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THE IMPACT OF CONSUMER–PRODUCT CONGRUENCE ON CONSUMER CONFIDENCE AND BOYCOTT RECOMMENDATION IN INFLUENCER MARKETING: A CASE STUDY OF HA LINH OFFICIAL AND HOA LINH PHARMACEUTICALS

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ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing has become increasingly influential in shaping consumer perceptions in emerging markets such as Vietnam, where livestream-based product reviews are widespread. Despite this growth, limited empirical research has examined how consumer–product congruence influences consumer confidence and boycott recommendation within influencer marketing contexts. This study investigates the mechanisms through which consumer–product congruence influences recommendation credibility and attitude toward the recommendation, which subsequently shape consumer confidence and boycott recommendation, using the case of Ha Linh Official and Hoa Linh Pharmaceuticals. A quantitative research design was employed, with data collected through a structured online questionnaire from 250 consumers familiar with both the influencer and the brand. Data were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistics and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS to test the proposed relationships. The findings reveal that consumer–product congruence positively influences recommendation credibility, which directly enhances consumer confidence and indirectly strengthens confidence through attitude toward the recommendation, with attitude serving as a partial mediating mechanism. Furthermore, attitude toward the recommendation negatively affects boycott recommendation, indicating that more favourable attitudes reduce consumers' tendency to recommend boycotts. These results contribute to influencer marketing literature by clarifying the role of congruence in shaping both supportive and resistance-related consumer responses, and offer practical implications for brands and influencers seeking to build credibility, strengthen trust, and mitigate boycott-related risks.

Keywords: boycott recommendation; consumer–product congruence; influencer marketing; recommendation credibility; skincare and pharmaceutical industries.

INTRODUCTION

Recent years have witnessed the rapid expansion of influencer marketing as a central strategy in digital promotion, fundamentally reshaping how brands communicate with consumers and how individuals form evaluations and behavioral responses toward products. With the proliferation of social media platforms, influencers increasingly function as independent opinion leaders and third-party endorsers capable of shaping consumer perceptions at scale (De Veirman *et al.,* 2017; Freberg *et al.,* 2011). Prior research suggests that influencer-generated content is more persuasive when perceived as authentic, credible, and value-enhancing, thereby fostering trust and more favorable consumer responses beyond traditional advertising formats (Audrezet *et al.,* 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

From an industry perspective, influencer marketing has gained substantial economic and strategic importance worldwide. In the GCC region, the influencer marketing market is projected to reach approximately USD 356.2 million in 2026 and is expected to further expand to about USD 771.6 million by 2032, with a CAGR of 13.9% (P&S Intelligence, 2025). In emerging markets such as Vietnam, rapid digital adoption and the growth of social commerce have further amplified the role of influencer-led content in shaping consumer decision-making processes (DataReportal, 2024).

Recent academic research emphasizes that endorsement effectiveness depends not only on influencer popularity or content quality but also on the perceived alignment between consumers and promoted products. Consumer–product congruence (CPC) refers to the perceived fit between consumers' self-concept, values, and preferences and the attributes of an endorsed product. High CPC enhances perceptions of authenticity and recommendation credibility, thereby strengthening persuasive impact (Belanche *et al.,* 2021). However, existing studies have primarily focused on positive outcomes of influencer marketing, such as attitudes and purchase intentions, while resistance-related responses have received limited attention (De Veirman *et al.,* 2017; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Moreover, CPC, recommendation credibility, and attitude are often examined as parallel predictors rather than as part of a sequential explanatory process, leaving the mechanism through which CPC simultaneously shapes consumer confidence and boycott-related responses insufficiently understood. This gap is particularly salient in high-risk product categories, such as pharmaceuticals and personal care products, where consumers rely heavily on credibility cues. Accordingly, this study investigates the relationships among CPC, recommendation credibility (RC), attitude toward the recommendation (ATT), consumer confidence (CO), and boycott recommendation (BR), using the case of Ha Linh Official and Hoa Linh Pharmaceuticals, and proposes an integrated model that captures both supportive and resistance-oriented consumer responses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer–Product Congruence in Influencer Marketing

Consumer–product congruence refers to the perceived alignment between consumers' self-concept, values, and preferences and the attributes of an endorsed product (Sirgy, 1982). Higher levels of CPC enhance product evaluation and relational outcomes, indicating that

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congruence shapes broader evaluative processes beyond immediate attitudes (Aaker, 1997; Kressmann *et al.,* 2006).

In influencer marketing contexts, CPC is particularly salient because consumers rely on endorsement cues to assess personal relevance. Perceived congruence between consumers and promoted products enhances endorsement effectiveness by increasing perceived authenticity and reducing skepticism (Belanche *et al.,* 2021). However, when congruence is low, endorsements may be perceived as inauthentic, triggering skepticism and resistance-oriented responses, especially in high-risk product categories (Audrezet *et al.,* 2020; Pan & Lee, 2025). Accordingly, CPC is conceptualized in this study as a foundational antecedent influencing both supportive and resistance-related consumer responses through subsequent evaluative mechanisms.

Recommendation Credibility as a Persuasion Mechanism

Recommendation credibility reflects consumers' perceptions that an influencer's endorsement is trustworthy, reliable, and honest, particularly under conditions of uncertainty (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). In influencer marketing, higher perceived credibility enhances message acceptance, strengthens evaluative responses, and reinforces CO (Erdem & Swait, 2004; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Recommendation credibility is closely associated with perceived congruence, as endorsements that appear well aligned with consumers' needs and expectations are more likely to be evaluated as authentic and credible (Belanche *et al.,* 2021). However, credibility is vulnerable to erosion when persuasive intent becomes salient or endorsements appear inauthentic, particularly in health-related contexts where perceived risk is high (Boerman *et al.,* 2017; Cabeza-Ramírez *et al.,* 2022). In such cases, diminished credibility may shift consumer responses from acceptance to resistance, including BR (Pan & Lee, 2025).

Attitude Toward the Recommendation

Attitude toward the recommendation represents consumers' overall evaluative judgment of an influencer-promoted product. In influencer marketing, attitude formation is closely tied to perceptions of RC and congruence. When endorsements are perceived as credible and appropriate, consumers are more likely to develop favorable ATT (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Unfavorable attitudes, in contrast, increase the likelihood of resistance-oriented behaviors, including avoidance and BR, particularly in high-risk product categories (Klein *et al.,* 2004; Pan & Lee, 2025; Romani *et al.,* 2012). Accordingly, ATT is conceptualized as a key evaluative mechanism linking credibility perceptions to both supportive and resistant consumer responses.

Consumer Confidence and Boycott Recommendation

Consumer confidence refers to consumers' sense of certainty regarding their evaluations and decisions, whereas BR reflects a resistance-oriented tendency to discourage others from purchasing or supporting a product or brand. In influencer marketing, CO emerges when recommendations are perceived as credible and attitudinally coherent, while BR arises when endorsements are perceived as misleading, untrustworthy, or potentially harmful, particularly in high-risk contexts such as pharmaceuticals (Cabeza-Ramírez *et al.,* 2022; Sen *et al.,* 2001).

Importantly, CPC is unlikely to directly determine boycott-related behavior. Instead, consumer responses follow a sequential evaluative process: perceived congruence enhances RC, credibility shapes attitudinal evaluations, and attitude determines whether consumers respond with confidence or resistance. This sequential logic provides an integrated explanation of how CPC, RC, and ATT jointly influence both CO and BR, addressing a key gap in influencer marketing research.

Hypothesis Development

Drawing on self-congruity theory, source credibility theory, and attitude–behavior perspectives, this study develops hypotheses to explain how CPC shapes both supportive and resistance-related consumer responses in influencer marketing. The proposed model focuses on the sequential roles of RC, ATT, CO, and BR.

Consumer–Product Congruence and Recommendation Credibility

Consumer–product congruence reflects the perceived alignment between consumers' self-concept and the attributes of a promoted product. When endorsed products align with consumers' values and preferences, recommendations are more likely to be perceived as relevant and sincere, thereby enhancing evaluations of authenticity and trustworthiness (Belanche *et al.,* 2021; Sirgy, 1982). In influencer marketing, such perceived congruence strengthens credibility judgments toward the recommendation.

H1: Consumer–product congruence is positively associated with recommendation credibility.

Recommendation Credibility, Attitude, and Confidence

Recommendation credibility refers to the extent to which consumers perceive an influencer's endorsement as believable and trustworthy. Credible endorsements facilitate positive information processing and are more likely to generate favorable ATT (Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Lou & Yuan, 2019). In addition, credible information reduces perceived uncertainty, strengthening CO in their evaluations (Erdem & Swait, 2004).

H2: Recommendation credibility is positively associated with attitude toward the recommendation.

H3: Recommendation credibility is positively associated with consumer confidence.

Attitude Toward the Recommendation, Confidence, and Boycott Recommendation

Attitude toward the recommendation represents consumers' overall evaluative judgment of an influencer-promoted product. Favorable attitudes reinforce evaluative certainty and increase CO, whereas unfavorable attitudes heighten skepticism and increase the likelihood of resistance-oriented responses, including BR (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Klein *et al.,* 2004).

H4: Attitude toward the recommendation is negatively associated with boycott recommendation.

H5: Attitude toward the recommendation is positively associated with consumer confidence.

Attitude is further expected to function as a key mechanism through which credibility perceptions are translated into confidence.

H5a: Attitude toward the recommendation mediates the relationship between recommendation credibility and consumer confidence.

Research Model

Based on the proposed hypotheses, a conceptual model is developed linking CPC, RC, ATT, CO, and BR in an influencer marketing context (Fig 1). The model proposes a sequential evaluative process in which perceived congruence enhances credibility, credibility shapes attitude, and attitude determines whether consumers respond with confidence or boycott-oriented resistance.

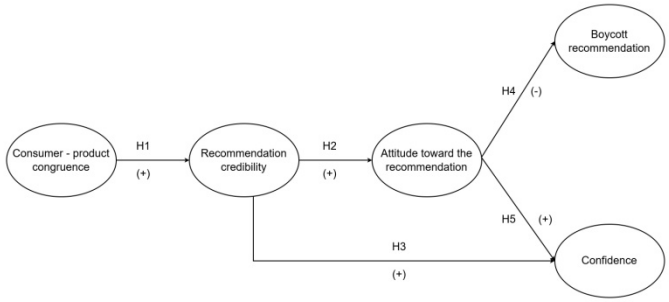

Fig 1: Proposed Research Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Analytical Approach

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among CPC, RC, ATT, CO, and BR in an influencer marketing context. A quantitative approach is appropriate for testing theoretically derived relationships and mediation effects among multiple latent constructs.

To evaluate the proposed conceptual model and its indirect effects, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was applied using SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is suitable for models involving latent variables and mediation analysis and performs robustly with moderate sample sizes (Hair *et al.,* 2019).

Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from established measurement scales in consumer behavior and influencer marketing research. All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Consumer–product congruence was measured using four items adapted from Belanche *et al.,* (2021). Recommendation credibility was assessed with five items adapted from Liang *et al.,* (2022) and Luo *et al.,* (2013). Attitude toward the recommendation was measured using four items adapted from Belanche *et al.,* (2021). Boycott recommendation was measured using four items adapted from Kim *et al.,* (2022). Consumer confidence was assessed using three items adapted from Raciti *et al.,* (2013) and Wu *et al.,* (2019). A summary of the measurement items and their sources is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Measurement Items

Constructs	Items	Observed Variables	Sources
Consumer-product congruence	CPC1	The product matches my style.	Belanche et al. (2021)
	CPC2	The compatibility between the product and me is high.	
	CPC3	The alignment between the product and me is high.	
	CPC4	The product fits my style.	
Recommendation Credibility	RC1	This influencer recommendation is believable.	Liang et al. (2022), Luo et al. (2013)
	RC2	The influencer-recommended items are useful.	
	RC3	I believe that the information that I get from the influencer is reliable.	
	RC4	The influencer recommended is good.	
	RC5	The influencer recommending the goods is experienced.	
Attitude towards Recommendation	ATT1	I find the recommendation for this product credible.	Belanche et al. (2021)
	ATT2	I trust the source recommending this product.	
	ATT3	I believe the recommendation for this product is reliable.	
	ATT4	I have confidence in the recommendation for this product.	
Boycott Recommendation	BR1	I plan to boycott products.	Kim et al., (2022)
	BR2	I will boycott products.	
	BR3	I want to boycott products.	
	BR4	I have the intention to boycott products.	
Confidence	CO1	I am confident that the influencer-recommended goods can satisfy everything I need.	Raciti et al. (2011), Wu et al., (2019)
	CO2	I am confident that I am good at purchasing the items that the influencer recommends.	
	CO3	I highly approve of the products recommended by the influencer.	

Participants and Data Collection

Data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms between 12 November 2025 and 15 December 2025. A non-probability convenience sampling strategy was employed, with the survey link distributed on Facebook to reach respondents who frequently engage with influencer-related content.

Participants were eligible if they were at least 18 years old, resided in Ho Chi Minh City, and had prior exposure to influencer marketing content related to Ha Linh Official or Hoa Linh Pharmaceuticals. After data screening and quality checks, a total of 250 valid responses were retained for analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis followed established PLS-SEM guidelines (Hair *et al.,* 2019). Preliminary data screening and descriptive statistics were conducted using SPSS 22. Subsequently, the measurement and structural models were evaluated using SmartPLS 4.

The measurement model was assessed for reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and collinearity. The structural model was then examined to test the hypothesized relationships among CPC, RC, ATT, CO, and BR. The significance of direct and indirect

effects was evaluated using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples, and model explanatory power was assessed using R^2 and f^2 values.

Pilot Test

A pilot study with 50 respondents was conducted to assess item clarity and preliminary reliability. All constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70. The pilot test results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Reliability Results of the Pilot Study

	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
CPC1, 2, 3, 4	0.793	4
RC1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0.845	5
ATT1, 2, 3, 4	0.867	4
BR1, 2, 3, 4	0.857	4
CO1,2, 3	0.891	3

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles governing social science research were strictly observed. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained electronically, and all responses were anonymous and confidential.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Sample Characteristics

After data screening, 250 valid responses were retained for analysis. Female respondents accounted for 57.2% of the sample (n = 143), while males represented 42.8% (n = 107). Most respondents were aged 18–24 (63.6%), followed by those aged 25–34 (30.4%).

Regarding education, 74.0% of respondents held a bachelor's degree and 9.6% held a master's degree. Most respondents reported watching livestreams or short-form videos frequently (61.2%) or sometimes (29.6%). Detailed demographic characteristics are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Demographic Characteristics

	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	107	42.8
Female	143	57.2
Age		
18 - 24	159	63.6
25 - 34	76	30.4
35 - 44	15	6
Educational level		
High school degree	18	7.2
Intermediate/College degree	21	8.4
Bachelor's degree	185	74
Master's degree	24	9.6
Doctoral degree	2	0.8
Frequency of watching live streams or videos		
Often	153	61.2
Sometimes	74	29.6
Rarely	23	9.2

Measurement Model Assessment

The reflective measurement model was evaluated using SmartPLS 4 prior to structural model testing.

Reliability and Convergent Validity

All constructs demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and rho_A values exceeding 0.70. All AVE values were above 0.50, and all indicator loadings exceeded 0.70 (Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Assessment

Latent variables	Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's α	Rho_A	CR	AVE
	Threshold			≥ 0.7	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.7	≥ 0.5
Consumer-product congruence (CPC)	CPC 1	3.98	0.827	0.876	0.881	0.915	0.729
	CPC 2	4.024	0.769				
	CPC 3	4.008	0.743				
	CPC 4	3.968	0.726				
Recommendation Credibility (RC)	RC1	3.872	0.743	0.89	0.892	0.92	0.697
	RC2	3.916	0.818				
	RC3	3.86	0.764				
	RC4	3.856	0.718				
	RC5	3.9	0.76				
Attitude (ATT)	ATT 1	3.996	0.729	0.856	0.86	0.903	0.699
	ATT 2	4	0.759				
	ATT 3	3.996	0.724				
	ATT 4	4.02	0.792				
Boycott Recommendation (BR)	BR1	3.008	0.748	0.85	0.866	0.898	0.688
	BR2	3.004	0.735				
	BR3	3.016	0.844				
	BR4	3	0.732				
Confidence (CO)	CO1	3.94	0.815	0.841	0.844	0.904	0.759
	CO2	4.028	0.723				
	CO3	3.988	0.718				

Table 5 Outer Loading Values

	ATT	BR	CO	CPC	RC
ATT1	0.867				
ATT2	0.870				
ATT3	0.833				
ATT4	0.770				
BR1		0.853			
BR2		0.859			

BR3	0.759			
BR4	0.844			
CO1		0.840		
CO2		0.888		
CO3		0.885		
CPC1			0.818	
CPC2			0.864	
CPC3			0.876	
CPC4			0.855	
RC1				0.824
RC2				0.754
RC3				0.875
RC4				0.856
RC5				0.860

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). The square roots of AVE values exceeded inter-construct correlations (Table 6), and all HTMT values were below 0.85 (Table 7).

Table 6 Fornell–Larcker Criterion

	ATT	BR	CO	CPC	RC
ATT	**0,836**				
BR	-0,498	**0,83**			
CO	0,466	-0,251	**0,871**		
CPC	0,341	-0,197	0,332	**0,854**	
RC	0,565	-0,263	0,481	0,51	**0,835**

Note: *The square roots of the AVE values are bolded on Table 6's diagonal.*

Table 7 HTMT Criterion

	ATT	BR	CO	CPC	RC
ATT					
BR	0.574				
CO	0.549	0.283			
CPC	0.389	0.221	0.386		
RC	02646	0.295	0.555	0.575	

Common Method Bias

Common method bias was assessed using the full collinearity approach. All outer and inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values were below 3.3 (Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8 Outer VIF Values

	VIF
ATT1	2.282
ATT2	2.292
ATT3	1.965
ATT4	1.648
BR1	1.951
BR2	2.171
BR3	1.69
BR4	1.986
CO1	1.785
CO2	2.144
CO3	2.174
CPC1	1.901
CPC2	2.204
CPC3	2.366
CPC4	2.304
RC1	2.19
RC2	1.659
RC3	2.707
RC4	2.448
RC5	2.491

Table 9 Inner VIF Values

	ATT	BR	CO	CPC	RC
ATT		1	1.47		
BR					
CO					
CPC					1
RC	1		1.47		

The results indicate that the measurement model demonstrates adequate reliability, convergent validity, discriminant validity, and is not affected by common method bias. Therefore, the measurement instruments are considered appropriate, and the analysis can proceed to the assessment of the structural model.

Structural Model Assessment

Explanatory Power and Predictive Relevance

Consumer–product congruence explained 26.0% of the variance in RC. Recommendation credibility explained 32.0% of ATT. Attitude explained 24.8% of the variance in BR. Recommendation credibility and ATT jointly explained 28.7% of CO (Table 10). All endogenous constructs exhibited positive Q^2 values ranging from 0.161 to 0.217 (Table 11).

Table 10 R^2 Values

	R-Square	R-square adjusted	Level of Explanatory Power
RC	0.26	0.257	Medium
ATT	0.32	0.317	High
BR	0.248	0.245	Medium
CO	0.287	0.281	High

Table 11 Q^2 Values

	R-Square	Predictive relevance level
ATT	0.217	Low
BR	0.161	Low
CO	0.212	Low
RC	0.177	Low

Effect Size (f^2)

Consumer–product congruence had a large effect on RC (f^2 = 0.351). Recommendation credibility had a large effect on ATT (f^2 = 0.470). Attitude had a medium effect on BR (f^2 = 0.330). Effects on CO were smaller (Table 12).

Table 12 Effect Size (f^2) Assessment

Structural path	f^2 value	Level of effect
CPC -> RC	0.351	Large
RC -> ATT	0.47	Large
ATT -> BR	0.33	Medium
ATT -> CO	0.078	Weak
RC -> CO	0.097	Weak

Model Fit

The SRMR values were 0.051 for the saturated model and 0.056 for the estimated model (Table 13).

Table 13 Model Fit Indices

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.051	0.056

Overall, the structural model shows adequate explanatory power, predictive relevance, and acceptable model fit, supporting its suitability for hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses were tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. All direct hypotheses (H1–H5) were supported at $p < 0.001$. Consumer–product congruence positively affected RC ($\beta = 0.510$). Recommendation credibility positively affected ATT ($\beta = 0.565$) and CO ($\beta = 0.319$). Attitude negatively affected BR ($\beta = -0.498$) and positively affected CO ($\beta = 0.286$) (Figure 2, Table 14).

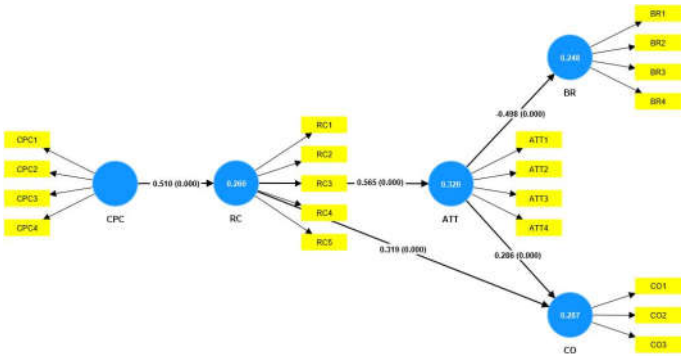

Fig 2: Structural Model Results

Table 14 Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing Results

	Path coefficient	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Results
H1: CPC -> RC	0.51	0.054	9.411	0.000***	Supported
H2: RC -> ATT	0.565	0.043	13.157	0.000***	Supported
H3: RC->CO	0.319	0.064	4.96	0.000***	Supported
H4: ATT -> BR	-0.498	0.044	11.23	0.000***	Supported
H5: ATT -> CO	0.286	0.056	5.088	0.000***	Supported

Note: *Two-tailed t-test; ***p < 0.001. CPC = Consumer–product congruence; RC = Recommendation credibility; ATT = Attitude toward the recommendation; CO = Consumer confidence; BR = Boycott recommendation.*

Mediation Analysis

The indirect effect of RC on CO via ATT was significant ($\beta = 0.162$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H5a (Table 15). Meanwhile, the direct effect of RC on CO also remained significant (Table 14), indicating partial mediation.

Table 15 Indirect Effects and Mediation Analysis

	Path coefficient	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values	Results
H5a: RC ->ATT -> CO	0.162	0.035	4.683	0.000***	Supported

Note: *Using two-tailed t-test, ***p value < 0.001.*

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study examines how CPC shapes both supportive and resistance-oriented responses to influencer marketing in a high-risk endorsement context. The findings support a sequential evaluative mechanism in which perceived congruence enhances RC, credibility shapes ATT, and attitude determines whether consumers respond with CO or boycott-oriented resistance.

First, the results identify CPC as a foundational evaluative cue in influencer marketing. When endorsed products align with consumers' needs and lifestyles, recommendations are more likely to be perceived as credible, thereby reducing skepticism toward sponsored content. This finding highlights the importance of a consumer-centric perspective on congruence, extending prior research that has primarily emphasized influencer-related characteristics.

Second, RC plays a central role in translating congruence into downstream evaluative responses. Higher credibility strengthens both ATT and CO, underscoring credibility as a critical signal in high-risk product categories where consumers face limited ability to verify product claims and rely heavily on trustworthy information sources.
Third, ATT emerges as the key mechanism distinguishing supportive from resistance-oriented responses. Favorable attitudes reinforce consumer confidence, whereas unfavorable attitudes substantially increase the likelihood of BR. The partial mediating role of attitude further indicates that credibility enhances confidence both directly and indirectly through evaluative endorsement.

From a theoretical perspective, this study integrates congruity-based evaluation, source credibility, and attitudinal mechanisms into a unified framework that explains both supportive and resistance-oriented consumer responses. By positioning CPC as an antecedent of credibility and identifying attitude as the primary evaluative channel linking credibility to confidence and resistance, the study advances influencer marketing research beyond a predominant focus on positive outcomes.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that firms should prioritize alignment between promoted products and target consumers' needs to enhance perceived relevance and credibility. Transparency, consistent messaging, and authentic usage experiences can further reinforce credibility, while managing consumers' evaluative attitudes toward endorsements is essential to reduce the risk of boycott-oriented resistance and strengthen CO.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

Conclusion

This study examined how CPC shapes both supportive and resistance-related responses to influencer marketing in the Vietnamese context, focusing on the case of Ha Linh Official and Hoa Linh Pharmaceuticals. The findings indicate that CPC functions as a

foundational evaluative cue that enhances recommendation credibility, which subsequently shapes consumers' attitudes, confidence, and boycott recommendation.

Attitude toward the recommendation emerges as a key psychological mechanism differentiating consumer responses: favorable attitudes strengthen consumer confidence, whereas unfavorable attitudes increase boycott-oriented resistance. Moreover, attitude partially mediates the relationship between RC and CO, highlighting its role in translating credibility perceptions into evaluative certainty. Overall, the study provides an integrated explanation of how congruence, credibility, and attitude jointly influence consumer responses to influencer endorsements in high-risk product contexts.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the empirical context focuses on pharmaceutical and personal care products, which are characterized by high perceived risk and strong reliance on credibility cues. The relative importance of CPC, RC, and ATT may therefore differ in lower-risk or more hedonic categories, such as fashion or lifestyle products. Future research could test the proposed model across diverse product categories to enhance generalizability.

Second, BR was measured using relatively generic items, which may capture broad resistance tendencies rather than brand-specific or incident-driven responses. Future studies should refine boycott-related measures by explicitly referencing the focal brand or by distinguishing among private avoidance, public discouragement, and collective resistance behaviors.

Third, this study adopts a consumer-centric perspective on congruence. Future research could extend the model by incorporating additional forms of perceived fit, such as consumer–influencer congruence or influencer–brand fit, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of congruence effects in influencer marketing.

Finally, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference and does not capture changes in evaluations over time. Longitudinal or experimental approaches would allow future studies to examine how congruence, credibility, and attitudes evolve across repeated exposure and how resistance responses emerge or dissipate in dynamic social media environments.

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