

A Global Bibliometric Analysis of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence Research: Trends, Themes, and Intellectual Structure (1992–2025)

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Abstract

The increasing influence of digital platforms and social media on consumer decision-making has intensified academic interest in Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII), making a comprehensive bibliometric review increasingly important. This study aims to examine the global development of CSII research over the period 1992–2025 using a bibliometric approach. Data were collected from the Scopus database, resulting in a final dataset of 56 relevant documents. The analysis was conducted using VOSviewer version 1.6.20 through four stages: descriptive publication analysis, keyword co-occurrence network analysis, overlay visualization, and density mapping. The findings reveal a fluctuating yet evolving publication trend, with a significant increase after 2010, a peak in 2015, and renewed growth between 2021 and 2023, reflecting the growing importance of social influence in digital consumer environments. The co-occurrence analysis identified seven major research clusters, including consumer behavior and social values, attitudes and product evaluation, interpersonal sensitivity and cultural differences, group influence and purchase intention, emotional and generational factors, sustainable consumption, and digital decision-making. These findings indicate that CSII has evolved from a traditional psychological construct into a multidimensional framework integrating social, cultural, and technological dimensions in understanding consumer behavior. This study contributes to the literature by providing a comprehensive mapping of the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of CSII research. The findings also offer practical implications for marketing strategies, particularly in leveraging social influence, digital trust, and consumer engagement within online platforms. Future research is encouraged to expand data sources and integrate complementary analytical approaches to enrich the understanding of CSII across diverse contexts.

Keywords:

CSII; Consumer behavior; Social influence; Digital marketing; Influencer credibility.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of global communication technologies and digital economic systems has fundamentally transformed how consumers interact with brands and make purchasing decisions (Tan, 2024). In earlier periods, consumer behavior was largely shaped by direct interpersonal relationships and recommendations from close social networks (Sherief et al., 2025). However, with the rise of digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, social influence has expanded beyond physical interactions into complex, networked digital environments (Zayyan & Saino, 2021). These platforms function not only as entertainment media but also as social ecosystems where norms, values, and consumption trends are constructed and disseminated (YAVUZ, 2025). Consequently, consumer behavior has shifted from an

individual-centered process to a socially driven phenomenon influenced by collective evaluations and digital social pressure (Donthu et al., 2020). One of the key theoretical constructs explaining this phenomenon is Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII), originally introduced by Bearden, Netemeyer, and Teel (1989). CSII refers to the extent to which individuals are influenced by others in shaping their attitudes, decisions, and consumption behaviors (Donthu et al., 2021).

This construct consists of two main dimensions: normative influence, which reflects conformity to group expectations for social acceptance, and informational influence, which reflects reliance on others for guidance and information (Wijayanti et al., 2024). Prior research suggests that these dimensions play a significant role in shaping consumption decisions, particularly in contexts where social identity and symbolic consumption are prominent (Hizmi et al., 2025). In the past two decades, the relevance of CSII has increased significantly due to the emergence of digital and social media environments (Maldonado-castro et al., 2024). Interpersonal influence is no longer limited to face-to-face interaction but is mediated through user-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and digital engagement indicators such as likes, shares, and comments (Rafi & Abdur, 2024). Moreover, social influence has been identified as a critical factor in online consumer decision-making, including product evaluations and trust formation in digital marketplaces (Nisa & Dwijayanti, 2022). These developments indicate that CSII must be recontextualized to better capture the dynamics of contemporary digital consumer behavior (Baas et al., 2020). Despite the growing body of research on digital consumer behavior, existing studies tend to focus on specific applications of CSII, such as influencer marketing, brand trust, and online purchase intention (Shekhar & Venugopal, 2025).

While bibliometric analyses have been conducted in related areas such as electronic word-of-mouth, influencer marketing, and digital advertising, existing studies have primarily focused on specific aspects of digital consumer behavior rather than comprehensively examining Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (Hu et al., n.d.). Furthermore, no previous study has systematically mapped the intellectual structure, thematic evolution, and global research trends of CSII across multiple disciplines over an extended period (Gallego-losada & Montero-navarro, 2024). This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive bibliometric investigation to better understand the development, research patterns, and emerging themes within the CSII literature (SAIDIN et al., 2025) and digital advertising, there is still a lack of comprehensive studies that map the intellectual structure and longitudinal development of CSII itself. Furthermore, CSII research spans multiple disciplines, including psychology, marketing, communication, and organizational behavior, yet there is no integrated bibliometric overview that captures its global scientific evolution (Setya Prihatining Tyas et al., 2024). This gap highlights the need for a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the development of CSII research over time. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a global bibliometric analysis of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII) over a three-decade period (1992–2025) (Pandita et al., 2025). Specifically, this study seeks to identify publication trends, key authors, influential journals, collaboration networks, and emerging research themes within the CSII domain (Kumar & Jibril, 2025). By utilizing data from the Scopus database and applying bibliometric techniques, this research provides a structured mapping of the intellectual landscape of CSII (Huang et al., 2025).

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to advancing theoretical understanding and providing a comprehensive overview of the evolution of CSII as a research domain. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for researchers and practitioners in management science, marketing, and information technology, particularly in understanding how social influence shapes consumer behavior in the digital era. Additionally, this study provides a foundation for future research by identifying research gaps, emerging topics, and potential interdisciplinary collaborations. This paper is structured as follows: the research method section explains the bibliometric approach, data sources, and analytical tools used in the study. The results and discussion section presents the main findings, including publication trends, thematic clusters, and collaboration patterns. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key insights and provides recommendations for future research.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a quantitative bibliometric approach to systematically examine the development of research on Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII) over the period 1992–2025. Bibliometric analysis is widely recognized as a rigorous and structured method for evaluating scientific output, identifying research trends, and mapping the intellectual structure of a particular field. This approach is particularly suitable for the objectives of this study, as it enables the exploration of publication patterns, collaboration networks, and thematic evolution within the CSII domain (Donthu et al., 2021).

The data for this study were obtained from the Scopus database, which is acknowledged as one of the most comprehensive and high-quality curated sources of academic literature (Baas et al., 2020). Data collection was conducted in 2025 using a keyword-based search strategy. The primary keyword employed was “Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence”, which was applied to the Article Title, Abstract, and Keywords (TITLE-ABS-KEY) fields to ensure a comprehensive retrieval of relevant documents.

The initial search yielded a total of 57 documents. A filtering process was subsequently conducted to ensure the relevance and quality of the dataset. Only documents published in English were included, resulting in the exclusion of one non-English publication. In addition, a manual screening process was performed by reviewing the titles and abstracts of all retrieved documents to ensure their direct relevance to the CSII construct. After applying these criteria, a final dataset of 56 documents was obtained for analysis. All bibliographic metadata were exported in RIS format to facilitate further processing.

Table 1. Data Collection Criteria

Component	Explanation
Database	Scopus (Elsevier)
Access Date	2025
Main Keywords	“Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence”
Search Field	TITLE-ABS-KEY
Search String	TITLE-ABS-KEY (“Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence”)
Year Range	1992–2025
Language	English
Document Type	Articles, Conference Papers, Reviews
Initial Results	57 documents
Filtering	Exclusion of non-English documents and irrelevant studies
Final Dataset	56 documents
Export Format	RIS (.ris)

Prior to analysis, the dataset underwent a data cleaning process to ensure consistency and accuracy. This process included the removal of duplicate records, standardization of author names and keywords, and verification of document relevance. These steps were essential to enhance the reliability of the bibliometric mapping and to minimize potential bias in the results.

The bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSviewer version 1.6.20, a widely used software tool for constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks. Several analytical techniques were employed in this study. Descriptive publication analysis was first conducted to examine the distribution of documents based on publication year, country of origin, subject area, and document type, thereby providing an overview of the growth and development of CSII research over time. Furthermore, co-occurrence network analysis was used to identify relationships among keywords based on their frequency of co-appearance within documents, allowing the identification of major research themes and conceptual clusters.

In addition, overlay visualization analysis was applied to examine the temporal evolution of research topics by indicating the average publication year associated with specific keywords. This approach enables the identification of emerging and declining research trends. Density visualization analysis was also conducted to identify areas with a high concentration of research activity, where frequently occurring keywords represent dominant themes within the CSII literature.

Table 2. Analysis Configuration

Component	Explanation
Software	VOSviewer 1.6.20
Types of Analysis	Co-occurrence, Network Visualization, Overlay Visualization, Density Visualization

The research procedure was carried out through several sequential stages, including data retrieval from the Scopus database, data filtering and validation, data preparation and cleaning, and bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer. Each stage was conducted systematically to ensure the transparency and replicability of the study.

Since this study utilizes secondary data from publicly accessible academic sources, ethical considerations related to human participants, such as informed consent and confidentiality, are not applicable. However, several limitations should be acknowledged. This study relies solely on the Scopus database, which may not capture all relevant publications indexed in other databases such as Web of Science or Google Scholar. Additionally, the use of a single primary keyword may limit the scope of the dataset. To address this limitation, a manual screening process was conducted to ensure that all selected documents were relevant to the CSII construct.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Publication Trends

The bibliometric analysis of publications on Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII) indexed in Scopus reveals a fluctuating yet evolving trend over the period 1992–2025. In the early phase

(1992–2005), research activity was relatively limited, with an average of 0–2 publications per year. This indicates that CSII was still in its formative stage and had not yet gained widespread academic attention.

A gradual increase in publications began after 2010, culminating in a peak in 2015 with nine publications. This surge reflects the growing relevance of social influence concepts in the context of digital transformation and online consumer behavior. However, after this peak, the number of publications declined and stabilized at a relatively low but consistent level, averaging 1–2 publications annually until 2025.

This pattern suggests that although CSII has not experienced exponential growth, it remains a relevant and specialized research area. The rise in research activity coincides with the expansion of digital platforms and the increasing importance of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions (Meng et al., 2022). Furthermore, cross-cultural studies indicate that eWOM has become a central theme in global digital consumer research (Kusawat & Teerakapibal, 2021). This shift reflects the evolution of CSII from traditional face-to-face social influence to digitally mediated influence shaped by online communities and source credibility.

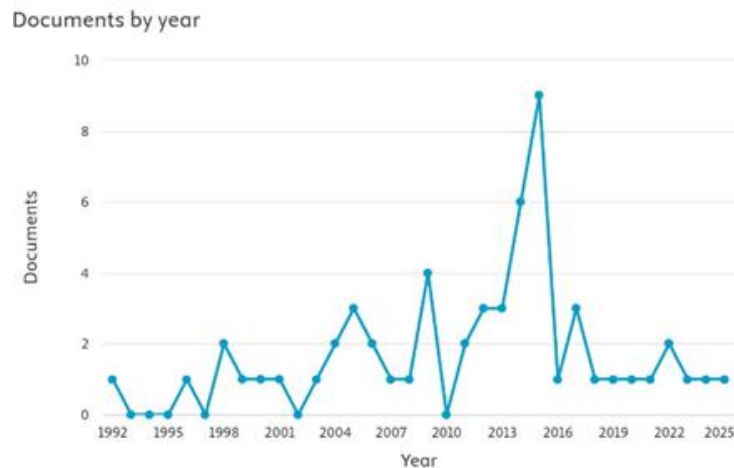


Figure 1. Publications Trends

3.2. Publications by Country

The geographical distribution of publications indicates that the United States is the leading contributor, accounting for more than 25 publications. This dominance is consistent with the historical development of the CSII concept, which originated from researchers in the United States (Bearden et al., 1989).

Following the United States, India ranks second, with notable contributions also coming from Taiwan, Canada, and China. Other countries, including Israel, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, and the United Kingdom, demonstrate consistent but relatively smaller contributions.

The increasing contribution from Asian countries, particularly India and Taiwan, reflects a growing interest in examining social influence within collectivist cultural contexts. In such societies, individuals tend to prioritize group norms and social acceptance, which strengthens susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Ren and Kuai (2023) highlight that collectivist cultural traits significantly shape social decision-making processes. The participation of countries such as Canada and China further illustrates the globalization of CSII research, expanding its application across diverse cultural and economic contexts.

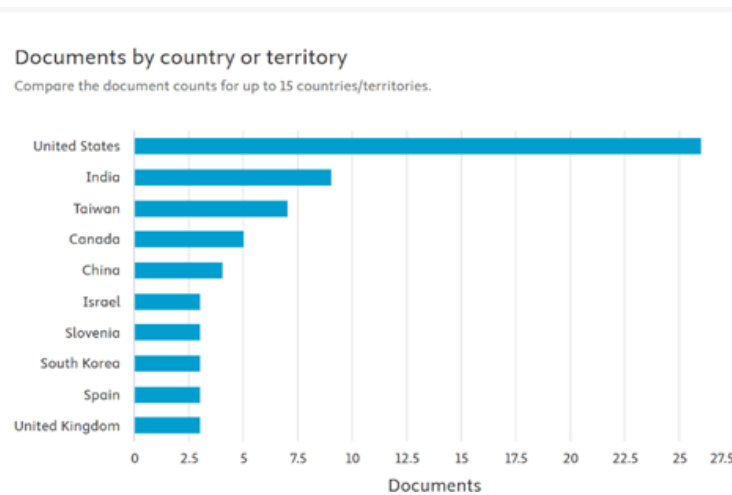


Figure 2. Publications by Country

The distribution of publications by subject area shows that research on CSII is predominantly concentrated in Business, Management, and Accounting, accounting for approximately 50% of total publications. This dominance reflects the relevance of CSII in understanding consumer behavior, purchasing decisions, and marketing strategies influenced by social interaction and trust. Psychology ranks second with 11.7%, indicating a strong connection between CSII and psychological constructs such as social conformity, need for acceptance, and information-seeking behavior (Bai et al., 2021). Additionally, Economics (9.6%) and Social Sciences (8.5%) highlight the importance of CSII in economic decision-making and social behavior within digital communities. Other disciplines, including Computer Science, Arts and Humanities, Decision Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and Neuroscience, contribute smaller proportions. The involvement of these fields demonstrates the multidisciplinary nature of CSII research, particularly in analyzing the role of digital platforms, algorithms, and online behavioral data in shaping interpersonal influence (Qiao & Sun, 2024).

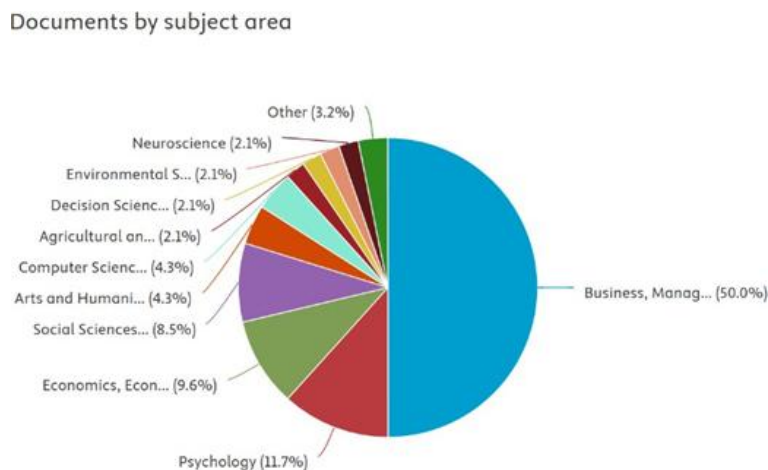


Figure 3. Publications by Subject Area

3.3. Network Visualization Analysis

The co-occurrence analysis of keywords using VOSviewer identifies seven major clusters representing the intellectual structure of CSII research.

Cluster 1 focuses on consumer behavior and social values, emphasizing the role of social identity and self-expression in shaping susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Studies show that individuals with strong self-expressive tendencies are more influenced by social norms in their consumption behavior (Bai et al., 2021).

Cluster 2 highlights attitudes, personal values, and product evaluation, illustrating how individual perceptions and social norms interact to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions (Wang & Chu, 2021).

Cluster 3 addresses interpersonal sensitivity and cultural differences, emphasizing the role of psychological and cultural factors in shaping consumer susceptibility across different contexts (Ngo et al., 2024).

Cluster 4 examines group dynamics and purchase intention, showing how social pressure and the desire for uniqueness interact, particularly in collectivist societies and digital environments (Müller-P et al., 2023).

Cluster 5 explores emotional responses and generational influences, highlighting how emotional attachment to brands and generational characteristics influence consumer loyalty and behavior (Laksana & Kuswati, 2024).

Cluster 6 represents sustainable consumption and social influence, indicating a shift toward environmental concerns and the role of normative influence in promoting green purchasing behavior (Kautish et al., 2023).

Cluster 7 focuses on decision-making approaches and market dynamics, emphasizing the influence of digital trust, online interaction, and psychological factors in shaping consumer decision-making processes (Mejía-Trejo et al., 2021).

These clusters collectively demonstrate the evolution of CSII from a traditional psychological construct into a multidisciplinary framework encompassing digital, social, and sustainability dimensions.

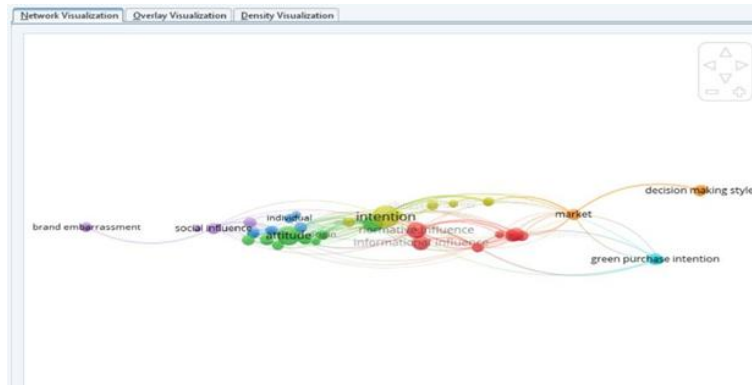


Figure 4. Network Visualization Analysis

The overlay visualization analysis reveals the temporal evolution of research themes within the CSII domain. Core concepts such as attitude, intention, and social influence remain dominant across different periods, reflecting the continued relevance of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) framework in consumer research (Prasetya et al., 2025; Luckyardi, 2023). However, recent publications show the emergence of new themes, including market dynamics, decision-making styles, and green purchase intention. These trends indicate a shift toward contemporary issues such as sustainability, digital trust, and influencer credibility (Prakash et al., 2025; Tan et al., 2025). This evolution suggests that modern consumer behavior research increasingly integrates technological and environmental considerations into traditional social influence frameworks.

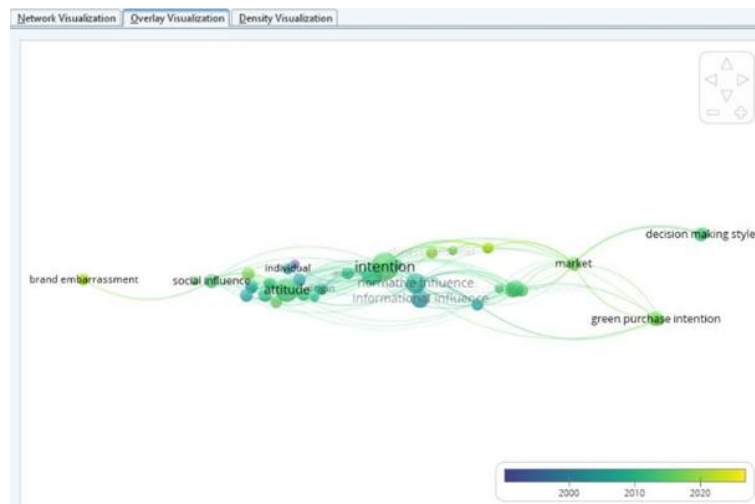


Figure 5. Overlay Visualization Analysis

The density visualization analysis highlights the concentration of research topics within the CSII literature. The highest density is observed in keywords such as attitude, intention, and social influence, confirming their central role in consumer behavior research and their strong alignment with TPB constructs (Prasetya et al., 2025; Prakash et al., 2025). Keywords related to normative and informational influence are also closely connected to the central cluster, emphasizing the foundational role of social influence in shaping consumer decisions (Luckyardi, 2023; Roy et al., 2023). Emerging topics such as green purchase intention and decision-making style are located in medium-density areas, indicating growing research interest in sustainability and cognitive decision processes (Tan et al., 2025). In contrast, topics such as brand embarrassment appear in low-density areas, suggesting a decline in research focus. Overall, this pattern reflects a transition from traditional psychological perspectives toward more complex models that incorporate social, digital, and sustainability-related factors in understanding consumer behavior.

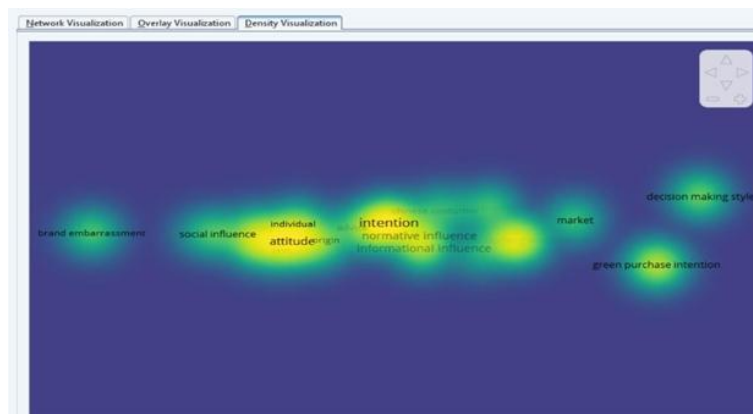


Figure 6. Density Visualization Analysis

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the global development of Consumer Susceptibility to Interpersonal Influence (CSII) through a bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in the Scopus database over the period 1992–2025. The findings reveal that CSII research has experienced dynamic yet fluctuating growth over the past three decades. Although early research activity was limited, a significant increase occurred after 2010, reaching a peak in 2015, followed by a decline and a gradual resurgence in recent years. This pattern reflects a shift in academic focus from traditional psychological perspectives toward broader applications in digital consumer behavior and social media contexts. The bibliometric mapping identified seven major research clusters, namely: (1) consumer behavior and social values, (2) attitudes and product evaluation, (3) interpersonal sensitivity and cultural differences, (4) group dynamics and purchase intention, (5) emotional responses and generational influences, (6) sustainable consumption behavior, and (7) decision-making approaches in digital markets. These clusters demonstrate that CSII has evolved into a multidimensional construct that integrates psychological, social, cultural, and technological dimensions in understanding consumer behavior. The results of overlay and density visualization analyses further confirm that core constructs such as attitude, intention, and social influence remain central to CSII research, indicating the continued relevance of established theoretical frameworks such as the Theory of Planned Behavior. At the same time, the emergence of recent themes, including green purchase intention, digital trust, and influencer credibility, highlights a significant shift toward sustainability and digitalization. This evolution reflects the adaptation of CSII to contemporary consumer environments shaped by technological advancement and global digital culture. The findings of this study contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing a comprehensive overview of the intellectual structure and development trajectory of CSII research. From a practical perspective, the results offer insights for practitioners and policymakers, particularly in designing marketing strategies that consider social influence, digital engagement, and consumer trust in online environments. Understanding the role of interpersonal influence can help organizations develop more effective communication strategies and enhance consumer engagement in digital platforms. However, this study has several limitations. First, the analysis is limited to the Scopus database, which may not include all relevant publications from other sources. Second, the use of a single keyword may restrict the scope of the dataset. Future research is recommended to expand the data sources by incorporating additional databases such as Web of Science and to use broader keyword variations to capture a more comprehensive set of publications. Additionally, further studies may integrate bibliometric analysis with systematic literature reviews or empirical methods to deepen the understanding of CSII in specific contexts. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that CSII remains a relevant and evolving research domain, with increasing importance in the digital era. The integration of social, psychological, and technological perspectives highlights the growing complexity of consumer behavior, emphasizing the need for continued research to explore emerging trends and interdisciplinary approaches in this field.

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