

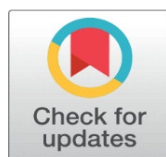
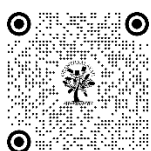
EVOLUTION OF BRAND IMAGE IN THE DIGITAL ERA: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND INFLUENCER MARKETING

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to identify the changes in brand image subject to social media and influencer marketing. Through the bibliometric analysis of the academic works, the present study outlines the recurrent themes, trends, and co-authorship collaboration networks that have characterized the brand image literature within the digital marketing environment.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The bibliometric analysis with regard to publications from 1991 till 2023 has been developed. Referring to tools namely biblioshiny (RStudio) and VOS viewer, 620 documents were reviewed with equal subdivision in journals, books and conference papers respectively with concentration on keywords, authors' cooperation and institutes.

Findings: The work shows increased popularity of the efforts geared towards evaluating brand image, facilitated by the development of the social media and influencer marketing concept. Average number of countries that have been involved in the research and high citation rates for these topics prove the significance of these topics to the researchers. Some of the relevant future trend areas are pointed out with reference to the topics like application of the AI in the sphere of marketing and analysis of consumers' behavior.

Originality/Value: This paper specifically provides a detailed bibliometric analysis of brand image and specifically how the digital age has influenced this research area through social media and influencer marketing. It points at major works, authors and institutions, which makes it useful for researcher and practitioners, who is interested in the development of the concept of branding in the new media context.

Keywords: Brand Image, Digital Era, Social Media, Influencer Marketing



1. INTRODUCTION

Currently brand image is a relevant factor to the modern company especially when it is trying to reach the consumer through the various channels that are available (Chen & Xie, 2008). This is unlike the traditional media techniques where brand communication was more or less a one-way affair, the social media has broken the barrier and allows the consumers to engage the brand hence making it more of an end-to-end affair (Sajid, 2016). Therefore, today's consumers through social media such as Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok have the ability to determine how brands are perceived by even larger audiences. The real-time feedback generated through digital media has made it challenging for the brands to adopt proactively strategies managing their image (Watanabe, Yan, & Soebbing, 2016). At the same time, the new form of marketing this year popular among brands and companies, namely influencer marketing (Lou & Yuan, 2019), only add

to the topic of brand image management. Becoming key players facilitating consumers' brand perception, influencers – individuals, who have accumulated substantial trust and credibility among their audiences (de Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Compared to the conventional celebrity endorsements, influencers work in smaller target segments and interact with customers in a much more individualized manner (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Consequently, their endorsements are construed as more valid by the consumers since they are a personal validated endorsement (Chen and Huang, 2014). The constant emergence of new forms of these technologies has consequently created a significant change in the way these brands deal with brand image (Swaminathan et al., 2020). Thus, this shift is clearly beneficial but at the same time it is also risky for brands. On one hand social media enables an organization to communicate with the consumers in a direct and more frequent manner (Toubia and Stephen, 2013). On the other hand, these platforms are viral and this makes negative comments or poor brand choices to circulate within the market within the shortest time possible hence compromising the image of a brand (Hambrick, 2017). For that reason, identifying the process of the brand image, in particular, substantially influenced by social media in the digital context and influencer marketing specifically, is significant for both researchers and practitioners (Pfahl, Kreutzer, & Maleski, 2012).

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Change in the marketing environment especially with the use of social media has greatly influenced the way firms deal with the image of their brands (Sajid, 2016). Earlier, enterprises including their brands used one-way prompt and look-like tools like television, radio and print media placing advertisements to immerse the image of the brand amongst the audience (Chen and Xie, 2008). However, the introduction of social media platforms can be viewed in the sense that, it has taken power from marketer's hands and placed in consumers hands (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This has created further challenges to the process of managing brand image because brand are not only restricted to communicating with the consumer but also listening to him/her (Lou and Yuan, 2019). Social media brings innovation by providing a voice to the consumers, via blogging, posting or tweeting, not only does the consumer consume the brand messages sent to them but they also generate content in relation to their brand consumed (Filo, Lock, & Karg, 2015). This has brought about the use of user generated content strongly impacting the general public's perception of a brand (Swaminathan et al., 2020). For example, one negative comment on Twitter or Instagram from an unhappy customer may generate great interest within a short span of time, and ruin a brand permanently (Hambrick, 2017). Besides the preceding changes, the other significant development that has characterized brand communication is influencer marketing as a major tactic in reaching specific and particular niches (Chen & Huang, 2014). Influencers occupy a rather authoritative position in the respective communities where they are active; therefore, any endorsements they give will go a long way in motivating their followers to act in a certain way (de Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Through relationship building, the influencers, therefore, prove handy for developing brands that are closer to the consumer and possess a human touch (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). As opposed to regular celebrities who advertise various products, mostly, influencers are known to commit to particular sectors, which makes their advertisements more believable (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

2.1. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The logic used to justify such efforts relates to the changes that have occurred in the brand image during the digital age (Chen and Xie, 2008). It has been noted that with the increased and constant changes in the usage of digital platforms brands used need to change the strategies used to keep the brand image intact (Toubia & Stephen, 2013). An active shift of people towards social media platforms combined with a relatively recent rise of influencer marketing has led to the appearance of new directions in studying brand image, specifically in understanding how it forms, evolves, and is negotiated in real-time by consumers (Swaminathan et al., 2020).

One of the main reasons is the growing influence of influencers over the customers' perception. As have been observed, influencers are some of the key players in the digital marketing environment, albeit often acting as the connecting link between brands and customers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The purpose of this research is to look specifically at the impact that influencer marketing has on the brand image and how brands can optimally select, cooperate with, and manage influencers to optimize the image of their brand (Lou & Yuan, 2019). This research seeking to establish the extent to which influencers contribute towards brand image seeks to add knowledge on how brands can utilize such relationships in an effort to foster better customer relationships as posited by Chen and Huang (2014).

The second justification for this study is the fact that information goes round within no moments when shared through the social media platforms (Hambrick, 2017). Unlike the conventional media where Brand messages can be planned and released at the time when the management feels it is most appropriate, social media is flooded with instant and often unpredictable comments from the consumers. Information propagates at this speed and the difference between making or breaking a brand image is pegged on the ability of brands to address consumer sentiment (Sajid, 2016). Hence, it becomes critical for the brands who desire to stay relevant in this connected world to make understanding of the dynamics of social media and influencer marketing (Pfahl, Kreutzer, & Maleski, 2012).

This current research will also aim at finding out the developments in the academic research work concerning the change by analyzing the trends, authors, and publications on the brand image and digital marketing area (Swaminathan et al., 2020). Through bibliometric analysis, the research will seek to offer a systematic review of brand image within the social media and influencer marketing context, map the scholarship within this topic and chart future research avenues (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Hence, the justification for this study is premised on the need to establish the manner in which brand image is developing due to current technological breakthroughs and ever increasing influence of the new media (Chen & Xie, 2008). As this research seeks to answer the research questions that stem from the relationship between social media, influencer marketing, and brand image, the findings will be relevant to the scholars and practitioners in branding management in the digital era envisioned by Toubia and Stephen (2013).

Research Questions

- 1) What are the effects of the social media change on the brand image investigation in the digitalization age?
- 2) Influencers and their personalities, do academic articles completed over the last few years offer any insights on this subject; Most recently, what part do the influencers play regarding brand perceptions?
- 3) Which authors, schools of thought and institutions creates the most contributions to the field of brand image?
- 4) What kind of trends are seen in the brand image, social media, and influencer marketing paradigm?

3. METHODOLOGY

The literature search method applied in this study focuses on a bibliometric analysis using the database that exists in between 1991 and 2023. Based on the findings, the concept of brand image is the development of the digital generation that has incorporated social media and influencers' marketing strategies. A total of 620 documents were examined comprised of journal articles, books, book chapters and conference papers. The data collected from 418 sources were helpful in understanding several disciplines of this particular research taxonomy. It was exhibited that with an annual growth rate of 15, the amount of documents was increasing. It revealed that the most of them, 69% of the documents were published in journals, and the overall average age of the documents was 4.98 years. In total 24 papers got the average score. The current average is 26 a sure show of citation impact within the field. The dataset also consisted of the general review of 28,698 references. The study applied sophisticated bibliometric tools such as biblioshiny (RStudio) and VOSviewer that allows for the fine splits of documents into the different areas of analysis especially on the part of authors and collaboration. A total of 1,646 authors participated in the research and out of 94 documents 17 were single authored. Altogether, on average, there was 2. Mean co-authorship per document was observed to be 96 which shows that researchers collaborate a lot in writing documents. Furthermore, 20.43.3% of the documents had at least one author from another country, which is evidence that the work being done in this field is conducted as an international collaboration. With regards the types of documents, 421 were articles, 13 books, 71 was for book chapters, and 93 for conference papers. Other types of documents comprised 7 conference reviews, 1 note, 12 review and 2 short surveys. Conducting the bibliometric analysis allowed the study to map the field of research, analyze the most frequent KeyWords Plus (1,312) as well as the most Author's Keywords (1,639) and assess the trends over time. Features such as social media use, influencers and branding in general were especially highlighted. This approach offers a coherent framework for the appearance of these research areas, defines main collaborators, and reveals the source works inspiring ongoing debates on this dynamic field.

4. RESULTS

4.1. BIBLIOMETRIC DATA

The bibliometric analysis gives general information about brand image studies, especially in the age of digitalization, social networks, and influencer marketing during 32 years (1991–2023). This is based on 620 documents sourced from 418 outlets comprising of journals, books and conference papers. The growth rate of fifteen percent annually. 69% we see the growth of interest in such topics among scholars. In order to estimate the mean value of the displayed documents' age, based on the graphic above one has to: The average age of the documents, 4.98 years, which implies that the field is relatively young and has been publishing several papers which are being cited as we shall see with the average of 24 citations. 26 citations per document. Altogether, these documents use a massive number of sources, 28,698; therefore, it can be noted that this area is extensive and well-developed. The method of the analysis also includes discussing the kinds of documents and authors in the corpus of this kind of work. 1,646 authors were identified in the dataset, which isn't surprising; however, 95 of these documents are single-authored. However, the mean of co-authors per document (2.96) suggest that the researcher work closely in undertaking collaborative research with 20.48% of the documents with international co-authorship the investigations in the chosen field are international.

Table 1 Bibliometric Data

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1991:2023
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	418
Documents	620
Annual Growth Rate %	15.69
Document Average Age	4.98
Average citations per doc	24.26
References	28698
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1312
Author's Keywords (DE)	1639
AUTHORS	
Authors	1646
Authors of single-authored docs	94
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	95
Co-Authors per Doc	2.96
International co-authorships %	20.48
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	421
book	13
book chapter	71
conference paper	93
conference review	7
note	1

review	12
short survey	2

This table can be viewed as a quantitative scanshot of the research context referring to brand image, as it gives the idea not only of the kind of documents included, but also of the collaborations, the citation profiles and the rising academic attention to the topic. From the presented document types, articles are most dominant with the count of 421; in other words, the journal serves as the primary platform for scholarly conversations on brand image, social media, and influencer marketing.

4.2. DOCUMENT TYPES

In the Figure 1 above, we also get a clear segregation of the different types of documents that were used for the bibliometric analysis from Scopus, as depicted by the pie chart labeled Documents by Type. This chart helps in the establishment of the distribution of the research outputs by document categories.

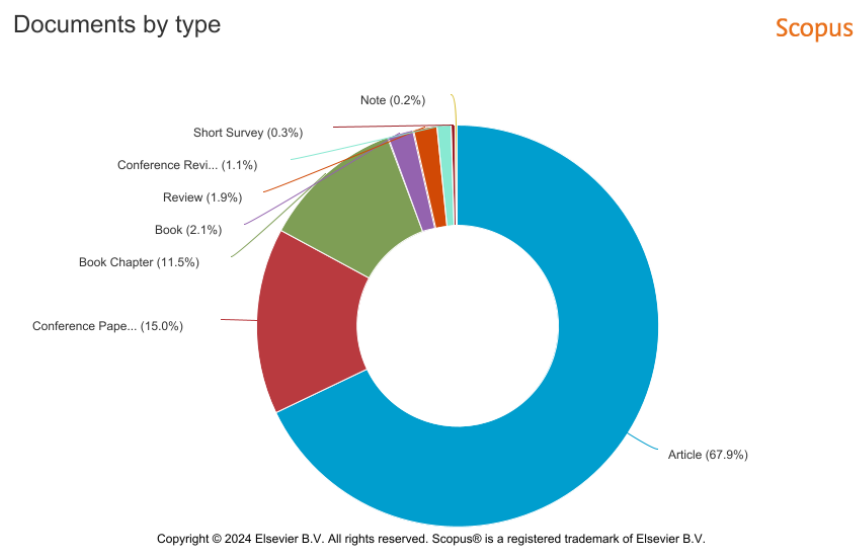


Fig. 1 Document Types

This, making up 69 % of the chart, is the largest segment of the chart suggesting that the concept of the driver's presence is a rather flexible one. In particular, the study identified shows that 1% of the research is in form of articles, this evidence supports the fact that most of the research that has been undertaken in this area has been in form of articles. Following this, books form 14 percent of the adverts that were analyzed in the course of this study. The average is 3 percent of the amount of the words comprising the works – the percentage of the words identified as abstract works reflects a rather large share of more extensive and detailed works. Fourth one is more diversity and students appear in 8 book chapters. 2% which in terms refers to donations in terms of volume, which may include sections in edited volumes. Most and least final works: Depending on the degree of risk aversion, the finality of works based on perceived risk by authors Mine a still relatively high at 37% while conference papers, which are less final or experimental, make up only 3%. 5% of the documents. Reviews, at 4. The term 4% is therefore mean a collection of studies that offer review and discussion of the current research literature on special themes. Other document type is even less frequent – editorials 0. 2%, retracted documents 0. 1%, and notes 0. 1% that can hardly be met. However, this dispersion explains the specific trends in the evolution of the scholarly communication, particularly, the emphasis on the article as the leading form of disseminating the results of research in this particular field. It also reveals that the type of document is not limited to books and book chapters but there are many other restricted form of documents to conference papers, review and editorial also. That there are retracted documents even if in small quantity is proof that the process of producing academic research is progressive and has self-correcting features.

4.3. AVERAGE CITATIONS PER YEAR

The overall number of documents being published has been continually increasing, corresponding to unstable, though mostly growing, citation rates per document. It has been seen that after the year 2010, there has been an increase in terms of publication per year rates as well as average citations per year rates, which is clearly seen from the year 2015 onwards. However, this trend underlines the increase of concern and awareness of the subjects related to those publications. Table 2 presents the yearly citation data in terms of Individual articles, thereby illustrating how the research impact may fluctuate from year to year, there is for instance a marked increase in 2011 with an average citation per article of 9.68.

Table 2: Average Citations Per Year

Year	MeanTCperArt	N	MeanTCperYear	CitableYears
1991	19.00	1	0.56	34
1999	42.00	2	1.62	26
2001	9.00	1	0.38	24
2002	17.00	1	0.74	23
2004	9.00	1	0.43	21
2005	31.50	2	1.57	20
2006	7.50	4	0.39	19
2007	76.00	1	4.22	18
2008	10.00	3	0.59	17
2009	7.00	1	0.44	16
2010	29.83	6	1.99	15
2011	135.57	7	9.68	14
2012	76.67	15	5.90	13
2013	12.86	14	1.07	12
2014	52.35	17	4.76	11
2015	62.73	22	6.27	10
2016	49.91	33	5.55	9
2017	20.04	27	2.50	8
2018	39.73	41	5.68	7
2019	19.06	63	3.18	6
2020	28.51	90	5.70	5
2021	15.39	69	3.85	4
2022	10.22	93	3.41	3
2023	3.55	106	1.77	2

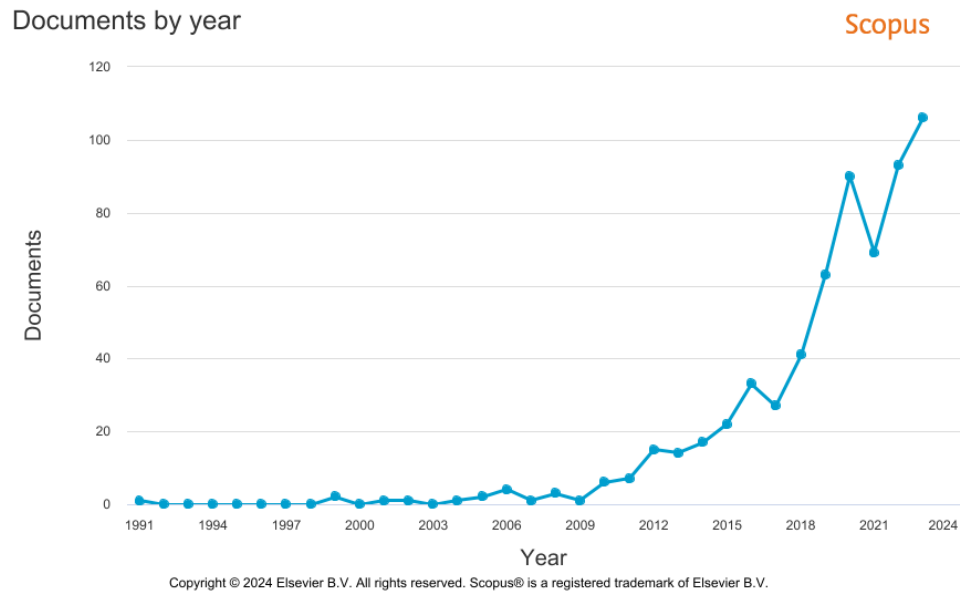


Fig. 2 Average Citations Per Year

The table 2 illustrates the MeanTCperArt also known as the Mean number of citations per article and follows the trend over the period of years. It shows that there is a large disparity in outcome terms of citation of articles and documents done where years like 2011 and 2012 especially have been productive years with averages of 9.68 and 5.90 citations per year, respectively. They used a total of 2180 peer-reviewed articles in their studies, the article database was retrieved from science direct with an average of 90 citations per year, respectively. This implies that articles that were produced in these years were received warmly in the academic circles. Hence, it is expected to observe a decrease of average citations per article in more recent years, as 2021 and 2023 in this case. Anticipating that there would be more citation in later years and less in the early years, the pattern of citation per year also indicates the academic trends or shift in the academic community interests or the shifting concern in research papers over the years.

4.4. MOST RELEVANT AFFILIATIONS

Data relating with the most relevant affiliations for total number of articles published has been shown in table 3 along with table 3 in form of figure 3. This reveals that USC, BNU and Islamic Azad University are prominent contributors that showcased the important function they play in terms of research production. These institutions have also shown high output of publications that include research papers, collaboration and their contribution in the various fields.

Table 3: Most Relevant Affiliations

Affiliation	Articles
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA	22
BINA NUSANTARA UNIVERSITY	17
ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY	11
UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE	11
NOTREPORTED	10
UNIVERSITAS PENDIDIKAN INDONESIA	10
INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS TRISAKTI	9
QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY	9
BINUS ONLINE LEARNING BINA NUSANTARA UNIVERSITY	8
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY	8

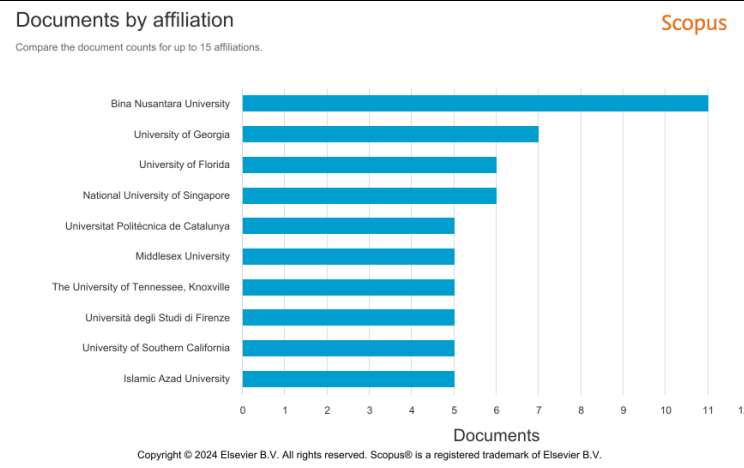


Fig. 3 Most Relevant Affiliations

Among them, University of Southern California is ahead of other universities with 22 articles while Bina Nusantara University with the second order of 17. Other institutes include, Islamic Azad University and University of Alicante with 11 articles each. It is especially notable to notice amnia such as Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia & the Institute of Transportation and Logistics Trisakti which are still rapidly progressing as research-oriented institutions from Indonesia. This is expected, but the presence of the “Not Reported” affiliations in the 10 articles supplements the ideas of the underreported research outputs, meaning that several affiliation may not be credited to specific organizations comprehensively. Moreover, cooperating institutions that include BINUS Online Learning which is part of Bina Nusantara University as well as Queensland University of Technology bring about a diversified context for research enrichment with an international focus on the participation in academic research. Thus, it is seen that today’s academic research is collaborative and involves broad institutions from different regions.

4.5. MOST RELEVANT AUTHORS

It is however important to note that the authors that are most closely associated with the contemporary emergence of knowledge within the given dataset is presented in figure 4. Some of the leading authors include T. S. Chua and P. Foroudi, both of which contributed 5 papers to the body of knowledge. This chart has underlined the leading figures that continue to advance knowledge in their subject areas. They are being consistently involved in academic publications, which shows that they have been actively participating in research agenda as experts and leaders in ongoing research areas.

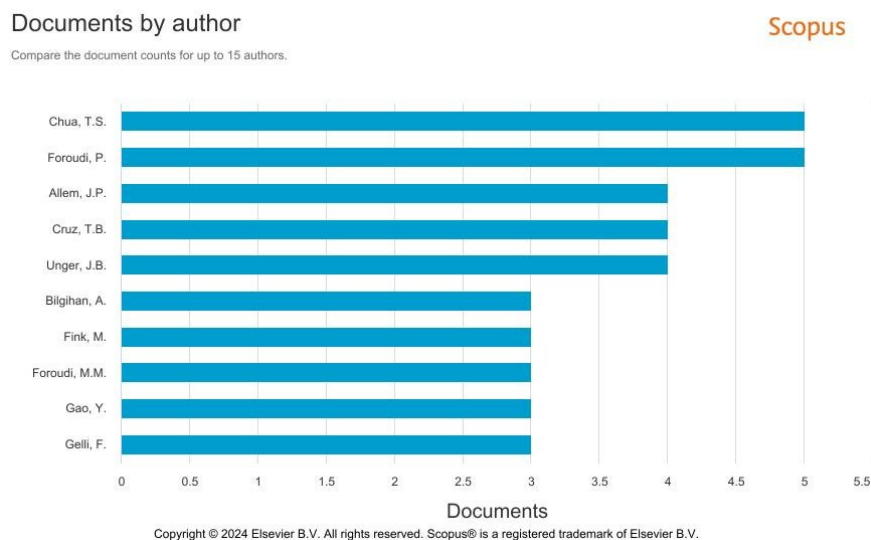


Fig. 4 Most Relevant Authors

Self-generated content analysis of the authors' productivity reveals that T. S. Chua and P. Foroudi with 5 articles each are the leading authors emphasizing their strong commitment towards development of theoretical research. Next up are J. P. Allem and T. B. Cruz both of which have authored 4 articles. The engagement of these authors also proves the relevance of their studies productive activity together with the total number of published and awarded articles. There are also other authors, who have published from 3 to 4 documents: J. B. Unger, A. , Blindigan, and M. Fink. Moreover, authors such as M. M. Foroudi and Y. Gao also contributed to development of the field with 3 publications each and reveal that many contributors are currently actively working in this sphere. Many authors' participation proves the existence of the researchers' network connecting the diverse studies, topics, and institutions that advance the development of the knowledge in the given fields.

4.6. DOCUMENTS BY COUNTRY

Table 4 and figure 5 shows the productive countries in terms of number of documents and average citations. The USA dominates with over hundred documents and TC of 2483 and this is followed by UK with TC of 289. Next are India and United Kingdom that have also been contributing their efforts in the global research and development. The table further goes ahead to indicate that while countries like France, Switzerland and Hong Kong have fewer articles, the number of citations per article in higher signifying that the work done by researchers in these countries will have a higher impact.

Table 4: Documents by Country

Country	TC	Average Article Citations
USA	2483	31.80
FRANCE	1480	211.40
UNITED KINGDOM	1162	38.70
CHINA	784	21.20
SPAIN	676	26.00
INDIA	635	20.50
AUSTRALIA	612	27.80
KOREA	533	41.00
SWITZERLAND	443	110.80
HONG KONG	396	99.00

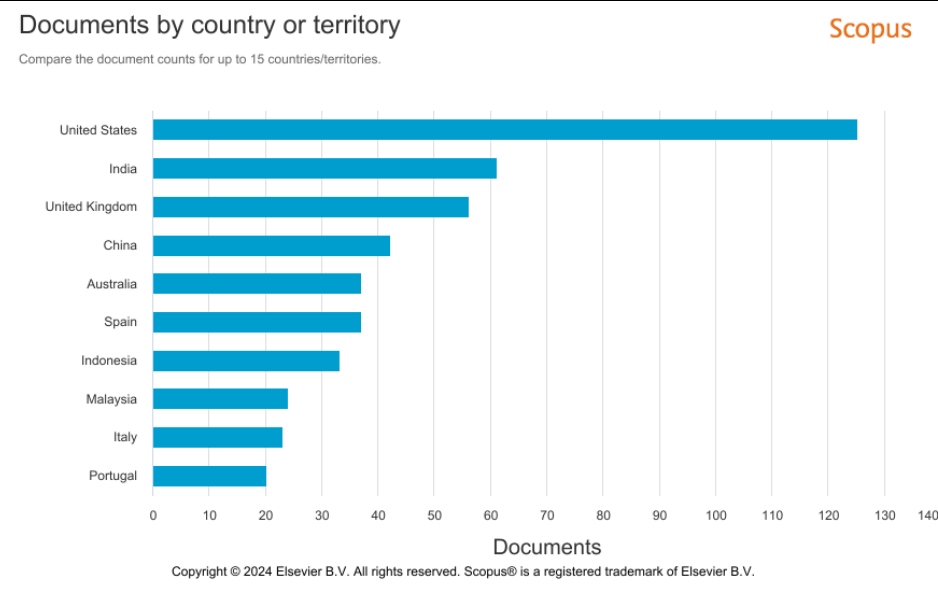


Fig. 5 Documents by Country

As evident with the number of documents published, the United States is run is clearly at the forefront with over one hundred ones and a total of 2483 citations. Both India and the United Kingdom has submitted effectively by contributing around 60 to 70 articles, but if we talk about average citation per article both are different. For example, the United Kingdom has 38 days of rain on average. On average there were 7 citations per article, which was much less than India's 20. 5, comparing the distinct differences in research papers influence or impact. That is why France appears less frequently with a much higher number of average citations per publication, 211. 4 which shows that, though the volume of research conducted in French language is low but it is highly cited indicating that it has a high impact.

4.7. DOCUMENTS BY FUNDING SPONSOR

Figure 6 describes the major funding agencies supporting published work showing a positive correlation between funding agencies and published studies. A significant number of the publications are sponsored by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia can sponsoring up to seven research publications. This goes to demonstrate the role funding organizations play in the advancement of science and in the scholarly publication. With the help of the given graph, it will possible to acknowledge the role of different national and international agencies in various research areas.

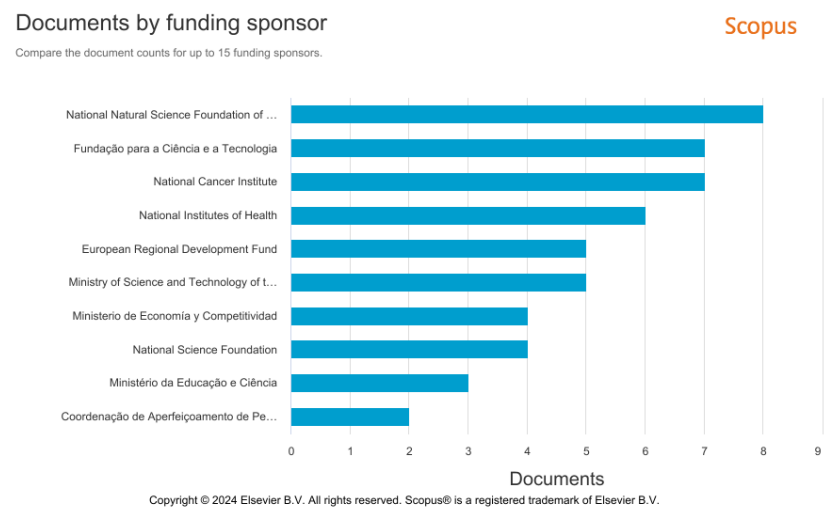


Fig. 6: Documents by Funding Sponsor

The data also gives information on several funding sponsor most of which contributed to a significant number of publication. The National Natural Science Foundation of China contributes the most, supporting 7 documents, proving the foundation's dedication for developing science and technologies in China. In the same way, another important funding body the Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, which operates in Portugal accorded support to 7 documents proving their significant role in the funding of science in Europe. Other notable sponsors include the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health both from United States each of which supports, 6 publications which major on health issues. These two organizations are critical in pushing biomedical as well as cancer research forward. This fund with a wider focus supported 5 documents presenting how it helps in encouraging co-operation in research across Europe. Moreover, organizations like Ministry of Science and Technology of Thailand and Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (Spain) have funded several publications indicating the government's interest to promote research for enhancing the nation's capability. The engagement of both foreign development funds and the national research institutions confirms the global character of scientific cooperation and the importance of providing sufficient funding for research to produce meaningful scientific productivity

4.8. DOCUMENTS PER YEAR BY SOURCE

Figure 7 and Table 5 show the annual publishing rate of different number of documents in the identified academic sources and reflects the importance and the role of some specific journals and proceedings. The "Developments in Marketing Science: There are 20 articles belonging to the category "Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science," 13 belongs to the "Sustainability (Switzerland)" Journal, and 11 belongs to the "Journal of Business Research." This data shows that the various academic sources that is used today in publishing and sharing researches in various fields such as marketing, sustainability and business among others, the frequent used sources for the past years.

Table 5: Documents per year by Source

Sources	Articles
DEVELOPMENTS IN MARKETING SCIENCE: PROCEEDINGS OF THE ACADEMY OF MARKETING SCIENCE	20
SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND)	13
JOURNAL OF BUSINESS RESEARCH	11
JOURNAL OF PRODUCT AND BRAND MANAGEMENT	9
JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN INTERACTIVE MARKETING	9
SPRINGER PROCEEDINGS IN BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS	9
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DATA AND NETWORK SCIENCE	8
EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF MARKETING	6
JOURNAL OF GLOBAL FASHION MARKETING	6
LECTURE NOTES IN COMPUTER SCIENCE (INCLUDING SUBSERIES LECTURE NOTES IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LECTURE NOTES IN BIOINFORMATICS)	6

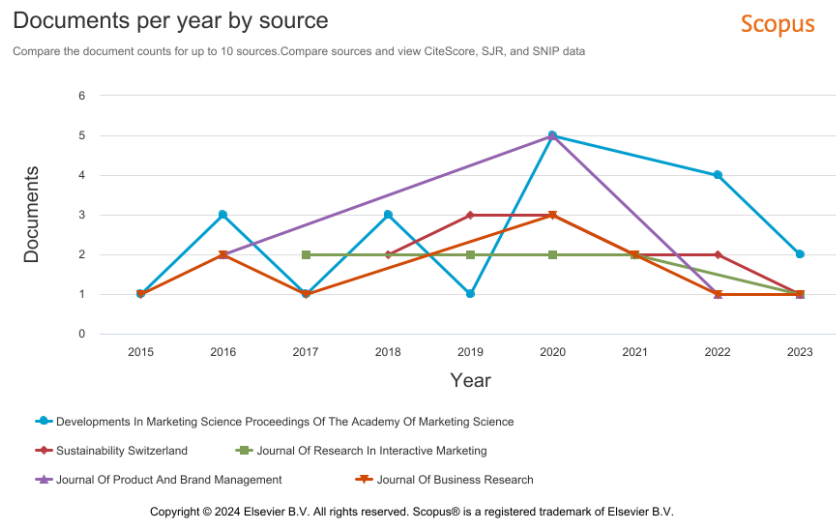


Fig. 7: Documents per year by Source

The chart and table represent the number of documents which have been published per year by different academic sources from 2015 to 2023. The *Developments in Marketing Science: Published by the Academy of Marketing Science* has ranked high in the number of documents as has been depicted in the table above with the publication stand at its record high 5 in both the year 2020 and 2022. Such a steady contribution further re-affirms its core position within the marketing research fraternity as a platform for researcher to publicize and disseminate research findings for the development of the discipline. Conversely, the percentage of contribution of *Sustainability (Switzerland)* gradually increases from the pre-2015 era up to 2% around 2018 and 2020 showing 4 publications highlighting that there is a growing interest in the certain sustainability topics in recent years. This is in accord with current trends towards sustainable approaches at both the university level and in industry for research. Two more notable journal publications are *Journal of Business research* and *Journal of Product and Brand Management* which also shows strong research contributions steady with their productions. These publications have turned into necessities for business and marketing scholars and shown a lot of potential that can help in enhancing knowledge in both fields. However, the *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing* has a constant annual number of publications as well as *Springer Proceedings in Business and Economics* also serves as an added contribution to the academic conversation in their respective disciplines. Other sources such as *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, *European Journal of Marketing*, and *Lecture Notes in Computer Science* also submitted regular contributions but infrequently. These are sources which represent specific areas of study however are significant in their fields of operation. It also raises awareness concerning the major sources of academic research while also pointing out the variation in document production which can also be used in identifying new fields or concerns within the most active academic society.

4.9. DOCUMENTS ANNUALLY

Table 6 show the yearly trend of documents published for the year 1991 to the year the data was retrieved. This very limited activity is demonstrated in terms of published articles during the first years, including only one document in the year 1991 and two in the year 1999. This can be well explained by the low levels of participation or research interest of the identified subject fields in the given areas during the early 1990s. But this laid a groundwork for what appears to be a trend of increased attention in the following years, which could be surmised from other numbers mentioned in this data above. Overall, it would be safe to say that these are early years of publication and form the groundwork of a growing number of works done in this area.

Table 6. Documents Annually

Year	Articles
1991	1
1992	0
1993	0

1994	0
1995	0
1996	0
1997	0
1998	0
1999	2
2000	0

This is revealed in the data presented in Table 6 showing that during the initial years, lesser than 100 articles were published per year and this increased slightly with slight improvement in the 1990s. More concretely, only one document appeared in 1991, two documents in 1999, and several other years in between did not yield any document. This signifies inadequate progress in research interest in the field of study or scarcity of data in the period under study. This slow start might be attributed to several factors for instance the buildup of research frameworks, changes in academic focus among others or the formation of the specific sub-discipline. $C = 60$; While there were literally no publications in the mid-to-late nineties, the analysis of later years' data shows a sharp increase in the number of publications. The rise from the year 2015 as exhibited by earlier figures might have been as a result of increased awareness of the developments in these subjects as they became more prominent in the academic and profession arena.

4.10. SERVICE MAPPING

In the service mapping section, a clear network analysis of the different focuses of the academic research in the areas of social media, influencer marketing, and collaborative research by different institutions and across different countries is presented. It provides a condensed view on the citation relationships between the identified themes, authors, institutions, and countries based on citations, co-authorship and document coupling. Each cluster is related to a particular domain of the comprehensive research area, pointing out the works which have a significant impact, the researchers who conducted them, and the interdisciplinarity of the knowledge exchange. Studying these drawings, the person will be able to comprehend various connections between corresponding academic contributions, the processes, which define some works as the key ones within specific scientific fields, and the ways global collaboration defines the further progress of such important areas as social media, digital marketing, and consumer behavior. These graphic illustrations offer the summary of trends in the evolution of the investigated fields of study and the major players who participate in the formation of academic agenda.

Cluster I: Network Analysis of Social Media Research Themes

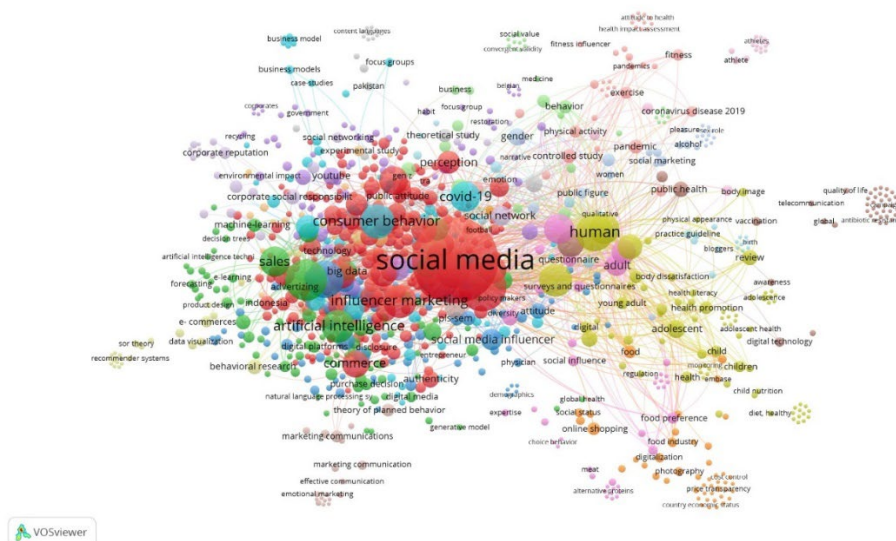


Fig. 8: Social Media Network and Related Topics

helps in visualizing the key players and influential works in influencing marketing research, and therefore helps one to understand how academic endeavor in this field is progressing.

Cluster II: Inter-Institutional Academic Collaboration

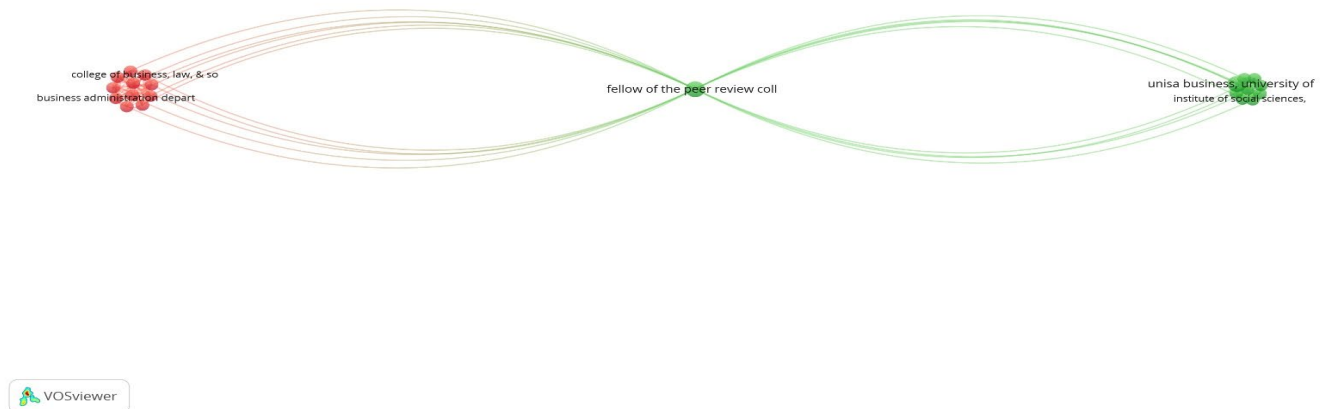


Fig. 10: Collaboration Between Institutions

The following diagram shows how universities are arranged in two main groups, but are interconnected with a node, recognized as 'Fellow of the Review Call.' The left red cluster includes such institutions as the College of Business and Economics, the more close co-authorships or joint research collaborations between participating institutions are shown. It is for this reason that this clustering suggests that the journals are clustered according to certain themes within business and economics. On the other hand, the right green cluster has got institutions like Unitec Business Institute that forms another collaborative network of institutions. The two groups are a part of the social network but situate in different areas from the red cluster, yet, they share an inter connection through the node meaning that there is collaborative activity between the institutions. With help of this visualization, it is possible to get a clear understanding of how institutions interconnect inside particular areas of focus, some of them can be seen as core player that connect wider network of actors regardless of their location or thematic interest. This is illustrated from the graph where different scientific relationships are depicted, and the special emphasis is given to show the institutions with a lot of academic connections and the one that appear to be central to shaping the academic disciplines in their subject specialty.

Cluster IV: Researcher Collaboration in Academic Publications

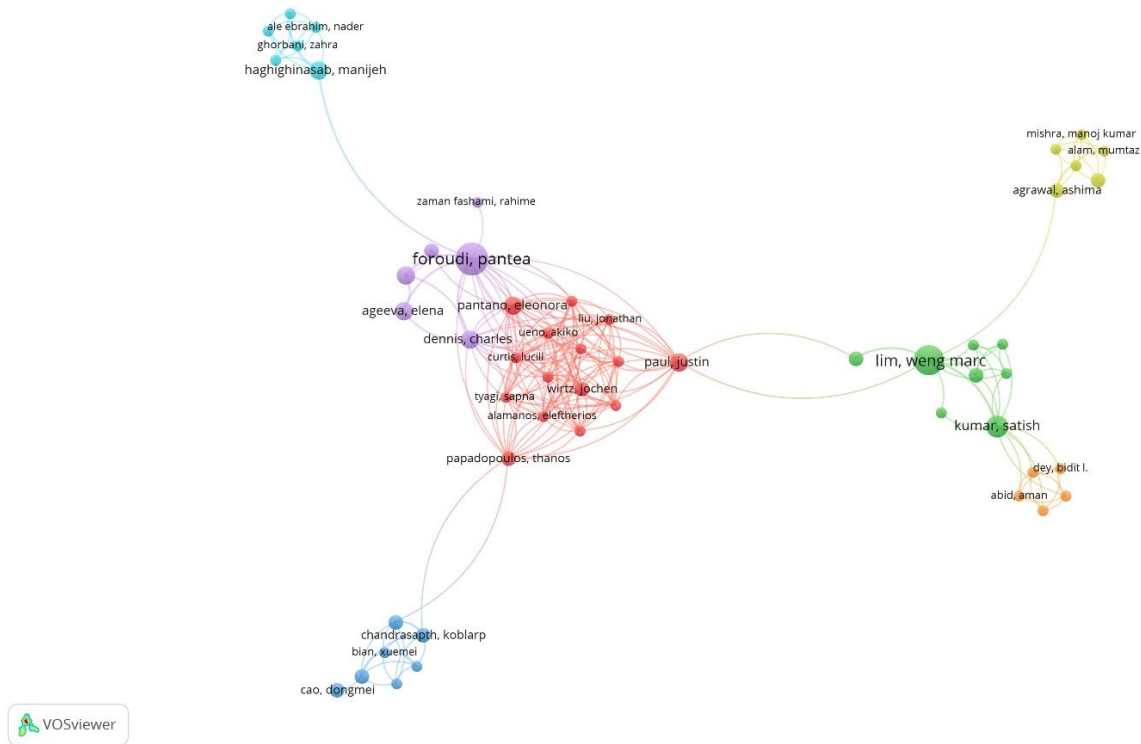


Fig. 11: Researcher Collaboration Network

The information depicted here is the co-authorship network of researchers who publish articles often in collaboration with each other. In the middle of the graph in the largest red form is the cluster of a large number of researchers who closely interact with follow researchers. Apparently, there's a high co-authorship density within this cluster: majority of the scholars in this cluster are either co-authors each to other or they share the same themes and interests which hint at the likelihood of them working on related subjects or projects. Yet the purple and blue circles indicate that the researchers operate in their own networks but this group is peripheral to the red cluster of researchers. Such researchers may be conducting research in less general or more specific areas, and hence, have a smaller, but not as extensive network of cooperation. Also, the green and yellow clusters represent different groups of researchers and individual networks that are connected and collaborate on specific, unique, and rather diverse topics. The relationships between these different clusters show that the scientific output is heterogeneous and focuses on certain research teams or groups while certain researchers act as brokers who connect these different networks. All in all, this graph is useful in providing information concerning the connection among researchers within an academic institution, the significance of cooperation in progressing research, and the creation of the research teams with the goal of making further developments in certain area of study.

Cluster V: Influential Works in Influencer Marketing Research

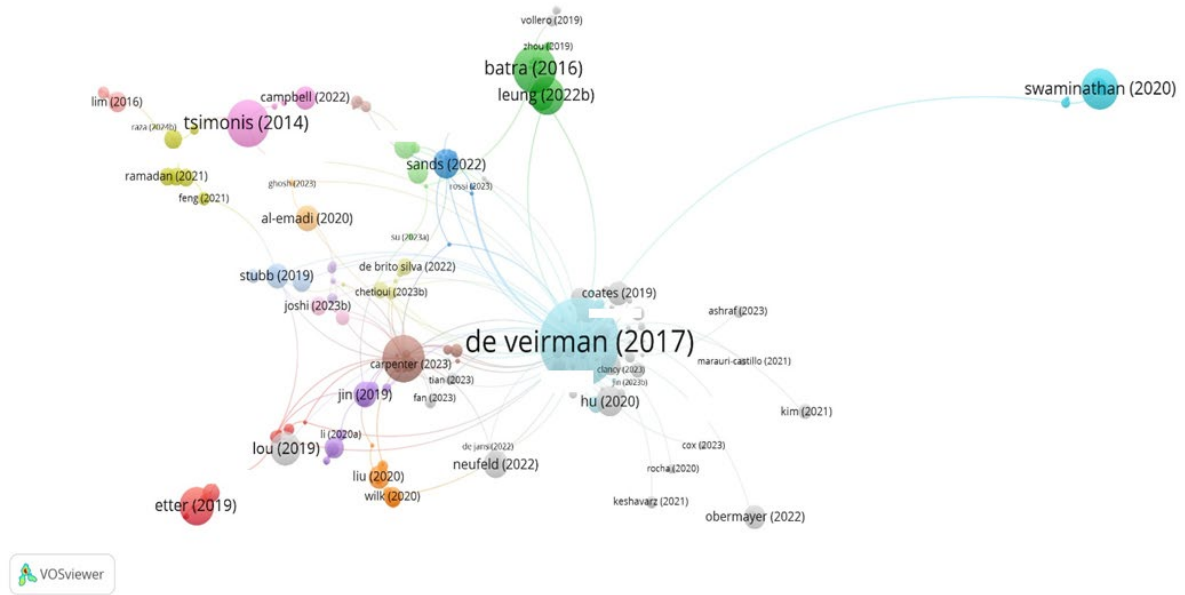
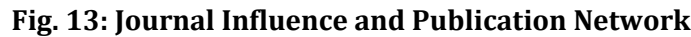


Fig. 12: Influencer Research Citation Network

The visualization presented below shows the citation connections between some of the critical papers in the area of influencer marketing. The central hub is formed by two scholars that are featured first, de Veirman (2017) and Swaminathan (2020), as their works outlined many ensuing investigations within the sector. Based on the citation, one can observe that the central blue coloring, de Veirman (2017), is a highly cited paper, and therefore is the root of the analyzed branch of knowledge. The same can be said about the green node Bata (2016) which captures other important aspects of influencer marketing, especially how brands use influencer to shape consumer behavior. Around these central nodes, there are less closely connected but groups of papers represented by the purple yellow and pink colors indicating how the seminal papers have given rise to subsequent works and the emergence of new themes discussions and concerns in influencer marketing. It is the measure that pertains to the number of citations each of the papers has got, with the size of the node showing the extent of the citation control, while the distance between the nodes showing the similarity of the research areas. The graph is therefore useful in demonstrating the trend of papers in influencer marketing, showing how the papers relate to prior works and how subsequent papers contribute to the existing body of knowledge to drive the evolution of the field.



ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts

Cluster VII: International Collaboration in Marketing Research

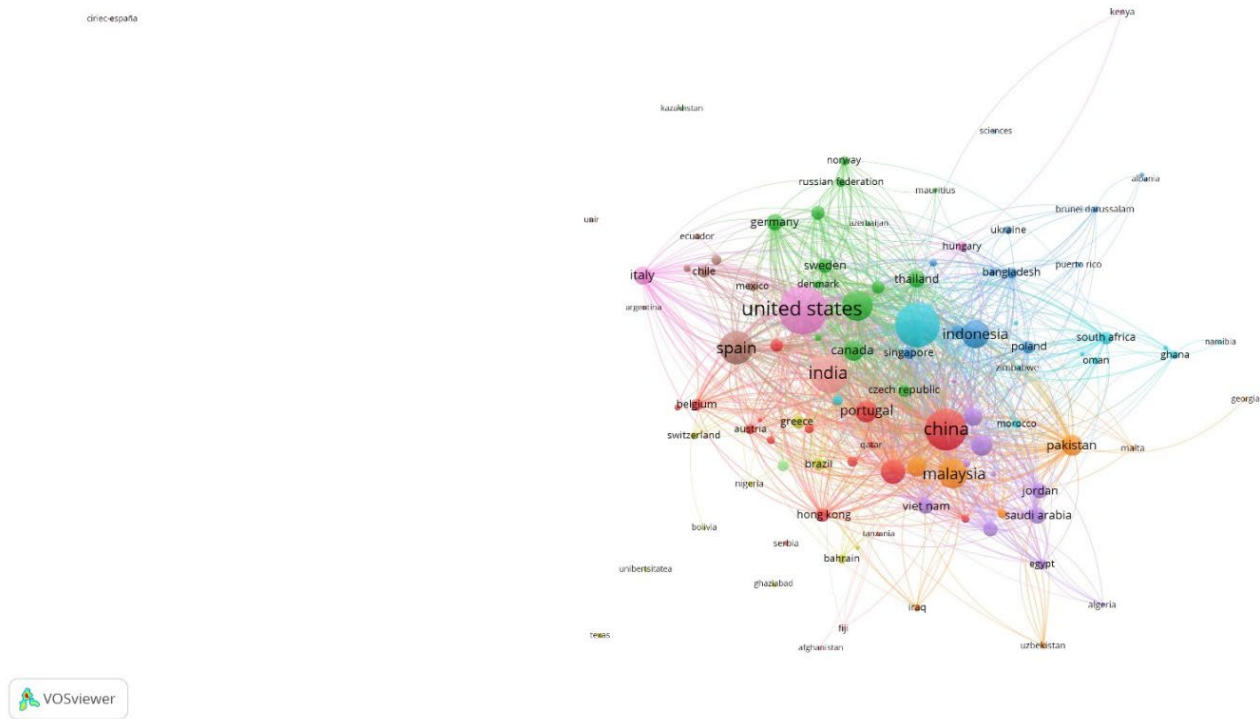
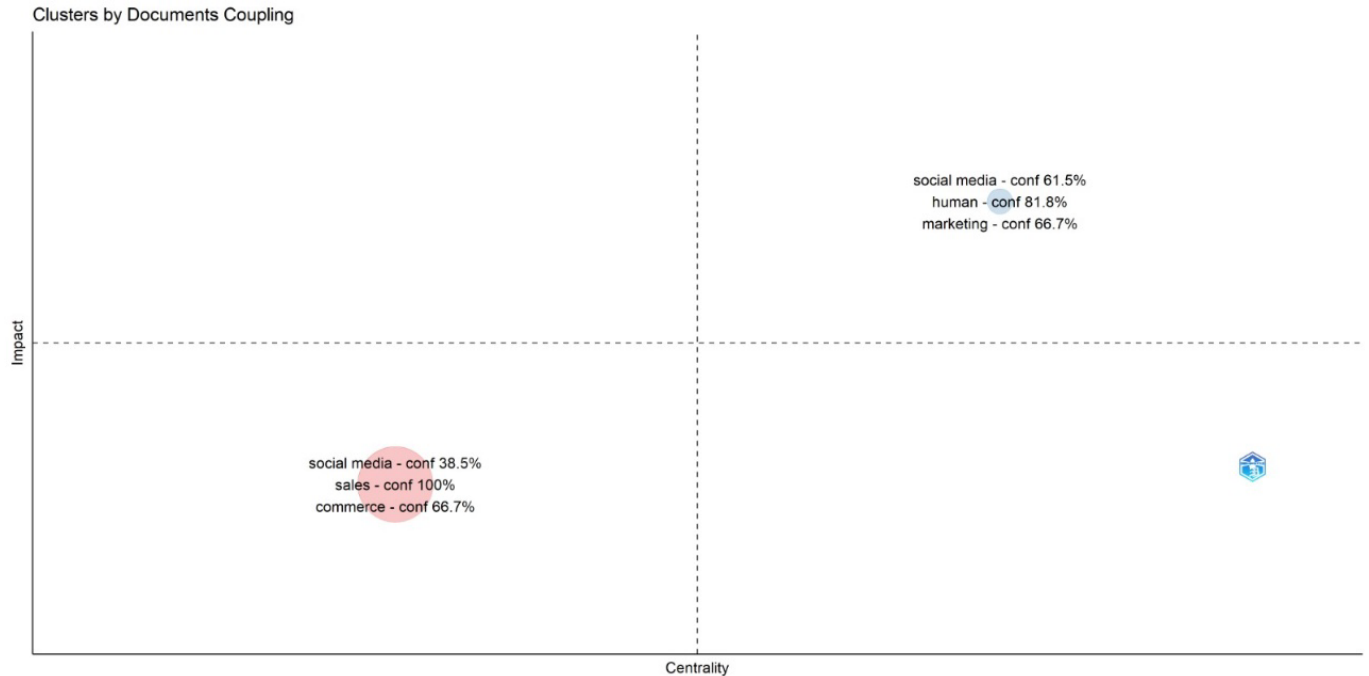


Fig. 14: Country Collaboration in Research

This graph shows the countries cooperating in research where the bigger and most central countries are the United States, India and China. Largest node in the middle of the figure is the node for US representing its important position in collaboration with numerous other countries in international research work. India and China, green and red clusters, have been conducting considerable proportions of international research; they also work with and without each other in cooperation with other countries. Their position on the graph increases while pointing out that they are active players in the global research arena. The purple, orange and yellow colored clusters are somewhat related to the same concept though these are relatively smaller groups of collaborative countries, which possibly can work on more specific or restricted areas of research interest or regions. Basically, the connectedness of these different clusters proved that academic research is a global enterprise and countries connected with each other organization in networks and not in geographical domains. With the help of this graph, it is possible to outline the general idea of the international collaboration in the field of marketing and influencer research, and it proves how necessary it is to collaborate internationally in order to move forward and share the latest data and findings that are crucial for making effective decisions.

Cluster VIII: Impact and Centrality of Research Themes by Document Coupling**Fig. 15: Clusters by Documents Coupling**

This graph shows topics of research as being grouped by document coupling as measured on the vertical axis and centrality on the horizontal axis. The four quadrants of the graph serve to dispel or rather put into perspective the magnitude of each of the themes under consideration in the subject of academic researches. In Nov 2018 discussion, when it comes to relevance, social media, sales, and commerce belong to the bottom-left quadrant, meaning that despite the fact they are considered to have a relatively high impact, they are not considered to be central to the large academic conversation. On the other hand we have the quadrant 2 with the themes such as Social (with higher degree of confidence), Interaction with human beings, and marketing with both high centrality and high relevance. These are the most popular topics that can be discussed with regard to academic publications being widespread and relevant sitewide and across the most subjects. There is also a single node that is isolated in the bottom – right corner that might be related to a less populated and rather specific field of interest. This area has not firmed up; this means that it has not made any central current popular; it is not mainstream. In general, this graph provides an understanding of which areas are core and significant and can be useful in identifying both the field's priorities and trends in its development.

Cluster IX: Citation Flow and Influence Between Research Papers

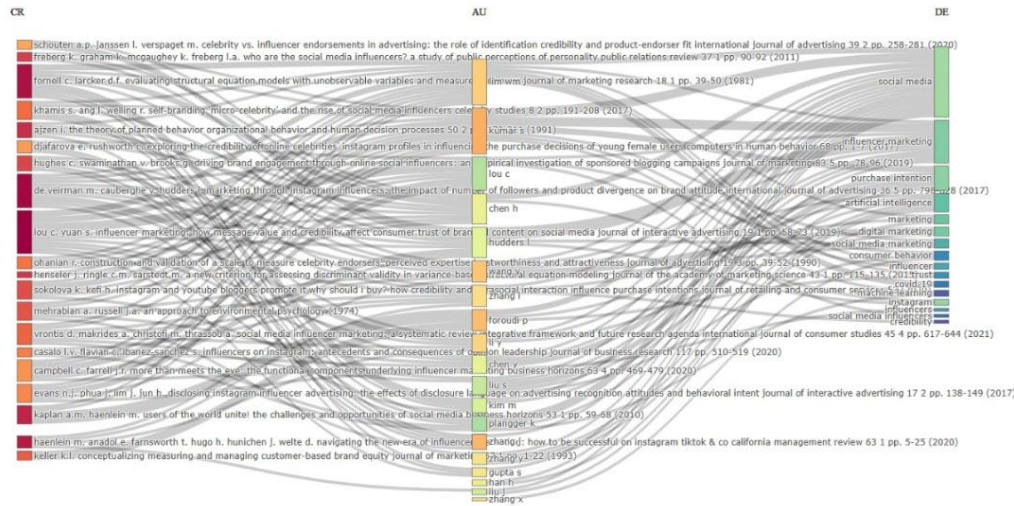


Fig. 16: Citation Flow Between Documents

This Sankey diagram depicts how the Citation flows from one paper to another and through various Journals and Topics. This study's works cited form the left CRL of the graph in overlay structure which are the papers that have set the base for future research. These older papers are some of the most important papers in the development of a given field as they are used as reference by newer papers. Middle section (AID) consists of articles which cite such fundamental sources and are cited by some newer papers at the same time. This section is considered as a link between the previous and current research works done in this field. Last but not the least; on the right side of the diagram, DDE is denoting the destination cited articles that are the current research papers which cite both the basic and intermediary papers. The lateral movement of the citations from left to right enables the tracing of the developmental progression of the ideas and themes in the course of research as well as documenting how new information is developed from existing information. The organization of these visuals enables people to perceive the continuation and the relations between different academic ideas, showing concepts and works which build on previous works, showing the evolution of different ideas in different fields of study. This graph is particularly useful for transgressing the 'generation' divides and seeing how themes have been inherited and developed across generations of scholars.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The findings discussed in this study provide a systematic literature review of the Brand Image literature from 1991 to 2023, with an especial emphasis on the role of social media and influencer marketing. Given that the recent advancements in information technology are constantly changing the consumers' habits and adjusting the tactical and strategic choices of companies, the notion of brand image is worth studying from both theoretical and practical perspectives. As seen from the emerging literature and mentioned earlier, the growth rate of publications per year is approximately 15%. 69%, the increase reflects raising importance of these topics within the academic discussions as well. The traditional approaches of consumers /audience interacting with brand and brands are markedly different, due to social media platforms that have empowered the consumers /audience and given them the ability to influence the brand /consumer discourse in real time. Of all the above-listed trends, influencer marketing has stood out to be vital since it helps brands to use trusted voices to pass messages to the audiences. This transition is well depicted by the expanded literature captured in the bibliometric analysis with more than 1600 authors and over 400 source documents.

First of all, in the case of considering the distribution of documents by type of publication, it is possible to mention that the articles are the most popular type of publication and comprise 421 in general 620 mentioned scholarly

documents. The average age of the documents means that this area is quite young, so the results of the research reflect the state of development of modern marketing. The analysis of the data of co-authorship also reinforces the cooperative tendency of this research with an average of 2.96 co-authors per document and a part of these documents, 20.48% of documents have included international collaborations. This is the reason why this paper has an international aspect: Researchers from different cultures and regions contribute to the common knowledge about how brand image is being managed and negotiated in the context of new digital media. In addition, the result of the bibliometric analysis shows a few major topics and developing trends in the brand image literature in the last few years. Social media has been the most significant area of focus, and scholars have looked at how the new media, including Instagram, Twitter, and Tik Tok offer consumers an engaging and unscripted experience with brands. Related to this is influencer marketing, as the influencer takes this central position in the consumption process by guiding the consumer's perception, potentially promoting or disgracing the brand in a single post. The study also reveals the growing prominence of technology in this area including the application of AI, particularly how brands use data analytics and machine learning in determining consumers' buying behaviors in order to align their marketing messages with consumers' preferences. That AI becomes the part of branding strategies is a new stage for brands, which are targeted to become more effective with the help of data analysis as the consumers are becoming more digital-savvy.

However, like in every research, there are limitations that have been pointed out in this research study. While utilizing the primary sources from the academia is helpful in identifying the modern trends in the particular academic field, it might be disadvantageous in a way that it fails to focus on the real-life expertise and insights from those sources, as the industry resources might be leading in implementing new strategies in the given fields of influencer marketing and social media branding. Thirdly, the rationale of articles with Scopus-indexed publications may be some sort of geography and culture bias because the majority of the compiled information is derived from publications from the USA and the UK. This could mean that the difficulties and prospects for brands of emerging markets are not fully currently represented in the dataset. Last, it is important to note that the study covers three decades, however, the development of digital marketing has been at a rapid pace in the last few years; therefore, not all of the phenomena novelties may be covered by the source material sufficiently.

5.1. RESEARCH IMPLICATION

As for further development, it is possible to distinguish a number of avenues for research development. First, future works should extend this research by looking into these new platforms as they continue to emerge and change over time in terms of their impact on brand image especially for younger generations who are inarguably more adventurous in their choice of social media platforms. Further, there is also a wide area of research which pertains to how exactly, brands can manage crises in today's digital age where word of mouth is instantaneous, and where consumers can turn against a brand as quickly as they can return to supporting it. Micro and nano-influencers who possess a lesser amount of users that they influence but their audience is always engaged is another interesting area of the future research because the ability of brands to reach consumers is more focused and genuine. Besides, the role of AI and machine learning in the advancement of marketing techniques is already becoming profound, but the overall consequences of applying such approaches to brand image management have not been researched enough.

5.2. LIMITATIONS

However, this study also understands some limitations that include the following. Dependence on peer-reviewed publications, although informative concerning theoretical developments, may exclude down-to-earth tips from the business sources, being always more progressive in adopting new approaches in influencer marketing and branding on social networks. Besides, the emphasis on articles listed in Scopus will inevitably give prejudice to geographic and cultural contexts since most of the studies stem from Western nations such as the US and the UK. This could indicate that the circumstances that brands operating in emerging markets may encounter has not been well represented in the current test set. Last, the study covers a period of three decades that allow for comprehensive coverage of the evolution of digital marketing but due to the rapid growth in this field, especially in the last few years, some of the newer trends may not be well covered in the literature.

This bibliometric analysis provides a good systematic view to understand the development of brand image studies addressing to the digital age, with a special focus on social media and influencer marketing. It also shows the increased

focus on these topics in research across disciplines together with its global and interdisciplinary nature. Nevertheless, several directions for further research are pointed by the authors to investigate the topic of brand image management in the future, in terms of various tendencies and themes discussed in the study, as well as the impact of such novelties and advanced facilities as distinctive technologies and platforms. Therefore, this study not only offers knowledge to scholars to comprehend the branding phenomena in the digital environment, but also lays a theoretical framework for the subsequent empirical studies to assist brands to manage the branding challenges and overcome the trends in the contemporary world which is shifting towards digital and consumer centric market.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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