

## **Role of Micro-Influencers in Driving Sustainable Food Purchase Intention in India: A Systematic Literature Review**

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### **Abstract**

Micro-influencers, or people with 5000–100000 followers, have become important players in the marketing revolution brought about by social media because of their high engagement rates and genuineness. In India, where environmental consciousness is rising and sustainable food consumption is becoming more popular, micro-influencers present a viable way to close the intention-behavior gap in the purchase of environmentally friendly food items. In order to investigate how micro-influencers mark Indian customers purposes towards buy sustainable food this systematic literature review which follows the PRISMA framework, examines 15 peer-reviewed studies available between 2014 and 2024. In line with the Theory of Planned Behavior, findings emphasize , importance on parasocial relationships, trustworthiness, and source credibility as motivators. However, there are still gaps like a lack of longitudinal studies, inconsistent measurement scales, and little research specifically focused on India. In order to improve micro-influencer tactics in India's sustainable food industry the study recommends experimental designs and scales that are culturally appropriate.

**Keywords:** *Micro-influencers, sustainable food consumption, purchase intention, India, influencer marketing, Theory of Planned Behavior, authenticity, trustworthiness, systematic literature review.*

### **Introduction**

Marketing has changed due to the advent in societal broadcasting and influencers; particularly, micro-influencers remain fetching more well-known due to their genuineness and high level of interaction (Gupta and Mahajan 2019). Micro-influencers who have between 5000 and 100000 followers are regarded as relatable figures who have the power to influence buying decisions.

Sustainable food consumption driven by ethical health and environmental considerations is becoming more popular in India. However, barriers to behavioural adoption include cultural norms greenwashing affordability and accessibility (Puspita 2023). Given that Gen Z values credibility over celebrity micro-influencers could aid in bridging the intention-behavior gap (Vanha-Aho 2023).

Influencers use their shared values knowledge and authenticity to shape attitudes (Uzunoglu & Misci 2014). Usually, they fall into the nano category. 5k) micro (5k–100k) macro (100k–1M) and mega (Tiers (1M). Although they have a wider audience macro and mega influencers frequently have lower levels of genuineness and appointment than nano and micro-influencers which offer trust and niche engagement (Veirman et al. 2017 Duthler & Dhanesh 2019). In the early 2000s, brands began shifting from traditional mass media to digital platforms due to the limitations of one-way communication and

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poor measurability in mass advertising. Digital forums enabled real-time engagement, personalized messaging, and performance tracking, allowing brands to directly correlate outreach efforts with consumer actions (Kirtis & Karahan, 2011)

These platforms also enabled hyper-targeted advertising through sophisticated data analytics and behavioral segmentation, which dramatically improved ROI and consumer relevance (Appel et al., 2020). By 2020, influencer marketing had matured, with brands increasingly investing in micro and nano -influencers to capitalize on authenticity and peer-level trust, further validating social media’s dominance in modern marketing (Enke & Borchers, 2019).

### **Influencer – (Purchase Decision)**

An influencer is a person with the ability to affect other people's beliefs, tastes, and purchasing decisions by virtue of their reputation, reach, and engagement on social media or digital platforms. Influencers typically create content around specific niches such as fashion, health, food, or sustainability, and are seen as trustworthy by their followers. Wu et al. (2023) . A wellness blogger with 20,000 Instagram followers regularly shares organic food reviews and recipes. When they endorse a new plant-based protein brand, Because of the product's perceived authenticity and trustworthiness, their followers are more inclined to try it.

Wu et al. (2023)

### **Types of Influencers (By Follower Count)**

Influencers are generally categorized by the size of their follower base, which impacts their reach, engagement, and influence:

Type	Followers	Features
<b>Nano</b>	<5,000	High engagement, intimate audience, hyper-niche
<b>Micro</b>	5,000–100,000	Balance of reach and authenticity; strong peer-level influence
<b>Macro</b>	100,000–1 million	Wider audience, but lower engagement; often perceived as semi-celebrities
<b>Mega/Celebrity</b>	>1 million	Mass appeal, celebrity status, often brand ambassadors with broad campaigns

### **Micro-Influencers**

#### ***Higher Authenticity and Trust***

Micro-influencers often come across as “everyday consumers” rather than celebrities. Their content is more personal and relatable, fostering trust among their followers. This is particularly important for Gen Z, who value authenticity over fame (Vanha-Aho, 2023).

#### ***Stronger Engagement Rates***

Despite having a smaller following, micro-influencers typically enjoy higher engagement rates (likes, comments, shares), meaning their followers are more actively involved and likely to act on recommendations (Veirman et al., 2017).

#### ***Niche Targeting***

Micro-influencers usually specialize in specific areas (e.g., vegan food, sustainable living), allowing targeted promotion to consumers already interested in those values. This leads to better conversion rates and relevance.

### ***Cost-Effective for Brands***

Compared to mega-influencers, micro-influencers are more affordable and allow brands to partner with multiple influencers for wider reach while maintaining authenticity.

### **Sustainable Food Purchase:**

A micro-influencer focused on sustainable eating shares a reel about a new eco-certified millet snack brand. Their content includes personal stories, recipes, and health benefits, prompting followers to try the product not just for taste but also for ethical reasons. This bridges the intention-behavior gap in green purchasing (Puspita, 2023).

Although micro-influencer marketing is becoming more and more important not many studies have examined its effects on sustainable food choices in a systematic manner particularly in developing nations like India. In order to identify research gaps and provide a roadmap for future studies in the Indian context this SLR attempts to classify influencer types evaluate their efficacy and critically assess current scales methodologies and theoretical models.

### **Objectives-**

1. To identify the most influential influencer types and themes Driving Sustainable Food Purchase Intention
2. To catalog measurement scales and methodological trends

### **Methodology**

The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology used in this study is informed by the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework. The aim of the study is to critically evaluate the body of research that looks at how micro-influencers affect consumers intentions to buy sustainable food particularly in the sociocultural and policy context of India. The review identifies methodological and theoretical trends maps out the current state of research in a methodical manner and identifies gaps that require further investigation.

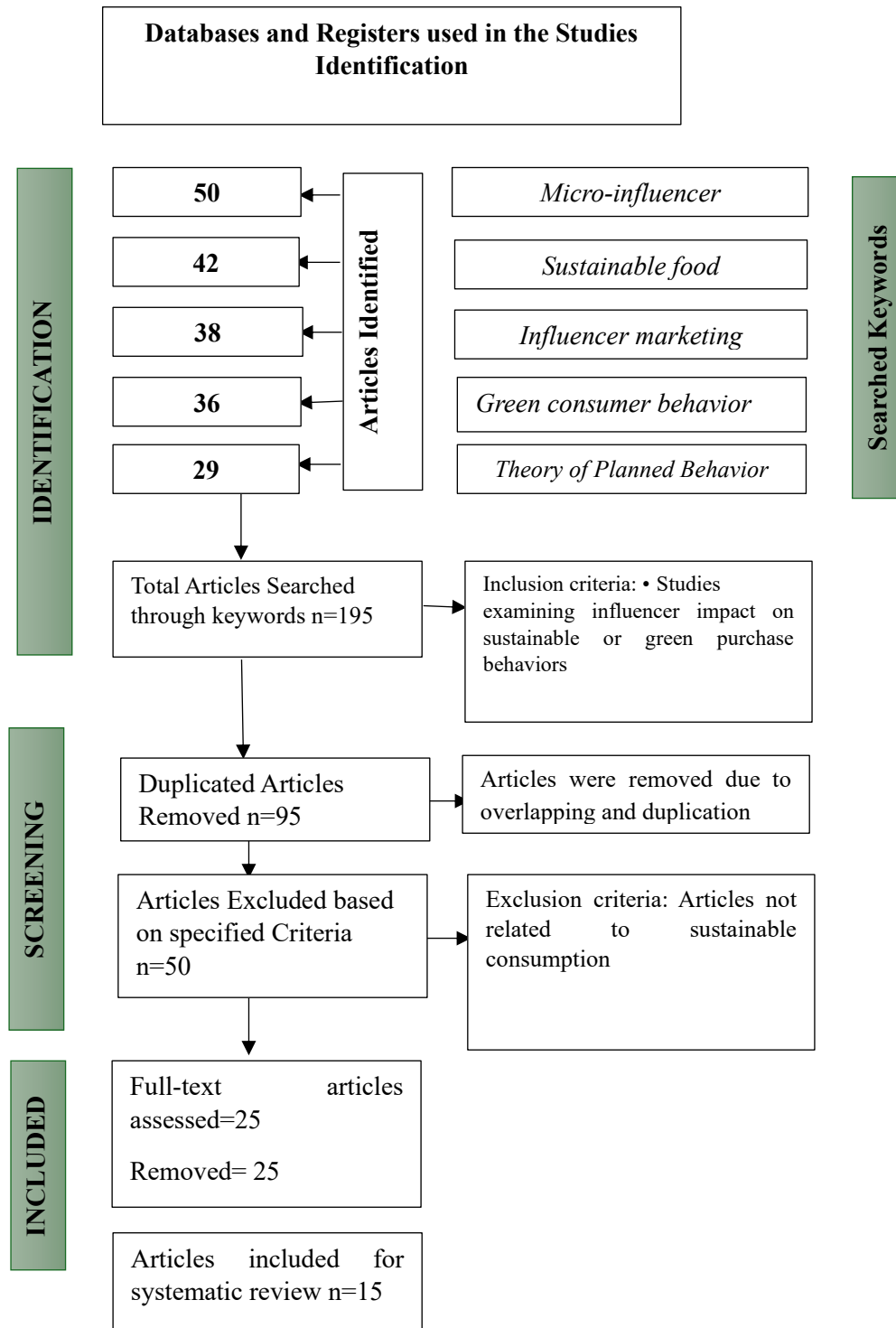
### ***Data Sources and Search Strategy***

A comprehensive search was conducted across major academic databases including:

- Scopus
- Web of Science
- Google Scholar
- Emerald Insight
- ScienceDirect

Search terms included combinations of:

“micro-influencer”, “sustainable food”, “purchase intention”, “India”, “influencer marketing”, “green consumer behavior”, and “Theory of Planned Behavior”.



***Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria******Inclusion Criteria:***

- Peer-reviewed journal articles (2014–2024)
- Studies examining influencer impact on sustainable or green purchase behaviors
- Articles that use empirical, conceptual, or mixed-method approaches
- Studies published in English

***Exclusion Criteria:***

- Articles not related to sustainable consumption
- Non-peer-reviewed sources (e.g., blogs, news articles)
- Studies focused solely on celebrity or macro influencers without discussion of micro/nano influencers

***Selection Process***

Title and abstract screening were used to eliminate duplicates and irrelevant articles from the original pool of 195 studies. Twenty-five papers in all were selected for full-text review. Fifteen studies were selected for a thorough review after the inclusion criteria were applied. The results were synthesized through thematic analysis of the extracted data supporting the narrative discussion of trends, insights, and research gaps in the sections that follow.

***Theoretical Framework: Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)***

In order to comprehend and forecast consumer behavior, Ajzen (1991) developed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which is a strong theoretical framework. According to TPB three fundamental concepts—attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control—have an impact on behavior. These collectively establish a person’s behavioral intention, which in turn shapes their actual behavior. TPB has been widely used in sustainability research to evaluate environmentally friendly consumption in areas such as nutritional choices sustainable tourism and the adoption of ethical products (Joo et al., 2020). To evaluate the impact of peer and social pressure through influencers (subjective norms) external barriers (economic or regulatory control) and attitudes toward sustainability on purchase intentions and behavior related to sustainable food TPB has been modified for this study. Given its capacity to capture the discrepancy between intention and actual behavior—a persistent problem in sustainability marketing—the model is especially pertinent. Though TPB makes it possible to investigate whether attitudes affect behavior it falls short in capturing the process by which attitudes are formed particularly when social media influence or emotional engagement is present which is frequently crucial in influencer marketing.

***Literature Review***

A growing amount of research has looked at how micro-influencers affect consumer behavior especially when it comes to the intention to buy sustainable food. Using a qualitative examination of open-ended responses from 135 Instagram users, 15 micro-influencers, and 8 business owners Gupta and Mahajan (2019) provide an early contribution to the Indian context. Their research highlights how relatability is crucial to building influencer credibility by capturing the real-life perspectives and interactions of people in India's vibrant Instagram ecosystem. The lack of standardized measurement

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instruments like Likert scales limits the study’s comparability and statistical generalizability even though the qualitative design offers deep practical insights. In order to more accurately measure factors like trust and purchase intention, the authors point out the possibility of including quantitative measures in subsequent research.

Through semi-structured interviews with eight participants, Vanha-Aho (2023) investigates the impact of micro-influencers on Generation Z. Credibility and authenticity are identified. by thematic analysis as important factors that influence customer engagement. However, the precision of the study is diminished by the lack of structured measurement scales. Generalizability is hampered by the small sample size and the subjective nature of thematic interpretation, which can introduce bias. Qualitative interviews combined with validated quantitative tools may improve methodological robustness particularly in the sustainable food sector, where Gen Z values and preferences are particularly significant.

An exploratory literature review focusing on the theoretical connections between Generation Z and micro-influencers is conducted by Ebulueme and Vijayakumar (2024) in another conceptual piece. Although the work adds to the theoretical framework, its practical application is complicated by the absence of empirical data and well-defined measurement instruments. The study emphasizes the need for more empirical research to create and validate Likert-based scales for evaluating influencer authenticity and how it affects consumers decisions to buy sustainably produced food

A more quantitatively rigorous study is presented by Puspita (2023) who uses a 5-point Likert scale to gauge concepts like credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, and parasocial relationships. The study, which used PLS-SEM on a sample of 253 respondents, demonstrates that parasocial ties and trustworthiness are important predictors of intentions to purchase green products. Nonetheless the denial of theories pertaining to credibility and expertise points to flaws in some scales construct validity. Additionally, the results wider applicability to India is limited by the geographic focus on Greater Jakarta. To account for sociocultural variations in the efficacy of influencer marketing scale adjustments specific to a given region are required.

Using Likert scales Bucha (2022) evaluates the reliability of sources and the value of information for 277 participants in a related study. Based on the Information Adoption Model this quantitative study demonstrates that decisions about sustainable consumption are favourably influenced by perceived credibility. The findings dependability is enhanced by the comparatively large sample size. However, the study’s scope is limited by its concentration on specific influencer types (non-food domains). In contrast to other product categories sustainable food marketing may involve distinct behavioral and motivational drivers so these scales need to be modified to better capture its dynamics.

Misra et al. (2024) using Likert scales to gauge attitude and purchase intention employ a 2x2 experimental design to investigate the effects of influencer and content types. Clear insights into the combined effects of various marketing strategies are provided by the controlled experimental setup. However, the findings’ ability to be applied broadly is constrained by the sample size of 197. Furthermore, although the study gauges general purchase intention attitudes regarding sustainability are not particularly covered. These scales could be made much more relevant to the sustainable food industry by adding sustainability dimensions.

On the other hand, Das and Nayak (n. d.) carry out an exploratory qualitative investigation using case studies from Odisha. Rich context-specific insights into consumer behavior are obtained using this method especially in underrepresented areas. The lack of standardized scales however limits the study’s applicability in various settings. Future research would be strengthened particularly in

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capturing India's regional diversity by the creation of consistent Likert-scale instruments to measure perceived authenticity and engagement.

Similar to this Louna (2022) employs qualitative techniques to analyse the influence of sustainability influencers through thematic analysis of 13 participant interviews. The study underscores the significance of perceived authenticity while highlighting changes in consumer attitudes and behaviors. However, the findings' scalability and replication are constrained by the absence of measurable metrics. Including structured tools like behavioral intention and attitude scales would increase the study's usefulness for wider applications in the field of sustainable food marketing.

Pereira et al. provide a more thorough quantitative analysis employing Likert scales to evaluate 243 respondents' attitudes towards parasocial relationships and trustworthiness. Although the study offers strong sector-specific insights, bias may be introduced due to its reliance on convenience sampling. Furthermore, the findings' direct applicability is limited by the lack of emphasis on sustainable food. This scale could be modified and validated for sustainable food marketing in future research to increase its impact and relevance.

In their systematic literature review Kanaveedu and Kalapurackal (2024) synthesize the results of 65 influencer marketing-related articles. Although this comprehensive summary provides a useful framework for comprehending current trends, it is devoid of primary data and excludes the creation or testing of particular measurement scales. The authors suggest creating instruments that have been empirically tested in order to better capture the subtleties of sustainable food purchase intentions. The reviews' usefulness is still restricted in the absence of such primary data.

Through the use of Likert scales and multiple regression analysis Thapa (2023) investigates the effects of influencer credibility and brand trust among 230 participants. The study emphasizes the significance of trust in influencing purchase decisions and exhibits strong statistical rigor. The results of the study, which was carried out in Thailand, might not be entirely relevant to the Indian consumer environment. For contextual accuracy, these tools must be modified to take into account Indian consumers' purchasing habits for sustainable foods.

Although the study lacks specific measurement instruments and empirical validation, Yi (2023) offers theoretical insights into influencer marketing by examining perceived expertise and trustworthiness. This restricts its use in real-world scenarios. According to the study, in order to support empirical research and cross-context comparisons, future research must create validated Likert scales especially suited to the sustainable food industry.

Using a 2x2 experimental design, Ferreira (2021) examines the endorsements of green products, evaluating attitudes and purchase intentions using Likert scales. Strong proof of the effectiveness of influencer endorsements is provided by the study's controlled setting and rigorous methodology. Nonetheless, it continues to emphasize green products in general rather than contexts specific to particular foods. For marketers aiming to reach eco-aware consumers, tailoring these scales for the sustainable food sector may provide more useful information.

Mazumder (2023) investigates the impact of Bangladeshi YouTubers on consumer behavior through qualitative thematic analysis. The study clarifies regional trends in content consumption and offers insightful cultural viewpoints. However, the lack of formal measurement scales restricts the capacity to make more generalizations or repeat the research in other settings. Research on influencer effectiveness in South Asian food sustainability domains could be improved by developing culturally sensitive Likert scales.

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Reiterating its synthesis of earlier research without empirical data or developed measurement tools Kanaveedu and Kalapurackals (2024) work is included in the reviewed literature. The review is helpful in defining future research avenues but the repetition emphasizes how urgently primary research is needed to operationalize and theorize factors linked to micro-influencer credibility trust and sustainable purchase intentions.

**Table 1: Key Measurement Scales for Instagram Micro-Influencers**

Antecedent factors for organic food intention (knowledge, attitudes, trust, past experience)	<b>Parwez, Ansari &amp; Mullick (2022):</b> <i>Examining the Antecedents of Behavioral Intention toward Organic Food in India, Sustainability and Climate Change</i>	Knowledge, attitudes, trust, experience, behavioral intention (TPB and SOR-based)	Trust and knowledge—often conveyed via micro-influencer content—emerged as significant predictors in the Indian context .

Paper (Year)	Influencer Focus	Constructs / Scales	Measurement Model	Key “Most Influential” Drivers
<b>De Veirman, Cauberghe &amp; Hudders (2017)</b> <i>Marketing through Instagram influencers</i>	Follower-count tiers (micro vs. macro)	– Perceived Popularity (3-item)– Influencer Credibility (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness via Ohanian, 1990)	Covariance-based SEM	Higher perceived popularity + expertise drive stronger brand attitudes for micro-influencers
<b>Djafarova &amp; Rushworth (2017)</b> <i>Exploring the credibility of online celebrities’ Instagram posts</i>	Celebrity vs. micro-influencers	– Authenticity (4-item)– Trustworthiness (4-item)– Attractiveness (4-item)	PLS-SEM	Authenticity and trustworthiness are significantly higher for micro-influencers, leading to greater purchase intent
<b>Casaló, Flavián &amp; Ibáñez-Sánchez (2018)</b> <i>Influencers on Instagram: Antecedents and consequences</i>	Opinion leaders (= micro-influencers)	– Source Expertise (5-item)– Self-Congruity (3-item)– Social Identification (4-item)	PLS-SEM + Multi-group	Expertise and self-brand congruity most strongly predict intent to follow recommendations
<b>Lou &amp; Yuan (2019)</b> <i>How message value &amp; credibility affect</i>	Instagram influencers	– Message Informativeness (4-item)– Message Entertainment (4-item)– Influencer	Covariance SEM	Informativeness and credibility jointly maximize consumer trust

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consumer trust of branded content		Credibility (adapted Ohanian)		and mediated purchase intention
<b>Ki, Cuevas, Chong &amp; Lim (2020)</b> <i>Social media influencers as human brands</i>	Micro-influencers on Instagram	– Parasocial Intimacy (4-item, Tsay & Bodine revision)– Perceived Authenticity (4-item)– Engagement Intention (3-item)	PLS-SEM	Parasocial intimacy and authenticity are top predictors of engagement intent
<b>Jin, Muqaddam &amp; Ryu (2019)</b> <i>Instafamous &amp; social media influencer marketing</i>	“Instafamous” micro-influencers	– Personal Branding Strength (5-item)– Relational Capital (4-item)– Content Congruence (4-item)	Covariance SEM + Bootstrapping	Relational capital (follower–influencer bond) drives both trust and purchase intention

**Table 2: Methodological Trends & Themes Driving Sustainable Food Purchase Intention**

Theme	Method / Approach	Typical Sample & Context	Key Papers & Links
Parasocial Influence on Food Purchase	SEM with PLS-SEM; multi-group analysis (micro vs macro influencers)	389–654 consumers (Brazil/China/Suzhou light-meal context)	Agnihotri et al. (2023), <i>Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services</i> <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.104070">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2023.104070</a>
Xu et al. (2025), <i>Food Quality and Preference</i> <a href="https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2025.104112">https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodqual.2025.104112</a>			
Micro-Influencer Food Endorsements	PLS-SEM; focus on credibility & informative content	439 Instagram users, Indonesian local-food context	Syarif et al. (2025), <i>Journal of Culinary Science &amp; Technology</i> <a href="https://journal.ipb.ac.id/index.php/jics/article/download/61105/30196">https://journal.ipb.ac.id/index.php/jics/article/download/61105/30196</a>
Self-Disclosure & Purchase Intention	SEM + ANN (neural-network ranking)	500+ respondents, cross-cultural (China, Brazil)	W Wu et al. (2023) u et al. (2023), <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i> <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652623020486">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652623020486</a>

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Scale Review for PSI/PSR	Systematic literature review (n ≈ 72 studies)	Mixed-methods; global literature synthesis	Bizjak Zabukovec (2024), <i>Sustainability</i> <a href="https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/16/17/7782">https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/16/17/7782</a>
<b>Environmental Concern &amp; Self-Disclosure</b>	SEM with mediation; environmental framing	628 respondents, China (green food products)	Wu et al. (2023), <i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i> <a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652623020486">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0959652623020486</a>
<b>Social Norms &amp; Social Identity</b>	Survey + CB-SEM; group-norm moderation	412 Chinese consumers, social-media context	Wu et al. (2025), <i>Scientific Reports</i> <a href="https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-89689-4">https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-89689-4</a>
<b>Light-Meal Influencer Platforms</b>	PLS-SEM; platform-specific endorsement analysis	550 light-meal consumers, multi-country (China, India, Indonesia)	Qin et al. (2024), <i>Sustainability</i> <a href="https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/16/11/4369">https://www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/16/11/4369</a>
<b>Health Consciousness &amp; Influencer Credibility</b>	SEM; TPB extension with influencer variables	422 Indian consumers, organic/plant-based dairy category	Raj, Rai & Jasrotia (2024), <i>Social Responsibility Journal</i> <a href="https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/SRJ-01-2022-0022/full/html">https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/SRJ-01-2022-0022/full/html</a>

**Table 1.2 Catalog of Measurement Scales and Methodological Trends**

Study	Measurement Scales	Methodology	Key Variables
Gupta & Mahajan (2019)	Qualitative responses (open-ended)	Qualitative analysis, interviews (135 users, 15 micro-influencers, 8 business owners)	Credibility, relatability, purchase intention
Vanha-Aho (2023)	Thematic analysis codes	Semi-structured interviews, thematic analysis (8 participants)	Authenticity, credibility, consumer behavior
Ebulueme & Vijayakumar (2024)	Not specified (exploratory)	Literature review, conceptual framework	Authenticity, purchase intention
Puspita (2023)	Likert-scale (trustworthiness, expertise, credibility, parasocial relationship)	Quantitative, PLS-SEM (253 respondents)	Trustworthiness, parasocial relationship
Bucha (2022)	Likert-scale (source credibility, information usefulness)	Quantitative survey (277 valid responses)	Source credibility, attitude, purchase intention
Misra et al. (2024)	Likert-scale (attitude, willingness to buy)	Experimental 2x2 design (197 participants)	Influencer type, content type
Nayak & Das (n.d.)	Not specified (exploratory)	Qualitative, case studies	Authenticity, engagement
Louna (2022)	Thematic analysis codes	Qualitative interviews (6 influencers, 7 followers)	Attitude, intention, behavior
Pereira et al. (2023)	Likert-scale (attitude homophily, trustworthiness, parasocial relationship)	Quantitative survey (243 respondents)	Trustworthiness, purchase intention
Kanaveedu & Kalapurackal (2024)	Not specified (systematic review)	Systematic literature review (65 articles)	Consumer behavior, influencer characteristics
Thapa (2023)	Likert-scale (brand trust, eWOM, influencer credibility)	Quantitative, multiple regression (230 respondents)	Brand advocacy, purchase intention
Yi (2023)	Not specified (exploratory)	Literature review, conceptual	Influencer type, trustworthiness
Ferreira (2021)	Likert-scale (attitude, purchase intention)	Experimental 2x2 design	Environmental concern, influencer reach
Mazumder (2023)	Thematic analysis codes	Qualitative, interviews, content analysis	Cultural influence, motivation
Kanaveedu & Kalapurackal (2024) (repeat)	Not specified (systematic review)	Systematic literature review (65 articles)	Consumer behavior, influencer characteristics

### **Research Gaps**

A survey of the current literature identifies a number of important gaps. Only a small number of studies incorporate sociocultural economic and policy-specific aspects unique to India into the framework for sustainable food behavior. Local realities like regional food ecosystems income-level diversity and religious dietary norms are ignored. The focus of the majority of empirical research is on macro or celebrity influencers. Research on the effects of micro- or nano-influencers who are more trustworthy and genuine on sustainable eating habits is lacking particularly when it comes to specialized or local Indian audiences. Existing research using TPB frequently ignores the ways in which external stimuli like perceived authenticity influencer credibility and content engagement shape attitudes. Although TPB is useful for forecasting behavioral outcomes it is deficient in an explanation of attitude formation which is a crucial component of research on influencer impact. Studies vary in how they apply and modify measurement scales particularly when it comes to capturing concepts like perceived behavioral control in influencer-driven campaigns social proof and source credibility.

### **Analysis**

A fragmented but developing body of research on the role of micro-influencers in influencing consumers intentions to purchase sustainable food is revealed by the systematic literature review. The 15 examined studies use a variety of approaches, such as quantitative surveys, experimental designs, qualitative interviews, and systematic reviews. The measurement scales used in these studies range from thematic coding to Likert-based tools. In line with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework, important constructs like authenticity, parasocial relationships, trustworthiness, and source credibility continuously show up as important drivers of purchase intention. Nonetheless, the review points out important contextual and methodological restrictions. Qualitative research (e.g., offers valuable perspectives on relatability and authenticity (Gupta and Mahajan 2019, Vanha-Aho 2023)), but its limited generalizability is caused by its small sample sizes and lack of standardized scales. Quantitative research (e.g., Puspita 2023; Pereira et al. 2023) offers statistical rigor, but it is frequently limited by contexts specific to a given region (e.g., Greater Jakarta, Thailand) or domains that are not specifically related to food, making it less applicable to India's sustainable food sector. Designs of experiments (e.g., Misra et al. 2024; Ferreira 2021) provide controlled insights, but they are constrained by small sample sizes and a dearth of scales tailored to sustainability. thorough evaluations (e.g., Kanaveedu and Kalapurackal (2024) highlight a lack of empirically validated scales by synthesizing broad trends without primary data. Comprehensive knowledge of the long-term effects of micro-influencers is further hampered by the lack of longitudinal studies and the uneven scale adaptation, especially for Indian sociocultural quirks. The review emphasizes that in order to close the intention-behavior gap in India's sustainable food context, culturally appropriate, empirically sound scales and experimental designs are required.

### **Conclusion**

Because of their genuineness dependability and high level of engagement with niche audiences' micro-influencers play a crucial role in encouraging sustainable food purchase intentions in India according to this systematic literature review. According to the research micro-influencers are more successful at building parasocial connections and trust than macro or celebrity influencers which is in line with Generation Zs desire for relatable and trustworthy voices. Significant gaps still exist though such as a dearth of research specifically focused on India uneven measurement standards and a dearth of experimental or longitudinal studies to demonstrate causality and long-term effects. Although the TPB framework is good at capturing behavioral intentions it needs to be combined with other theories such

as Source Credibility Theory to provide a more comprehensive explanation of how attitudes are formed in influencer-driven campaigns. In order to assess concepts like authenticity and trust in India's heterogeneous sociocultural and economic environment future research should focus on creating standardized culturally sensitive scales. Furthermore, to evaluate the long-term effects of micro-influencer campaigns on sustainable food consumption experimental and longitudinal designs are required. In order to help India achieve its sustainability goals researchers and practitioners can improve the effectiveness of micro-influencer strategies in closing the intention-behavior gap.

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