik çalışma kapsamında kullanılacak ve başka kişi, kurum veya kuruluşlar ile kesinlikle paylaşılmayacaktır.

Anket ile ilgili tüm sorularınız ve netleştirilmesini istediğiniz noktalar iletişime geçebilirsiniz.

Katılımınız ve katkılarınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Sena İldem

Istanbul Bilgi University

Department of Management

1) Sosyal Medya Kullanıyor musunuz?

Evet... Hayır...

2) Hangi Sosyal Medya Hesabı veya Hesaplarını Kullanıyorsunuz?

Youtube...

Instagram...

Facebook...

Twitter...

Tiktok...

Twitch...

Snapchat...

Other

3) Sosyal Medya Fenomeni takip ediyor musunuz?

Evet... Hayır...

4) Hangi Sosyal Medya Hesabı veya Hesaplarını Fenomen takip etmek için kullanıyorsunuz?

Youtube...

Instagram...

Facebook...

Twitter...

Tiktok...

Twitch...

Snapchat...

Diğer

5) Beğenerek takip ettiğiniz sosyal medya hesabı hangi kategoride paylaşım yapıyor?

Seyahat

Yemek

Ebeveyn (Bebek-Çocuk Bakım)

Makyaj ve güzellik sırları

Moda ve Giyim

Oyun

Sağlık

Yaşam Tarzı

Evcil Hayvanlar

Diğer (Belirtiniz)

Aşağıda yer alan soruları takip ettiğiniz sosyal medya fenomenini düşünerek size en yakın olacak şekilde cevaplayınız.

### Liderlik

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum						
LEAD1	SMF neyin iyi olup olmadığını takipçileri ile paylaşarak öncülük ediyor.	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD2	SMF, başkalarının önemsemediği en yeni trend ve tasarımları bulup takipçileri ile paylaşan ilk birkaç fenomenen biridir.	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD3	SMF'nin giydiği veya kullandığı bir ürün şık, güzel, lezzet sergisi bir görünüm kazanıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD4	SMF sosyal medya hesabında çok miktarda bilgi paylaşıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
LEAD5	SMF sıklıkla öneri ve tavsiyelerini sosyal medya hesabı üzerinden takipçileri ile paylaşıyor.	1	2	3	4	5

### Prestij

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum						
PRS1	SMF'nin paylaşım içeriğini prestijli buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
PRS2	SMF'nin paylaşım içeriğini üst kalite buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
PRS3	SMF'nin paylaşım içeriğini yüksek statüde buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

## İlham

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

INS1	SMF yeni fikirleri ile dikkatimi çekiyor.	1	2	3	4	5
INS2	SMF ufkumu açıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
INS3	SMF yeni bir şeyler keşfetmemi sağlıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
INS4	SMF hayal gücümü kamçılıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
INS5	Beklemedik ve spontane bir şekilde SMF'den fikirler alabiliyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

## Görsel Estetik

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

VA1	SMF'nin paylaşım içeriği estetik olarak memnuniyet verici.	1	2	3	4	5
VA2	SMF'nin paylaşım içeriği çekici.	1	2	3	4	5
VA3	SMF'nin paylaşımlarını görsel olarak albenili.	1	2	3	4	5
VA4	SMF'nin paylaşımları hoş görünüyor.	1	2	3	4	5

## Fiziksel Çekicilik

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

PA1	SMF'ni çekici buluyorum	1	2	3	4	5
PA2	SMF stil sahibi.	1	2	3	4	5
PA3	SMF hoş görünlü.	1	2	3	4	5
PA4	SMF'ni seksi buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

## Keyif

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

ENJ1	SMF'ni komik buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ2	SMF'ni neşeli buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ3	SMF'ni eğlendirici buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ4	SMF'ni şakacı buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ5	SMF'ni donuk buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
ENJ6	SMF'ni sıkıcı buluyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

## Benzerlik

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

SIM1	SMF'ni kendime benzetiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
SIM2	SMF'nin tat ve tercihlerini kendime benzetiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
SIM3	SMF ile birçok ortak noktamız var.	1	2	3	4	5

## Etkileşim

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

INT1	SMF'ne özel mesaj atarsam, bana cevap vereceğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
INT2	SMF'nin paylaşımına yorum yaparsam, bana cevap vereceğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
INT3	SMF'ne özel mesaj atarsam, bana hızlı ve etkili bir cevap vereceğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
INT4	SMF'nin paylaşımına yorum yaparsam, bana hızlı ve etkili bir cevap vereceğini düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
INT5	SMF onunla direkt iletişime geçebilmeme izin verir.	1	2	3	4	5

### **Güvenilirlik**

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

TR1	SMF'nin dürüst olduğunu hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
TR2	SMF'yi güven verici olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
TR3	SMF'ni içten olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
TR4	SMF'nin ağırbaşlı olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

### **Uzmanlık**

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

EX1	SMF'nin çok bildiğini hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
EX2	SMF iyi olduğu alanda iddiada bulunacak yetkinlikte olduğunu hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
EX3	SMF'nin kendi alanında uzman olduğunu düşünüyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
EX4	SMF kendi alanında iddiada bulunabilecek seviyede yeteri kadar deneyimli.	1	2	3	4	5

### **Benzeme / Taklit Etme İsteği**

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

DM1	SMF'nin yaşam tarzına özeniyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
DM2	İlham aldığım SMF gibi şık olmak istiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
DM3	İlham aldığım SMF gibi moda uymak istiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
DM4	İlham aldığım SMF gibi bir yaşam tarzım olsun istiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5

## Parasosyal İlişki

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

PR1	SMF'nin paylaşımlarını onun sosyal medya hesabında görmeyi dört gözle bekliyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
PR2	SMF'nin başka bir sosyal medya platformunda ki paylaşımlarını da takip ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
PR3	SMF'ni izlediğimde, kendimi onun grubunun bir parçası gibi hissediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
PR4	Bence, SMF eski bir arkadaş gibidir.	1	2	3	4	5
PR5	SMF ile yüz yüze tanışmayı isterim.	1	2	3	4	5
PR6	SMF hakkında gazete veya dergide bir yazı yayımlansa okurum.	1	2	3	4	5
PR7	SMF sanki arkadaşlarımlaymışım gibi beni rahatlatıyor.	1	2	3	4	5
PR8	SMF bir marka hakkında ne hissettiğini paylaştığında, marka hakkında karar vermemde yardımcı oluyor.	1	2	3	4	5

## Marka Etkileşimi

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5: Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

CE1	SMF'nin tanıtımını yaptığı marka ile ilgili her türlü paylaşımı (yazıları, resimleri, videoları) okurum.	1	2	3	4	5
CE2	SMF'nin tanıtımını yaptığı marka ile ilgili paylaşımın altındaki yorumları okurum.	1	2	3	4	5
CE3	SMF'nin tanıtımını yaptığı marka ile ilgili paylaşımında bulunurum.	1	2	3	4	5
CE4	SMF'nin tanıtımını yaptığı marka ile ilgili paylaşımları beğenirim.	1	2	3	4	5
CE5	SMF'nin tanıtımını yaptığı marka ile ilgili paylaşım yaparım.	1	2	3	4	5

### Satın Alma Niyeti

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5:Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

PI1	SMF'nin gönderisinde gördüğüm ürünleri muhtemelen satın alırım.	1	2	3	4	5
PI2	SMF'nin gönderisinde gördüğümden dolayı, online veya fiziksel mağazayı ziyaret ederim.	1	2	3	4	5
PI3	Eğer ihtiyacım varsa SMF'nin tanıttığı ürünleri/markaları satın alabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5

Takip ettiğiniz SMF'yi düşünerek, SMF'nin post ve güncellemeleri:

### Eğlence Değeri

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5:Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

ENT1	Eğlenceli değil / Eğlenceli	1	2	3	4	5
ENT2	Sıkıcı / Heyecanlı	1	2	3	4	5
ENT3	Nefis / Nefis değil	1	2	3	4	5
ENT4	Nefes Kesici değil / Nefes Kesici	1	2	3	4	5
ENT5	Zevkli değil / Zevkli	1	2	3	4	5

### Bilgi Değeri

1: Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum - 5:Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

INF1	Etkili değil / Etkili	1	2	3	4	5
INF2	Yardımcı değil / Yardımcı	1	2	3	4	5
INF3	Fonksiyonel değil / Fonksiyonel	1	2	3	4	5
INF4	Gerekli Değil / Gerekli	1	2	3	4	5
INF5	Kullanışlı değil / Kullanışlı	1	2	3	4	5

### Demografik Sorular

<b>1. Cinsiyet</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Kadın <input type="checkbox"/> Erkek
<b>2. Yaş</b>	.....
<b>3. Medeni Durum</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Bekar <input type="checkbox"/> Evli
<b>4. Eğitim Seviyesi</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Okur-Yazar <input type="checkbox"/> İlkokul <input type="checkbox"/> Ortaokul <input type="checkbox"/> Lise <input type="checkbox"/> Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Yüksek Lisans <input type="checkbox"/> Doktora
<b>5. Çalışma Durumu</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Kamu'da Çalışıyor <input type="checkbox"/> Özel Sektör'de Çalışıyor <input type="checkbox"/> İşyeri Sahibi <input type="checkbox"/> İşsiz / İş Arayan <input type="checkbox"/> Ev Kadını <input type="checkbox"/> Emekli <input type="checkbox"/> Öğrenci <input type="checkbox"/> Yaşlılık veya Engellilik Nedeni ile Çalışmıyor
<b>6. Kişisel Aylık Gelir</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3000 TL'den az <input type="checkbox"/> 3000 TL - 5999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 6000 TL - 8999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 9000 TL - 11999 TL <input type="checkbox"/> 12000 TL ve üzeri