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Name: Amirah Tumsah

Student Number: x20137907

Degree for which thesis is submitted: M.Sc. In International Business

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**THE IMPACT SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS HAVE ON CONSUMER PURCHASE
INTENTIONS: A STUDY UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE BEAUTY GURUS
HAVE ON YOUNGER GENERATIONS**

By Amirah Tumsah

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of social media influencers (SMIs) on the purchase intentions of consumers. This study's main aim is to add the understanding of the influence of beauty gurus on younger generations. This study sets out to attain the following objectives: 1) to investigate the trend of social media influencing in the Beauty products industry. 2) to investigate the impact of beauty influencers trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. 3) to investigate the impact of beauty influencers expertise on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. The study adopted the source credibility theory to explain the various the relationship among the study variables. The study adopted a survey research design. The convenience nonprobability sampling techniques was utilized in selecting the respondents and a sample of 200 respondents was selected for the study. Self-administered questionnaires which were distributed on an online platform were used to collect data for this study. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to examine as well as examine the reliability of the tool, it presented an Alpha of 0.716. Preliminary testing was performed using 30 WhatsApp users. The collected data were analyzed using a combination of descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. The study found a statistically significant positive correlation between beauty influencers trustworthiness and consumers purchase intentions with a correlation coefficient of 0.302 and significance at the 1% significance level. There was also a positive correlation between beauty influencers expertise and consumers purchase intentions with a correlation coefficient of 0.819 and significance at the 1% significance level. The results show both a significant negative impact of beauty influencers on consumers purchase intentions and positive impact of beauty influencers on consumers purchase intentions. The study recommended that brand owners and advertising agencies should make use

of social media influencers who have expertise about advertised products and service as they will be in better position to pass accurate information about the product to the consumers which will in turn influence the purchase intentions.

Abbreviations:

- 1) Social Media Influencers (SMI's)
- 2) Para social Interaction (PSI)
- 3) Electronic word of mouth (EWOM)
- 4) Word-of-mouth (WOM)

DECLARATION

I declare that this work is solely done by me, and it is my original work, it has never been posted anywhere or presented to any institution. In addition, all the materials, literature and sources used for this research have been acknowledged appropriately and fully compliant with National College of Ireland.

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Firstly, I would like to begin by thanking and dedicating this work to my family and loved ones for the never-ending motivational conversations and support throughout the academic year especially when I was sick and thought I could not do the thesis this year. I am forever grateful and in awe of them.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The last decade has heralded the development of a plethora of technologies which has resulted in the proliferation of various social media platforms among the populace. This has equipped corporations and firms with a broad variety of veritable tools which could be utilized in public relationship and employed in showcasing the various goods and services offered at a much lower cost (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This shift in marketing strategies and available tools has led to the drastic reduction in physical contact which is ubiquitous at marketplaces, improves corporate communication with existing and potential customers and ultimately affects how commercial users access the internet (Starkov, 2003). Moreover, Nielsen (2016) posits that corporations deploy various tools and strategies to grow their revenue and gain larger market shares in their respective industries. This has led to the creation and deployment of various innovative and efficient marketing strategies which are reliant on the web and particularly social media platforms (Brown et al., 2007).

Over the past decade, the widespread use of various types of social media platforms has succeeded in aiding the emergence of dynamic digital marketing tools such as Social Media Influencer Marketing. Social Media Influencer Marketing includes brands that work with individuals who have created great social media presence through their works and activities on the various social media platforms. As a result of the expanse of reach attained by the individuals on the platforms, corporations believe that working with them to promote their goods and services offered is a profitable option (Kim, 2019). Uzunoğlu and Kip (2014) are of the view that these influencers

have large audiences, can influence people, and effectively drive target audience behavior towards loyalty to a specific brand or corporation. Hence, the target audience of a company can be influenced by using collective influencers who collaborate with the brand (Schroder, 2017). According to Van Reijmersdal et al. (2016), this differs from celebrity endorsement as it has to deal with the corporations utilizing trusted people through defined audiences to create word of mouth advertising against celebrity endorsement which attributes celebrity reputation to brands and products. A prime facet of influencer marketing is understanding the potential personalities of influencers, which allows consumers to make connections between personal attributes, product characteristics, and brand values with which influencers can interact and evaluate roles (Sethi et al., 2018).

Freberg et al., (2011) mentioned that influencers on social media platforms entails the use of third-party individuals or group of individuals, using various social platforms such as Tweeter, blogs, Facebook and among others to shape audience attitudes. They regularly create and post photos, videos and other updates on their social media pages / profiles, and other users will follow them if they are interested in that particular topic. Social media influencers are not necessarily celebrities but are people who have effective connections and strong social charisma. However, the influence of celebrities is different from that of trusted friends who endorse the same product. Therefore, it is important to determine the correct influence as it will influence consumer purchasing decisions (Kim et al., 2009). On the other hand, it's very usual for brands to sign on public figures and celebrities to recommend products and services through different traditional and non-traditional advertising channels. However, Lou et al., (2019) were of the view that social media influencers are normal individuals who then become renowned online for their insight and skill on a particular point like motion pictures, food, design, sports, innovation, travel, instruction, surveys, music, and

among other fields. Due to the popularity, effectiveness, and cheapness of this form of social media marketing, it is quickly being adopted as an alternative to celebrity endorsement (Hall, 2015).

De Veirman et al. (2017) posited that social media has lately been flooded with individuals from different disciplines, and similarly, the use of social media influence in marketing communications has become an effective and valuable tool for brand promotion. By incorporating social media insights into effective strategy and marketing design, brands and retailers can increase sales and reduce waste of resources (Galeotti et al., 2009). Consumers exposure to various advertisements by corporations are more likely to buy, which means increased interest in buying and the potential to buy. Furthermore, Yee et al., (2007) are of the view that consumers are continually streamlining their consumption behavior to their online behavior which results in what the study terms as the Proteus effect which entails uniform behavior by consumers both online on social platforms and in reality. Therefore, when consumers use the Internet to create their own avatars, the emergence of brands on the Internet has a similar impact on the real world and vice versa (Schau et al., 2003). This phenomenon has led to the widely held assumption that being generally influenced will usually affect the overall perception and purchase intent of products and services. Thus, this particular study seeks to investigate the actual nature and essence of relationship between social media influencers and actual consumer purchasing intents, with particular reference to young people in the beauty and cosmetics industry.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The role of social media influencers in consumer decision making and its importance on corporate profits cannot be overstated and has been demonstrated in numerous studies globally (Courtney et

al., 2019). Veissi (2017) posits that social media influencers are normal people within the society, who usually have a large following on social media and their recommendations / product reviews can change the perception of their audience, thus, increasing marketing influence and relevance. Woods (2016) claims that two out of three retailers confirm that they use influencers to promote their content. However, little is known about its impact on buying intentions. This is an important mistake because it shows a huge difference in the literature and is useful for marketers and brands who use effective marketing strategies. Coursaris (2018) mentioned that there is absence when it comes to the comprehension of this topic amidst many marketers, and it is progressively becoming ubiquitous. He then goes ahead to state that there could be a potential explanation for the limited academic focus on this topic, which can be potentially based on the issue of nascency ascribed to the topic (Coursaris, 2018). Therefore, this topic is worth considering as it helps a brand to change its strategy to get more return on investment with influencers. Thus, this proposed research focuses on the outcome of effective marketing on purchasing intent. In addition, Sago (2015) argues that the source of recommendations is a key part of influencer marketing. The effectiveness of WOM marketing on the Internet amidst groups of dissimilar races is related to the close relationship between the sender and the recipient of the message. As a result, Bruns (2018) believes that trust has an undeviating positive effect on purchasing intentions, especially among the younger generation. Mahoney et al., (2016) also conclude that younger generations often value the experience of social media influencers because the lifestyle of others helps them improve their personal identity. Research shows that testing products and presenting everyday experiences should also boost consumer confidence. Therefore, it is expected that to gain credibility on the social media, influencers from the must show some expertise in their chosen field through adequate content creation. However, many years of research have shown divergent results on the impact of

trust and expertise of social media influencers on the purchasing intentions of consumers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the experience and trustworthiness of social media influencers on the young generation's purchasing intents.

Furthermore, despite the rapid development of social media influence marketing and the proliferation of social media, few research has studied influencer marketing in the beauty and cosmetic industry, so little is known about how social media influencers in this industry influence young customers purchase intention. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this observed gap and contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge.

1.3 Research Objectives

The study aims at investigating the impact of social media influencers on consumer purchase intentions. Specifically, the study seeks to;

1. To investigate the trend of social media influencing in the Beauty products industry.
2. To investigate the impact of beauty influencers trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.
3. To investigate the impact of beauty influencers expertise on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.

1.4 Research Problems

The study aims at providing answers to questions surrounding the impact of social media influencers on consumer purchase intentions. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the trends of social media influencing in the Beauty products industry?

2. What is the impact of beauty influencers trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations?
3. What is the impact of beauty influencers expertise on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations?

1.5 Statement of Hypothesis

This research seeks to test and examine the following hypothesis;

1. H₀: Beauty influencers trustworthiness have no significant impact nor effect on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.
2. H₀: Beauty influencers expertise have no significant impact nor effect on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This particular study seeks to investigate the impact of beauty influencers on the purchase intentions of the younger generation. The study will foremost be most helpful for stakeholders in the beauty, cosmetic and fashion industry as the study will expose trends among the young generation, which arguably makes up a larger market share of the industry. The study will inform industry players on the right strategies to deploy in marketing their beauty products among the young populace. The study will help beauty and fashion brands/marketers to obtain more relevant knowledge and better understanding when it comes to choosing the relevant social media influencers to promote and elevate their brands on various social media platforms. The study will also be helpful to industry players in evaluating the level of trustworthiness and expertise of a social media influencer.

This survey is also important for marketing professionals. Marketers can decide and pick the appropriate social media effects to promote their brand and reach the desired targeted audience with the information they need. Not all social media influencers are qualified to represent and promote any brand, this decision should solely rely on factors that influence social media. Choosing the wrong social media influencer can damage your brand image or get in the way of getting your message across to your target audience. It is very important for a company to better understand its marketing strategy and soar sales. In current world we live in, various people use social media to stay updated and connected. Therefore, social media platforms are increasingly becoming ad sellers because they can reach large audiences and viewers. This research will help researchers and marketers and gain a deeper understanding of areas that may be missing.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter contains a literature review of the research variables, which is quite substantial and a theoretical framework for the research. This chapter is divided into 4 sections which includes empirical literature, theoretical framework, conceptual literature, and conclusion.

2.2 Conceptual Literature

2.2.1 Social Media

Scholars such as Van et al., (2013) and Kaplan et al., (2010) argued an absence of consensus on social media definition. Comm (2010) posited that scholar define social media as “audience generated contents”. According to Strauss et al., (2009), social media is a web-based tool or stage that permits cooperation on content, knowledge and experience, and links for pleasure or business. Social media is a collection of web-based applications built on the philosophical and technological basis of web 2.0, which permits the generation and exchange of user-generated content (Kaplan et al., 2010). Hanna et al., (2011) also described social media as an act of feeding, creating, and sharing information and content through social interaction and on online-based platforms. Centeno et al., (2009), also stated that social media is a comprehensive concept that incorporates well-known tools which aid users engage in social activities such as sharing of photos, video, social networking, and blogging. Social media is a collection of technological innovations that help web users create low-cost content, interactive and collaborative (Berthon et al., 2012). Social media platforms are “a set of communication programs that enable communication between companies. Create, share, and disseminate information between stakeholders and their networking communities and companies (Larson et al., 2011).

There are three types of communication with hosts on social media, which include (1) One-to-one, (2) One-to-many, and (3) Many-to-many (Barak, 2012). According to Kaplan et al., (2010), there is no clear difference between the types of social media, but there are clear differences between social networks. Sites (such as Facebook) and other platforms are used for connecting people and professionals to distribute videos via YouTube, photo-sharing sites such as Flickr, additionally, social bookmarking sites such as Delicious, Digg, and other informational sites are also used for posting on the web. It allows users to connect to microblogs such as Twitter, such as Wikipedia within the society in a way that people have never seen before (Fischer & Reuber, 2011).

2.2.2 Social Media Influencer

The growth of social media has also given birth to an innovative type of advertising known as “influencer marketing.” Sammis et al., (2016) described influencer marketing as “the art and science of engaging web influencers to share brand messages with their audience in the form of sponsored contents.” Evans et al., (2017) views influencer marketing as a profit yielding link between influencers and brands. Influencers are used in brand promotions and for marketing of products to clients and stakeholders, and the brand interaction is carried out by the influencer through the social media avenues (Evans et al. 2017). Chai (2018) is of the opinion that SMI’s are people, mostly celebrities, who usually tend to expose their private information and personal lives to social media users who follow them on all the various platforms. According to Molenaers (2018), social media influencers are mostly regarded as young celebrities. Khamis et al. (2016) added that they make images to capture attention and entertain their followers. They include tourists, models, actors, the super-rich, and friends of celebrities. In some situation, micro-influencers exalt their flamboyant and extravagant lifestyle. Their social media pages showcases

their lifestyle as a vision with majority of luxury (Abidin, 2016; Chai, 2018). Social media influencers get things in return (in cash or kind) for offering branded product or experience (Chai, 2018). Social media influencers association with a brand can capture the attention of customers of a brand and promote significant content to the appropriate customers. Hence, the new trend of social media influencers has effectively changed how these brands interact with buyers, especially when it comes to lifestyle branding (Glucksman, 2017). Social media influencers are a new generation of advertisers that brands use to influence purchase intentions (Freberg et al., 2011).

2.2.3 Purchase Intention

A consumer or buyer decision or motive towards buying a specific brand is regarded as purchase intention (Shah et al., 2012). According to Morenza et al., (2007), purchase intention is “a condition in which a consumer is inclined to purchase a particular product under certain conditions.” Therefore, the desire to buy a product or service is dependent on the consumers behavior and perception of consumers (Mirabi et al., 2015). (Ghosh, 1990) posited that the tool for forecasting purchasing attitude or behavior is purchase intention. Additionally, there is a notable positive effect of advertisement on purchase intention (Mirabi et al., 2015). It was also found that shoppers who expressed their expectations of purchasing a product also had a higher real purchase rate than those without a purchase target, and the Duffet (2015) study found that the influence of advertisers in South Africa over thousands of years in a positive buying plan. Furthermore, a study by Babich et al., (2016) revealed a significant amount of information on the effects of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) on purchasing power. The most powerful influence of eWOM is on social media channels. Thoreau et al., (2004) described eWOM as “a positive or negative statement by potential, actual, or past customers about a product or business that is made available to many

people and organizations over the Internet.” eWOM is possessed by social media influencers. As afore mentioned, the most credible and reliable source of marketing information is eWOM (Cheung et al., 2009). Therefore, the experts are the social media influencers since they have the unique role in influencing the opinions of consumers of a product or services (Glucksman, 2017; Babich Rosario et al., 2016). A lot can be learnt by consumers privately with the social media influencer role models. This is particularly true for the millennia, which looks to social media influencers as reliable sources of information (McGee, 2017). This results in a greater desire to purchase tangible popular products from social media influencers (Babich Rosario et al., 2016; Tran et al., 2014).

2.2.4 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is the apparent enthusiasm of an influencer to make legitimate statements from the point of view of the followers, consumers and/or potential buyers and provide honest and truthful information about a product (Ohanian, 1990; McCracken, 1989). O’Mahony et al., (1997) noted that trust is the credibility of a source to highlight the effects of changes in a client’s behavioral habits. Without trust, the different characteristics of the supporter cannot be convincing when changing the customer’s point of view (Miller et al., 1969). The idea of trust is important and has been powerful in consumer encouragement (Moore et al., 1988) and desperation (McGinnies et al., 1980). This is consistent with Atkin et al., (1983), who argue that cited sources and/or contributors are considered more dependable than traditional sources. Chao et al., (2015) and Wei et al., (2013) influence source reliability in consumers’ purchase intentions and have a constructive conclusion to confirm the feasibility of it. In addition, a correct belief in the source can well influence the customer’s value impression and further influence the purchase decision

(Erdem et al., 2004). There appears to be a positive relationship between contention quality, reliability, enthusiasm, and product; For example, when disputes about specific items represent promotional repetition, the credibility effect is less noticeable than claims about weak items (Chan et al., 2013; Priester et al., 2003). Thus, the influencers selected must be someone that buyers can identify with and are considered genuine, fair, and legitimate (Timberly et al., 2006). This is usually reflected in the study, where supporters of online media influencers see themselves as having the same characteristics and interests as they do and increased product transparency depending on the content shared on social media.

2.2.4.1 Trustworthiness and Purchase Intentions

According to Li et al. (2010), influencers trust has played an important role for consumers quest for information about a product online. Contrary to brands or companies, social media influencers (SMIs) are regarded credible and has been a pivotal source of information to consumers of a product (Forbes, 2016). Kim et al., (2015) noted that the purchase decision of consumers is often influenced by those close to them or individuals that inspire them such as friends, family, role models, influencers, and celebrities. Likewise, there is an empirical verification of social media influencers trustworthiness having a beneficial and positive influence on consumers purchase intentions (Suh et al., 2002; Wu et al., 2005). Furthermore, scholars such as Lim et al., (2006) and Hsiao et al., (2010), also posited that trust has a significant impact on the purchase of consumers. Additionally, Uzunoglu et al., (2014) noted that the credibility and trustworthiness of a brand's image, knowledge and information is linked to the social media influencer's trustworthiness by a large audience.

2.2.5 Influencers Expertise

The expertise of an influencer is regarded as the perceived degree of skills or knowledge possessed by an influencer (Lis et al., 2013; Hovland et al., 1953; Teng et al., 2014). According to Nedja et al., (2014), the ability to make accurate and reliable information from the start of a conversation with a client or customer to develop a binding link with them is mostly seen as expertise. These indicates all the components of influencer's expertise and competence on a given brand and a developed strategy for disseminating opinion online (McQuarrie et al., 2013; Sedeke et al., 2013; Uzunoğlu et al.,2014). According to Geysler (2021), it is a requirement to know your and understand your target audience (demographics, interests and so on). Therefore, there is need for the social media influencer to effortless interact about a brand and maintain the attention of consumers which is dependent on their competency level (McQuarrie et al., 2013). To add to this, the competency level is usually based on your level of expertise in the field and a large following. Social media influencers display their expertise and gain the trust of their followers when they engage their followers on social media channels with highly professional experiences, share information and other individual point of views (Uzunoğlu et al., 2014; Kapitan et al., 2015). Furthermore, your brand should be able to take in brand collaborations whenever it is required. Moreover, the process of being an expert influencer requires a lot of effort and time to yield the best results (Geysler, 2021).

2.2.5.1 Expertise and Purchase Intention

It is claimed by Li et al., (2011) that social media influencers gain the attention of their followers and acquire more influence when they engage with their followers. Valck (2013) posited that the

extent of a SMI's expertise is a fundamental when it comes to influencing a consumers' purchasing intentions. Social media influencer is one who is knowledgeable in different type of products (Kapitan et al., 2015), which will also determine the influencers' ability to influence consumers (Burges, 2017). The consumers perception of the influencer's expertise is linked to purchase intention (Ohanian R. 1991). Because SMI's usually have the ability and potential to generate a creative message for the brands and/or products that are trustworthy, this then attracts the attentions of the consumers and leads to the purchase of the products being advertised (Abdullah et al. 2020). Additionally, Magnini (2008) supported the findings empirically clarifying that expertise can lead to the influencers effectiveness in influencing and impacting consumer's purchasing decision. Therefore, the higher the level of social media influencers expertise, the greater the chances of the influencers being perceived to be reliable, and the greater will be the influence on purchase intention (Lis et al., 2013).

2.3 The Role of Influencers

Today, influencer's play a very important role in word of mouth (WOM) marketing, and at the same time, their awareness is increasing (Scoble et al. 2006) because they offer complex information in various ways and functions (Akritidis et al., 2011). According to Wu (2012), the major determining variables of the chances of a consumer to be influenced by a given stimulus relies greatly on the accuracy of information, at the appropriate time and place and by the right person. Influencers have a major role to perform in the virtual space. They share information across several social media platforms such as social platforms networks and blogs; They share photos, stories, and content in general; communicate their experiences; They express their opinions on various topics, issues, brands, products and services, and products; This illustrates a particularly

important influence phenomenon (Al-Suleiman et al. 2015; Al-Haidari et al., 2015). As previously mentioned above, Influencers tend to create content and ads on these various social platforms to generate a following, unlike celebrities who naturally generate fans and followers based on their presence in the entertainment industry. Furthermore, most of these influencers usually get paid to do a write up or advertise products and or services. The audience of bloggers are interested in specific discussion topics, and marketers do not acknowledge the popularity of blogs – after all, 77% of Internet users have either read blogs or visited a blogsite (McGrail, 2013). As a result, marketers and SMI's have begun to integrate blogging with other marketing strategies they partake in, they use these blogs as validators, because they are conceivably considered more authentic than other famous platforms (Mendoza, 2010). Hence, the availability of internet connections implies that brands that wish to be viewed as original tend to place a lot of emphasis on using the right marketing mediums such as SMI's and influencer marketing so the right information can be spread across, but this also usually depends on their capability to give consumers a feel of being like them (Solis, 2016). Consumers perceive this act as the highest form of influence (Nielsen, 2016). This implies that brands should be cautious when it comes to outsourcing potential influencers, the SMI's need to be transparent also create real interest, cause the brands image and sometimes customer loyalty, recognition and so on depends on this. To further this, according to Nurfadila et al (2020), potential buyers/consumers usually view SMI's as authorities that assess products in a neutral manner, so they are influenced to a greater extent. However, regardless of the of positive implications of influencers, there has been room for criticism of influencers and influencer marketing by various federal regulators i.e. US Federal Trade Commission (FTC). According to Moshi (2020), SMI's may mislead consumers which can negatively influence their buying decisions. Nadezhda (2017) also stated that there are dilemmas usually created by SMI's based on

the overflow of data and information which also negatively impacts their purchase intention, brand loyalty, relationship and so on. To further this, a lot of damage can be caused if influencer marketing is not done rightly and it can be hard to recover from it (Barker, 2021).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Source Credibility Theory

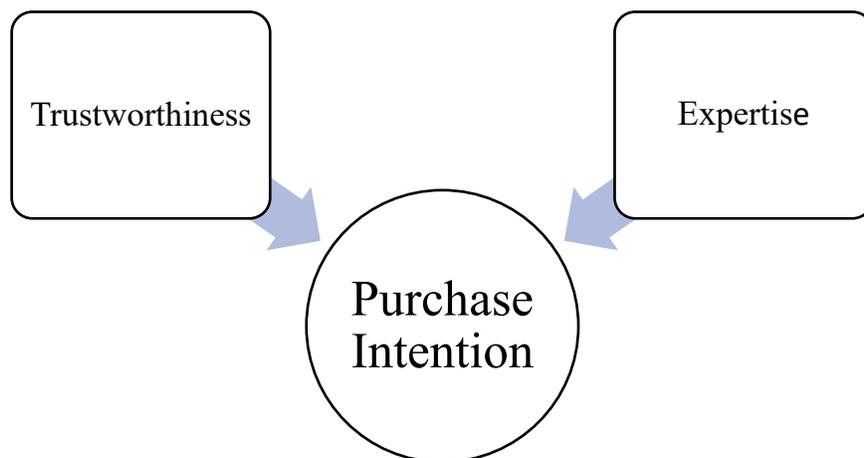
As presented by Hovland et al., in 1963, the source credibility theory affirmed that when a source presents itself as credible, people and other receivers of the news are presumably going to be persuaded. Furthermore, Weiss (1974) and Hovland (1963) later went ahead to study the effect of sources within persuasion. The following study is carried out by contrasting both credible and non-credible bases, utilizing similar messages that are convincing, to check if the sources that are being described as credible can influence receivers' views more than non-credible sources. The study follows the presupposition that audiences are expected to be impacted more by credible sources. Ohanian (1990) argues that the reliability of a source is an acceptable quality of lawyers that leads to the acceptance of a message to a target audience. Attractiveness and reliability are key dimensions of this model (Park et al., 2020). Attractiveness refers to the liking of a source (supporter) and/or familiarity with the source which influences the consumer's objectivity when making a purchase decision (Brain et al., 2000). It is concluded that consumers have a certain affection for their attractive celebrities, and this positive attitude is also reflected in the acceptance of their approved products (Park et al., 2020). In other words, a beloved celebrity can influence consumers' purchasing decisions. On the other hand, reliability is a consumer perception of honesty, conviction, and honesty confirmed by Brain et al., (2000). They argue that this dimension

of the model is critical, especially if the products to be certified do not require professional expertise. Therefore, Chung et., (2017) argued that credible-perceived celebrities greatly influence consumer attitudes toward a brand and equally influence their purchasing decisions. This means that if the certified product decision is considered valid, consumers will make a purchase decision favoring the products and vice versa (Djafarova et al., 2017). The importance of the source reliability model in this study lies in addressing reliability and expertise in a conceptual model.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The aim of this investigation model is to present a comprehensive overview of the hypotheses that has been constructed. In this section, the hypotheses about the proposed model is developed. Two hypotheses about the potential reliability and attractiveness of SMI that may influence purchasing intentions are reliability and expertise.

Fig 2.1: Study Conceptual Framework



Source: Author

2.6 Conclusion

Trustworthiness and expertise of SMI's influences purchase intentions both negatively and positively. The 2 variables mentioned above have a high correlation, consequence and outcome compared to other variables such as likability, familiarity, PSI and so on. Additionally, influencer marketing is here to stay. The literature review showcased different ways brands have used and are still using social media influencers to tap into the younger generations mind set, shopping habits and also a high increase in purchase intentions because this generation is social media focused.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter documents the methods utilized by the researcher in assessing the impact social media influencers have on consumers purchase intentions. The chapter presents the research design, population of the research, sampling technique, instrumentation, reliability and validation of the study, method of data collection, and lastly the method of data analysis.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Paradigm is a "collection of beliefs, attitudes and practices accepted by members of a scientific community and acting as a guide or map to identify problems that should be dealt with by scientists and the kind of explanations acceptable to them" (Kuhn, 2012). Positivism, interpretivism, realism, relativity and critical realism are the most common paradigms in social science research (Aliyu et al., 2014). The positivistic method to research is believed to be the cornerstone of management research in the present day, and many scientists are in agreement or disagreement with that

approach (Johnson et al., 2000). A French philosopher named August Comte, felt it is the initial approach of human behaviour to comprehend procedures based on logic and observation, that the philosophical foundations for the positivist approach are (Dash, 2005). Positivism is inherent in determinism, empiricism, parsimony and generality (Cohen et al., 2011). Determinism is a capacity to control occurrences based on comprehending the relationships that are interconnected and caused by different situations. Parsimony and generality are the reasons for an event in a thorough but most comprehensive method that involve summing up people's thoughts about a worldwide investigation (Dash, 2005). Based on the fact that the paradigm allows the samples to be collected in large samples, and the hypothesis being tested, the study adopted positivism, it is established on tangible and unbiased reality.

3.3 Research Design

Research design entails the procedures a researcher adopts in exploring and achieving research aims and objectives, by providing answers to specified research questions. Wahyuni (2012), defined it as a structural frame of work that helps to show how researchers can conduct research for the purpose of obtaining relevant data that is equivalent to the proposed research objectives.

According to Wright et al. (2016), a research design is a strategy a researcher adopts in the conduct of research to address the formulated objectives of the research, question(s), and hypothesis of the study by gathering, analysing, and interpreting data.

Creswell (2013), reported that the following three approaches which include (1)quantitative approach, (2)qualitative approach, and (3)mixed method approach are the main approaches used in undertaking study/research. Additionally, he goes ahead to state that the approach and

philosophical strategies utilized, usually tends to contribute to research methods that are either mixed method, quantitative or qualitative (Creswell, 2014). However, this study adopted quantitative approach, thereby, the positivist declarations for knowledge development (i.e., hypothesis testing and questions, cause and effect relationship and use of theories) are fundamentally supported through the research designs adopted, such as collection of data, data analysis and lastly, experiments and surveys (Creswell, 2014; Cooper et al., 2011). To add to this, Zikmund (2000), stated that the reasoning behind qualitative research is to showcase visual portrayals, interpretations, stories, significant characterisations and other demonstrative descriptions while quantitative research approach is usually used to work out quantity of numbers or the extent of several occurrences in form of numerals.

3.4 Population of the study

The whole set of entities such as humans, institutions, or organizations with common characteristics that are in line with the research purpose under study and from which conclusions will be drawn by the researcher is referred to as a population (Salaria, 2012). Best et al. (2014), defines population as a group of different individuals whom share various features that are similar and it is useful or of interest to the investigator. The population of this study consisted of adults with social media who have a social media account with population social media platforms. However, the population size for the study is huge. Hence, a sample frame will not be utilized in this study.

3.5 Sample and Sampling procedure

It is considered impracticable to consider the entire population when conducting research. It is also near impossible, if not impossible, to collect information from entire social media users, hence non-probability sampling methods will be appropriate to reduce the amount of data to be gathered by only accepting and taking into account information and data from a subsection of the population (Saunders et al., 2012). Based on this point of view, a non-probability sampling technique is considered as a well suited alternative for this study cause there is no population framework for social media users. Thus, it is not possible to make use of a probability sampling technique. Based on these views, a convenient sampling method/technique will be utilized in this research to select the sample for the study. The type of non-probability sampling that tends to allow samples to be selected from the population-based on the fact that they are conveniently accessible to the researcher is called convenience sampling method. According to Roscoe (1975), a sample size of 30 to 500 is considered good enough for most studies. On the other hand, Chun et al., (2018) posited that a sample size of 200 would provide a fairly good precision for a survey study; hence the sample size for this study is 200.

3.6 Sources of Data

Data used for this study were primarily sourced. A primary data source is a broad term for all originally sourced data. The approach that easy used to gather and collect information for this research was a survey approach. A survey approach is one of the ways of primarily sourcing and collecting quantifiable information (data) from a population sample. According to Creswell (2011), surveys consists of self-administered questions in form of a questionnaire and/or structured interviews either carried out through face-to-face or over the phone. Robson (2011), added to this by stating that the surveys perform better with questions that are standardized and

can confidently be agreed that the proposed questions asked are well understood and read with the same meaning by all the various types of respondents.

3.7 Instrument of Data Collection

A research instrument is a tool or strategy used in collecting data from respondents for analysis.

The main instrument used for collecting data for this particular study was a self-administered questionnaire. A method that is used to collect data frequently is a questionnaire, it is an effective technique provided for the collection of responses to quantitative analysis from a sample that is large (Saunders et al., 2012). The questionnaire was organized to provide the responses required for study's research questions. The self-structured questionnaire was structured under two (2) sections. Section A represented the sociodemographic data of the respondents, while Section B contained research statements proposed in accordance with the three research questions.

A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the respondents by the researcher, who also stood by to collect the filled questionnaire. To further this, Denscombe (2010) and Burns et al., (2012). stated that self-survey allows respondents to finish off the questionnaire without any help needed. The inherent pros of self-administered surveys is the capability of being able to eliminate interviewer bias, as well as the ability to reach sizable study groups and attain sufficient response rates. Although Bhattacharjee (2012) cited a low response rate as one of the shortcomings of dispensing self-administered questionnaires by post, the internet or even through emailing, the study presented the survey was presented online. On the other hand, the researcher took serious follow-up steps such as sending mails to remind the respondents to fill and submit the questionnaire and putting across messages

on group social media platforms considered in the study to overcome this problem and to assure a high response rate.

The response rate observed could be calculated as below;

$$\text{Response Rate} = \frac{168}{200} * \frac{100}{1} = 84.0\%$$

Saunders et al., (2019) put forward that the response rates differ, which usually depends on the assigns of the questionnaire chosen, however there is usually no overall agreement on an acceptable response rate amongst scholars. A response rate of 30% to 50% was considered as moderately high and quite reasonable for the collected and delivered questionnaires that was done in this study, there was use for acceptance. Thereby, the response rate of 84% became an acceptable response rate.

3.8 Limitations of Research Methods

The major constraint to data collection is the prevalence of the global pandemic (COVID19) and the resultant restrictive measures set aside by health professional to combat the virus. The questionnaires were therefore the easiest way to get information as they can be delivered over email, shared as a document on various social media platforms or with the aid of an online form such as google forms. However, interviews would have given a better-quality data as a wider range of respondents' opinions would have explored.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

It is a common practice for researchers to describe adherence to the principles behind researching humans. Describing the principles for conducting research raises an aspect of ethical issues. Howe

et al., (2010) identified some of these commonly detected ethical concerns, including respect for research sites and respondents, informed consent, permission and confidentiality. Respondents were provided with complete confidentiality and protection of their identity as

The respondents were not forced to put down their names on the tool used to collect data, and in this instance, the questionnaire and the purpose of the researcher's research were duly explained to the participants. Additionally, the questionnaire stated that honest answers are required and well appreciated (Narteh, 2013). Another contribution to the high response rate was how private the survey was. "These measures should reduce people's anxiety about evaluation and reduce the likelihood that their responses will change, making them more socially desirable, tolerant, and compatible with the way the researcher wants them to respond," according to Podsakoff et al., (2003). The completed questionnaires were stored in a passworded folder in the researcher computer system. However, this information will be disposed 6 months (January 2022) after the completion of this research.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Pilot studies and pretesting were performed between small group of people prior to the questionnaires launching, to make sure that the data to be collected and research equipment are current, valid and reliable. The survey questions was pre-tested with 30 WhatsApp users to evaluate the respondent's capability to understand the language and the importance of the questions. The self-structured questionnaire was also validated by the project supervisor and an expert in the field of study. However, Saunders et al. (2012), stated that the pre-tested questionnaire

tends to help elucidate some of the questions that aren't required or worded properly in the questionnaire. An indicator that was used as a reliability tool for collecting data (the questionnaire) was Cronbach's Alpha (Cronbach, 2010). To add to this, Cronbach (2010), mentioned that an alpha value of 0.7 must be achieved before the tool used for collecting data can be regarded as reliable. Moreover, some experts also say that achieving an alpha value above 0.5 is valid enough to measure the studies reliability. Therefore, this is the reason why Cronbach Alpha was used to measure the reliability of this study.

3.11 Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive method of analysis was used to measure and analyse the characteristics of the demographic of respondents chosen. The demographic characteristics of respondents were analysed using the descriptive method of analysis. This was done using percentages and ratios, tables, and mean. In other to see the relationship and impact of social media influencer's trustworthiness and expertise (independent variables) on consumer's purchase intentions (dependent variable), a correlation and regression analysis was carried out. According to Gajenderan (2015), The main basic objective of regression equations being used in this research is to aid the researcher with more effectiveness at understanding, controlling, describing, and predicting the variables indicated. Hence, the regression model is specified thus;

$$CPI = F (SMIT, SMIE)$$

$$VT = \alpha + \beta_1 SMIT + \beta_2 SMIE + \mu$$

Where;

α = intercept term

CPI = Consumer Purchase Intention

SMIT= Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness

SMIE = Social media influencer Expertise

μ = model error term

α is the intercept term- it gives the mean or average effect on CPI of all the variables excluded from the equation, although its mechanical interpretation is the average value of CPI when the stated independent variable is set equal to zero.

β_1 and β_2 refer to the partial regression coefficients of the independent variables (SMIT and SMIE, respectively), which measure the change in the mean value of CPI per unit change in the independent variable.

Multiple regression analysis is performed in order to determine the extent to which the explanatory variables explain the variance seen in the explained variable (Betelhem, 2019). All the analyses are with the aid of the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software version 20.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The data analysis discussed in this section is intended to show the impact of beauty influencers' expertise and trustworthiness on consumer's purchasing intentions. The data analysis is made of two sections; the first sections deal with the descriptive analysis of the demographic attributes of the respondents, while the second segment deals with the testing of the hypothesis. Regression

analysis was used to study the impact of beauty influencer's expertise and trustworthiness on consumer's purchasing intentions, while the relationship amidst study variables was examined through correlation analysis. All the analysis was done with the use of Excel and SPSS.

4.2 Data Editing, Coding and Screening and Entry

Saunders et al., (2019) noted that series of actions must be completed after the collection of data before the beginning of the analysis. Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used by the researcher to key data in order to eliminate errors after coding and screening was carried out. According to Coakes (2016), the screening of data eradicates inputs that can tilt the findings of the study. Furthermore Baumgartner et al., (2010), asserted that the process ensures the suitability of the data for further analysis.

4.3 Goodness of Measure

4.3.1 Reliability Analysis

Testing reliability has to do with the determination of the reliability of the research instrument and agreement with research standards. It provides answers to questions that have to do with the consistency of measurement of a given concept. For this reason, the reliability of this research was measured through Cronbach's Alpha. It was utilized for the variables to be captured by the research instrument of data collection. Sekaran (2013) made it clear that reliability below 0.60 is regarded as bad, however those in the range of 0.70 are acceptable, while those beyond 0.80 are viewed as good. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.716, which implies that the tool used for the measurement of each and any variable in this study was reliable. The summary of the reliability test is shown in the table below.

Table 4.1 Summary of Reliability Statistics (Whole Item)

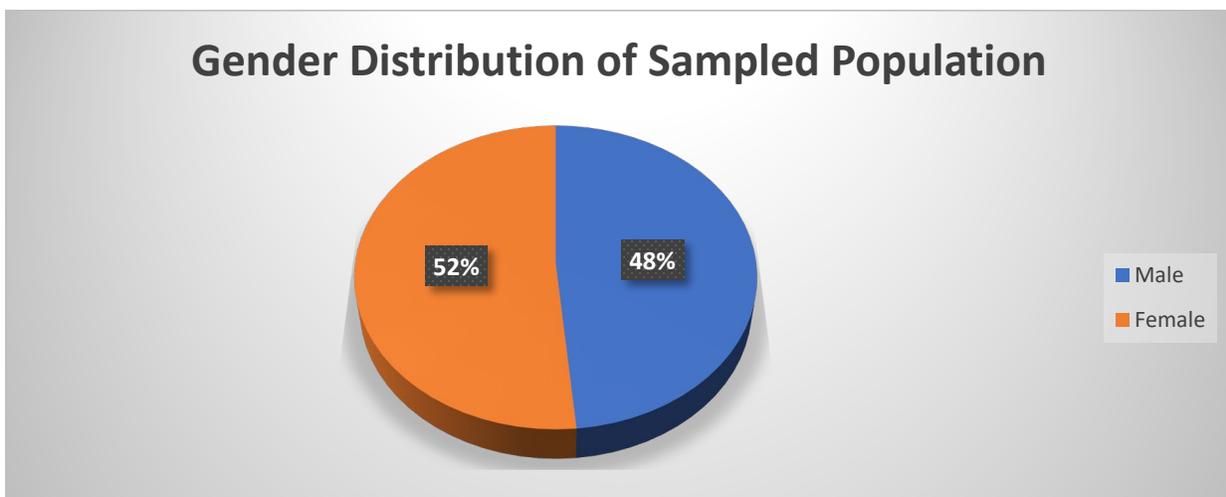
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.716	20

4.4 Demographic Characteristics of Population

The demographic features of the population are presented thus;

4.4.1 Distribution of population based on Gender

Figure 4.1: Gender distribution of Population

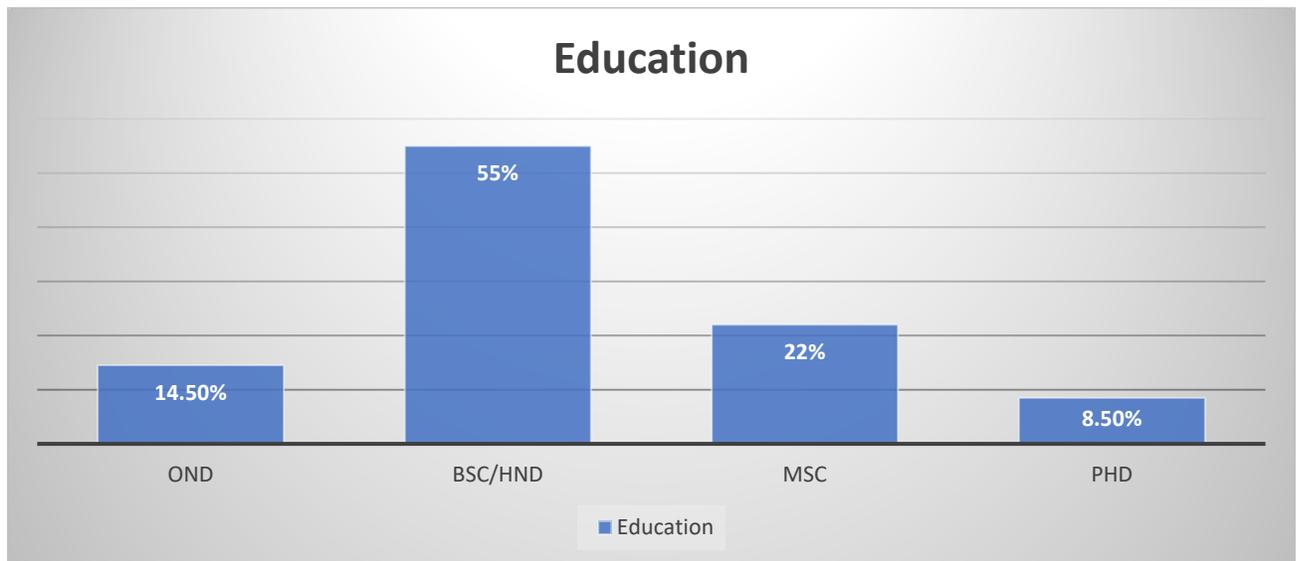


Source: Survey, 2021

The gender distribution of the population presented above shows that 97 respondents were male, representing 48.5% of the sampled population, while 103 respondents were female, representing 51.5% of the sampled population.

4.4.2 Distribution of Population Based on Level of Education

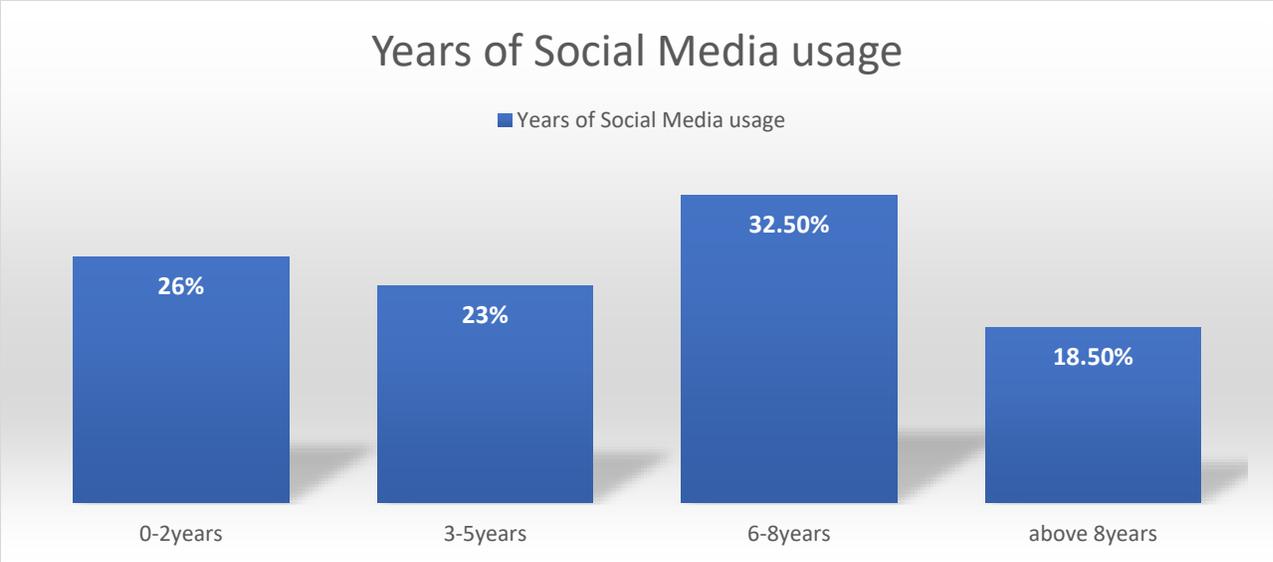
Figure 4.2: Distribution of Population by Education



The distribution of the population based on education shows that 29 respondents have an OND representing 14.5% of the sampled population. 110 respondents have a BSC/HND representing 55% of the sampled population. 44 respondents have an MSC representing 2% of the sampled population. 17 respondents have a PHD representing 8.5% of the sampled population.

4.4.3 Distribution of Respondents Based on years on Social of Social Media Usage

Figure 4.3: Years of social media usage

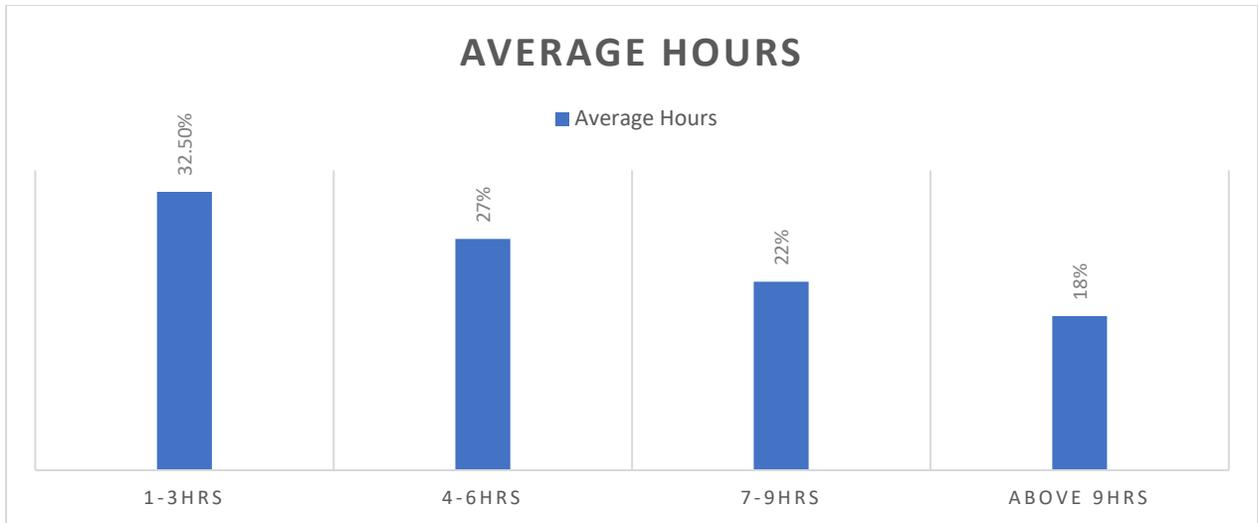


Source: Survey, 2021

A report on years of social media experience of respondents shows that 52 respondents have been on social media between 0-2 years, representing 26% of the sampled population. 46 respondents have been on social media for between 3-5 years representing 23% of the population. 65 respondents have been on social media for between 6-8 years representing 32.5% of the sampled population. 37 respondents have been on social media for more than 8 years representing 18.5% of the sampled population.

4.4.4 Distribution of Population Based on Average Hours Spent on Social Media Per Day

Figure 4.4: Average hours on social media

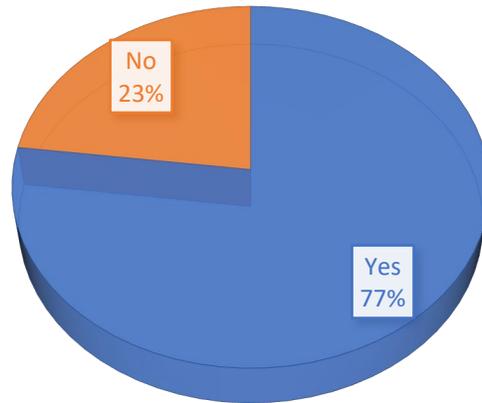


The distribution of the population based on an average number of hours spent on social media per day shows that 65 respondents spend an average of 1-3hrs on social media per day, representing 32.5% of the sampled population. 54 respondents go through an average of 4-6hrs a day on social media representing 27% of the sampled population. 45 respondents spend an average of 7-9hrs daily on social media representing 22% of the sampled population, while 36 respondents spend an average of 9hrs and above on social media representing 18% of the sampled population.

4.4.5 Distribution of Population Based on Followership of Beauty Influencer on Social Media.

Figure 4.5: Followership of Beauty Influencers on Social Media

BEAUTY INFLUENCERS FOLLOWERSHIP

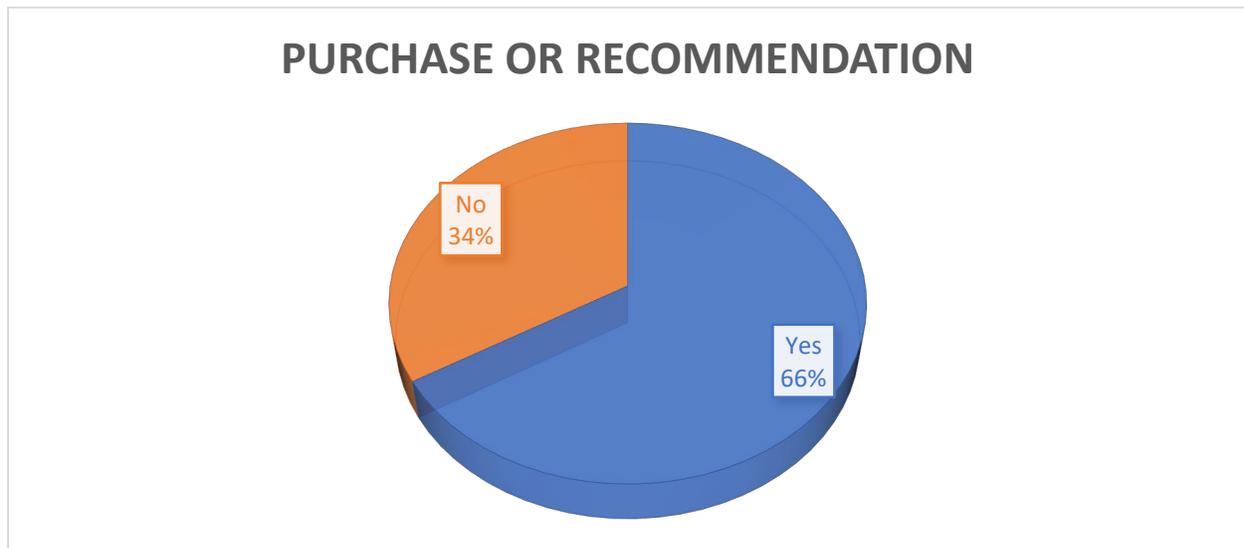


Source: Survey, 2021

Respondents were questioned if they follow any beauty influencer on social media; the result shows that 154 respondents are following a beauty influencer on social media, representing 77% of the sampled population, while 46 respondents are not following any beauty influencer on social media, representing 23% of the sampled population.

4. 4.6 Distribution of Population Based on Purchase or Recommendation of Beauty Product Found on Social Media

Figure 4.5: Purchase or Recommendation of Beauty Product Advertised by Beauty Influencers



Source: Survey, 2021

Respondents were asked if they have purchased or recommended a beauty product advertised by a beauty influencer on social media. The result shows that 133 respondents have purchased or recommended a beauty product advertised by a beauty influencer representing 66% of the sampled population, while 67 respondents have neither bought nor recommended a beauty product advertised by a beauty influencer representing about 34% of the sample population.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

A bivariate analysis that calculates and measures the strengths and correlation between two variables is known as correlation analysis (Mitiku, 2016). According to Abdulkadir et al., (2015) Pearson’s product moment was used as a means to calculate Inter-correlations coefficients (r). To further this, Cohen (1988) mentioned, r ranging from 0.10 to 0.29 may be considered as indicating

a low degree of correlation, and then r 0.30 to 0.49 may be viewed as indicating a moderate degree of correlation and finally, r ranging from 0.50 to 1.00 may be regarded as a high degree of correlation. Usually, in statistics, 3 different types of correlations which includes: (1) Pearson correlation, (2) Spearman correlation, and (3) Kendall rank correlation are measured (Mitiku, 2016). However Pearson correlation was utilized for this research.

Table 4.2: Summary of Correlation Result

	Purchase Intentions	
	Pearson Correlation coefficient (r)	Significance
Trustworthiness of Beauty Influencers	.302	.000
Expertise of Beauty Influencers	.574	.000

Table 4.2 above shows a summary of the correlation result, which is the relationship of beauty influencers trustworthiness and expertise with consumers purchase intentions. The result shows that there is a moderate correlation between beauty influencers trustworthiness and consumer purchase intention as the correlation coefficient (r) lies between 0.30 to 0.49. this implies that the younger generation perception of the trustworthiness of beauty influencers is moderately related to their purchase intentions. The result also shows that there is a strong correlation between beauty influencer expertise and consumers purchase intentions as the correlation coefficient (r) lies

between 0.50 to 1.00. This implies that the younger generation perception of the expertise of beauty influencers is highly related to their purchase intentions.

4.6 Regression Analysis

In this segment, multiple linear regression analysis was used and conducted to test the hypothesis as well as to obtain findings from statistical analysis of the data gathered, this was done through the self-administered survey questionnaires. The multiple regressions analysis was utilized to figure out whether there's a relationship between the dependent and independent variables, and also their level of significance. (Mitiku, 2016)

4.6.1 Overall goodness of fit of the model

Table 4.3: Model Summary Beauty Influencer's Trustworthiness and Expertise on Purchase Intentions.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.788 ^a	.646	.609	.29792

a. Predictors: (Constant), Expertise, Trustworthiness

Table 4.4: ANOVA^a result Beauty Influencer’s Trustworthiness and Expertise on Purchase

Intentions.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.315	2	8.157	63.233	.000 ^b
	Residual	25.425	197	.129		
	Total	41.740	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase

b. Predictors: (Constant), Expertise, Trustworthiness

Model analysis includes independent variables (Beauty Influencer’s trustworthiness and Expertise) and dependent variables (Consumer’s purchase intentions). As demonstrated in the above summary table of Model 4.3 and ANOVA Table 4.4, the linear set of independent variables was significantly correlated to the dependent variable, $R = 0.646$ between beauty influencer’s trustworthiness, beauty influencer’s expertise, and consumers purchase intentions adjusted $R = .788$, $F = 63.233$ ($p = 0,000$.) between beauty influencer’s trustworthiness, beauty influencer’s expertise, and consumers purchase intentions. This means that about 64.6% of the total variance is in the dependent variable; purchase intentions are explained by predictors, i.e., beauty influencer’s trustworthiness and beauty influencer’s expertise A, where 29.3% are explained by other factors.

4.6.2 Individual Factors Affecting Consumers Purchase Intentions

Table 4.5: Coefficients Beauty Influencer’s Trustworthiness and Expertise on Purchase Intentions.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.068	.421		-.162	.871
1 Trustworthiness	-.225	.101	-.176	-2.217	.028
Expertise	1.223	.140	.695	8.761	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intentions

Table 4.5 above shows that the coefficient of beauty influencer’s trustworthiness (Beta1 = -.225) has a significant impact on consumer’s purchase intentions. This is because the coefficient of the variable is negative with a p-value (sig.) less than 5% (0.05). Beauty influencer’s expertise (Beta2 = 1.223) have a significant positive impact on consumers purchase intentions. This is because the coefficient of the variable is positive with a p-value (sig.) less than 5% (0.05).

4.7 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.6: Summary of Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Description	Method	Regression Values	P-value	Result
H1	Beauty influencers trustworthiness has no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.	Regression	-.225	.028	Not Supported
H2	Beauty influencers expertise has no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.	Regression	1.223	.000	Not Supported

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This section presents the discussions of findings. The discussion is done based on the different hypotheses stated in the first section of the study.

5.2 *H1: Beauty influencer's trustworthiness has no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.*

The growth in information and communication technology and the increased usage of social media platforms brought about the concept of social media influencers. These personalities are perceived by scholars such as (Suh et al., 2002; Wu et al., 2005; Lim et al., 2006; and Hsiao et al., 2010) to have a positive impact and effect on the purchase intentions of the consumers exposed to social media. Hence, one of the major objectives of this study was to investigate the impact of beauty influencer's trustworthiness on consumer's purchase intention. The hypothetical construct for this hypothesis was "beauty influencers trustworthiness has no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations". Findings from the study revealed that beauty influencer's trustworthiness has a consequential negative impact on the consumers' purchase intentions of younger generations. This is contrary to the assertion of (Suh et al., 2002; Wu et al., 2005; Lim et al., 2006; and Hsiao et al., 2010). They were of the opinion that consumer's purchase intentions are being positively influenced by the trustworthiness of the social media influencer. The findings are similar to the findings of Lim et al. (2017) who found that consumers purchase intentions is not influenced by the social media influencers trustworthiness. The implication of this finding is that if firms or brands make use of social media influencers out of perceived trustworthiness of the influencer by the consumers, they are going lose customer

patronage and a resultant decline in sales. Hence firms should consider other personal traits of an influencer such as the influencers loyalty, and attitude toward their followers as these can influence the purchase intentions of consumers positively.

5.3 H2: *Beauty influencer's expertise has no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations.*

The study also set out to examine the impact of beauty influencer's expertise on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. The hypothetical construct for this objective was “Beauty influencers expertise have no significant impact on the consumer purchase intentions of younger generations” findings from the study revealed that beauty influencers expertise has a significant positive effect on the purchase intentions of consumers. This is similar to the assertion of Valck (2013), who posited those consumer's purchase intentions are fundamentally affected by the degree of expertise of a social media influencer. The findings are also similar to Magninin (2008), who empirically discovered that social media influencer's expertise affects consumer's purchase intention. In the same vein, the study aligns with Lis et al., (2013) proposition of the greater the expertise of influencers, the more the perceived reliability of the influencer, which in turn influences the purchase intentions of consumers. The implication of this finding of this study is that if firms make use of influencers that have some level of expertise in the product, they advertise it will help them communicate well with their audience which in turn have a positive impact on the purchase intention of consumers. Hence, firms should look at enlightening the influencer more about the product they are to advertise or look for an influencer who have the expertise about their product and have the skills to communicate well with their audience.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main objective of the following chapter is to summarize the study, discuss and analyse various implications of the study findings. Therefore, this chapter will present a summary of the implications, findings, conclusions of the study, and potential recommendations.

6.2 Summary of the Study

The study embarked on an investigation into the impact of social media influencers on consumer's purchase intentions. The study had the vision of building our understanding of the influence of beauty gurus on younger generations. For this reason, the study set out to achieve the following objectives; 1) An investigation on the trend of how social media influences consumers in the beauty products industry. 2) to investigate the impact of beauty influencer's trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. 3) to investigate the impact of beauty influencer's expertise on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. The study adopted the source credibility theory to explain the various the relationship among the study variables. According to this theory, people are most likely to be persuaded when sources present themselves as credible. Hence, consumers may be persuaded or most likely to have purchase intentions when the source in which information about a product is perceived to be credible by them. In other to achieve the set objectives of the study, a survey research design was adopted, and information was gathered with the aid of a questionnaire from a sample of 200 respondents. Correlation and regression analysis was carried out in other to check the relationship and impact of beauty influencer's trustworthiness and expertise on the purchase intentions of consumers. Findings from

the correlation analysis revealed that younger generations' purchase intentions are positively related to beauty influencers' trustworthiness and expertise. Findings from the regression analysis revealed that beauty influencer's trustworthiness has a significant negative impact on consumer's purchase intention of younger generations, while beauty influencer's expertise has a significant positive impact on consumer's purchase intentions of younger generations.

6.3 Conclusions

The growing trend in the use of social media influencers for product marketing and advertisement has raised the question of its impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Hence, this study aimed at investigating the impact of social media influencers on consumer's purchase intentions of the younger generation. The study's major objectives were to investigate the impact of beauty influencer's trustworthiness on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations and investigate the impact of beauty influencer's expertise on consumer purchase intentions of younger generations. Based on the analysis carried out in the study, the following conclusions are drawn. Firstly, social media influencer's expertise and trustworthiness are positively related to consumer's purchase intentions. Secondly, social media influencer's trustworthiness has a negative impact on consumer's purchase intentions. Thirdly, social media influencer's expertise has a positive impact on consumer's purchase intentions.

6.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are given based on the points discussed and given in the conclusion :

1. Social media offers a wide of opportunities for producers as it makes it easy for marketing products and services. Therefore, firms should endeavour to use social media platforms for marketing their products and services and, in doing so, use social media influencers to communicate product information to their customers. Brand owners and marketers should endeavour to look at the expertise of social media influencers they use in advertising their products, as customers are most likely to purchase products based on the expertise of the social media influencer.
2. Brands & Marketers should be a tad bit careful when it comes to endorsing and employing SMI's and beauty influencers because their other relationships could potentially be affected (i.e., an endorsement deal they have with a celebrity). Advertising agencies usually suffer from this based on potential conflict of interest and so on. So therefore, brands, advertising agencies and other marketing agencies looking to employ various beauty influencers and/or SMI's should make sure there is an understanding, they are all valued and there is diversity.
3. The older generations are increasingly becoming interested in the operations of social media and are also engaged in social activities on different social platforms. Hence it is recommended firms and advertisement agencies should also look at using influencers that are older in age as familiarity among age group can be persuasive thus leading to the development of purchase intentions.

6.5 Recommendations for Further Study

This study was on the impact of social media influencers on consumer's purchases intentions. Scholars are encouraged to research further into this topic area by considering other personal traits such as the influencer's degree of engagement with audience, loyalty, and leadership quality and

its resultant effect on purchase intentions of consumers. Scholars can also research on the impact of social media advertising on brand loyalty and patronage. Scholars may also research the impact of the use of social media influencers on consumer's perception of brand authenticity and uniqueness. It has also been observed the older generations are becoming increasingly interested in the social network space, hence further studies can be done to investigate the exposure of older generations to social media and the impact of celebrity endorsed adverts on brand loyalty and purchase intentions of the older generations. Furthermore, scholars can research into consumers' response to the male and female to celebrity branded advertisement on social and its resultant effect on their purchase intentions and brand loyalty.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is to collect information that would be used in completing the research topic stated above. The information collected is for purely academic purposes and would be treated with utmost confidence. Thank you.

SECTION A: GENERAL QUESTIONS

S/N	Item	Option	
1	Sex	Male	
		Female	
2	Years of using Social Media	0-2 years	
		3 – 5 Years	
		6 – 8 Years	
		Above 8 Years	
3	Educational Level	OND	
		BS.c/HND	
		MS.c	
		PHD	
4	Average time spend on social media per day	1-3hrs	
		4-6hrs	
		7-9hrs	
		Above 9hrs	
5		Yes	

	Are you following any beauty influencer on social media?		
		No	
6	Have you ever bought a beauty product presented or recommended by a social media influencer?	Yes	
		No	

SECTION B: Please kindly indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement below, ranking from the lowest 1 – Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 – Disagree (D), 3 – Undecided (N), 4 – Agree (A), and to the highest 5- Strongly Agree (SA).

BEAUTY INFLUENCER TRUSTWORTHINESS

	Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Beauty influencers on social media are trustworthy					
2	Social media beauty influencers are reliable					
3	Social media beauty influencers are dependable					
4	Social media beauty influencers are honest					
5	Social media beauty influencers are truthful and believable					

SOCIAL MEDIA BEAUTY INFLUENCERS EXPERTISE

	Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	Social media beauty influencers have experience in using the beauty product which they advertise.					

2	Beauty influencers on social media are qualified to advertise beauty products.					
3	Beauty influencers on social media are knowledgeable knowledge about the beauty product which they advertise.					
4	Beauty influencers are expert in the field of using advertised beauty product.					
5	Beauty influencers possess the ability to market advertised beauty product.					

CONSUMER PURCHASE INTENTIONS

	Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I am mostly like going to purchase a beauty product advertised by social media beauty influencer.					
2	I will purchase the beauty product advertised by social media beauty influencer in the future.					
3	I have the willingness to purchase a beauty product advertised by					
4	I have intentions of recommending a beauty product advertised by beauty influencers to other people.					
5	I have interest in purchasing beauty product advertised by beauty influencers					

Thank you