



The Influence of Social Media Influencer on Consumer Repurchase Intention through the Mechanism of Trust: Evidence from Chinese Social Commerce

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the relationship between influencer authenticity and trust, the relationship between trust and post-purchase satisfaction, and the relationship between post-purchase satisfaction and repurchase intention. It also aimed to investigate the mediating role of trust in the relationship between influencer authenticity and post-purchase satisfaction in the context of Chinese social commerce. The sample comprised 637 Chinese social media users with experience purchasing products recommended by influencers. Data were collected using an online questionnaire and analyzed in AMOS using confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and bootstrap mediation analysis with 5,000 resamples. The research findings revealed that: 1) influencer authenticity was significantly and positively associated with trust; 2) trust was significantly and positively associated with post-purchase satisfaction, while post-purchase satisfaction was significantly and positively associated with repurchase intention; and 3) trust significantly mediated the positive association between influencer authenticity and post-purchase satisfaction. These findings highlight authenticity-based trust as an important psychological mechanism in consumers' post-purchase evaluations and underscore the association between satisfaction and repurchase intention.

Keywords : Authenticity; Trust; Satisfaction; Repurchase Intention; Influencer Marketing

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Introduction

Influencer marketing embeds commercial persuasion within personal storytelling and ongoing social interaction. Consumers therefore evaluate not only product claims but also whether the source appears sincere, transparent, and consistent. Recent research shows that perceived authenticity, identity consistency, and influencer-product congruence shape how audiences interpret sponsored recommendations and whether they respond with confidence or skepticism (Lee & Eastin, 2021; Liao & Chen, 2024; Zniva et al., 2023). Authenticity is consequently central to explaining why some influencer messages generate trust whereas others evoke resistance. Broader synthesis and campaign-level evidence further shows that source credibility, product congruence, and content originality are central to influencer effectiveness across platforms (Belanche et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2021).

This mechanism is especially relevant in Chinese social commerce, where livestream content, real-time interaction, platform recommendation, and purchasing functions often converge. Recent live-commerce research shows that broadcaster cues and synchronous interaction can reduce uncertainty and cultivate trust, while trust supports users' intention to continue using the commerce format (Lu & Chen, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). The setting therefore provides a theoretically consequential context for examining how authenticity-based judgments carry forward after an influencer-related purchase.

Existing influencer research has concentrated mainly on engagement and initial purchase outcomes, leaving the post-purchase sequence from authenticity to trust, satisfaction, and repurchase intention less clearly specified. Recent live-streaming evidence nevertheless indicates that trust and satisfaction are relevant internal states for continued purchase and repurchase intention (Meng & Lin, 2023). To address this gap, the present study integrates the Stimulus-Organism-Response model with a trust-transfer perspective: Authenticity is modeled as the external stimulus, Trust and Satisfaction as sequential internal states, and Repurchase Intention as the response. The resulting model specifies a parsimonious trust-centered route from an influencer-related cue to post-purchase evaluation and continued buying intention (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026). This framing responds to calls to move beyond isolated engagement metrics and examine linked psychological and post-purchase outcomes within a coherent mechanism (Leung et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2021).

Objectives

1. To examine whether Authenticity is positively associated with Trust in influencer-mediated commerce.
2. To examine whether Trust is positively associated with Satisfaction and whether Satisfaction is positively associated with Repurchase Intention.
3. To test the indirect association between Authenticity and Satisfaction through Trust.

Literature Review

The literature review positions the four focal constructs within two complementary theoretical perspectives: the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework and the trust-transfer perspective. It first details the foundational S-O-R logic, then conceptualizes influencer Authenticity and Trust as pre-purchase cognitive cues and organismic states, and finally specifies post-purchase Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention as downstream outcome variables. This theoretical sequence provides a rigorous basis for the conceptual framework and structural hypotheses.

Stimulus-Organism-Response Model

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model explains how environmental stimuli shape internal psychological states that subsequently influence behavioral responses (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). In live-streaming and social-commerce research, broadcaster attributes, interaction features, and content cues are treated as stimuli, trust and satisfaction as organismic states, and continued purchase or repurchase intention as the response (Meng & Lin, 2023; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026). Accordingly, this study treats influencer Authenticity as the focal stimulus, Trust and post-purchase Satisfaction as sequential organismic states, and Repurchase Intention as the downstream response. This mapping distinguishes perceptions of the influencer from consumers' internal confidence and post-purchase evaluation and is appropriate to social commerce, where promotional communication, platform interaction, and transaction functions coexist within one digital environment. The S-O-R model therefore provides the process logic linking an authenticity cue to Trust, Satisfaction, and Repurchase Intention.

Influencer Authenticity

Influencer Authenticity is defined as the extent to which consumers perceive a social media influencer as sincere, transparent, consistent, distinctive, and congruent with the endorsed product (Lee & Eastin, 2021; Zniva et al., 2023). Authenticity is not merely a static personal trait; it is a context-sensitive, carefully managed evaluation influenced by content presentation style, commercial disclosure behavior, passion expression, and influencer-brand alignment. Recent empirical investigations establish that authenticity management strategies and congruent sponsored communications significantly mitigate consumer perceptions of commercial opportunism, thereby boosting digital audience engagement and persuasive effectiveness (Belanche et al., 2021; Liao & Chen, 2024). Furthermore, synthesized evidence across platforms demonstrates that source credibility, product-influencer fit, and original content creation are central drivers of influencer marketing success (Leung et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2021).

Trust-Transfer Perspective and Trust

Trust refers to consumers' confidence that an influencer's product recommendation is reliable and not opportunistically biased, particularly when product quality cannot be fully assessed before purchase (Zhang et al., 2022; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026). The trust-transfer perspective explains how trust associated with a credible communicator can extend to a linked recommendation, product, or transaction context. In influencer-mediated commerce, perceived authenticity and credibility provide the relational basis for such transfer, while congruent influencer-product communication strengthens consumers' willingness to rely on the recommendation (Alcantara-Pilar et al., 2024; Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026). The tested model does not include an untested direct path from Trust to Repurchase Intention; instead, Satisfaction is specified as the proximal post-purchase evaluation through which trust-related judgments carry forward.

Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

Satisfaction is the consumer's post-purchase evaluation of whether the product experience met expectations, whereas Repurchase Intention is the stated willingness to buy again in the future. Social-commerce research identifies Trust and Satisfaction as important states associated with continuance and repurchase intention (Meng & Lin, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). This distinction is important because persuasive influencer content can generate an initial purchase without ensuring a satisfactory product experience. Trust shapes how consumers approach the recommendation, while Satisfaction reflects their subsequent evaluation of the value delivered (Pan et al., 2025). In the proposed model, Satisfaction is therefore the immediate predictor of Repurchase Intention; no direct Trust-to-Repurchase Intention path is claimed.



Conceptual Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the conceptual framework treats Authenticity as the stimulus, Trust and Satisfaction as organismic states, and Repurchase Intention as the behavioral response. The formal mediation test in this article focuses on the validated indirect path from Authenticity to Satisfaction through Trust.

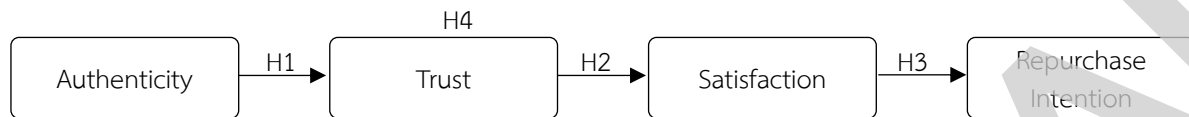


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Hypotheses:

- H1: Authenticity is positively associated with Trust.
- H2: Trust is positively associated with Satisfaction.
- H3: Satisfaction is positively associated with Repurchase Intention.
- H4: Trust mediates the positive association between Authenticity and Satisfaction.

Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The target population consisted of Chinese social media users who had prior exposure to influencer-related purchase contexts. Because no complete sampling frame exists for all Chinese users who view, evaluate, or purchase products recommended by social media influencers, the population was operationally defined by three criteria. First, respondents had to be social media users in China. Second, they had to have encountered influencer product recommendations. Third, they had to have sufficient experience to evaluate influencer-related purchase contexts. This definition ensured that the population was directly aligned with the research objectives and the trust-based mechanism examined in this article.

The final analytical sample comprised 637 screened responses from first-tier cities and from second-tier cities or provincial capitals. Because no probability sampling frame was available, recruitment is described as non-probability criterion-based online sampling: respondents had to be Chinese social-media users with influencer-recommendation exposure and related purchase experience. The sample exceeds common minimum requirements for covariance-based structural equation modeling, but inference remains limited to the eligible urban users represented in the analytical file rather than all Chinese consumers.

Research Instruments

The structured questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). It contained 16 Authenticity items adapted from an established scale (Lee & Eastin, 2021), eight Trust items, three Satisfaction items, and three Repurchase Intention items. The items captured sincerity, transparency, consistency, influencer-product congruence, confidence in the recommended brand, post-purchase evaluation, and willingness to purchase again. Recent work provides construct-level support for the trust-transfer and continued-purchase logic (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026; Alcantara-Pilar et al., 2024); these studies are not treated as the sole item sources where the available questionnaire record does not establish that provenance. This distinction separates scale adaptation from conceptual support and makes the measurement basis transparent.

Before formal data collection, five academic experts reviewed the questionnaire for content relevance, conceptual alignment, clarity, and wording using an Item-Objective Congruence framework. The panel comprised three internal and two external specialists whose professional roles collectively covered academic administration, research and innovation, school leadership, and university administration. A 50-response pilot survey was subsequently conducted on January 21-22, 2026 to assess preliminary internal consistency and respondent comprehension. Cronbach's alpha was .96 for Authenticity, .97 for Trust, .93 for Satisfaction, and .97 for Repurchase Intention; therefore, all focal items were retained. The final analytical dataset comprised 637 valid responses and was used for the CFA, SEM, bias diagnostics, and bootstrap mediation reported in this article.

Data Collection

The formal online survey was administered from January 25 to February 25, 2026. Recruitment used a criterion-based online approach because no complete sampling frame exists for Chinese social-media users with influencer-related purchase experience. Eligibility screening required respondents to be located in China, to have encountered influencer product recommendations, and to have sufficient purchase experience to evaluate the focal constructs. Participation was voluntary, responses were collected through the online questionnaire platform, and records were screened for completeness and usability before analysis. The final dataset contained 637 valid questionnaires from first-tier cities and from second-tier cities or provincial capitals. The sample composition supports examination of the proposed mechanism in the represented urban social-commerce context but is not interpreted as nationally representative.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the maximum-likelihood covariance-structure procedure specified for AMOS. The 637-case analytical file was screened for missing values, duplicate rows, response duration, univariate shape, and multivariate normality. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin and Bartlett tests assessed factorability. Common-method concentration was examined with the first unrotated component and a single-factor CFA, and an early-versus-late response-wave comparison provided a non-response-bias proxy. A four-factor CFA assessed the measurement model; reliability and validity were evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, AVE, and latent correlations. The hypothesized structural model then estimated direct effects, exact standard errors and critical ratios, R^2 values, and the indirect effect using 5,000 nonparametric bootstrap samples with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals. Fit was evaluated using χ^2/df , RMSEA, CFI, TLI, and SRMR, with conventional thresholds treated as indicative rather than absolute (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2023).

Results and Discussion

The demographic profile of the formal survey respondents is presented in Table 1. A total of 637 valid responses were retained for analysis. The table reports gender, age, education level, monthly income, and residence of the respondents.

**Table 1** Sample profile of the formal survey respondents (N = 637)

Category	Label	n	%
Gender	Male	102	16.01
	Female	535	83.99
Age	Under 20 years old	106	16.64
	21-30 years old	168	26.37
	31-40 years old	244	38.30
	41-50 years old	118	18.52
	51 years and above	1	0.16
Education level	Below bachelor's degree	128	20.09
	Bachelor's degree	363	56.99
	Above bachelor's degree	146	22.92
Monthly income (RMB)	Below 2,000	92	14.44
	2,000-4,000	50	7.85
	4,000-6,000	100	15.70
	6,000-8,000	94	14.76
	8,000-10,000	113	17.74
	Above 10,000	188	29.51
Residence	First-tier cities	215	33.75
	Second-tier cities and provincial capitals	422	66.25

As shown in Table 1, women represented 83.99% of respondents, the largest age group was 31-40 years (38.30%), and bachelor's-degree holders formed the largest education group (56.99%). Most respondents lived in second-tier cities or provincial capitals (66.25%). These figures describe the analytical sample and should not be generalized to the Chinese population.

The analytical file contained 637 complete rows, with no missing item responses and no exact duplicate full records. Completion time ranged from 122 to 637 seconds ($M = 234.84$, $SD = 53.10$). Item skewness ranged from -0.79 to -0.32 and excess kurtosis from -0.41 to 0.19. The KMO value was 0.97, and Bartlett's test was significant, $\chi^2(435) = 11,058.22$, $p < .01$, supporting factor analysis.

Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis tests were significant (skewness = 125.84, $\chi^2(4,960) = 13,359.49$, $p < .01$; kurtosis = 1,218.41, $z = 74.42$, $p < .01$). Because strict multivariate normality was not supported, inference for the indirect effect used nonparametric bootstrap confidence intervals in addition to maximum-likelihood point estimates.

The first unrotated principal component explained 42.51% of total item variance. In addition, the single-factor CFA fit poorly ($\chi^2 = 2,963.65$, $df = 405$, $\chi^2/df = 7.32$, $RMSEA = 0.10$, $CFI = 0.76$, $TLI = 0.75$, $SRMR = 0.09$) and was substantially inferior to the four-factor solution. These diagnostics indicate that one common factor did not dominate the covariance structure, although common-method bias cannot be ruled out. In the first-versus-last 20% response-wave comparison, Authenticity, Trust, and Satisfaction did not differ after Holm adjustment (adjusted $p = 0.61$, 0.26 , and 0.33), whereas Repurchase Intention was higher in the late wave (adjusted $p = 0.04$, $|d| = 0.33$). Thus, wave-related non-response bias appears limited for three constructs but remains a caution for Repurchase Intention.

The four-factor measurement model demonstrated good fit: $\chi^2 = 583.22$, $df = 399$, $\chi^2/df = 1.46$, RMSEA = 0.03, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.98, and SRMR = 0.03. Standardized loadings ranged from 0.65 to 0.83. These results supported evaluation of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Descriptive statistics, internal consistency, and convergent validity are reported in Table 2. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability exceeded 0.70 for every construct, and AVE exceeded 0.50.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics, reliability, and convergent validity

Construct	Mean	S.D.	α	CR	AVE
Authenticity (AUCT)	3.31	0.79	0.95	0.95	0.54
Trust (TRST)	3.48	0.80	0.90	0.90	0.52
Satisfaction (SAFT)	3.52	0.90	0.83	0.83	0.62
Repurchase Intention (RPIT)	3.60	0.97	0.85	0.85	0.65

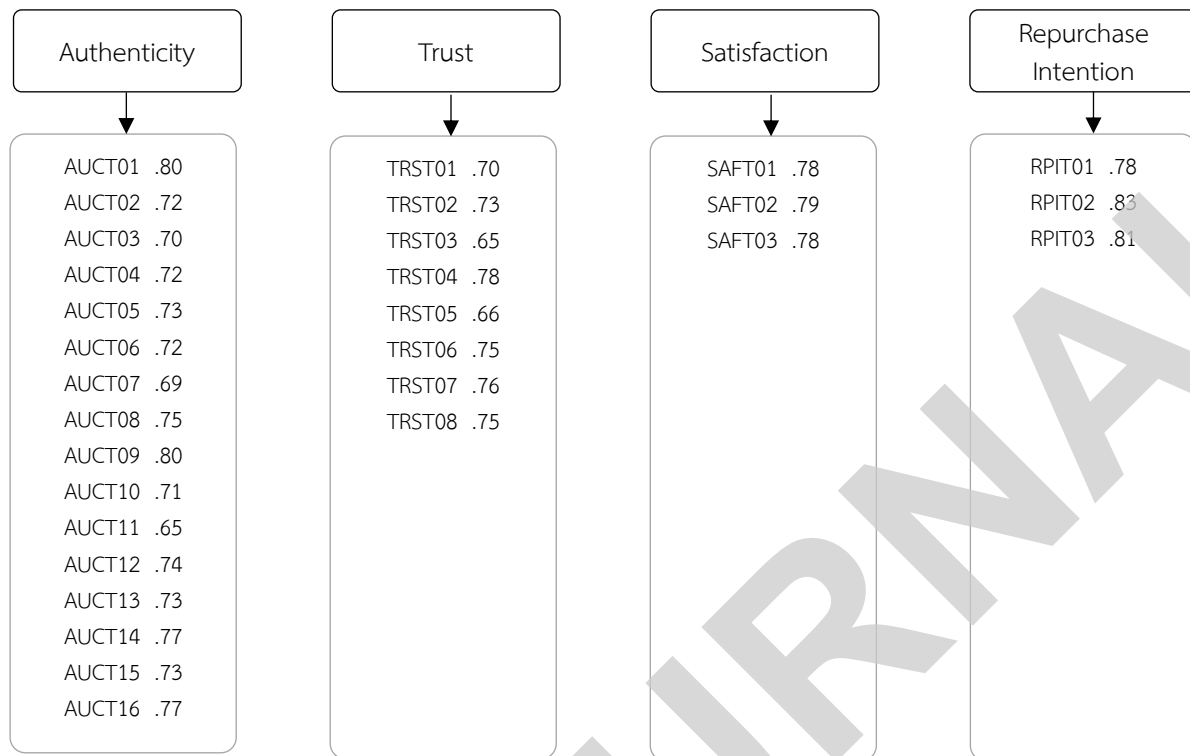
Table 2 shows moderate-to-high construct means on the five-point scale. Reliability and convergent-validity criteria were satisfied for all four constructs.

Discriminant validity was assessed by comparing each construct's square root of AVE with the latent correlations from the four-factor CFA. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Discriminant validity: CFA latent correlations and square roots of AVE

Construct	AUCT	TRST	SAFT	RPIT
AUCT	0.74			
TRST	0.59	0.72		
SAFT	0.61	0.58	0.79	
RPIT	0.53	0.58	0.57	0.80

In Table 3, every diagonal square-root-of-AVE value exceeds the corresponding CFA latent correlations, supporting discriminant validity. These correlations are measurement-model associations; they are not expected to equal the standardized regression weights in Table 5, which are conditional structural effects under the directional model.



Standardized four-factor CFA solution (N = 637); latent correlations are reported in Table 3

Figure 2 Final four-factor CFA model (standardized loadings; N = 637)

Before the objective-specific findings, model fit was assessed. Table 4 compares the common-method single-factor diagnostic, the four-factor measurement model, and the hypothesized structural model. The four-factor CFA and structural model met the stated fit benchmarks, whereas the single-factor model did not.

Table 4 Model-fit comparison

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
Single-factor CFA	2,963.65	405	7.32	0.10	0.76	0.75	0.09
Four-factor CFA	583.22	399	1.46	0.03	0.98	0.98	0.03
Structural model	728.49	402	1.81	0.04	0.97	0.97	0.08

The structural model showed acceptable fit: $\chi^2 = 728.49$, $df = 402$, $\chi^2/df = 1.81$, $RMSEA = 0.04$, $CFI = 0.97$, $TLI = 0.97$, and $SRMR = 0.08$.

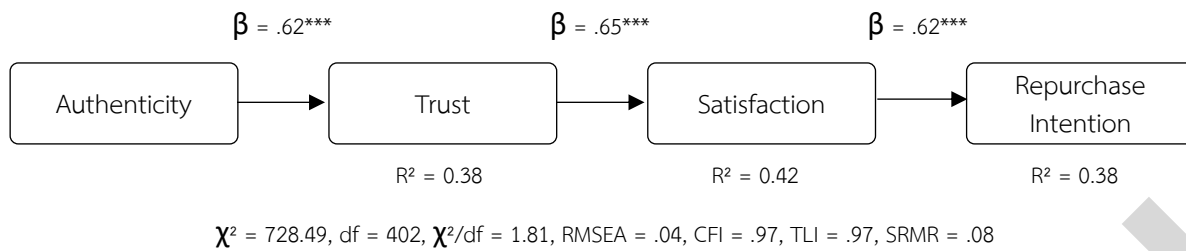


Figure 3 Final structural model (Standardized Estimates; N = 637)

After acceptable structural-model fit was established, the hypothesized direct paths were evaluated. Table 5 reports unstandardized estimates, unrounded-model standard errors, exact critical ratios, p values, and standardized coefficients.

Table 5 Structural path results for the direct effects

H	Path	b	SE	C.R.	p	β
H1	AUCT $\rightarrow$ TRST	0.53	0.04	13.13	<.01	0.62
H2	TRST $\rightarrow$ SAFT	0.74	0.06	12.81	<.01	0.65
H3	SAFT $\rightarrow$ RPIT	0.65	0.05	12.50	<.01	0.62

1. Authenticity was positively associated with Trust ($\beta = 0.62$, C.R. = 13.13, $p < .01$). The result indicates that perceived sincerity, transparency, consistency, and influencer-product congruence can operate as uncertainty-reducing cues in influencer-mediated commerce. This interpretation accords with evidence that audiences assess whether sponsored communication is consistent with an influencer's identity and with research showing that credible broadcaster cues reduce uncertainty in live commerce (Lee & Eastin, 2021; Lu & Chen, 2021; Liao & Chen, 2024; Zniva et al., 2023). The finding also shows that authenticity extends beyond disclosure to the congruence of promotional content with the influencer's established identity and endorsed product, consistent with broader credibility and influencer-effectiveness research (Belanche et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2022; Vrontis et al., 2021).

2. Trust was positively associated with Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.65$, C.R. = 12.81, $p < .01$), and Satisfaction was positively associated with Repurchase Intention ($\beta = 0.62$, C.R. = 12.50, $p < .01$). These findings extend trust beyond initial persuasion to consumers' evaluation of the purchase experience and position Satisfaction as the proximal post-purchase state in the tested model. This pattern is consistent with live-commerce research linking Trust and Satisfaction to continuance and repurchase outcomes (Zhang et al., 2022; Meng & Lin, 2023). It does not establish the untested direct Trust-to-Repurchase Intention path. Rather, the results indicate that trust formed before or during a transaction is carried forward through the subsequent product evaluation and that stated Repurchase Intention is associated with whether the experience met expectations.

The coefficients of determination for the endogenous constructs are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6** Coefficients of determination (R^2)

Endogenous construct	R^2
Trust	0.38
Satisfaction	0.42
Repurchase Intention	0.38

As shown in Table 6, the model explained 37.92% of the variance in Trust, 41.90% in Satisfaction, and 37.78% in Repurchase Intention. These values indicate meaningful explanatory power for a deliberately parsimonious mechanism, but they also show that substantial variance remains attributable to factors outside the model. Product quality, price, platform safeguards, prior brand experience, social influence, and situational purchase motives may independently shape post-purchase evaluation and continued buying intention.

3. The indirect effect of Authenticity on Satisfaction through Trust was estimated using 5,000 nonparametric bootstrap resamples and a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. The result is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Bootstrapped mediation effect

H	Indirect path	Effect	Boot SE	95% BC CI	Result
H4	AUCT $\rightarrow$ TRST $\rightarrow$ SAFT	0.39	0.04	[0.32, 0.47]	Supported

The unstandardized indirect effect of Authenticity on Satisfaction through Trust was 0.39 (Boot SE = 0.04, 95% bias-corrected CI [0.32, 0.47]); the corresponding standardized indirect effect was 0.40. Because the interval excluded zero, Trust mediated the association between Authenticity and Satisfaction. In S-O-R terms, Authenticity functioned as the stimulus and Trust and Satisfaction as sequential organismic states (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Meng & Lin, 2023). From the trust-transfer perspective, confidence associated with authentic influencer communication can extend to the recommendation context (Wang & Chan-Olmsted, 2026). In Chinese social commerce, where livestreaming, interaction, recommendation, and purchasing functions are closely connected, the result clarifies how post-purchase evaluation may depend on continuity between the pre-purchase message and the subsequent product experience (Libai et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2025). The indirect effect supports the specified association chain but does not prove causality or actual repeat-purchase behavior.

Conclusion

1. Perceived influencer Authenticity was positively associated with Trust among Chinese social media users with influencer-related purchase experience ($\beta = 0.62$, $p < .01$). Perceived sincerity, transparency, consistency, and influencer-product congruence therefore function as upstream cues associated with confidence in an influencer recommendation. The cross-sectional design, however, does not establish that Authenticity causes Trust.

2. Trust was positively associated with post-purchase Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.65$, $p < .01$), and Satisfaction was positively associated with Repurchase Intention ($\beta = 0.62$, $p < .01$). The results position Satisfaction as the proximal post-purchase evaluation associated with continued buying intention. They do not test a direct Trust-to-Repurchase Intention path and should not be interpreted as evidence of actual repeat purchasing.

3. Authenticity was indirectly associated with Satisfaction through Trust (unstandardized indirect effect = 0.39, Boot SE = 0.04, 95% bias-corrected CI [0.32, 0.47]). Trust therefore operated as the psychological bridge specified in the model between authenticity cues and post-purchase evaluation. Taken together, the findings support a parsimonious upstream route Authenticity to Trust to Satisfaction to Repurchase Intention in Chinese social commerce while remaining limited to cross-sectional, self-reported associations and stated intention.

Contribution

Theoretically, this study connects the S-O-R model with the trust-transfer perspective by specifying Authenticity as the stimulus, Trust and Satisfaction as sequential organismic states, and Repurchase Intention as the response. This extends S-O-R applications in social commerce beyond immediate purchase outcomes and clarifies how trust associated with influencer communication is carried into post-purchase evaluation. Empirically, the study tests a focused four-construct route among 637 Chinese social-media users and distinguishes measurement-model correlations from conditional structural effects. Practically, the findings indicate that brands should assess authenticity cues and post-purchase Satisfaction together rather than rely only on reach or immediate conversion.

Suggestion

1. Brands should incorporate sincerity, transparency, communication consistency, demonstrated product use, and influencer-product fit into influencer screening and campaign briefs. Selection should combine audience and reach metrics with a documented assessment of whether the influencer's established identity, expertise, and communication style are naturally aligned with the endorsed product. This reduces the risk that consumers interpret the recommendation as opportunistic or excessively commercialized.

2. Campaign execution should require clear commercial disclosure while allowing influencers to communicate in a manner consistent with their established voice. Firms should avoid rigid scripts, exaggerated claims, and promises that the product cannot reliably deliver. Content review should focus on factual accuracy and regulatory compliance without removing the personal experience and transparency cues that support Trust. Post-campaign monitoring should include consumer questions, complaints, and indications that the message was perceived as misleading.

3. Campaign evaluation should extend beyond impressions, clicks, and immediate conversion to include post-purchase Satisfaction, repeat-buying tendency, product returns, customer-service feedback, and the persistence of favorable brand evaluations. Where possible, firms should connect influencer-specific campaign exposure with cohort-level retention measures while respecting privacy requirements. This broader assessment can distinguish short-lived promotional attention from influencer relationships that create trustworthy recommendations and sustainable consumer retention.

Limitations

1. The study tests a focused four-construct mechanism and does not provide a complete account of every influence on continued buying behavior. Product involvement, platform affordances, sponsorship-disclosure type, influencer category, brand familiarity, and influencer-brand fit may alter how authenticity cues are interpreted. Future research can test these variables as theoretically justified antecedents, mediators, or moderators while preserving a clear distinction between exploratory extensions and the fixed model examined here.



2. The cross-sectional online survey and self-reported measures limit strong causal inference and cannot establish that the observed associations will persist over time. Although the first-component and single-factor-CFA diagnostics did not indicate a dominant common factor, they cannot eliminate common-method bias. The early-versus-late response-wave proxy also identified a small difference in Repurchase Intention (Holm-adjusted $p = .04$, $|d| = .33$), so non-response-related sensitivity for this outcome should be considered. Longitudinal, experimental, transactional, or platform-behavioral data would permit stronger tests of temporal ordering and actual repeat purchase.

3. The analytical sample represents eligible users in first-tier cities and in second-tier cities or provincial capitals; it does not establish national representativeness. Women also constituted a large majority of the sample, which may limit the transferability of the descriptive profile to other consumer groups. Broader probability-based or carefully stratified samples are needed to compare gender groups, city tiers, regions, social-commerce platforms, product categories, and influencer types. Such work should test measurement invariance before interpreting differences in structural paths.

4. The focal constructs were examined in Chinese influencer-mediated social commerce, and the questionnaire was applied to respondents with relevant recommendation and purchase experience. Cross-platform and cross-cultural validation is required before assuming that the same measurement structure and trust-centered route apply to livestreaming and non-livestreaming formats, high- and low-involvement products, or other cultural settings. Future studies should also compare stated Repurchase Intention with verified behavioral outcomes to determine when intention is translated into actual repeat purchasing.

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