

Journal of legal and social studies

ISSN: 2507-7333

Eissn: 2676-1742

**The Impact of Social Influencers' Content on Reshaping Social Values Among
University Students**

Fatima Ahlam Ladjelat^{*}

Ziane Achour University (Djelfa) (Algeria), fatima.ladjelat@univ-djelfa.dz

Date of send: 05/03/2026	date of acceptance: 01/05/2026	Date of Publication: 01/06/2026
--------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------------------

***Corresponding author**

Abstract :

This study aims to assess the influence of social media influencers' material on the value systems of university students. As social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube proliferate, social media influencers have emerged as significant figures capable of influencing the ideas and habits of youth. The research employed a qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews with a targeted sample of 15 university students. The collected data were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and primary themes related to the participants' experiences and perceptions.

The results demonstrate that frequent daily engagement with social media platforms heightens the likelihood of students being swayed by influencer content, as their motivations for following influencers vary from entertainment to the pursuit of valuable knowledge and personal growth. The findings indicate a dual influence of digital information on ethical and communicative values. Influencer content can foster beneficial values like respect and constructive discourse; conversely, it may also mainstream detrimental behaviors such as sarcasm or uncritical imitation of popular trends. The results demonstrate that influencers substantially affect students' purchasing choices and link certain brands to indicators of social standing. Regarding social responsibility, influencer content can enhance awareness of social projects and volunteer acts; nevertheless, this influence may appear transient or contingent upon specific circumstances.

The research reveals that the impact of social media influencers on university students' value systems is intricate and multifaceted, primarily determined by exposure level, content style, and audience critical awareness. Consequently, the study emphasizes the imperative of enhancing media and digital literacy inside universities to mitigate any adverse impacts and foster the advantageous outcomes of digital content.

Keywords: Social media influencers; social media; societal values; university students;

Introduction

The swift proliferation of social media usage among university students and their near-daily dependence on influencer content for guidance, entertainment, and information have rendered the digital realm an essential component of student life, influencing communication as well as the formation of norms, values, and behaviors. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat have transcended their original functions of communication and personal moment sharing. They have evolved into environments dominated by influencers, who serve as symbolic figures that depict lifestyles and redefine what is considered "normal" or "desirable" behavior among university students.

The pervasive influence of social media personalities, who articulate narratives surrounding success, consumption, interpersonal relationships, and philanthropy, exerts continual pressure on the value systems of university students, leading to a reconfiguration where conventional moral principles (such as justice, patience, integrity, and honesty) are juxtaposed with contemporary self-representations and perceptions of others, shaped by visual media, brief videos, and trending challenges. The inquiry pertains to the degree and character of the influence that daily engagement with influencer content exerts on students' moral, consumer, and social responsibility values: Does this content foster positive attributes such as integrity, empathy, and social initiative, or does it perpetuate tendencies towards excessive consumption, ostentatious display of wealth, and apathy towards communal concerns?

This study examines the issue from a sociological standpoint by observing and analyzing the correlation between exposure to influencer content and students' behaviors and attitudes regarding ethics, consumption, and social engagement, aiming to elucidate how value systems within the university are being redefined due to the increasing prevalence of the digital realm.

Research problem

This research aims to analyze the mechanisms of value among university students, considering the emergence of social media influencers as new participants in the framework of social education. These influencers possess symbolic and digital capital, enabling them to shape meaning and regulate norms and behaviors both within and beyond the university environment. Within this framework, engagement with influencer content is perceived not merely as a technical or entertaining event, but as a manifestation of symbolic power, where

algorithmic logic and trends intersect with the processes of individual and collective identity formation among a university-aged demographic transitioning from a conventional value system to a more fluid and diverse digital paradigm. The focus is on the reconfiguration of students' value systems through daily engagement with influencer content, encompassing moral actions (honesty, justice, integrity), consumerist tendencies (expenditure, ostentation, pursuit of luxury), and representations of social responsibility (volunteering, collaboration, collective belonging).

This influence does not manifest as a linear progression from "authentic values" to "deviant values," but rather emerges through intricate value negotiations, wherein students amalgamate the embrace of specific digitally endorsed symbols and lifestyles with the resistance or reinterpretation of others to forge their identities within a dynamic social landscape. The thesis examines disparities within the student body, positing that the influence of actors differs based on their positions within the university hierarchy (gender, academic level, specialization), as well as their cultural and symbolic resources and capacity for critical analysis of digital content. The primary issue addressed in the thesis pertains to the inquiry:

Main question:

Does exposure to influencer content on social media platforms affect the reshaping of university students' value systems in terms of ethics, consumption, and social responsibility?

Sub-questions:

1. Does exposure to content from social influencers impact the moral values of university students, including justice, patience, integrity, and honesty?
2. Does exposure to social influencer content influence the consumer values of university students, including excessive consumption, ostentation, and the quest of luxury?
3. Does exposure to content from social media influencers influence university students' ideals of social responsibility, including volunteering, cooperation, group affiliation, and environmental conservation?

General hypothesis:

Frequent exposure to influencer content on social media platforms impacts university students' value systems, altering moral values, reinforcing or

diminishing consumerist values, and variably influencing social responsibility values.

Sub-hypotheses:

1. Exposure to social influencer content influences university students' commitment to the principles of justice, patience, integrity, and honesty.
2. Exposure to social influencer content influences university students' consumerist attitudes, particularly about excessive consumption, ostentation of things, and the desire of luxury.
3. Exposure to content from social media influencers influences university students' adoption of values related to social responsibility, including volunteering, cooperation, group affiliation, and environmental conservation.

Objectives of the article:

This research seeks to evaluate the effect of exposure to social media influencers' content on university students' social values by quantifying its influence on moral, consumer, and social responsibility values. It seeks to identify the types of influencer content that affect students' behavior on moral conduct, consumption patterns, and participation in social events both within and outside the school. The project aims to deliver a scientific evaluation of the extent of this influence and to leverage the findings to recommend actionable strategies for the intentional use of social media platforms and influencer content inside the academic environment.

First section: General framework of the study

This section seeks to establish a conceptual framework regarding the exposure to social influencer content and its correlation with the social values of university students, by elucidating the principal concepts and themes associated with influencers, social media platforms, and the value structure of students within the university milieu. This introduction presents the formulation of research problems and questions, offering a theoretical framework that elucidates the role of influencers in contemporary social education and demonstrates how their content can influence the reconfiguration of students' moral, consumer, and social responsibility values. This argument serves as the conceptual foundation for the subsequent research in the paper.

First requirement: The most important general concepts of the study:

First: Social Values

Social values are understood as shared principles and standards within society that determine what is considered important and desirable, guide individuals' judgments and behaviors, and support the continuity and cohesion of the social system. They represent deeply held beliefs about what is fair or desirable and translate into norms and rules that regulate social interaction and frame individual and collective choices.¹

Second: Social Media Influencers

Social media influencers are defined as digital content producers who regularly share knowledge or entertainment content and recount details of their daily lives on one or more platforms, enabling them to attract a large number of followers. This presence gives them a relatively "captive" audience and the ability to influence their consumption and other social behaviors.²

Third: Consumption Values

The theory of consumption values is founded on the premise that consumers make purchase decisions based on various dimensions of value, such as functional, emotional, social, and cognitive value, each of which implies a belief in the utility or significance of a product or consumption pattern. These values

¹ - Rui, V. "Social Values and Their Role in Society." *International Scholars Journals* 10, no. 2 (2022):3-4

² - De Veirman, Marijke, Veroline Cauberghe, and Liselot Hudders. "Marketing through Instagram Influencers: The Impact of Number of Followers and Product Divergence on Brand Attitude." *International Journal of Advertising* 36, no. 5 (2017)1-2

help explain the preference for certain consumption patterns or brands as an expression of identity, status, and integration into a particular reference group.¹

Fourth: Social Responsibility in the University Context

Social responsibility in the university context is defined as the set of attitudes and behaviors that reflect the student's commitment to the issues of their community, through incidental competencies related to ethical behavior, the education they receive, and their participation in social or volunteer activities. It is seen as a variable that can be measured through dimensions related to awareness, practice, and involvement in initiatives that target the public good inside and outside the university.²

Second requirement: Sociological approach:

Every scientific study has a theoretical framework on which it is based and which defines its identity. In this article, we have adopted the social learning theory.

established by Albert Bandura in the 1960s, which explains the acquisition of behaviors and values through observation and imitation of prominent social models. Its basic principles are: Attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation, with a focus on mediating reinforcement as a driver of imitation.

In the context of the study, social influencers become digital models that students observe daily, learning moral, consumer, and social values from their content.³

Selectivity in observation explains the student's choice of influencer content that is compatible with their needs, corresponding to the question of non-random exposure. Identification is projected onto followers as reference groups, where students define themselves by imitating influencers' style and values. The hypothesis of moral values is supported by the interpretation of imitating behaviors of justice and honesty if they are considered socially rewarding.⁴

As for consumer values, they are interpreted through the imitation of ostentation and luxury as digital reinforcement. About social responsibility, it

¹ - Sheth, Jagdish N., Bruce I. Newman, and Barbara L. Gross. "Why We Buy What We Buy: A Theory of Consumption Values." *Journal of Business Research* 22, no. 2 (1991):159–161

² - García-González, Ángeles, Raquel Jiménez-Fontana and Pilar Azcárate. "Measurement Scale of Social Responsibility in the University Context." *Innovar* 29, no. 73 (2019):171–172 .

³ . Bandura, Albert. Social Learning Theory. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977.

⁴ . Bandura, Albert. Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

demonstrates the imitation of volunteer initiatives if influencers portray them as successful models.

supported by the mediating reinforcement mechanism, where the student sees the influencer's rewards (likes, partnerships), reinforcing their imitation.¹

Third requirement: Previous studies

Reviewing previous studies in scientific research is of great importance, as it performs many tasks for the researcher during the implementation of the research. It provides the researcher with the appropriate standards, measures, concepts, and methodology for their research. It also helps clarify the dimensions of the problem and show where the proposed research fits in with other previous efforts, alerting the researcher to sources that they may not have known about or found, and helping them understand the nature of the existing scientific material. This enables the researcher to define the theoretical framework within which the study is conducted and the background against which the research results are discussed. It also alerts the researcher to the shortcomings and mistakes made by previous researchers so that these mistakes are not repeated. (Fadhil, Daliou et al., 1999, p. 92) Through this, we have attempted to present the most important studies related to the topic of this article.²

First study: The impact of social media use on the social values of university students

Bouhali's (2025) study seeks to examine the influence of Facebook usage on the social values of students within the Faculty of Media and Communication, utilizing a field survey of a sample of third-year students, who are among the most prolific users of digital communication platforms. The findings indicated that Facebook is the predominant platform relative to other networks, with students primarily interested in entertainment and instructional information, while traditional values content is of lesser importance. The study also showed that a significant portion of the content disseminated on the platform conflicts with the social values declared by the respondents, and that excessive use is associated with negative effects in some dimensions of the value system, such as a decline in social responsibility or tolerance of some socially unacceptable practices. This study is interesting since it focuses on media students and links the intensity of

¹ Bandura, Albert. "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication." *Media Psychology* 3, no. 3 (2001): 265–299.

² Daliou, Fadhil et al., *Foundations of Methodology in the Social Sciences*, Dar al-Bahth Press, Constantine, 1999.

use and the nature of the content on the one hand, and value shifts on the other, which form the direct background to the topic of exposure to influence content.¹

Second study: The impact of social media on the personal values of Generation Z students

The study "The Influence of Social Media on the Personal Values among Gen Z Students" (2025) examines the relationship between the time Gen Z students spend on social media and the personal values they adopt, such as openness to new ideas, respect for cultural traditions, empathy, and the pursuit of self-improvement. The study adopted a quantitative approach based on a sample of students and concluded that time spent on social media platforms has a significant impact on the value system, as heavy use was found to be associated with higher values of openness, empathy, and personal growth, as well as psychological pressures related to idealized images and standards promoted by content and influencers. The results also indicated that the impact of social media is not uniform, as there is a mixture of positive effects (increased awareness of humanitarian and cultural issues) and negative effects (feelings of pressure and constant comparison with others), confirming the need to incorporate media education in dealing with this space. This study is an important reference because it shows how social media can reshape values at the individual level among an age group close to university students.²

Third study: The impact of influencers on adolescent behavior and value construction

The study by Moulahi and colleagues (2023) provides an empirical investigation of the influence of influencers on adolescent behavior, concentrating on how influencer traits (credibility, authenticity, expertise, and "uniqueness" in content) affect the attitudes and behaviors of followers. The results showed that influencers with high levels of perceived authenticity and content uniqueness have a greater ability to shape adolescents' behaviors and decisions, and that these effects extend to aspects related to identity and daily choices, with the possibility that "authenticity" and "experience" become sources of symbolic authority that influence values and norms. The research indicated that extensive exposure to authentic and captivating information might serve as a source of inspiration and motivation; yet, it may also lead to digital distraction and value pressure when

¹ - Bouhali Hafida. "The Impact of Social Media Use on the Social Values of University Students." *Journal of Social Media Studies* 9, no. 3 (2025)

² - Al-Abdullatif, A. M. "The Influence of Social Media on the Personal Values among Gen Z Students." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 9, no. 6 (2025):

juxtaposed with utopian or showy standards. This research is significant to your thesis because it empirically demonstrates that the influence of influencers extends beyond consumption to behavior and identity formation, opening the door to linking this to the reshaping of moral, consumer, and social values among university students.¹

Second section: Field framework of the study:

This field framework serves as the conduit that transitions the inquiry from theoretical constructs to hypothesis testing inside the academic setting. This section aims to elucidate the research methodology employed to assess the influence of influencer content on the social values of media and communication students. It details the identification of the study population (media and communication students at the University of Djelfa), the selection of an appropriate sample, and the development of data collection and qualitative instruments (semi-structured interviews). This framework includes a delineation of the organizational and temporal protocols associated with fieldwork, including obtaining approvals, selecting interview dates, and establishing conditions for impartiality, confidentiality, and research ethics. This section discusses the sanctioned data analysis procedures and thematic analysis of the interviews to identify the patterns of value discourse associated with the specified influencers. Thus, the field framework provides a comprehensive outline of the study's procedural stages, enabling the evaluation of the validity of its results and their relevance to the target group of university students.

First requirement: Field of study

Spatial scope:

The study was conducted at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Ziane Achour University in Djelfa, specifically at the Faculty of Humanities.

Temporal scope:

The fieldwork for the study was completed during the month of February of the academic year 2025-2026, during which time the research tools were distributed and the data collected and processed.

Second requirement: Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive, analytical, and field-based methodology that aims to diagnose the level of exposure to social media influencers among media

¹ - Moulahi, B., et al. "The Effect of Social Media Influencers on Teenagers' Behavior." *Frontiers in Psychology* 14 (2023).

and communication students at the University of Djelfa, examining their correlation with social ideals (ethical, consumerist, and social responsibility). The technique employs a qualitative approach, including semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis of content derived from students' narratives regarding their interactions with influencers and the evolution of their values inside the university setting.

Qualitative research is a scientific approach that relies on collecting data from the field through direct observation and in-depth interviews, without turning to quantitative statistical analysis. This style of research is based on direct interaction between the researcher and the study participants, as it tries to comprehend social phenomena in their natural setting. Members of the community sometimes participate in the implementation of research activities, which makes this sort of research known as participatory observation research. The extent of engagement between the researcher and the sample participants fluctuates according on the nature of the study topic, its objectives, and its methodological procedures."¹ .

Third requirement: Study community, sample, and study tools

First: In humanities terms, a **research community** is a predetermined set of elements, whether limited or unlimited, that are observed and studied within the framework of scientific research.²

The research community is defined as the complete group of individuals, persons, or material elements that are the subject of the research study and constitute its analytical scope.³

Second: Selecting the elements of the original community for study:

At this stage, the researcher precisely and clearly defines the original community for study by selecting the elements or individuals to be included in the research according to predetermined criteria.⁴

In defining the original community accurately and clearly, Obeidat, Thoqan, Kayed, Abdul-Haq, and Abdul-Rahman Adas provide the following illustrative example:

If a researcher wants to study the problems of community college students in Jordan, he must determine the original research community—whether it is all

¹ - Mohsen Balqasim: **Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Social Studies: Theory and Practice**, Journal of Integration in Social and Mathematical Research, Vol. 07, No. 01, Moulay Ismail University (Morocco), June 2023, pp. 101-102

² - Maurice Angers, **Research Methodology in the Humanities and Practical Exercises**, translated by Bouzid Sahraoui, Kamal Boucherif, Saïd Sebaoun, Dar El Qasbah Publishing, Algeria, 2004, p. 298.

³ - Obeidat Zoufan, Abdelhak Kaid et al., **Scientific Research: Concept, Tools**, and Methods, Dar Al-Fikr Publishing, Amman, Jordan, 7th edition, 2001, p. 99.

⁴ - Ibid., p. 100

students of public and private community colleges, whether it is all first-year or second-year students, etc.¹ This is what was taken into consideration in determining the original research community targeted by the study and research.

Therefore, the “study population” represents all students in the Department of Library Science, Media, and Communication.

Third: Study sample:

In some cases, the research community is so large that it is impossible for the researcher to study it in its entirety.²

In such cases, it is difficult for the researcher to conduct a comprehensive study covering all its elements, so they resort to taking a sample that represents the characteristics of the research community and targets its attributes within the limits of time and cost, then draw conclusions and generalize them.

The sample, in its precise meaning, refers to a selected subset of the study population, characterized by its representation of the characteristics of that population, and selected according to specific procedures and methodologies that ensure its accuracy and reliability in the study.³

Sample extraction, as intended by Saeed Saboun, is the extraction of a part of the study population to enable the verification of hypotheses, due to the impossibility of studying all units of this population. The sample is considered a limited representation of the whole, on which the study is conducted instead of the entire research population, with the aim of facilitating the analysis process while maintaining the representativeness of the results.⁴

The study group consists of all students majoring in media and communication at the University of Djelfa.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, a purposive (non-probability) sample will be selected from students who meet certain basic criteria, such as actively following influencers on social media platforms and being willing to participate in in-depth interviews. The qualitative sample is estimated at approximately 15 students, taking into account gender and academic level (bachelor's/master's) diversity to ensure a variety of perspectives.

Fourth: Study tools.

¹- Obeidat, Zoukan et al., op. cit., p. 100

²- Muwafaq Al-Hamdani, Adnan Al-Jadri, et al., Scientific Research Methods – Research Fundamentals, Book 1, 1st edition, Al-Waraq Publishing, Distribution, and Printing, Amman, 2006, p. 123.

³- Muhammad Walid Al-Batash, Farid Kamel Abu Zeina, Scientific Research Methods – Research Design and Statistical Analysis, 1st edition, Al-Masir Publishing, Distribution and Printing House, Amman, Jordan, 2007, pp. 96, 97.

⁴- Saeed Saboun, Hafsa Jradi, op. cit., pp. 135, 136.

1 Observation: Given the nature of the subject under study, participatory observation within the university environment was adopted to track students' interactions with influencers on digital platforms in their daily lives and to clarify their expectations regarding the influence of these influencers on their future academic and career choices.

2 Interview:

Interviews are one of the qualitative research methods based on establishing a dialogue between the researcher and the respondent, which involves asking a set of questions to the respondents and collecting data on the subject. It is "one of the techniques used in the study of Collective perceptions , especially semi-structured interviews, where the respondent is invited to explain what is inside them spontaneously. Within the framework of the research content, this is done by answering a set of verbal questions posed by the researcher, where representations emerge through the conversation between the researcher and the respondent, allowing access to the content of the representations. However, the interview reflects the researcher's subjectivity in the individual's orientations, so the researcher must use other techniques to control, compare, and deepen the information collected and to identify all the research data."¹

Third section: Results and analysis

This part examines the outcomes derived from the research instrument utilized on the study sample, with the objective of addressing the research questions and evaluating its hypotheses. Initially, the statistical data will be displayed through tables, percentages, and descriptive indicators, followed by an interpretation grounded in the theoretical framework and prior research. This process will culminate in the derivation of essential conclusions that enhance comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation and elucidate the contributions of these findings to the specialized domain of knowledge.

First requirement: Presentation and analysis of statistical tables

Applied aspect

Table (1) Sample characteristics

Variable	Categories	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Type	Male	Male	7	46.7
	Female	Females	8	53.3
Academic year	Bachelor's degree 1	Bachelor's Degree 1	2	13.3

¹ - Boualleg Linda, and Nassira Brahma. "Methodological Techniques for Studying Social Representations." Scientific Research Bulletins 12, no. 2 (2024). p. 292.

	Bachelor's Degree 2	Bachelor's Degree 2	6	40.0
	Bachelor's degree 3	Bachelor's Degree 3	2	13.3
	Master's 1	Master's 1	2	13.3
	Master 2	Master 2	2	13.3
Place of residence	Urban	Urban	11	73.3
	Semi-urban	Semi-urban	4	26.7
Number of hours of use	2–4 hours	2–4 hours	4	26.7

The findings indicate that the bulk of the sample is from urban centers (73.3%), in contrast to (26.7%) from semi-urban areas, highlighting the sample's concentration in an urban setting characterized by the widespread presence of digital platforms.

A relative gender balance and diverse academic distribution exist, marked by a majority of undergraduate students. The analysis of usage hours indicates a significant exposure intensity, as the majority of participants engage with social media sites for 4 to 6 hours daily.

Coding matrix structure

Table (2) Major theme (1): Nature of exposure and motives for following

Code	Procedural definition	Linguistic indicators in interviews	Analytical significance
C1-1 Intensive daily exposure	Daily use lasting several hours	“4–6 hours,” “I spend a long time.”	High likelihood of impact due to repetition
C1-2 Following for benefit	Following influencers for learning/self-development	“Time management,” “self-development,” “I benefit.”	Positive perception of the influencer's role
C1-3 Entertainment and trends	Follow for fun or trends	“Trends,” “fun content,” “short videos”	Quick impact through imitation
C1-4 Credibility as a selection criterion	Choosing influencers based on trust	“Respectful language,” “meaningful content.”	Selective awareness among some students

The chart demonstrates that the influence of influencers begins with the regularity of daily exposure and the motivations for following them. Regular

interaction increases the likelihood of influence through repetition, while for many students, following influencers is linked to the quest for benefit and personal development, so enhancing the content's trustworthiness. Conversely, entertainment and trends enable the swift spread of copying, since some students demonstrate selective awareness shaped by credibility criteria when choosing influences.

Table (3) Major theme (2): Shifts in moral and communicative values

Symbol	Procedural definition	Linguistic indicators	Type of influence
C2-1 Promoting respect	Content that promotes politeness/morals	"Polite conversation," "respect," "religious values."	Positive
C2-2 Normalizing sarcasm	Imitation of sarcastic/provocative style	"Sarcasm," "Imitation," "Excessive Audacity"	Negative
C2-3 Influenced by the style of speech	Transfer of vocabulary and manner of expression	"I started talking like them."	Communicative transformation
C2-4 Blind trust	Accepting content without scrutiny	"We trust them," "We imitate directly."	Critical fragility

The table reveals that the influence of influencers in ethical and communicative domains is dualistic; some content promotes principles of respect and civil discourse, demonstrating a positive effect. The widespread use of sarcasm and the emulation of provocative styles facilitate the normalization of certain detrimental habits. The effect is seen in the adoption of new vocabulary and modes of speech, as well as instances of uncritical trust in influencers, indicating a vulnerability in scrutiny among certain students.

Table (4) Major theme (3): Consumer values and status symbols

Symbol	Procedural definition	Linguistic indicators	Value dimension
C3-1 Purchasing influenced by influencers	Making a purchase decision after viewing content	"I saw the product," "I ordered it after seeing it."	Direct influence
C3-2 Brand = Status	Linking the product to social value	"This says he is rich," "He wants to be like him."	Status symbol
C3-3 Comparison pressure	Comparing oneself to the influencer's lifestyle	"I want to be like them."	Psychosocial influence
C3-4 Critical consumer awareness	Checking reviews and experiences	"I read reviews," "I compare prices."	Protective factor

The study demonstrates that influencers significantly impact consumer behavior, shifting purchasing decisions from utilitarian needs to being swayed by presented materials, with some students making purchases immediately after product exposure. Brand acquisition correlates with social standing among students, driven by the desire to imitate the lives of influencers. Conversely, certain students exhibit critical consumer awareness by evaluating reviews and comparing prices, serving as a protective factor that mitigates unconscious influence.

Table (5) Major theme (4): Social responsibility and belonging

Symbol	Procedural definition	Linguistic indicators	Direction of influence
C4-1 Encouraging volunteering	Encouraging participation in initiatives	“Tree planting campaign”, “donations”, “initiatives”	Positive
C4-2 Strengthening solidarity	Sense of belonging and responsibility	“I have come to see the importance of helping others.”	Positive
C4-3 Seasonality	Seasonal activity	“Only during Ramadan”	Limited sustainability
C4-4 Digital showcase	Sharing for the sake of the image	“Posting only,” “likes.”	Superficial impact

The table demonstrates that influencers positively impact social responsibility by promoting participation in voluntary activities and cultivating a sense of community and belonging among students. Nonetheless, this influence is not without limitations, as it occasionally manifests as seasonal behaviors associated with specific events or digital engagement restricted to posting and liking, indicating low sustainability in certain contexts.

Table (6) Comprehensive coding matrix (Theme × Code × Direction of Impact)

Major Theme	Sub-codes	General Trend
Nature of Exposure	C1-1 / C1-2 / C1-3 / C1-4	Neutral (preliminary factor)
Ethical values	C2-1 / C2-2 / C2-3 / C2-4	Positive/negative dual
Consumer values	C3-1 / C3-2 / C3-3 / C3-4	Mostly ascending towards consumption
Social responsibility	C4-1 / C4-2 / C4-3 / C4-4	Positive with restrictions

The coding matrix was developed following the procedures of thematic analysis, wherein the interview texts were deconstructed into primary semantic units, subsequently generating open codes that encapsulated recurring meanings,

which were then categorized into sub-themes and overarching themes that illustrate patterns of value influence. This approach allowed us to clarify the overlapping effects of influencer content on ethical, consumer, and social aspects, highlighting the need of critical awareness as a mediating element in shaping this influence.

Table (7): Theme Map

Major Theme	Subthemes	Analytical Significance
Nature of exposure and motives for following	Intensive use – Search for usefulness – Entertainment and trends – Credibility criteria	Repeated exposure paves the way for the transfer of value influence
Moral and communicative values	Promoting respect – Normalizing mockery – Influenced by style of speech – Blind trust	Dual impact (positive/negative)
Consumer values and status symbols	Influenced purchasing decisions – Brand as a status indicator – Comparison pressure – Critical consumer awareness	Reshaping the concept of social status
Social responsibility and belonging	Motivation to volunteer – Promotion of solidarity – Seasonality – Digital display	Social mobilization with limited sustainability

The theme map table illustrates that the impact of social influencers is disseminated through an interconnected analytical framework, commencing with the nature of exposure and motivations for following as the foundational basis for influence, where extensive usage and the pursuit of utility and entertainment facilitate the transmission of values. The influence presents a dual ethical and communicative dimension, weighing the promotion of respect and discipline against the normalization of harmful behaviors or uncritical trust.

The consumer dimension indicates a transition in the interpretation of consuming from a utilitarian necessity to a sign of status and identity, influenced by mechanisms of comparison that affect purchasing decisions. In the realm of social responsibility, influencers contribute to galvanizing youth participation in volunteerism and fostering unity; yet, this influence is occasionally contingent upon seasonality or superficial involvement. Thus, the graphic depicts the interconnection of value dimensions and highlights the complex and overlapping impacts of digital content within the academic environment.

Table (8): Presence Overview

Code	Degree of presence in interviews	Analytical Interpretation
Intensive daily use	High	Enhances the likelihood of normalization and influence
Search for benefit	High	Gives the influencer cognitive legitimacy
Normalization of sarcasm	Medium – High	Associated with entertainment content and trends
Promotes respect	Medium	Related to value/religious content
Brand = status	Very high	Most prominent apparent value shift
Purchasing decision influenced	Medium – High	Reflects social persuasion
Motivation to volunteer	Medium	Positive motivational effect
Seasonality	Moderate	Challenge to the sustainability of impact

The findings indicate that the influence of individuals varies based on their interview presence, with frequent daily engagement correlating with a heightened presence, hence enhancing the likelihood of normalization and the transmission of behavioral patterns through persistent repetition. Moreover, the quest for advantage confers cognitive validity upon influencers, enhancing their influence. In contrast, it demonstrates a moderate to high degree of sarcastic normalization, suggesting a relationship between certain behavioral effects and the attributes of entertainment content and current trends. The "brand as status" symbol signifies a substantial shift in value, demonstrating the transformation of consumption into a unique social symbolic domain, supported by content-oriented purchasing decisions. In the social context, the motivation to volunteer serves as a positive mobilizing force; yet, the indication of seasonality highlights a challenge to the sustainability of this force.

The table demonstrates a hierarchy in the intensity of value presence, with the consumer dimension being the most significant in the sample data.

Table (9): Table of supporting textual evidence (Exemplar Quotes)

Theme	Representative quote from the data	Interview number
Entertainment and trends	"A wave of imitation begins... for useless ideas."	8
Purchase decision	"I saw the product... I read the reviews... Then I ordered it."	3
Brand symbolism	"If someone sees a certain brand... they say this is rich."	3
Promoting solidarity	"Participating in campaigns such as tree planting... promotes a spirit of solidarity."	15

Social awareness	"I have come to see the importance of being a positive person."	3
------------------	---	---

The table of supporting textual evidence reveals that the results are based on genuine statements from participants, with the quotations illustrating that the influence of influencers encompasses multiple aspects. The expression "It initiates a wave of imitation... of superfluous ideas" highlights the rapid dissemination of trends and their influence on behavior via mimicry. A participant's statement, "I observed the product... I perused the comments... then I placed an order," exemplifies the direct impact of content on purchasing decisions, enabled via digital interaction.

The reference to "a certain brand... asserts this is affluent" incorporates the symbolic dimension of consumption as an indicator of social standing. In contrast, studies on participation in tree planting programs and the need to adopt a "positive persona" highlight the social dimension of impact, where content promotes a sense of unity and collective awareness. Thus, the table confirms that the observed value changes are not merely analytical assumptions, but are supported by genuine textual evidence from the study data.

Table(10): Distribution of codes by number of interviews

Code	Number of interviews (out of 15)	Percentage	Degree of presence
Intensive use	13	86.7	Very high
Search for benefit	11	73.3	High
Trend/imitation	10	66.7	High
Promoting respect	13	86.7	Very high
Sarcasm/mockery	4	26.7	Low–Medium
Purchase decision influenced	13	86.7	Very high
Brand = Status	6	40	Average
Volunteer work	13	86.7	Very high
Seasonal	4	26.7	Low–Medium

Table 10 reveals that most codes were prominently represented in the interviews, with notable usage, reinforcement of respect, influence on purchasing decisions, and volunteer work reaching 86.7%, indicating that the impact of influencers significantly affects behavioral, consumer, and social aspects simultaneously. The quest for advantage and trend copying demonstrated remarkably elevated rates (73.3% and 66.7%), highlighting the importance of cognitive and entertainment factors in shaping behavior. In contrast, sarcasm/mockery and seasonality codes appeared less frequently (26.7%), indicating that negative or unsustainable

influences are not the prevailing trend, although they remain among a subset of people. Thus, the findings confirm that digital influence is pervasive, demonstrating varying degrees of presence across multiple dimensions.

Table (11): Strength of each main axis according to coding density

Main axis	Total number of codings within the axis	Percentage of total coding %	Degree of strength
Exposure and motives for follow-up	34	39.1	Most influential
Consumer values and status symbols	19	21.8	High
Ethical and communicative values	17	19.5	Average–High
Social responsibility and belonging	17	19.5	Medium–High
Total	87	100	—

The axis strength table reveals that the axis of "exposure and motives for following" constituted the biggest proportion of coding cases (39.1%), indicating that the extent of use and the nature of the motives establish the foundational framework from which the subsequent value impacts emerge. The following axis is "consumer values," accounting for 21.8%, signifying the symbolic dimension of consumption within the academic framework.

The categories of "moral values" and "social responsibility" each recorded similar percentages (19.5%), indicating a relative balance between moral and social influences in student speech. These data confirm that the digital effect begins with exposure, gradually manifests in consumer behaviors, and finally includes ethical and social dimensions.

Results

The results revealed that 86.7% of respondents engaged in extensive use of social media platforms, indicating significant daily exposure to influencer content among the sample. This result corresponds with the tenets of Cultivation Theory, which asserts that continuous exposure to media content cultivates the formation of new social perspectives and norms among individuals. Heightened exposure is associated with an increased likelihood of values and behavioral patterns being transferred from the digital domain to social reality.

The ethical dimension indicated that "promoting respect" achieved a high score of 86.7%, meaning that a considerable portion of the content available to students transmits positive messages that uphold the ideals of discourse and behavioral discipline. Nevertheless, the presence of the "trend/imitation" signal (66.7%) concurrently indicates susceptibility to popular content, regardless of its positive or negative characteristics.

This disparity can be clarified using Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which posits that individuals acquire behaviors through observation and imitation, especially when the model (influencer) exhibits appeal or symbolic importance. Thus, the ethical consequences depend not only on the level of exposure but also on the quality of the model utilized.

Regarding consumption, "content-influenced purchasing decisions" accounted for a significant 86.7%, although "brand as an indicator of social status" attained 40%. The results imply a shift from functional consumption to symbolic consumption, where the commodity functions as a means for expressing identity and social affinity. This phenomenon can be clarified through symbolic interactionism, which asserts that individuals ascribe social meanings to objects based on interactions, along with the concept of "social persuasion" highlighted in digital marketing research, where experiences and feedback foster trust and impact purchasing decisions.

The results demonstrated that "volunteering" attained a participation rate of 86.7%, implying that influencers can elevate awareness of community initiatives. The "seasonality" indicator, at 26.7%, implies that this effect may be situational or context-dependent, aligning with the principles of Uses and Gratifications Theory, wherein individuals pursue immediate social, affiliative, or symbolic needs without forming lasting commitments.

The statistical data reveal that the influence of social influencers has a complex structure, categorized into three simultaneous pathways: ethical, consumerist, and social. The crucial factor in determining this influence appears to be the student's level of critical awareness, as indirectly suggested in various interviews through references to evaluating comments or verifying information before making a choice. The relationship between digital exposure and value transformation is not a direct causal connection; rather, it is an interactive relationship shaped by cognitive and societal influences.

This study confirms that social influencers serve as a new symbolic agent in shaping values within the university environment, with their influence heightened when three conditions coincide: exposure intensity, model attractiveness, and less critical evaluation. This requires the integration of media and digital literacy into university curricula to alleviate negative effects and improve positive results.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that substantial interaction with influencer content on social media platforms markedly affects the formation of value systems in university students. This corresponds with the results of other previous research that has demonstrated the increasing impact of digital information on shaping the social perspectives and behaviors of youth. The findings of this study suggest that influencer material can promote positive values, such as respect and civil conversation. This aligns with the findings of Ichsan et al., who demonstrated that

social media can facilitate the promotion of specific ethical standards among students, particularly when the content includes educational or awareness-raising topics. The current study's results indicate potential negative effects linked to the imitation of specific behavioral patterns associated with trends or mockery, demonstrating that the ethical implications of social media are multifaceted and largely influenced by the nature of the content consumed and the recipient's level of critical awareness.

The findings of the present study indicate that influencers significantly impact students' purchasing decisions, as a substantial number of participants reported that their consumption choices may be influenced by the products or personal experiences showcased by influencers. This result corresponds with the study by Maulidy et al., which showed that social media, especially influencer marketing, promotes consumption among university students and links certain products or brands to an aspirational social status.

This study reinforces the idea that digital consumption goes beyond basic utilitarian needs, gaining symbolic importance linked to social identity and alignment with particular lifestyles endorsed by influencers on various platforms.

The present study indicates that influencers can effectively elevate awareness of social and volunteer initiatives among students, including involvement in charitable or environmental campaigns. This aligns with Silva's (2021) findings, which assert that influencers' engagement in social responsibility content can bolster public perception of their credibility and authenticity, provided this content aligns with the influencer's expressed values.

The research indicated that alignment between social communications and the influencer's persona enhances followers' trust and amplifies their susceptibility to persuasion, whereas discord between rhetoric and actions undermines credibility. This finding aligns with the current study's conclusion that the influence of social media figures is mostly contingent upon students' perception of the authenticity of their words and the consistency of their online behavior.

This study is unique, despite similarities with prior research, as it provides a thorough qualitative analysis of the influence of social media personalities on the value systems of university students by examining the participants' experiences and viewpoints.

It incorporates three fundamental dimensions of influence: ethical, consumer, and societal, whereas most previous study has focused solely on one of these factors. This study enhances our comprehension of the value-based

impact of social influencers in the university context and affirms that this influence is determined by a complex interplay of content characteristics, exposure levels, and the recipient's critical awareness.

Table (12) Comparison Between the Current Study and Previous Studies

The study	Subject of the study	Methodology	Study sample	Key findings	Points of agreement with the current study	Points of Disagreement
Ichsan et al. (2024)	The impact of social media on students' moral values	Quantitative approach	University students	Social media has a significant impact on promoting certain moral values such as responsibility and respect.	Agrees with the current study in emphasizing that digital content contributes to shaping values among young people	Focused only on moral values without analyzing consumer and social dimensions
Maulidy et al. (2025)	The impact of social media on consumerism among university students	Qualitative approach	University students	Influencers and digital advertisements promote consumerism and link products to social status.	Consistent with the current study, in highlighting the influence of influencers on purchasing decisions and consumer values	Limited to the consumer dimension, while the current study addressed several value dimensions

Silva (2021)	Consumers' perception of influencers' participation in social responsibility through social media	Quantitative experimental approach	421 participants	The results showed that value alignment between influencers and social content increases the audience's perception of credibility and authenticity, while misalignment leads to decreased trust in influencers.	The current study agrees that influencer credibility plays an important role in the social and value influence of followers.	It focused on consumers' perception of influencers' social responsibility, while the current study focused on the transformation of the value system among university students.
The current study	The impact of exposure to social influencer content on the value system of university students	Qualitative approach (interviews and thematic analysis)	15 university students	The results revealed a multidimensional impact of influencers, including ethical, consumer, and social values, determined by the degree of critical awareness among students.	—	Provides an in-depth qualitative analysis of the impact of influencers on students' value systems

Conclusion

The research established that the impact of social influencer content on the social value system of university students is complex and varied, involving ethical, consumer, and social dimensions.

The results demonstrated that significant interaction with social media platforms fosters an environment conducive to the transmission of values and behavioral norms through observation, imitation, and normalization via repetition. In the realm of ethics, a dual trend has emerged: some information promotes principles of respect and civil discourse, while other content, based on trends or sarcasm, normalizes harmful behaviors among certain students.

Influencers are clearly transforming social status by linking it to brands and products, signifying a shift from functional consumption to symbolic consumption.

The results demonstrate that influencers can successfully include students in volunteer initiatives; however, this influence may depend on seasonal variables or particular contextual conditions.

Thus, social influencers have become pivotal symbolic agents in fostering value consciousness inside the university environment, with their influence dependent on the degree of exposure, the quality of information, and the recipient's level of critical awareness.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, the subsequent recommendations are proposed:

1. Suggestions at the educational and scholarly level

Incorporate media and digital literacy into university curricula to cultivate critical thinking abilities and enhance the analysis of digital content.

Conduct awareness workshops on digital persuasion techniques, indirect marketing, and the effects of social comparison.

Foster a culture of mindful consumerism among students via educational initiatives.

2. Social-Level Recommendations

Motivate local influencers to create content that advocates for ethical principles and social accountability.

Facilitate university volunteer programs to guarantee that the effects of digital engagement convert into enduring, practical applications.

3. Recommendations for Future Research

Execute extensive quantitative research to assess the causal relationship between exposure intensity and value transformation.

Analyze the effect of content creators based on content categories (religious, entertainment, commercial).

Examine the disparities in impact based on gender or academic major.

Bibliography List :

- Rui, V. "Social Values and Their Role in Society." *International Scholars Journals* 10, no. 2 (2022):3-4
- De Veirman, Marijke, Veroline Cauberghe, and Liselot Hudders. "Marketing through Instagram Influencers: The Impact of Number of Followers and Product Divergence on Brand Attitude." *International Journal of Advertising* 36, no. 5 (2017):1-2
- Sheth, Jagdish N., Bruce I. Newman, and Barbara L. Gross. "Why We Buy What We Buy: A Theory of Consumption Values." *Journal of Business Research* 22, no. 2 (1991):159–161
- García-González, Ángeles, Raquel Jiménez-Fontana y Pilar Azcárate. "Measurement Scale of Social Responsibility in the University Context." *Innovar* 29, no. 73 (2019):171–172.
- Katz, Elihu, Jay G. Blumler, and Michael Gurevitch. "Uses and Gratifications Research." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (1973): 512–518.
- Bouhali Hafida. "The Impact of Social Media Use on the Social Values of University Students." *Journal of Social Media Studies* 9, no. 3 (2025)
- Al-Abdullatif, A. M. "The Influence of Social Media on the Personal Values among Gen Z Students." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science* 9, no. 6 (2025):
- Moulahi, B., et al. "The Effect of Social Media Influencers on Teenagers' Behavior." *Frontiers in Psychology* 14 (2023).
- Mohsen Balqasim: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Social Studies: Theory and Practice, *Journal of Integration in Social and Mathematical Research*, Vol. 07, No. 01, Moulay Ismail University (Morocco), June 2023, pp. 101-102
- Maurice Angers, *Research Methodology in the Humanities and Practical Exercises*, translated by Bouzid Sahraoui, Kamal Boucherif, Saïd Sebaoun, Dar El Qasbah Publishing, Algeria, 2004, p. 298.
- Obeidat Zoufan, Abdelhak Kaid et al., *Scientific Research: Concept, Tools, and Methods*, Dar Al-Fikr Publishing, Amman, Jordan, 7th edition, 2001, p. 99.
- Ibid., p. 100
- Obeidat, Zoukan et al., op. cit., p. 100
- Muwafaq Al-Hamdani, Adnan Al-Jadri, et al., *Scientific Research Methods – Research Fundamentals*, Book 1, 1st edition, Al-Waraq Publishing, Distribution, and Printing, Amman, 2006, p. 123.
- Muhammad Walid Al-Batash, Farid Kamel Abu Zeina, *Scientific Research Methods – Research Design and Statistical Analysis*, 1st edition, Al-Masir Publishing, Distribution and Printing House, Amman, Jordan, 2007, pp. 96, 97.
- Saeed Saboun, Hafsa Jradi, op. cit., pp. 135, 136.
- Boualleg, Linda, and Nassira Brahma. "Methodological Techniques for Studying Social Representations." *Scientific Research Bulletins* 12, no. 2 (2024). p. 292.
- Ichsan, M., et al. (2024). The influence of social media use on students' moral values in the digital era. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 14(2), 45–58.
- Maulidy, A., et al. (2025). Social media and consumerism tendencies among university students. *International Journal of Communication and Media Studies*, 9(1), 73–88.
- Silva, L. E. (2021). Influence for change: Consumer perceptions of social media influencer engagement in social responsibility (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University). *BYU ScholarsArchive*.
- Bandura, Albert. *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977.
- Bandura, Albert. *Aggression: A Social Learning Analysis*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973.
- Bandura, Albert. "Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication." *Media Psychology* 3, no. 3 (2001): 265–299.
- Dellou, Fadil et al., *Foundations of Methodology in Social Sciences*, Dar al-Bahth Press, Constantine, 1999.