

Momfluencers as mere advertising vehicles or sources for support? A qualitative study on the experiences of mothers with the breastfeeding related content of momfluencers

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Momfluencers play a significant role in the lives of brand-new mothers. They are considered niche social media influencers (SMIs), credible parenting information sources and are known to exert tremendous influence on their large number of followers. While extensive research has scrutinized influencer marketing, a noteworthy gap exists in understanding how momfluencers can be employed to encourage pro-social behaviors. This study focuses on breastfeeding behavior, a prominent topic on momfluencers' profiles. Despite the clear guidelines on breastfeeding provided by the WHO, global rates remain alarmingly low. While research shows potential in social media content to encourage breastfeeding, insights lack on influencers' role in encouraging breastfeeding among mothers. To address these gaps, our qualitative exploratory study conducted 15 in-depth interviews among breastfeeding mothers who follow momfluencers. Through the lens of social cognitive and social comparison theory, we aimed to explore the experiences of mothers with momfluencers' breastfeeding content.

Keywords: momfluencers; social media; breastfeeding; qualitative research; social marketing