

# Chapter 14

## Bookstagrammers vs. BookTubers: A Comparative Study on Readers' Preferred Social Media Book Influencer

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### **ABSTRACT**

*As the Internet has become a part of many people's daily lives, it has led to the growth of a reading culture influenced by book bloggers on different social media platforms. This chapter identifies two social media platforms that the readers utilize to share about the books they have read. While readers have found their reading space on social media platforms, some have become book influencers. This chapter identifies two categories of prominent literary influencers i.e., Bookstagrammers and BookTubers. Since the readers follow book influencers to learn about the latest books and to read their reviews before making their purchase decision. This chapter aims to compare and analyse the prominent categories of book influencers focusing on knowing more about the preferred book influencers from the readers' point of view.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reviews are the honest opinions of users who have used the product or service in some capacity. Studies have demonstrated that Social Media (SM) has become a significant source of information and reviews for users to gain information about other customers' online ratings and opinions about the product; this helps users lower the risk associated with their choices and buy the products that match their need and expectation (Farzin et al., 2020, 2022; MajlesiRad & Haji pour Shoushtari, 2020). Since Publishers are now approaching Bookfluencers to market and promote their books online, it is important to know who

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do the readers prefer as their source of information on books when making their purchase decision. Hence, one of the main topics of this study is to know how reviews of books on different SM platforms impact the reader's purchase intention. In this study, we investigate this question within the context of book reviews of Bookfluencers.

With the evolution of information technology, numerous SM platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube are popular among internet users, including individuals and organizations. These technologies enable users to create content and communicate, connect, and share their thoughts and ideas with their network of people. (Cheng et al., 2020). Globally, there are an estimated 3.6 billion SM users, and by 2025, that number is expected to rise to about 4.41 billion (Jacobson & Harrison, 2022; Fernandes et al., 2022). According to the latest report by Statista (2023) in July, Facebook has the highest number of users (2989 million users), followed by YouTube (2527 million users), Instagram (2000 million users), WeChat (1319 million users) and TikTok (1218 million users). Initially, SM platforms were intended for user entertainment. Today, they have revolutionized the way information is circulated among users (Cinelli et al., 2021), considering how users interact in real-time or asynchronously with big or niche communities that gain value from user-generated content (UGC) and build a sense of connection with others (Wibowo et al., 2021).

In marketing, SM is a platform where people build their network and share information or sentiments. SM has transformed how firms interact, engage, and influence consumers. It enables firms and customers to connect better and understand their audience to build solid ties and determine customer referral behavior. However, people started using SM platforms to sell products and services over other marketplace platforms, and this suggests that, despite the advanced capabilities of the marketplace platform, when the right marketing content is shown to the customers on the SM platforms, it still entices individuals to buy products through SM. Therefore, this led to the emergence of Social Media Marketing (SMM) (Li et al., 2021). SMM is an extension of traditional and digital marketing communication tools that monitor, support, and stimulate consumer communications, collaborations, and interactions with the firm, its brands, and other customers. It also describes customers' perceptions of the company's various marketing efforts on the SM platform (Ebrahim, 2020; Yadav & Rahman, 2018). SMM is similar to word-of-mouth marketing, except it is more public and visible. Marketers embrace Word-of-Mouth (WOM) because they understand that consumer-driven messages are more successful than company-sponsored messages (Clark et al., 2017). Today, electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) is shared by consumers via product and service reviews on various online platforms and are usually expressed in the form of star ratings (1 to 5 stars) and open-ended review texts; these online reviews are the key reference information for consumers to confirm their purchase decision (Zuo & Gou, 2023).

Consumers often seek other's opinions before making their own purchase decisions. These opinions are based on the product experience that has made them form a particular perception of that product. When this experience is shared online, it takes the form of eWOM and plays a significant role in influencing the potential consumer's purchase behaviour (MajlesiRad & Haji pour Shoushtari, 2020). Bilal et al. (2022) observed that consumers usually seek recommendations from those with similar purchasing capabilities. Hence, one of the stimuli on eWOM and purchase intention is moderated by the social setup of the purchasing capacity of the consumers. Peña-García et al. (2020) suggested that factors like Ease of Use (EOU) also impact impulse buying decisions of consumers online. If consumers perceive online shopping as effortless, they are more prone to impulse buying behaviour and spend less time thinking about what and where to purchase. Therefore, the possibility of impulse buying behaviour increases, leading to higher chances of online purchase intention. While some factors motivate online purchases,

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