



National  
College *of*  
Ireland

**SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER MARKETING: IMPACT  
ON PERCEIVED AUTHENTICITY, TRUST, AND  
PURCHASE INTENTION AMONGST FEMALE  
COSMETIC CONSUMERS IN NIGERIA**

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to study the impact of social media influencers in Nigeria, on the perception and purchase intention of female consumers of cosmetic products in the country. The topic is informed by the fact that the world of business today is experiencing a paradigm shift in the marketing and management of brands. The purchase decisions that people make today are determined by the information they have about a brand, which is impacted directly by the number of details a commodity possesses especially on social media platforms. Social media influencers have become a tool in the promotion activities of major players in different industries especially in the developing and developed world. The role of social media influencers as digital marketing agents to promote and influence the purchase of commodities as authentic and trustworthy and their impact in the process has not been adequately studied in the African cosmetic industry context. The study makes use of a quantitative research methodology as an explorative research design, to collect data from 300 female consumers of cosmetic commodities in Nigeria using purposive sampling to cater for the various major social media platforms available today. This methodology was implemented with the help of Google Forms. The results show that although correlation and regression analyses produced statistically significant result, there was generally weak positive relationship between authenticity, trustworthiness and attractiveness of influencers and the cosmetic brands/products they promote. There is therefore a great room for improving social media influencer marketing in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** *Social Media, Influencers, Cosmetic Consumers, Nigeria*

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

B2C-Marketing	Business to Consumer Marketing
Blog	Web Logbook
CTR	Click-Through-Rate
e.g.	for example
eWOM	electronic Word of Mouth (or also online Word of Mouth)
i.e.	that is (lat. id est)
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
ROI	Return on Investment
SEA	Search Engine Advertising
SEM	Search Engine Marketing
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SERP	Search Engine Result Page
SMM	Social Media Marketing
SOM	Self-Organizing Map
Vlog	Video Blog
UGC	User Generated Content
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
WOM	Word of Mouth
WWW	World Wide Web
IM	Influencer marketing
SIMs	Social Media Influencers

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The future of almost all business marketing is increasingly connected to social media networks as the world becomes more interconnected (Starkov, 2003; Appel et al., 2020). With the advent of social media and the heavy presence of online shopping, consumers' purchasing behavior, particularly among millennials and generation Z, is continually influenced by activities within the environment (Choi and Rifon, 2012; Dobre et al., 2021; Shin and Seock, 2022). Social media influencers are entities who have built a following on social media and play a crucial part in marketing for businesses by using their influence to sway and persuade consumers (Lokithasan et al., 2019). Although, there are influencers that are not on social media, individuals who create material and share it on social sites and other social media platforms are digital influencers that this study is about. This concept has continually seen increase on social media, which is mainly facilitated by the actions and inaction of individuals aimed primarily at influencing the thoughts, actions, behavior as well as attitudes of their followers and audience through the various social media tools available to them. Hence, social media influencers can greatly influence consumers' behaviour, trust, perception of authenticity of a product, and purchasing intention. Recognizing this trend, marketers have begun reaching out to social media influencers and public figures to capitalize on their ability to convince others by sharing their purchasing preferences.

A rising impact of the influence of family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues on a person's decisions have been established in some studies (Mechanic et al., 1967; Feick and Price, 1987; Godes and Mayzlin, 2004; Luan, Yao and Bai, 2017; Husnain et al., 2018; Chopra, Avhad and Jaju, 2020). These close social contacts are usually in constant engagement on social media platforms and can serve as amplification of an influencer's reach through reposts, comments and sharing abilities. In this way, the reach of influencers can get wide enough to influence attitudes, improve brand recognition, or destroy it, and they can achieve such reach or prestige by displaying their dedication to their followers constantly. This creates an important psychological connection between influencers and users, a key requirement for building social acumen to influence users on social media platforms (Cheung et al., 2022). The

psychological connection is important because having high popularity or a large following is not necessarily what makes an influencer suited for marketing brands (Pittman and Abell, 2021). Once users perceived that an influencer is commercialized, the relationship and connection can become distant no matter the popularity or the number of following of the influencer. Therefore, perception of attractiveness, trustworthiness, authenticity etc. of brands involved in influencer marketing reflects that of the influencer. This is the main hypothesis of this study. An influencer with fewer followers could be more effective in promoting a brand than one that has more followers.

Cosmetics are goods designed to be used on healthy skin to preserve and enhance its beauty (Bonnet, 2018). For most women, cosmetics are among their essential demands. Although, it must be stated that males are now starting to use cosmetics products too, though this is not closely comparable to women, especially in Nigeria. Ever since beeswax and olive oil were used as cosmetics in ancient Egypt hundreds of years ago, there has been a connection between women and cosmetics (Wibowo, Wulandari and Qomariah, 2021). In addition to being used for aesthetic purposes, cosmetics are frequently connected to professionalism since it is used by professionals to present themselves in a dignified way. Influencers have been recognized as useful intermediates by many cosmetic brands because of their ability to access even the most difficult to reach customers especially millennials and generation Z (Nugraha, 2021). Cosmetics products are in high demand in Nigeria due to the high importance attached to looks in the country. In fact, Nigerians have been rated as the highest users of skin lightening cosmetics, despite the potential harmful effects (Beatrice and Oluyemi, 2020). Most well-known cosmetics companies in Nigeria rely on social media influencers with big followings, especially female superstars, to inspire and impact customer buying intents, attitudes, choices, and brand loyalty. As a result, several cosmetic businesses set aside money to hire well-known social media influencers to promote their products (Forbes, 2019). This is due to the genuineness with which influencers provide and showcase brand promotion and value to their large audiences (Sarstedt, Wilczynski, et al., 2013). The study is critically planned and built around the above introduction to dissect and assess the role of social media personalities, particularly on perceived authenticity, trust and purchase intention among Nigerian millennial female cosmetic consumers.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The rise of influencer marketing can be explained by the power and reach of a consumer's online opinion or reviews, which can immediately influence thousands of other consumers (Yusuf et al., 2018). With "amazing growth and increasing power," social media influencers have grown into a powerful force of "somebodies" (Booth and Matic, 2012: 184/190). Generally, there has been calls for more research with regards to influencer marketing because the effectiveness has been called into question (Taylor, 2020). However, this impact and the studies available are related to the developed nations and economies where ecommerce has progressed and matured. Studies are needed on developing countries, which are actually the significant emerging markets for cosmetic products. With the tremendous growth in the utilization of social media, there are several prospects in the niche. Therefore, the Nigerian cosmetic market and consumer reaction to influencers-initiated marketing and endorsement are viable topics of focus.

## **1.3 Research Significance**

As per current statistics, influencer marketing may be applied in every business and on any social media platform. Influencer marketing is heavily present in the cosmetics business (Launchmetrics, 2017). The phrase "cosmetic industry" was chosen to be wide since it allows for analyzing a range of circumstances, explicitly concerning social media influencers and digital natives. The current research is significant since female customers in Nigeria seems to very much like cosmetic products and influencers appears to be the go-to marketing standard due to its perceived genuineness. Consequently, marketers, agencies, firms, and possibly influencers need to understand the connections between their endorsements and the engagement generated in terms of perceived authenticity, trust, and intent to buy. As a result, it was determined to create a conceptual model that contained all of these essential components. Businesses, marketers, agencies, and influencers can benefit from this study. The perceived authenticity of influencer-driven social marketing and its impact on trust is also regarded to be linked. As a result, this research aims to see how the different components affect Nigerian women who purchase cosmetics. A focus on Nigeria helps to develop the most viable marketing framework suitable for emerging markets in developing countries. Therefore, this study contributes significantly to the existing

literature as regard the modern approaches to marketing that can be utilized in the country.

#### **1.4 Research Questions and Hypotheses**

The central question of this research pertains to what role social media influencers play on the authenticity, trust and purchase intentions of cosmetic brands through the perception of female cosmetic consumers in Nigeria. Concerning the issue, the following sub-questions are designed to be addressed;

- i.** What is the type and nature of the relationship between the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the perceived authenticity of the cosmetic brands/products they promote?
- ii.** What is the type and nature of the relationship between the attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers and the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the cosmetic brands/products they promote?
- iii.** What is the influence of authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products?

Research Hypotheses include:

**H1:** There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the perceived authenticity of the cosmetic brands/products they promote.

**H2:** There is a significant positive relationship between the attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers and the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the cosmetic brands/products they promote.

**H3:** Authenticity, attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers predict their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

#### **1.5 Research Aim and Objectives**

The study aims to critically analyze the impact of social media influencers on their followers' intention to buy or patronize cosmetic products/brands. The specific objectives are as follows;

- a. To investigate the nature and type of relationship between the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the perceived authenticity of the cosmetic brands/products they promote. To achieve this objective, a validated scale for measuring perceived authenticity will be identified from literatures. This will form the basis of questions that will be designed to measure the authenticity of influencers and the brands they market separately. Analysis will then be performed to reveal the nature and type of relationship that exists.
- b. To determine the relationship between the attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers and the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the cosmetic brands/products they promote. To achieve this objective, a validated scale will be sought from literature that measures perceived attractiveness and trustworthiness. This will then be adapted to measure these qualities of influencers and brands separately before analysis is done to reveal the relationship.
- c. To examine the influence of authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. Here, since all the variables have been measured in the aforementioned objectives, regression analysis will be employed to determine the influence of authenticity, attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

## **1.6 Structure of the Research**

There are six chapters in this dissertation. The introduction is given in this opening chapter. The most recent developments in literature reviews are discussed in the second chapter. The process of the research methodology is spelt out in chapter three and the results are presented in the fourth chapter as findings and analysis. While the fifth chapter contains the wider discussion of the insights generated, the conclusion of the research is presented in chapter six.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Preamble**

This section of the dissertation reviews the existing literature on the topic. The section is structured to capture the current sentiments, reviews, and evidence related to influencers and social media marketing worldwide and in Nigeria as a particular focus for the study. The literature review portion of the research investigates theories and concepts connected to the chosen issue. The current research will focus on the growth of social media as a tool for communication and marketing and how influencers and change agents are likely to impact brand trust, loyalty, and intention to make a purchase. Finally, the literature on female consumers will be investigated, encompassing their features, social media affinities, buying habits, and overall interaction with influencer marketing. Finally, essential variables that influence this topic will be examined.

#### **2.2 Social Media and Marketing**

Recent marketing research has stressed the relevance of digital marketing because we live in the digital age. There has been a digital revolution, which the advent of social media has hastened. As a result, one should look into social media more deeply, as it is the driving force behind the tremendous growth of digital marketing. Most authors use the phrase to describe Web 2.0 media content, apps, and platforms (Mangold Faulds 2009). Through a specialized internet platform, users can engage with one another through uploads and remarks and actively assist in managing media content (Kaplan, 2015). As a result, user-generated material distinguishes social media from conventional mainstream media. Due to social media's vast capabilities and low entry barriers, users can actively engage in generating news and information. Moreover, as a result of social media, consumers are becoming more in control of the marketing communication process and acting as message creators, collaborators, and commentators (Hamilton et al. 2016). It has become increasingly important for marketers to strategically use and leverage social media to achieve competitive advantage and superior performance as the role of social media has gradually changed from that of a single marketing tool to that of a marketing intelligence source

(Lamberton and Stephen, 2016). For example, a place where businesses can observe, analyze, and predict customer behaviors.

Social media is seen as platforms in the marketing world where people connect with one another and exchange knowledge and/or opinions (Li, Larimo and Leonidou, 2020). It has generated significant changes in the economy due to its unique nature as "dynamic, networked, egalitarian, and interactive organisms" (Peters et al. 2013, p. 281). Historically and currently, the most common business strategy across platforms has been to monetize users (audiences) by providing marketing services to anybody desiring to reach those audience with digital content and marketing communications (Appel et al., 2020). Previous studies have looked at the applicability of social media (in its different forms) for marketing reasons. For instance, research by Trusov, Bucklin and Pauwels, (2009) and Stephen and Galak, (2012) showed that specific social interactions that now take place on social media (for instance, "refer a friend" features and discussions on online communities) can favorably affect crucial marketing outcomes like new customer acquisition and sales. From a marketing standpoint, the "omni-social" nature of the current environment suggests that social media impact is possible in almost every stage of a consumer's decision-making process (Appel et al., 2020). For example, when a customer watches their favorite YouTube beauty influencer test out a new product, need recognition may be triggered (Appel et al., 2020). A customer looking to purchase a car may inquire about recommendations from their Facebook friends. These distinct scenarios show that social media has the potential to affect consumers' complete decision-making process, from beginning to end.

Social media has had a significant impact on traditional marketing strategies, but it has also significantly affected local communications channels. As a result, according to Zanger, the conventional sender-transmitter communication model is fundamentally changing due to the use of social media (2014). In the communication process, the roles of sender and receiver are no longer defined, and users, as recipients of textual information, will also become the firm's originator. Above all, they communicate with other consumers, sharing with others. They call this method "electronic word of mouth" after this explanation. According to the current view of social media, users use it to create, access, and transmit information via WOM to different categories of individuals. Some recent research has examined social media from the WOM perspective, including



the effects of transmitting WOM (such as writing a Facebook post or tweeting) on others, the influence of the type of WOM content shared on others' behavior, and the motivations that drive consumer posting on social media, include considerations of status and self-presentation (Herhausen et al. 2019; Stephen and Lehmann 2016). Because this study is primarily focused on Nigeria, it is critical to investigate Nigerian social media behavior. According to the most recent data (2017) from the Nigerian Statistical Association, 75% of Nigerians use the Internet daily. What's more, which social networking platform is the most popular? In Nigeria, Facebook is currently the most popular social networking platform. 70% of Nigerians have a Facebook account, and 75% use it daily. Also worth noting is that only 40% of Nigerians have an Instagram account. Instagram is used daily by half of its users.

### **2.3 Social Media Influencer**

A subcategory of digital content providers known as social media influencers are those who have some sizable online followers, a recognizable brand persona, and established business partnerships (Duffy, 2020). Conceptually, Carrillat et al. (2013) defined influencer marketing as a marketing strategy that ensures that products or services are marketed to consumers through users on social media platforms, particularly those that have gained significant people's credibility and a strong relationship with many audiences. It should be noted that social media influencers are not alien. Instead, they are real people who regularly share their opinions and perceptions concerning the efficacy and authenticity of a product or service that have the greater capacity to influence the purchase intention of their followers. Others are attracted to these people for their knowledge and competence in make-up, fitness, and healthy eating.

It is believed that customers respect social influencers' advice as much as the advice of CEOs (Freberg et al., 2011). They promote branded goods and services to their communities of followers to make money; this promotional communication takes the form of knowledge, counsel, and inspiration. Influencers' persuasive communication is frequently perceived as more "genuine" or "organic" than conventional paid advertising since it is included into their already extensive libraries of visual, textual, and/or narrative information. Despite the fact that influencers are expanding generally, it is important to recognize that their communities and practices differ greatly across platforms and industries. Some people also dispute the term "influencer" given its overt

marketing orientation (i.e., the influence they allegedly have over consumer decisions) (Abidin, 2016). Influencers also appeal to a broader cultural appeal of authenticity since they are viewed as sincere or reliable sources of knowledge and guidance. Because they are often portrayed as people "just like us," today influencers temper their promotional messages with sentiments of reality and ordinariness (Duffy, 2017). The influencer economy also borrows from the customs of conventional stardom despite, or perhaps even because of, this emphasis on relatability (Hearn and Schoenho, 2015). According to scholars like Senft (2013), Marwick (2015), Abidin (2016), modern influencer strategies can be understood through the lens of micro celebrity, which is defined as "the concerted and strategic cultivation of an audience through social media with a view to attaining celebrity status." (Khamis, Ang, and Welling, 2017, p. 196).

Digital influencers can be divided into several categories, and a taxonomy can be created for them based on the various traits they each possess. Influencers are divided by their range, which is related to the number of followers they have, inside the first of these groups (Wielki, 2020). The following categories of influencers can be distinguished in this context: celebrities (over 5 million), mega influencers (1 million-5 million), top influencers (over 500 thousand), macro influencers (100-500 thousand), middle level influencers (20 thousand-100 thousand), micro influencers (less than 20 thousand), and nano influencers (1 thousand-10 thousand) (Górecka-Butora, Strykowski and Biegun, 2019; Wielki, 2020). An organization can use digital influencers in its marketing efforts for a variety of reasons and doing so has a few advantages. Unquestionably, the relationship between the content communicated and a specific individual is the main and most usually brought up concern in all reports and studies. In today's market settings, relationships with recipients can be created and trust can be instilled in them thanks to the influencer's honest message (Zak and Hasprova, 2020).

When studying how social media influencers work as marketing tools, it is difficult to ignore the concept of influence. "A tendency to comply with someone else's positive beliefs," Deutsch and Gerard define normative social power (1955: 629). Their studies demonstrated that people value other people's opinions and, as a result, consider them incredibly important (Deutsch and Gerard 1955). Consumers appreciate influencer product reviews because they can relate to the influencers and prefer to learn from a

trustworthy source (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Furthermore, in an online study of social influence, Guadagno et al. (2013) revealed that positive or negative comments can convince clients of other customers. As a result, positive comments from other customers on an influencer's Instagram post recommending the purchase of a make-up product have been discovered to improve consumers' willingness to comply with the request or message sent based on their desire for social acceptability (Guadagno et al. 2013; Chen 2017). As a result, it's logical to assume that if a client commits to following a social media influencer on social media, they like them and will be more open to their message. According to De Veirman *et al.* (2017), an influencer might be viewed as an opinion leader if they have a substantial following. When someone is seen as an opinion leader, the issue of credibility arises.

#### **2.4 Theoretical Review**

In view of the foregoing, the conceptual framework for this study was designed using the source credibility, match up hypothesis model, social influence theory, and consumer socialization theory to represent the research aims.

According to the source credibility model put forth by Hovland, Janis and Kelley, (1953) perceived knowledge and trustworthiness are the two main factors that determine source credibility. When making a purchasing decision, a consumer's objectivity may be influenced by the source's familiarity and likeability (or attractiveness) (Till and Busler, 2000). It is inferred that consumers form a certain affinity for their attractive celebrities, and that this positive attitude spreads to the approval of things being supported by them (Park and Lin, 2020). Or to put it another way, a likable celebrity may affect consumers' purchasing decisions. On the other hand, trustworthiness is the consumer's opinion of the endorser's honesty, belief, and integrity (Till and Busler, 2000). They contend that this aspect of the model is crucial, particularly when the endorser's knowledge is not necessary for the products being promoted. Therefore, Chung and Cho (2017) claim that customers' perceptions of celebrities as trustworthy have a significant impact on how they feel about a business and how they decide whether to make a purchase. This suggests that consumers will choose to purchase endorsed products when their opinions are seen to be valid, and vice versa (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). To address the issues of reliability and appeal in the conceptual model, the source credibility model is crucial in this study.

Another pertinent idea that some researchers use to analyze influencers and customer purchasing intents or decision-making is the match-up hypothesis (Till and Busler, 2000). According to the theory, endorsers (influencers) will produce more when they "fit" with the product they are endorsing (Kamins, 1990). The interaction between the influencer and the consumer is strengthened by the model, which also emphasizes the necessity of a match-up (Choi & Rifon, 2012). The physical beauty of the endorser has been the primary emphasis of the match-up hypothesis, but to effectively use this model, the endorser credibility must be taken into account and evaluated (Stafford, Stafford and Day, 2002). According to the match-up theory, there should be a good fit between the celebrity image and the brand image (Parmar, Ghuman and Mann, 2019). Compared to an advertisement where the celebrity image and the product image are not well matched, the advertiser and celebrity are more credible with this match. Because different celebrities have varying effects on the endorsed product, match-up hypothesis has its roots in this phenomenon. When a celebrity promotes a product, consumers compare the celebrity associations with the characteristics of the product category to assess the efficacy of the marketing (Bertrand and Todd, 1992; Lynch & Schuler, 1994). Customers may have negative opinions of a product or service if they believe that a celebrity and the product or service are not a good match (Erdogan, 1999).

The context provided by social impact theory describes how conveyed identities shape a person's social behavior (Kelman, 1961). It considers how social networks' pull and compels people to adopt societal norms (Venkatesh and Brown, 2001; Venkatesh and Davis, 2000). Three levels of influence—compliance, identification, and internalization—that affect a person's attitudes and behaviors were established in a research by Kelman (1958). Compliance is the modification of behavior to obtain benefits or avoid drawbacks, such as social rejection (Bagozzi and Lee, 2002). According to social influence theory, people adjust their behavior to deal with new changes in their social environments (Ozuem et al., 2021). According to Kelman's (1958) theory, levels of compliance, identification, and internalization determine the extent of social influence. People conform through accepting rewards and associating with organizations that conform. Identification occurs when people consent to sources of influence to continue a desired relationship (Kelman, 1958; Warshaw, 1980). Internalization occurs when a person adopts and accepts new behaviors and ideas in a group and realizes that doing so will benefit them (Kelman, 1958). Customers that

follow social media influencers are consequently more likely to adopt their norms, attitudes, motives, and behaviors.

## **2.5 Empirical Review of Related Studies**

According to a survey conducted by Fondevila-Gascón et al., (2020), respondents who follow influencers make up 93.3 percent of the sample, while those who do not follow any influencers make up 6.33 percent. Overall, it has been determined that social media has prompted and affected most respondents who are between the ages of 20 and 30 to a greater extent these days, most of the younger members of the group. Users of social media who followed at least one influencer were asked to complete an online survey by Lou and Yuan (2019). The findings showed that influencers' educational postings can help build followers' trust in their branded material, which might then influence purchase intentions. It may be because influencers automatically have a status of authority among their followers that their reliability, attractiveness, and perceived likeness (to their followers) positively increased their followers' trust in their branded messages. Expertise and attractiveness of influencers contribute to increased brand awareness among followers. Interviews with Instagram users by Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) revealed that a person's reputation can be gauged by their number of followers. Additionally, data from the study by Casaló, Flavián and Ibáñez-Sánchez, (2018), which included responses from over 800 Instagram users, suggests that originality and uniqueness are crucial qualities for a user to possess if they want to be recognized as an opinion leader on the platform.

De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders, (2017) investigated if popular Instagram profiles were perceived as more likeable. His objective was to determine the qualities that make an influencer successful in marketing. In contrast to more diversified accounts, they experimented with how these well-known individuals are perceived and how this affects sales. In a study he conducted, he gave several people the same Instagram page with varying numbers of following and followers. To avoid gender bias, the experiment included a male and a female participant. Participants in the study graded factors such as likability, trustworthiness, and likelihood that they would engage with the content. According to the study, the same profile with more followers scored higher across the board. The study's findings revealed that individuals believe the ideas of those who have a large following on their account. Influencer marketing has gained a lot of ground

in popularity, but most research indicates that it might not be as successful as many people think. Customers doubt social media influencers more and more frequently.

According to some studies that investigated influencer marketing, influencers were categorized as information providers. Beauty makers are SMIs who work in the cosmetics sector, and information providers are social media influencers who operate in the social media sphere (Choi and Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Dekavalla, 2019). Customers are affected differently by various types of beauty influencers. Influencers from the general populace, as opposed to celebrities, have more of an impact on the buying habits and brand attitudes of young customers (Schouten, Janssen and Verspaget, 2019; Trivedi and Sama, 2019). However, in a research conducted by Trivedi, (2018), it indicates that attractive celebrity influencers are more likely than generalist influencers to have an impact on customers' reactions in the fashion and lifestyle sectors. Additionally, another study found that influencers from the general people were more effective at influencing shoppers than celebrities were in the field of cosmetics (Choi and Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Dekavalla, 2019). Kim and Lee's, (2017) research found that, even when a celebrity's material does not disclose its sponsorship, a friend's suggestion is more likely to persuade a buyer to buy a product.

Sparkman and Richard (1982) investigated how consumer assumptions about the amount of money those particular celebrities received from brands affected how persuasively commercials worked. According to the study, when consumers suspected that celebrities were receiving significant salaries, they were less likely to be swayed by commercials. According to the findings of these studies, people are less likely to trust a celebrity influencer's recommendations of a product when they think they are solely being made in exchange for money. Another study was conducted by Ezenwafor, Olise and Ebizie, (2021) on Social Media Influencers and Purchase Intention amongst Social Media Users in developing African economy. The participants in this study were active social media users in the state of Anambra. Utilizing convenience sampling for an infinite population, a sample size of 220 was determined. The construct reliability and discriminant validity tests were conducted using smart-pls, respectively. Data were analyzed with SEM via Smart-Pls after being generated with SPSS version 24. The results of this study demonstrated that trustworthiness, attractiveness, and influencer product alignment each had a favorable and noteworthy impact on purchase intention.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Influencer marketing has taken quite a fast growth in the communication of products and services to consumers. Marketing professionals are focusing more on social media channels to sell their goods or services as customers use social media on a wider scale. Influencers, a new class of celebrity made popular by the growth of social media, have now proven to have that influence in promoting brands and products by attracting consumers. Thus, these businesses have been drawn to collaborate with influencers on social media in exchange for payment for marketing due to the influencers' potentially big audiences. Influencers are always working to sway and alter consumers' intentions to make purchases. Operationally, their purpose is to inform users and audiences about the finest products to buy at any given time. In this perspective, a "product" could be anything, including things like services, organizations, and events. Understanding that products come in a variety of forms justifies the necessity for various approaches to audience communication. For cosmetic brands, influencers are particularly useful because their body is usually the selling point. However, a growing concern seeks more answers about the effectiveness of this marketing approach, which may be based on hype. Even if influencers can gain the trust of their followers, are they able to translate these effectively to third party brands? This is essentially the thesis of this study. In the context of Nigeria, no such study exists. In view of the study, analysis has been made through the literature review, theoretical and empirical reviews to give a broader knowledge on the study of the impact of social media influencers on perceived authenticity, trust, and purchase intention amongst female cosmetic consumers in Nigeria.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to present the research methodology. The goal is to describe a clear and vivid picture of the research process such that it can easily be replicated to achieve the same results. The methodology of this study was developed following the research onion by (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The research onion is shown in Figure 3.1 below. The numerous processes that can be employed while developing the methodology are represented by the research onion, which is a useful tool for managing thoughts and for assisting in the decision-making framework when deciding which techniques or methods to apply (Palaiologos and Al Khunaizi, 2017). This model discusses the research methodology from the perspective of the research philosophy, the approach, methodological choice, strategy, time horizon and techniques and procedures. One of the main advantages of the research onion is in the fact that it helps in achieving a coherent research methodology (Zolfagharian et al., 2019). The following sections describe the various peels of the research onion which essentially spell-out the research design.

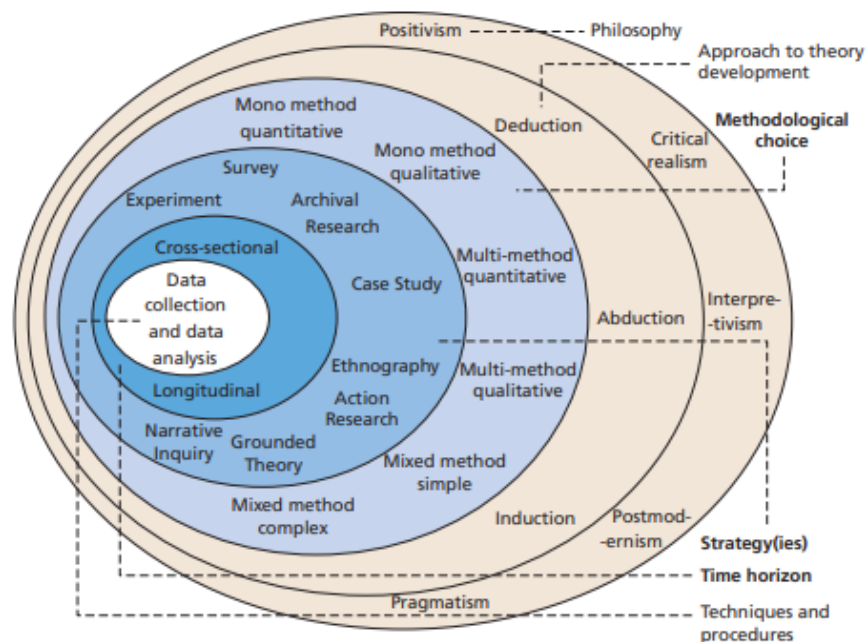


Figure 3.1: The research onion

Source: Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019)



### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019) described research philosophy as the set of beliefs, assumptions and ideologies that a research is based on. Whether one is aware or not, all research involves the development of new knowledge and consciously or unconsciously involves several assumptions (Burrell and Morgan, 2016). Therefore, getting to know the assumptions that underpins one's research philosophy will help in conducting a research where all elements fit together. Among the established philosophies are positivism, interpretivism or pragmatism. This study is based on the positivist research philosophy. There are many cogent reasons that make this research suited to positivism. In terms of ontology, positivism assumes that what happens to the research subject is objective based on one true reality (Rashid et al., 2019). In terms of epistemology, positivism has been associated with generalizability of research answers (Pillai and Kaushal, 2020), observable and measurable facts (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022), and establishing causal or explanatory links using quantitative methods (Park, Konge and Artino, 2020). In terms of axiology, positivism has been associated with objectivity, value-free research and proving or disproving hypotheses (Ryan, 2018). Taken together, these characteristics are generally lacking in other philosophical positions. Therefore, although positivism has often been criticized as being shallow and overtly focused on correlation (Geels, 2022), it is still the prevailing philosophy in survey data analysis (Zaitseva, Tucker and Santhanam, 2021). All the desirable characteristics of this research are therefore strongly underpinned by the positivism.

### **3.3 Research Approach**

Research approach can be deductive, inductive, or abductive (a combination of both deductive and inductive) (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The process of deductive reasoning starts with the formation of a particular hypothesis based on the observations made by the researcher during the literature study. The researcher then collects data and tries to test this hypothesis under a variety of conditions to determine whether or not it is valid. On the other hand, the inductive method starts with data, and the researcher constructs a new hypothesis based on what they find in the data. In this study, a deductive approach is applied, starting with the assumption that there is actual positive impact of social media influencers on the marketing dynamics. Data

collection is then initiated to test hypotheses and provide practical answers to the research questions (moving from theory to data).

### **3.4 Methodological Choice**

The various methodological choices available are mono, multi or mixed, based on the dichotomy of qualitative and quantitative research (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). According to Rutberg and Bouikidis (2018), researchers choose the methodology to use based on the study question under consideration. The questions designed for this study are quantitative in nature. Based on the nature of the subject matter and the study's goals and objectives laid forth in the introduction, the choice of research technique is decided as a mono method, quantitative research. Therefore, this study adopted mono-quantitative research on the basis that a large sample of respondents was required to examine relationships between the various variables through numerical and standardized data. The methodology is defined by Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) as the approach a researcher takes to gather and analyze data to draw conclusions about a certain phenomenon. The study's focus on the effect of social media influencers on a Nigerian cosmetic consumer's sense of authenticity, trust, and buy intention have influenced the study's research strategy, research design, data collecting source, and data analysis source, among other things. The overarching goal of quantitative research is to explore a certain issue or subject by measuring a set of carefully chosen variables and translating their results into numerical values (Mertler, 2020). Moreover, quantitative research is also more inclined to the positivist philosophy and the deductive approach adopted for this study (Baškarada and Koronios, 2018; Corry, Porter and McKenna, 2018; Farghaly, 2018). These and the other aforementioned reasons informed the quantitative methodology employed in this research.

### **3.5 Research Strategy**

The next layer of the research onion is the strategy for executing the chosen quantitative methodology. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019), quantitative research is principally associated with experimental and survey research strategies. However, although the research questions herein can be tackled through experimental strategy, it is not applicable due to the scope of resources that will be required for implementation. Therefore, this study was naturally left with the survey research

strategy as the viable option. In survey research, the precise evaluation of the traits of entire populations or subsets of them is usually the goal (Baral, 2017). Therefore, the survey research strategy aligns well with the other choices made with regards to the methodology of this study. This also aligns with the purpose of this research, which is descriptive in nature. This seeks to accurately profile certain incidents, people, or circumstances using research questions that often begin with ‘Who’, ‘What’, ‘Where’, ‘When’ or ‘How’ (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Consequently, the questions posed in this research follow this pattern.

### **3.6 Time Horizons**

Based on the time span of data collection, studies may be classified as either cross-sectional or longitudinal (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Cross-sectional study is used when all observations are made at the same time, as is the case in most surveys. On the other hand, longitudinal study refers to data that has been gathered over a period involving series of repeated processes. A longitudinal time horizon would require that data is collected over a long time and compared across the timelines, which would be costly in terms of time and resources. Due to the constraints of time as with any university study, cross-sectional study was adopted. The research focused on the influence that social media influencers have on the consumers and data collection was carried out at the same time, within one month. All the analysis and discussion were based on this cross-sectional perspective.

### **3.7 Instrument of Data Collection**

The questionnaire (survey) served as the main data collection instrument based on the methodology already established. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix I. The survey was carried out successfully with the help of Google Forms. The questionnaire begins by providing information to participants about the study. This explained the aim of the research, a summary of the questions and assurances of the fact that even though no personal information is required, all information will be used only for the purpose of this study. Respondents were then asked to provide an informed consent for voluntary participation. Respondents were also required to attest to the fact that they were following at least one influencer of cosmetic product on social media before they could proceed to answering the main questions. The questionnaire is made up of four sections. The first sections measures socio-demographic information of the respondent.

The second section measures the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the cosmetic brands they recommend. The construct used in this section is the validated Perceived Brand Authenticity (PBA) scale (Morhart et al., 2014). The third section of the questionnaire was designed to measure the purchase intention of the respondents, based on influencers' recommendation. The scale used in this section is a validated construct by Aji, Nadhila and Sanny (2020). The fourth section of the questionnaire was designed to measure the perceived attractiveness and trustworthiness of influencers and their associated brands using a validated scaled from Ohanian (1990). All the constructs were measured using the Likert scale, which is an established tool for measuring opinions. The questionnaires were delivered as a link to participants through email, and social media platforms.

### **3.8 Population, Sample and Sampling Technique**

The focus of a researcher's interest is on the population, which consists of all elements with common traits, whereas the sample is a subset of the population made up of several target respondents (Verawati, Achsa and Novitaningtyas, 2021). Consequently, people who voluntarily take part in scientific studies involving human beings are referred to as research participants (also regarded as human subjects or research subjects). Survey researchers analyze samples taken from populations because they do not often study the entire community but rather a subset of it. The traits and viewpoints of the specified population being studied are inferred from such sample. By using sample surveys, researchers can try to figure out how sociological and psychological characteristics occur, are distributed, and relate to one another (Baral, 2017). The population of the study therefore consisted of all active female social media users who patronize cosmetic products in Nigeria. Although it is not possible to directly estimate this number, it can be inferred.

According to Statista (2022), the total number of active social media users in Nigeria is 33.9 million. Although this number consists of male and female users, it is safe to assume that the number of female social media users in Nigeria is greater than 100,000. Based on sample size calculation by Israel (2013), a sample of 300 will result in a precision of  $\pm 7\%$ , where confidence level is 95% and  $p=0.5$ . The sample consists of young Nigerian women in their twenties and thirties who are active on social media and buy cosmetics. This is a requirement that was set as part of the consent before

respondents could proceed to start answering the questionnaire questions. The sample size that is a subsection of the populace that is being studied, is intended to be representative of the group that will be the focus of the research. It is essential to make certain that the sample size used in an investigation is substantial enough to provide an accurate representation of the target population. Because the findings will be an accurate representation of the whole population, there is no need to decrease the size of the sample that was taken (Sharma, 2017). To make meaningful conclusions about the population being researched, empirical research of any kind must rely on a sufficiently big sample.

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling. This sampling technique is based on the researcher's opinion in accordance with the study's objectives (Li and Zhang, 2022). In this study, the choice of purposive sampling was driven by the fact that questionnaires needed to be shared equally to users on all the major social media sites that support direct messaging with strangers. The first step in ensuring this is to identify an influencer of cosmetic products on a particular platform, check the list of followers and select randomly those who to send request to. This was done on each platform until the desired number of questionnaires was reached.

### **3.9 Pilot Study**

The descriptions of a pilot study have been simplified as follows: it is carried prior to the main research, it is undertaken on a micro level than the main research project, it seeks to enhance the efficiency and success of the main research study, and it determines whether the main study is practicable, to the extent that resources will be sufficient (Blažev, Babarović and Serracant, 2020). It was therefore important in this study to perform a pilot study. To assure consistency, increase clarity, and prevent misunderstanding for participants, it is crucial for such a pilot study to determine if the participants comprehend the questions of the survey by examining the degree of linguistic and grammatical compatibility in the responses (Vuong et al., 2021). This was therefore the aim of the pilot study conducted in this study. The study was implemented online, using Google Forms. The pilot study was opened between Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June and Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The study involved 13 participants who were chosen using purposive sampling. The selection process for participants followed the same process described for the main study above. The pilot study questions consisted

of the questions designed for the main research questionnaire with an open question where participants were asked to comment on any aspect of the questionnaire with suggestions for improvement. Based on the responses and comments of the participants, some minor changes were made to clarify the wordings of some of the questions. However, there was no aspect of the questionnaire that required significant changes. Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) was calculated to be  $\alpha=0.96$  which shows excellent internal consistency. The result of the pilot study is summarised in Appendix II.

### **3.10 Data Analysis**

It is essential to do data analysis on the research to validate or invalidate hypotheses, arrive at conclusions, or deduce inferences on the topic at hand. To analyze the collected data, this study employed Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. To illustrate how many times a response occurs, the data is summarized and presented using descriptive analysis as percentages and frequencies in charts and tables. Inferential statistics was also used in analyzing data. Particularly, the statistical tools of correlation and regression were employed to test bivariate relationships while regression was used to test multivariate relationships. The ANOVA was first used to investigate how fit the model was before regression was applied.

### **3.11 Ethical Consideration**

Throughout the execution, this study adhered to ethical standards. The participants were in no way harmed in any manner by the study. The study was carried out with the utmost degree of morality. The participants' names were concealed during the research, and anonymity was always maintained. The analysis of the responses that were gathered was likewise carried out anonymously as stipulated by Saunders (2012). There was not a single person who took part in the study without consent. The importance of participation on a voluntary basis was highlighted throughout the research. No information was gathered using any methods that violated ethical standards.

## CHAPTER FOUR

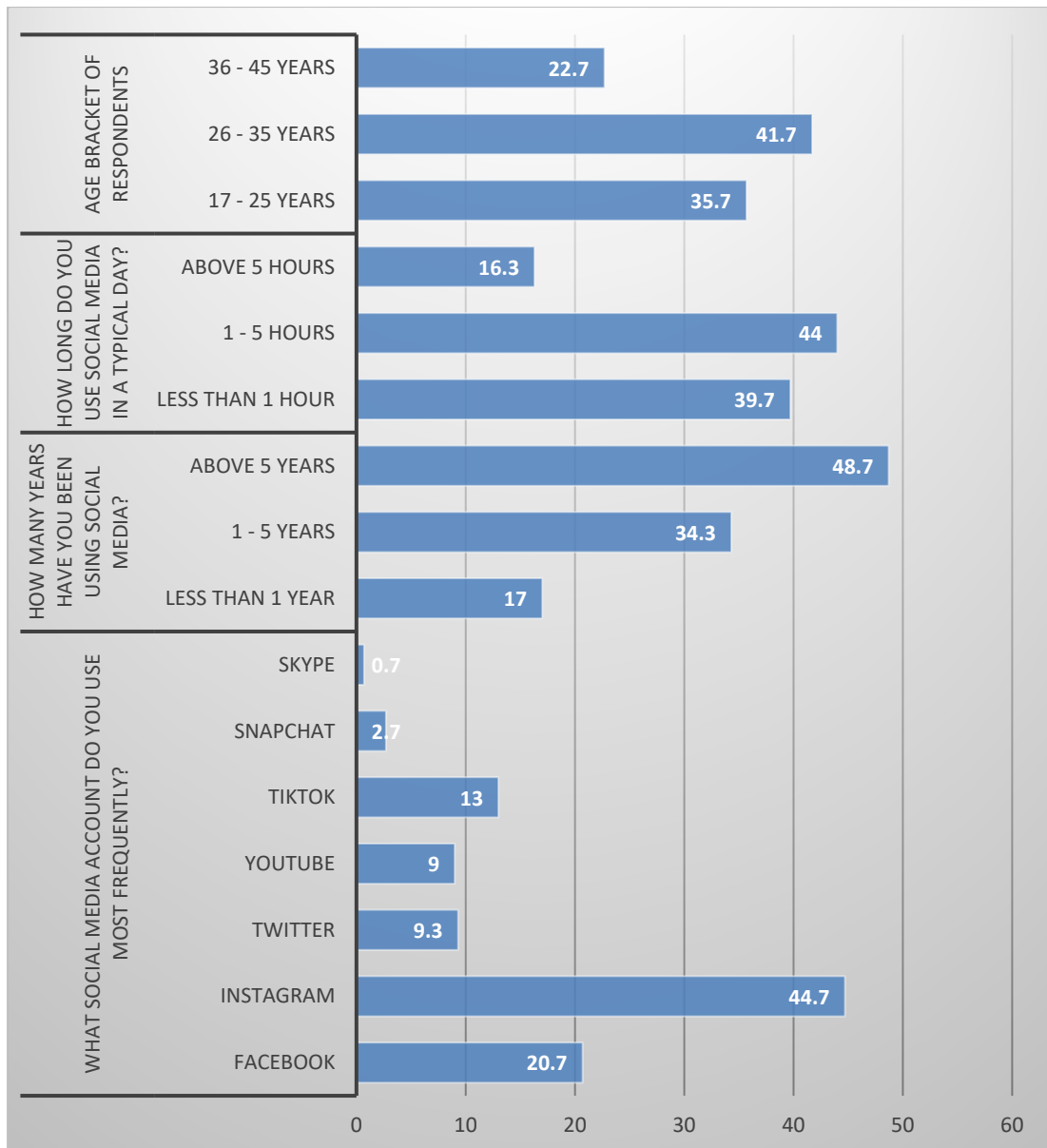
### FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data and the corresponding results. Depending on the research variables and study's research topics, this also includes interpretation. Inferential statistics is presented after the descriptive analysis of the survey responses. The responses are compiled in tables and graphs to produce a visual representation of the data.

#### 4.2 Descriptive Statistics

This section makes use of tables and charts to present numerical summaries of responses from the respondents. In the study participated by 300 respondents, the demographic data are presented below. The Figure 4.1 shows that majority of the social media user being 41.7 percent are between 26 and 35 years old. This result generally aligns with established fact about the composition of social media users, who are often referred to as digital natives. According to Mooi (2018) for example, majority of consumers on social media are young innovative users since their information-seeking curiosity helps them in to manage new innovation better than older people. With reference to Nigeria, studies that are based on consumers on social media also agree to this fact. In a study by Bolarinwa et al. (2020) for example, more than 75 percent of the respondents were below 40 years old. However, when Generation Z users (17-26 years of age) are compared to Millennials (26-1), the result of this study does not align with popular findings in literature. Gen Z users are usually reported to be more than millennials as expressed by Curtis et al. (2019), Serbanescu (2022) and Ali Taha et al. (2021). This difference in trend may be due to a range of factors such as the structure of the country or participation bias that can be attributed to age. Figure 4.1 also shows how long the respondents use social media in a typical day. Majority of the social media users being 44 percent spend between 1 and 5 hours per day. It has been reported that Nigerians spend the longest time per day on social media sites, about 4 hours and 7 minutes (Buchholz, 2022). Therefore, many of the respondents may be spending close to 5 hours on social media.

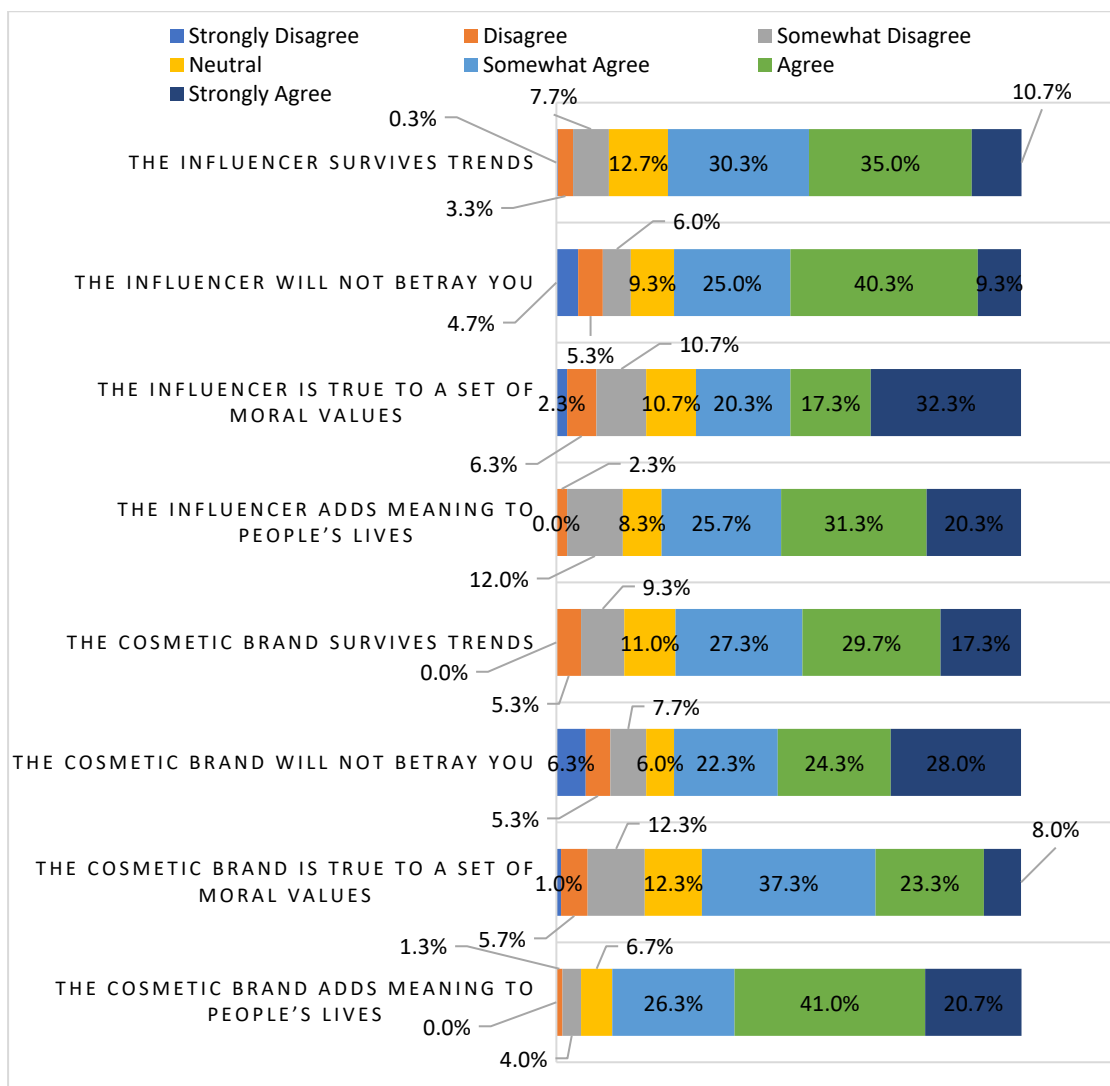


**Figure 4.1. Demographic data of respondents in percentages (n = 117)**

Figure 4.1 also shows the number of years in which respondents have been using social media. Majority of social media users being 48.7 percent have been using social media above 5 years while only 17.0 percent have been using social media for less than 1 year. Again, this shows the high affinity of the respondents towards social media use. Given that most of the major social media sites that are live today became operational after 2005, this will mean that most of the respondents started using social media in the decade of launching.

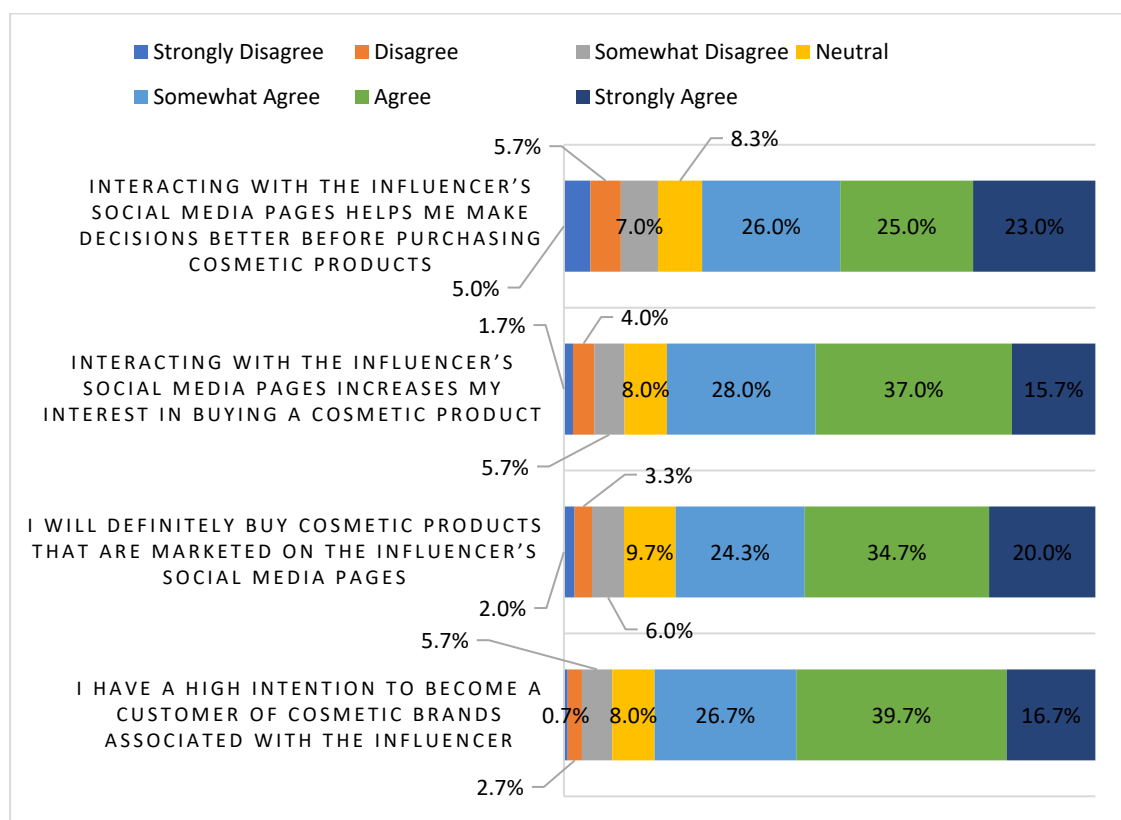


Figure 4.1 also shows the most frequently used social media account. Majority of the users being 44.7 percent uses Instagram. Skype being the least used is expected given the nature of the platform and the little it offers in terms features for showcasing visual appearance of users. Microsoft has in fact decided to relegate Skype and some of its associated services (Molloy, 2021). The most visually stimulating site is Instagram, which is particularly beneficial for businesses that frequently post photographs, such as those offering cosmetic services (Anon, 2020). Therefore, it is no surprise that Instagram comes off as the most used social media platform among the respondents. Although Facebook is the most popular social media platform.



**Figure 4.2: Perceived Authenticity of Social Media Influencer and the Cosmetic Brand they Recommended**

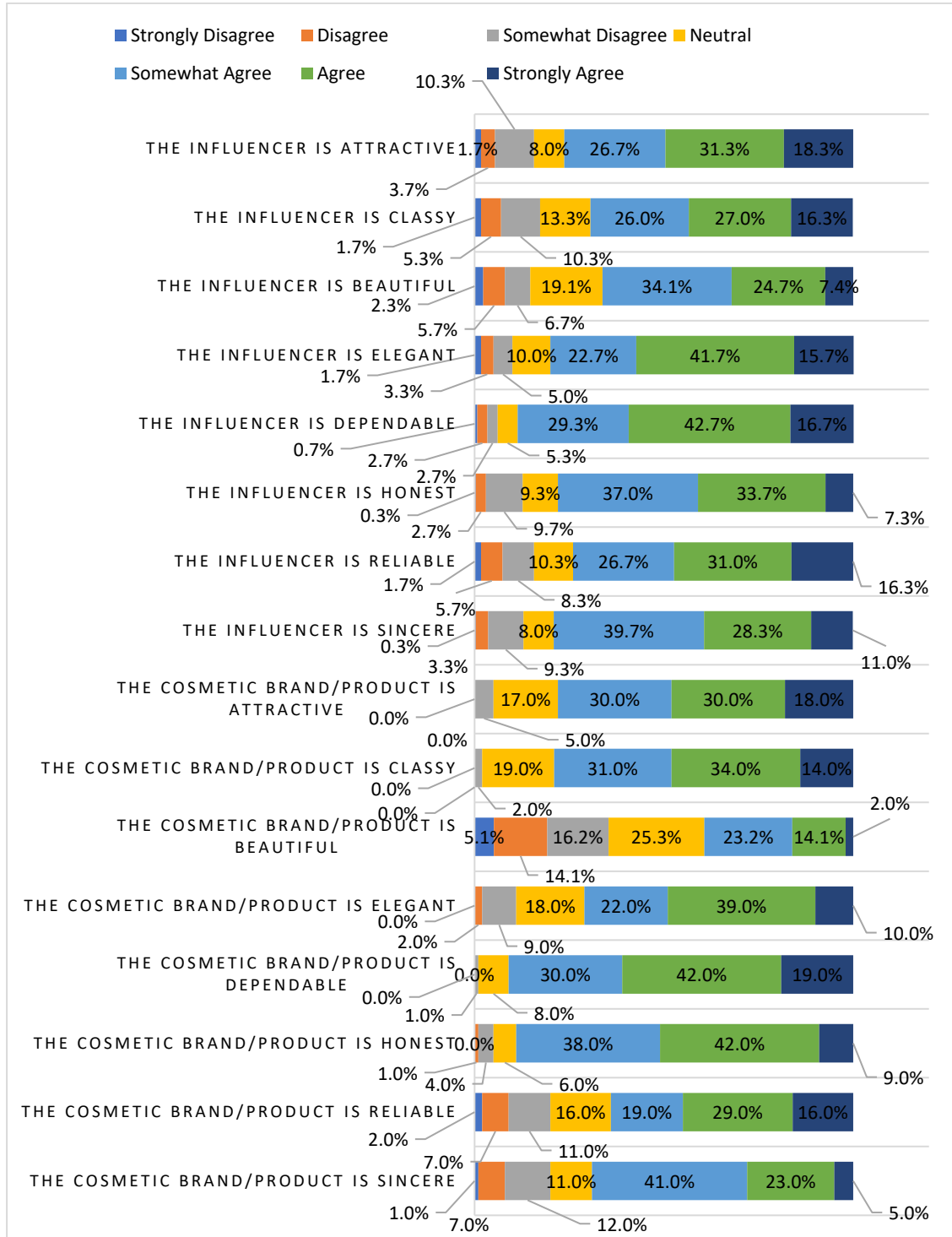
Figure 4.2 presents the opinion of the social media users with respect to perceived authenticity of social media influencer and the cosmetic brand they recommended. It was revealed that majority of the respondents being 76% agreed and strongly agreed that influencers survive trend, 74.6% of them agreed that influencer will not betray you, 69.9% of them agreed that influencers are true to a set of moral values, 77.3% agreed that influencers add meaning to people’s lives, 74.3% of them agreed that the cosmetic brands survive trends, 74.6% agreed that cosmetic brands will not betray them, 68.6% of them agreed that cosmetic brands are true to a set of moral values, and 87% of them agreed that cosmetic brands add meaning to people’s lives.



**Figure 4.3: Purchase Intention of Customers on Social Media**

Figure 4.3 presents the purchase intention of customers on social media, where it was revealed that majority of the respondents being 74% agreed that interacting with the influencer’s social media pages helps them make decisions better before purchasing cosmetic products. 80.7% of them agreed that interacting with the influencer’s social media pages increases their interest in buying a cosmetic product. 79% of them agreed that they will definitely buy cosmetic products that are marketed on the influencer’s

social media pages, and 83.1% of them agreed that they have a high intention to become a customer of cosmetic brands associated with the influencer.



**Figure 4.4: Perceived Attractiveness and Trustworthiness of Influencers and Associated Brands**

Figure 4.4 presents the opinion of the social media users regarding perceived attractiveness and trustworthiness of influencers and associated brands. It was revealed that majority of the respondents being 76.3% agreed that social media influencers are attractive, 69.3% of them agreed that social media influencer are classy, 66.2% of them strongly agree and agreed that social media influencers are beautiful, 80.1% of them agreed that social media influencers are elegant, 88.7% of them agreed that social media influencers are dependable, 78% of them agreed that social media influencers are honest, 74% of them agreed that social media influencers are reliable, and 79% of them agreed that social media influencers are sincere. It was further revealed that majority of the respondents being 78% agreed that cosmetic brands and products are attractive. 79% of them agreed that cosmetic brands are classy. 62.6% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and products are beautiful. 71% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and products are elegant. 91% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and products are dependable, 89% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and products are honest. 64% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and their products are reliable, and 68% of them agreed that cosmetic brands and products are sincere.

**Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics at Conceptualized Construct Level (7-point Likert-type Scale)**

<b>Constructs and Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Variance Explained</b>
<b>Perceived Authenticity of Social Media Influencers</b>				
Continuity	300	5.17	1.241	1.540
Credibility	300	5.03	1.531	2.344
Integrity	300	5.22	1.705	2.906
Symbolism	300	5.33	1.341	1.799
<b>Perceived Authenticity of Cosmetic Brands</b>				
Continuity	300	5.19	1.387	1.925
Credibility	300	5.18	1.790	3.203
Integrity	300	4.81	1.346	1.811
Symbolism	300	5.64	1.087	1.182
<b>Purchase Intention of Customers on Social Media</b>				
Interacting/Better Purchasing decision	300	5.12	1.685	2.839
Interacting/Increased Interest	300	5.30	1.358	1.844

<b>Constructs and Items</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>	<b>Variance Explained</b>
Buy Marketed Cosmetic products	300	5.35	1.410	1.987
High intention to become Customer	300	5.43	1.240	1.537
<b>Perceived Attractiveness of Influencers</b>				
Attractive	300	5.22	1.448	2.097
Classy	300	5.03	1.491	2.223
Beautiful	299	4.81	1.362	1.855
Elegant	300	5.36	1.336	1.784
<b>Perceived Trustworthiness of Influencers</b>				
Dependable	300	5.55	1.143	1.306
Honest	300	5.10	1.182	1.397
Reliable	300	5.13	1.472	2.167
Sincere	300	5.12	1.233	1.520
<b>Perceived Attractiveness of Cosmetic Brands and Products</b>				
Attractive	300	5.39	1.114	1.242
Classy	300	5.39	1.011	1.021
Beautiful	297	3.98	1.473	2.169
Elegant	300	5.17	1.219	1.486
<b>Perceived Trustworthiness of Cosmetic Brands and Products</b>				
Dependable	300	5.70	.902	.813
Honest	300	5.43	.953	.908
Reliable	300	4.94	1.576	2.485
Sincere	300	4.73	1.320	1.743

*Source: Suggested by the Author*

Table 4.1 presents a summary of the selected descriptive statistics. It could be seen that all the mean values are above 3.5, which is the average of the 7-Point Likert scale utilized for the research instrument in this study. Based on the high mean scores, it could be said that there is relatively high degree of agreement for all the questions relating to perceived authenticity, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and purchase intention of social media users. Table 4.1 also provides an overview of all main

variables' means, standard deviations, and the variance explained on each Likert-scale to further describe the items for each construct.

## Preliminary Tests

### Test of Normality

This section intends to check if the chosen variables for estimation are normally distributed. Below is the

**Table 4.2: Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Social Media Influencer's Authenticity	.176	300	.000	.876	300	.000
Social Media Influencer's Attractiveness	.204	300	.000	.889	300	.000
Social Media Influencer's Trustworthiness	.205	300	.000	.894	300	.000
Consumer Purchase Intention	.240	300	.000	.867	300	.000
Cosmetic Brands Authenticity	.242	300	.000	.914	300	.000
Cosmetic Brands Attractiveness	.188	300	.000	.907	300	.000
Cosmetic Brands Trustworthiness	.199	300	.000	.913	300	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The study conducted a normality test to examine if the data obtained for the study are normally distributed. The value of Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk test from Table 4.2 revealed that the statistic for each of the indicators included in the study are significant at 1% level of significance. That implies that the variables are not normally distributed.

The study proceeded to check for multicollinearity among the variables with the aid of correlation analysis and variance inflator factor.

	Social Media Influencer Authenticity	Social Media Influencer's Attractiveness	Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness	Cosmetic Brands Authenticity	Cosmetic Brands Attractiveness	Cosmetic Brands Trustworthiness	Customer Purchase Intention
Social Media Influencer Authenticity	1	.035	-.089	.188**	.028	-.088	-.120*
Social Media Influencer's Attractiveness	.035	1	-.173**	.064	.289**	-.013	-.160**
Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness	-.089	-.173**	1	-.121*	.132*	.444**	.022
Cosmetic Brands Authenticity	.188**	.064	-.121*	1	-.036	-.185**	-.150**
Cosmetic Brands Attractiveness	.028	.289**	.132*	-.036	1	.105	-.066
Cosmetic Brands Trustworthiness	-.088	-.013	.444**	-.185**	.105	1	.059
Customer Purchase Intention	-.120*	-.160**	.022	-.150**	-.066	.059	1

The Table 4.3 above presents the correlation result for the test of multicollinearity. According to Baltagi (2011), the threshold for multicollinearity test is 0.75, which implies that any coefficient above 0.75 within the correlation matrix shows that the series have multicollinearity problem. In the Table above, the result showed that none of the correlation coefficient is above 0.75, indicating that there is no problem of multicollinearity among the variables employed in this study. This is evident from their correlation coefficient that are below 0.75.

The study proceeded to further confirm if there is multicollinearity among the independent variables only by conducting collinearity statistics using Variance Inflator Factor (VIF).

Table 4.4: Collinearity Statistics

Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Social Media Influencer Authenticity	.957	1.045
Social Media Influencer's Attractiveness	.931	1.074
Social Media Influencer Trustworthiness	.864	1.157
Cosmetic Brands Authenticity	.752	1.330
Cosmetic Brands Attractiveness	.879	1.138
Cosmetic Brands Trustworthiness	.779	1.284

The Table 4.4 above presents the collinearity statistics based on the tolerance level and variance factor inflator (VIF). The decision rule is that if tolerance level is less than 0.1, there is a problem of multicollinearity. Accordingly, if the VIF coefficient is greater than 10, it implies that the variables are suffering from multicollinearity problem. The result obtained showed that the tolerance level of each variable is greater than 0.1 and the VIF coefficient is less than 10. Based on this outcome, it was concluded that there is no problem of multicollinearity among the independent variable included in the study.

### 4.3 Inferential Statistics

This section will be employing statistical tools of correlation and regression to examine the relationship and influence of the variables included in the study. Correlation will be used to examine the relationship between the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the perceived authenticity of the cosmetic brands/products they promote. Accordingly, correlation will be employed to test the relationship between attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers and the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the cosmetic brands/products they promote.

On the other hand, regression will be employed to test the influence of authenticity, attractiveness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.



### 4.3.1 Hypotheses Testing

H1: There is a significant positive relationship between the perceived authenticity of social media influencers and the perceived authenticity of the cosmetic brands/products they promote.

H2: There is a significant positive relationship between the attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers and the attractiveness and trustworthiness of the cosmetic brands/products they promote.

H3: Authenticity, attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers predict their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

### Correlation Analysis

**Table 4.5: Correlation Showing relationship between perceived authenticity of social Media Influencers and Cosmetic Brands Product**

Symmetric Measures					
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.167	.057	2.920	.004 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.155	.056	2.708	.007 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		300			
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.					
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.					
c. Based on normal approximation.					

Table 4.5 presents the correlation results of the relationship between perceived authenticity of social media influencers and perceived authenticity of cosmetic brand products they promote. The spearman correlation coefficient of 0.155 indicates that there is a positive relationship, while the associated significance level of 0.007, which is less than the chosen 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant.

Based on this outcome, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is positive and significant relationship between perceived authenticity of social media influencers and perceived authenticity of cosmetic brand products they promote

**Table 4.6: Correlation Showing relationship between the attractiveness of social Media Influencers and Cosmetic Brands Product**

Symmetric Measures					
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.289	.063	5.220	.000 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.366	.060	6.794	.000 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		300			
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.					
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.					
c. Based on normal approximation.					

Table 4.6 presents the correlation results of the relationship between the attractiveness social media influencers and the attractiveness of cosmetic brand products they promote. The spearman correlation coefficient of 0.366 indicates that there is a positive relationship, while the associated significance level of 0.000, which is less than the chosen 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant.

Based on this outcome, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is positive and significant relationship between the attractiveness of social media influencers and the attractiveness of cosmetic brand products they promote

**Table 4.7: Correlation Showing relationship between the trustworthiness of social Media Influencers and Cosmetic Brands Product**

Symmetric Measures					
		Value	Asymp. Std. Error <sup>a</sup>	Approx. T <sup>b</sup>	Approx. Sig.
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.204	.067	3.595	.000 <sup>c</sup>
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.259	.060	4.637	.000 <sup>c</sup>
N of Valid Cases		300			
a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.					
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.					
c. Based on normal approximation.					

Table 4.7 presents the correlation results of the relationship between the trustworthiness social media influencers and the trustworthiness of cosmetic brand products they promote. The spearman correlation coefficient of 0.259 indicates that there is a positive relationship, while the associated significance level of 0.000, which is less than the chosen 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant.

Based on this outcome, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is positive and significant relationship between the trustworthiness of social media influencers and the trustworthiness of cosmetic brand products they promote.

#### 4.3.2 Hypotheses Testing

Regression Results showing the influence of authenticity of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

**Table 4.8: Model Summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.120 <sup>a</sup>	.014	.011	1.233
a. Predictors: (Constant), The influencer is true to a set of moral values				

This Table 4.8 above presents the model summary. It shows the correlation coefficients R is 0.120 (i.e.  $R=0.120$ ) which indicates a weak positive correlation between authenticity and followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The R-Squared value of 0.014 indicated that as much as 1.4% percent variation in followers' intention to purchase cosmetic is explained by authenticity of social media influencer, while the remaining 98.6 percent is influenced by other factors not captured in this model

**Table 4.9: Analysis of Variance**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.639	1	6.639	4.368	.037 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	452.891	298	1.520		
	Total	459.530	299			
a. Dependent Variable: followers' intention to purchase cosmetics products.						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Authenticity of social media Influencer.						

The Table 4.9 presents ANOVA table. The F-statistic as shown from the model is statistically significant since the probability value of 0.037 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. A high F-statistic value with a significant value 0.000 indicate that the model is fit. This implies that authenticity of social media influencers is significant determinant of followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

**Table 4.10: Regression result for Influence of authenticity of social media**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.886	.229		25.649	.000
	Authenticity	.087	.042	.120	2.090	.037
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention of Customers on Social Media						

From the coefficient Table 4.10, it could be seen that authenticity of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.087 with a significance level of 0.000. The implication of this is that authenticity of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in authenticity of social media influencer will bring about 0.087 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.

**Regression Results showing the influence of attractiveness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.**

**Table 4.11: Model Summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.160 <sup>a</sup>	.026	.022	1.226
a. Predictors: (Constant), The influencer is attractive				

This Table 4.11 above presents the model summary. It shows the correlation coefficients R is 0.160 (i.e. R=0.160) which indicates a weak positive correlation between attractiveness and followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The R-Squared value of 0.026 indicated that as much as 2.6% percent variation in followers' intention to purchase cosmetic is explained by attractiveness of social media influencer,

while the remaining 97.4 percent is influenced by other factors not captured in this model

**Table 4.12: Analysis of Variance**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.784	1	11.784	7.843	.005 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	447.746	298	1.503		
	Total	459.530	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Followers' intention to purchase cosmetic product						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Attractiveness of social media influencer						

The above Table 4.12 presents ANOVA table. The F-statistic as shown from the model is statistically significant since the probability value of 0.005 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. A high F-statistic value with a significant value 0.005 indicate that the model is fit. This implies that attractiveness of social media influencers is significant determinant of followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

**Table 4.13: Regression results for influence for attractiveness**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.145	.265		23.189	.000
	Attractiveness	.137	.049	.160	2.800	.005
a. Dependent Variable: I have a high intention to become a customer of cosmetic brands associated with the influencer						

From the coefficient Table 4.13, it could be seen that attractiveness of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.137 with a significance level of 0.005. The implication

of this is that attractiveness of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in attractiveness of social media influencer will bring about 0.137 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.

**Regression Results showing the influence of trustworthiness of social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.**

**Table 4.14: Model Summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.117 <sup>a</sup>	.014	.010	1.233
a. Predictors: (Constant), Trustworthiness				

This Table 4.14 above presents the model summary. It shows the correlation coefficients R is 0.117 (i.e.  $R=0.117$ ) which indicates a weak positive correlation between trustworthiness and followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The R-Squared value of 0.014 indicated that as much as 1.4% percent variation in followers' intention to purchase cosmetic is explained by trustworthiness of social media influencer, while the remaining 98.6 percent is influenced by other factors not captured in this model

Table 4.15: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA <sup>a</sup> )						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.306	1	6.306	4.146	.043 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	453.224	298	1.521		
	Total	459.530	299			

<b>Table 4.15: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA<sup>a</sup>)</b>
a. Dependent Variable: followers purchase intention to purchase cosmetics products
b. Predictors: (Constant), Trustworthiness of Social media influencer

The above Table 4.15 presents ANOVA table. The F-statistic as shown from the model is statistically significant since the probability value of 0.043 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. A high F-statistic value with a significant value 0.043 indicate that the model is fit. This implies that trustworthiness of social media influencers is significant determinant of followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

**Table 4.16: Regression Results for influence for trustworthiness**

<b>Coefficients<sup>a</sup></b>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.057	.316		19.166	.000
	Trustworthiness	.123	.060	.117	2.036	.043
a. Dependent Variable: Followers purchase intention to purchase cosmetics products						

From the coefficient Table 4.16, it could be seen that trustworthiness of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.123 with a significance level of 0.005. The implication of this is that trustworthiness of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in trustworthiness of social media influencer will bring about 0.123 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.



**Regression Analysis of Authenticity, attractiveness and trustworthiness of social media influencers predict their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.**

**Table 4.17: Model Summary**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.232 <sup>a</sup>	.054	.044	1.212
a. Predictors: (Constant), Authenticity, Attractiveness, Trustworthiness				

This Table 4.17 above presents the model summary. It shows the correlation coefficients R is 0.232 (i.e. R=0.232) which indicates a weak positive correlation between authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness and followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The R-Squared value of 0.054 indicated that as much as 5.4% percent variation in followers' intention to purchase cosmetic is explained by authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of social media influencer, while the remaining 94.6 percent is influenced by other factors not captured in this model.

**Table 4.18: Analysis of Variance**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	24.798	3	8.266	5.628	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	434.732	296	1.469		
	Total	459.530	299			
a. Dependent Variable: Followers purchase intention to purchase cosmetics products						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Authenticity, Attractiveness, Trustworthiness						

The above Table 4.18 presents ANOVA table. The F-statistic as shown from the model is statistically significant since the probability value of 0.001 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. A high F-statistic value with a significant value 0.001 indicate that the

model is fit. This implies that authenticity, attractiveness, and, trustworthiness of social media influencers is significant determinant of followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products.

**Table 4.19: Regression results for the influence of authenticity, attractiveness, and Trustworthiness**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.245	.457		15.845	.000
Authenticity	.087	.041	.120	2.111	.036
Attractiveness	.134	.048	.157	2.777	.006
Trustworthiness	.129	.059	.123	2.179	.030

a. Dependent Variable: Followers purchase intention to purchase cosmetics products

From the coefficient Table 4.19, it could be seen that authenticity of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.087 with a significance level of 0.000. The implication of this is that authenticity of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in authenticity of social media influencer will bring about 0.087 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.

From the coefficient table, it could be seen that attractiveness of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.134 with a significance level of 0.005. The implication of this is that attractiveness of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in attractiveness of social media influencer will bring about 0.134 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.

From the coefficient table, it could be seen that trustworthiness of social media influencer has a coefficient of 0.129 with a significance level of 0.005. The implication of this is that trustworthiness of social media influencer has positive and significant influence on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. The logical interpretation for this is that a point increase in trustworthiness of social media influencer will bring about 0.129 increase in the intention of followers to purchase cosmetic products.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

This study sets off with the main aim of analysing the impact of Nigerian social media influencers on the followers' intention to buy or patronise cosmetic products/brands. Specifically, the first objective is to investigate the nature (strength) and type (whether positive or negative) of relationship that exist between the authenticity of Nigerian influencers and the authenticity of associated brands. To achieve this, an associated hypothesis was designed to be tested. To demonstrate the effectiveness of influencer marketing, there should be a significant positive relationship between the perceived authenticity of influencers and associated brands as measure separately in by the questionnaire. This study found that there was a statically positive correlation. However, the correlation is very weak at 0.155. The second objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between the attractiveness and trustworthiness of Nigerian social media influencers and that of associated brands they promote. A moderate positive correlation (0.366) was found for attractiveness while a weak correlation (0.259) was found for trustworthiness.

The third objective of this study is to determine the influence of authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of Nigerian social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. Regression statistics was consequently employed for this purpose. The result of linear regression shows that the authenticity of Nigerian social media influencers accounted for 8.7% of their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. Similarly, the attractiveness of Nigerian social media influencers accounted for 13.7% of their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. Likewise, in the case of trustworthiness of the influencers, it accounted for 12.3% of their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic product. Multiple regression was then used to determine the combined influence of authenticity, attractiveness and trustworthiness of Nigerian social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products or patronise cosmetic brands. The result shows that only 5.4% of followers' intention to purchase is influence by the combined variables.

## 5.2 Discussions of Findings

The findings of this study support the fact that young Nigerians (generation Z and millennials) are generally ardent users of social media. Digital marketing is therefore seen as the most effective medium with young customers, the age group that, in accordance to findings, seems to purchase more expensive branded clothing, designer bags, digital gadgets, tattoos, and other cosmetic operations (Berg, 2018). In a related study of the socioeconomic factors influencing the usage patterns of cosmetic products among Korean respondents, Park et al. (2018) particularly pinpointed the 20-29 female age group as showing the highest prevalence and frequency of use of all cosmetic products. This was closely followed by the 15-19 female age group. Consequently, products or brands that are associated with these age groups will do well to incorporate social media in their marketing budget. In this case, the strategy may particularly involve young female social media influencers. Young female influencers have even been used to successfully market unconventional products to young people on social media (Kirkham, 2019). The views of the modern-day women as consumers of cosmetic brands are as important as their role as influencers. According to Lee and Eastin (2020), the market for influencers has been dominated in particular by female influencers. A typical example of a young female Nigerian influencer that has changed the perception of women about brands is Maryam Apaokagi, popularly known as Taomma. The 23-year-old influencer ensures that she passes every information about a product to the audience through her video skits. She has influenced a lot of online users and she is attractive, dependable, honest, and reliable because she is true to a set of moral values.

In terms of the length of social media use among the respondents, there is an implication for the fact that Nigerians spend the longest time on social media as found in this study and confirmed by Buchholz (2022). Such prevalent use of social media has generally been associated with digital depression, anxiety, and suicide among young people (Ghaemi, 2020). This might not be unconnected with the fact that people generally look unrealistically better on social media compared to real life. Young people are consequently pressured into attaining the high level of appearance. This further drives their desire for cosmetic products and reinforces the high market demand for the products on social media, particularly those that are highly image based. Therefore, the potential for marketing for cosmetic products to Nigerians on social media is huge. This

potential may be more for highly-image based social media platforms since the results obtained in this study reinforces Instagram as the most popular social media platform ahead of Facebook which has the highest number of users in Nigeria and in the world. Instagram is regarded as the king of social engagement (Gupta et al., 2020). It was also considered as the most popular platform in a study by Choi, Guo and Luo (2020) and Wróblewski and Grzesiak (2020). Thus, in a study by Lee and Eastin (2020), Instagram was seen as the most preferred social media platform for influencers of predominantly female background and was used solely in researching female social media influencers. However, this study avoided bias by considering more social media platforms.

The inferential statistics revealed that there is significant relationship between authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of social media influencers and authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of cosmetics brands. This result aligns with the views of Mudge and Shaheen (2017) and Guadagno et al. (2013) who believed social media influencers will only vouch for brands that they trust to offer quality to their audience. That further buttress the authenticity and trustworthiness of the social media influencers and cosmetic brands.

The regression results also indicated that all the three indicators, which are authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of social media influencers have significant impact on followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products of brands advertised by social media influencers. In the study of Freberg et al. (2011), social media influencers are seen as a public figure that people believe whatever they bring to them as genuine. Therefore, it could be generalized that social media influencers authenticity and trustworthiness plays a significant role in convincing internet users about cosmetic brands products they promote.

The general implications of the results of this study within the context of Nigeria can be discussed using themes such as the impact of technology on purchase intentions, the source of information for millennials, the marketing audience of the future and the evolving or dynamic nature of social media and influencers. Because new variables connected to consumer behavior and online communication are constantly being added because of new interaction forms that are developed, the impact of technology on customers' purchase intentions is a dynamic topic. With the aid of these modern technology, consumers can now make quick decisions and access a wealth of

information, which in certain cases lowers the risk involved in the purchase of particular goods and services (Cantalops and Salvi, 2014). In countries like Nigeria with less access to information technology due to several factors, the impact of technology is probably not as large as other nations where access to them is more widespread. However, is it worthwhile to consider the fact that the culture of Nigerians predisposes them to be able to overcome some of the technological challenges such that they use social media longer than some developed countries. This is indicated by the result of this study.

Effective market strategies must consider the source of information used by millennials and other factors like the channel of purchasing preferred (Nassivera et al., 2020). Millennials are among the largest users of cosmetic products, thus when they are commonly acknowledged to have a fascination for technological advancements and gadgets as their source of information and most preferred channel, this has significant implications for cosmetic brands. Consequently, due to the significant variation of cultural factors that operate in Nigeria compared to the rest of the world, it is important to target Nigerian millennials as a specific group of consumers. In the broader domain of marketing, the applications of marketing communications are almost always heavily influenced by the target audience or audiences, as determined through research in the context of environmental factors (Kitchen, 2017). The foregoing discussion needs to consider the dynamic nature of social media.

The results of this study and the dynamic nature of social media as a conduit for marketing and communication indicate that consumer research that fails to properly consider social media may overlook important insights about consumption. Knowledge producers become knowledge entrepreneurs through the linked endeavor of marketing knowledge by addressing the demands of the target audience and their search for accomplishments that can serve as models for future marketing interventions (Moe and Müller, 2018). Examining social media networking sites based on value proposition, target markets, and co-creator qualities is still in need of improvement (Pelletier et al., 2020). Essentially, the role of data for drawing insights will significantly expand. In this sense, the insight they generate is relevant information that also benefits the players participating in the process—the knowledge producers and their clients—in their plans to accumulate strategic, significant, and financial capital.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Conclusion

The conclusions of this study will be given here from the perspective of the research questions that this study sought to answer. The first research question was designed to investigate if Nigerian social media influencers and the cosmetic brands they promote share similarities in terms of authenticity. Although correlation is not an established measure of causation, it could represent a starting point for further investigation as done in this study. Therefore, correlation analysis preceded regression analysis in this study. Based on the first research question, this study concludes that a significant but weak positive correlation exist between the authenticity of Nigerian social media influencers and the cosmetic brands they promote. The second research question was designed to investigate a similar relationship between attractiveness and trustworthiness of Nigerian social media influencers and that of the brands they promote. This study concludes that a significant and moderate correlation results in the case of attractiveness which a significant but weak relationship exist in the case of trustworthiness. The third research question was designed to investigate the influence of authenticity, attractiveness, and trustworthiness of Nigerian social media influencers on their followers' intention to purchase cosmetic products. This study confirms a significant influence, however the individual and combined effects of the variables on the intention of social media followers to purchase cosmetic products was generally weak. Therefore, based on the main aim of this study, the conclusion is that Nigerian social media influencers are generally not effective in marketing cosmetic products/brands. Although there is great potential, there is great room for improvement.

#### 6.2 Recommendation

The recommendations of this study will be directed to the main actors in the social media influencer marketing industry, especially the Nigerian context. These include the influencers themselves, cosmetic marketers or brands, and social media users.

- Social media influencers need to be systematic in their approach to social media marketing. Nigeria social media influencers and cosmetic brands should particularly take steps to boost their attractiveness, trustworthiness, and



authenticity. This can include the use of testimonials on social media, maintaining a consistent image based on a persona across all social media platforms, and increasing the level of direct engagement with users across multiple platforms.

- Marketers of cosmetic products should endeavour to work with younger social media influencers especial those within the age bracket of 18-35. This is because this age group represents the most prevalent in terms of social media use and the use of cosmetic products of all types. The influence of influencers that are in the same age brackets with intended users is bound to be more than with celebrity influencers.
- Fans of cosmetic products/brands should look to Instagram for inspiration on cosmetic trends. Although Facebook and TikTok are very popular in other climes, Instagram is the platform of choice with regards to Nigeria. However, users must also recognise the tendency of Instagram to be associated with depression, suicide, and anxiety.

### **6.3 Limitation and Future Studies**

Although this study successfully investigated the aim and objectives set out, there are limitations that create room for future studies. Firstly, the fact that this study used a survey methodology for data collection exposes it to possible significant response bias. The researcher advocates for a procedure that will enable a future investigation to draw a more comprehensive conclusion. Therefore, future studies could implement a triangulated mixed methodology. Mixed methodology gives more options for improving understanding of difficult research challenges in many contexts. Furthermore, as the research revealed, social media users follow their preferred influencers on multiple social media platforms. Since it was not the research's main objective, it was not possible to determine how well each site evaluated influencers' performance. The effectiveness of each social media site in terms of marketing cosmetic products and brands will be interesting to compare. Therefore, future research should concentrate on exploring this.

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## APPENDIX I

### ONLINE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

#### IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS ON PERCEIVED AUTHENTICITY, TRUST AND PURCHASE INTENTION AMONGST FEMALE COSMETIC CONSUMERS IN NIGERIA.

#### INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

Dear Respondent,

My name is Oluwaseun Jide, a master's student at National College of Ireland, studying Management. The study aims to critically analyze the impact of social media influencers on perceived authenticity, trust, and purchasing intention among female consumers in Nigeria.

This questionnaire is divided into four sections, each with its own set of questions, and it should take you about 10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is very important but completely voluntary. You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation required from you. You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you. You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered. If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

The data I collect here does not contain any personal information about you. All information gathered through this survey will remain anonymous, confidential, and utilized solely for academic purposes. Your completed questionnaires will be collected, evaluated, and stored in a way that protects your privacy.

Thanks for your contribution.

#### INFORMED CONSENT

By continuing, you are agreeing that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet, (2) questions about your participation in this study have been answered satisfactorily, (3) you are aware of the potential risks (if any), and (4) you are taking part in this research study voluntarily (without coercion).

Yes (Please continue with the questionnaire)

No (Please do not continue with the questionnaire. This questionnaire is only meant for those who give their consent)

Do you follow any influencer that recommends cosmetic products/brands on social media?

Yes (Please continue with the questionnaire)

No (Please do not continue with the questionnaire. This questionnaire is only meant for those who follow at least one fashion brand on social media)

## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

Please tick ( ✓ ) the option that most closely describes you.

1. Age bracket

17-25 years [ ]

26-35 years [ ]

35-45 years [ ]

2. How long do you use social media in a typical day (please state your answer in hours)?

3. How many years have you been using social media?

4. Which social media account do you use most frequently?

Facebook [ ]

Instagram [ ]

Twitter [ ]

YouTube [ ]

TikTok [ ]

Snapchat [ ]

Skype [ ]

LinkedIn [ ]

Others (Specify).....

## SECTION B: Perceived Authenticity of Social Media Influencers and the Cosmetic Brands They Recommend

Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Continuity</b>							
The influencer survives trends							
<b>Credibility</b>							
The influencer will not betray you							

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Integrity</b>							
The influencer is true to a set of moral values							
<b>Symbolism</b>							
The influencer adds meaning to people's lives							

Please, reflect on the cosmetic brand that the social media influencer recommends and rate your agreement with the following statements.

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Continuity</b>							
The cosmetic brand survives trends							
<b>Credibility</b>							
The cosmetic brand will not betray you							
<b>Integrity</b>							
The cosmetic brand is true to a set of moral values							
<b>Symbolism</b>							
The cosmetic brand adds meaning to people's lives							

### SECTION C: Purchase Intention of customers on Social Media

Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Interacting with the influencer's social media pages helps me make decisions better before purchasing cosmetic products							

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Interacting with the influencer's social media pages increases my interest in buying a cosmetic product							
I will definitely buy cosmetic products that are marketed on the influencer's social media pages							
I have a high intention to become a customer of cosmetic brands associated with the influencer							

#### **SECTION D: Perceived Attractiveness and Trustworthiness of Influencers and Associated Brands**

Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.

STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Attractiveness</b>							
The influencer is attractive							
The influencer is classy							
The influencer is beautiful							
The influencer is elegant							
<b>Trustworthiness</b>							
The influencer is dependable							
The influencer is honest							
The influencer is reliable							
The influencer is sincere							

Please, reflect on the cosmetic brand/product that the social media influencer recommends and rate your agreement with the following statements.

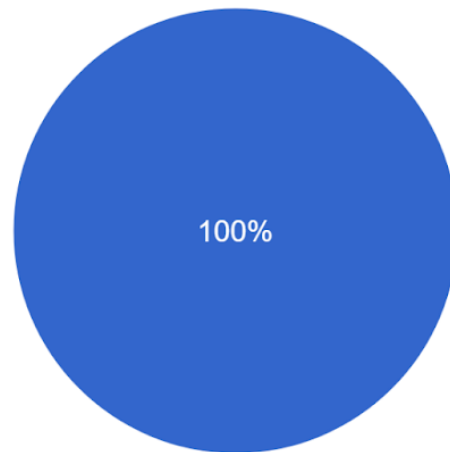
STATEMENTS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Attractiveness</b>							
The cosmetic brand/product is attractive							
The cosmetic brand/product is classy							
The cosmetic brand/product is beautiful							
The cosmetic brand/product is elegant							
<b>Trustworthiness</b>							
The cosmetic brand/product is dependable							
The cosmetic brand/product is honest							
The cosmetic brand/product is reliable							
The cosmetic brand/product is sincere							

## APPENDIX II

### SUMMARY RESULT OF PILOT STUDY

By continuing, you are agreeing that: (1) you have read and understood the Participant Information, (2) questions about your participation in this study... this research study voluntarily (without coercion).

13 responses

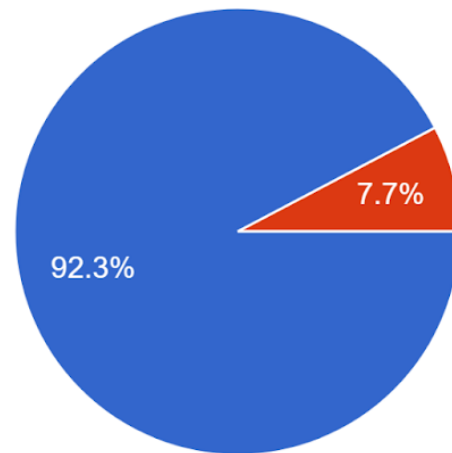


- Yes (Please continue with the questionnaire)
- No (Please do not continue with the questionnaire. This questionnaire is only meant for those who give their consent)



Do you follow any influencer that recommends cosmetic products/brands on social media?

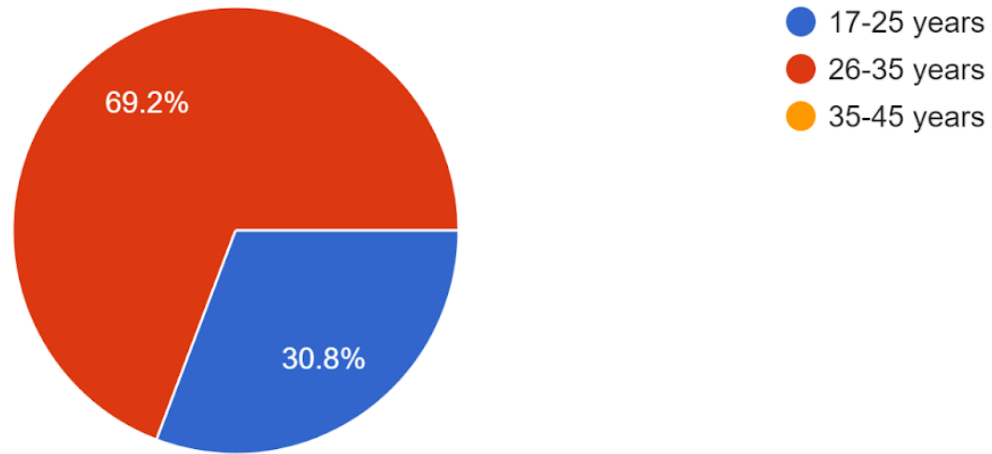
13 responses



- Yes (Please continue with the questionnaire)
- No (Please do not continue with the questionnaire. This questionnaire is only meant for those who follow at least one influencer that recommends cosmetic product/brand on social media)

### What is your age bracket?

13 responses



How long do you use social media in a typical day (please state your answer in hours)?

13 responses

10/12 hours

5 hours

7hrs in a day

4 hours

14 hours

10 hours

8hours

5 hours

4 hours

6

I can't say

6 hours

7-8 hours

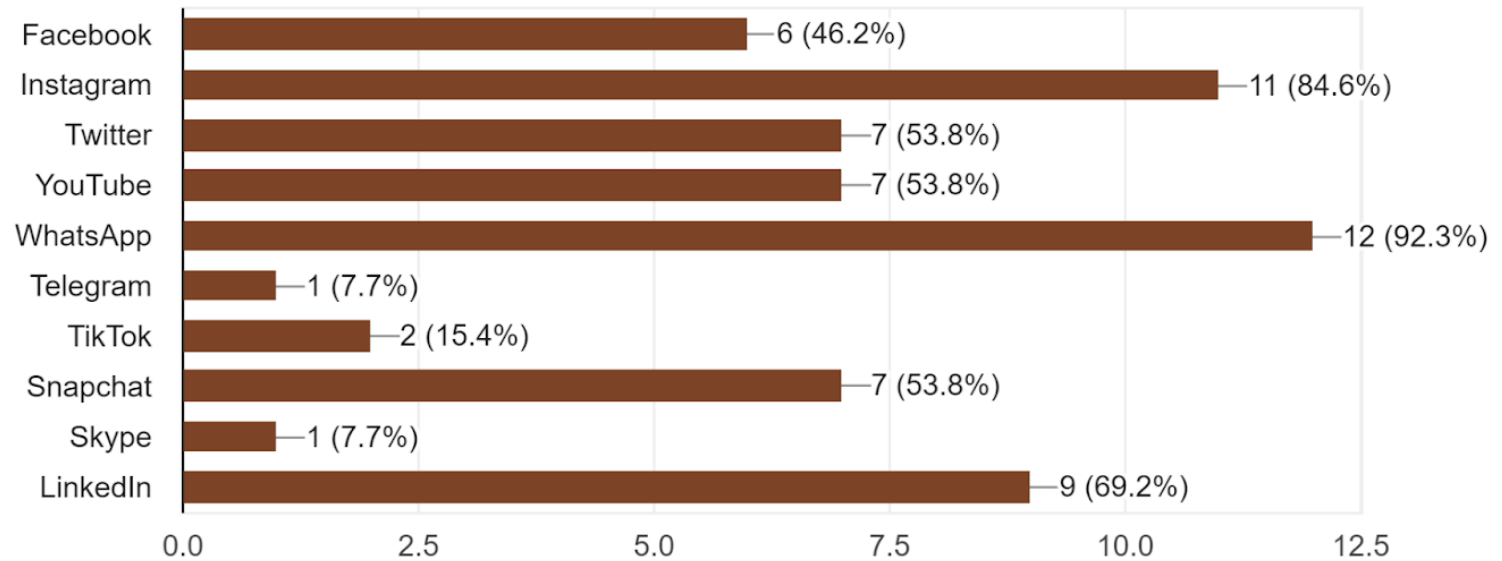
How many years have you been using social media?

13 responses

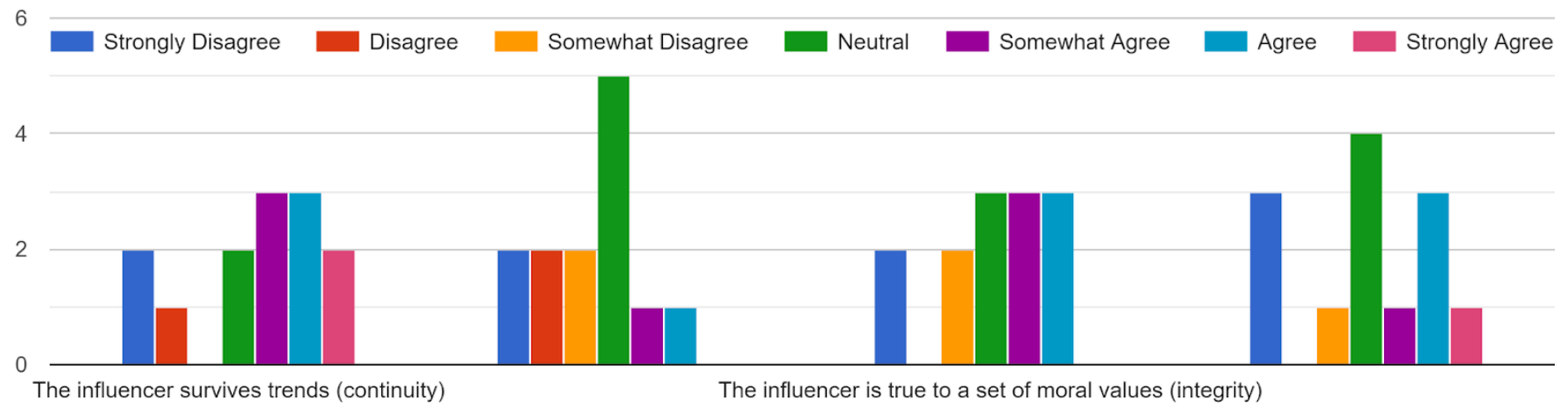
13  
13 years  
13years  
23  
8 years  
5 years  
9 years  
10 years  
15  
8  
Since 2008  
Over 6 years  
11

Which social media platform do you do you use most frequently? (Indicate all that apply)

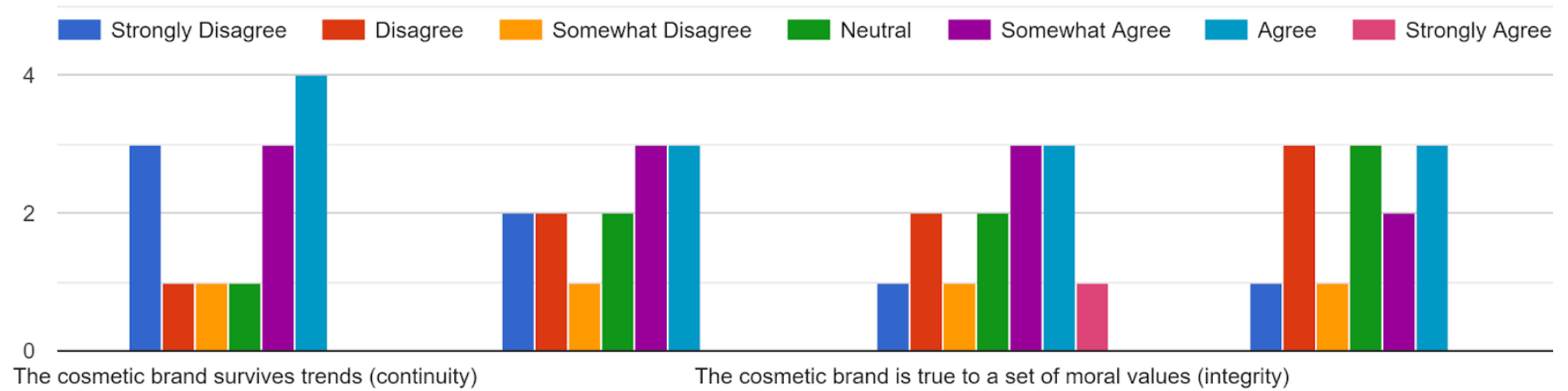
13 responses



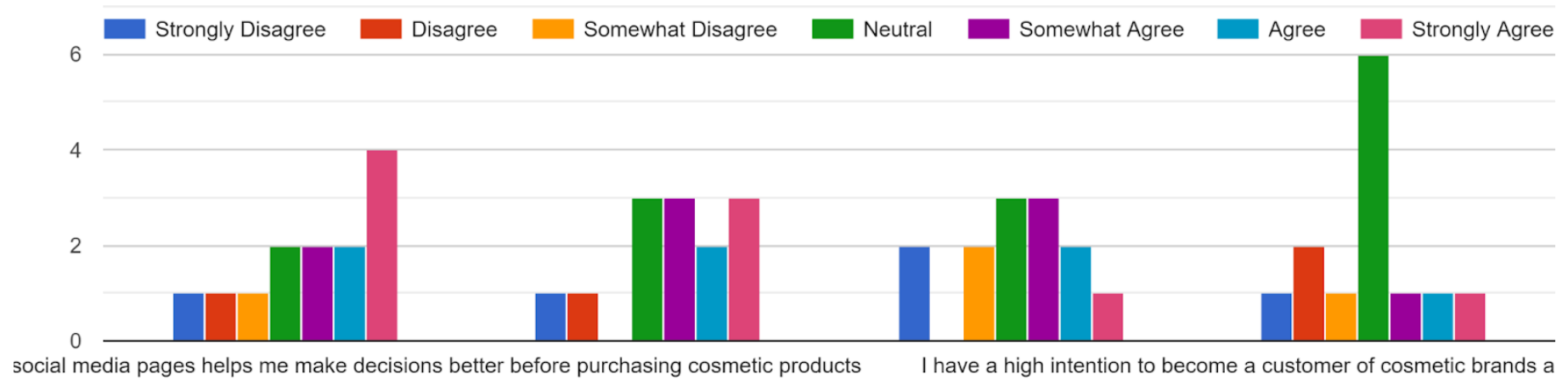
Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.



Please, reflect on the cosmetic brand that the social media influencer recommends and rate your agreement with the following statements.

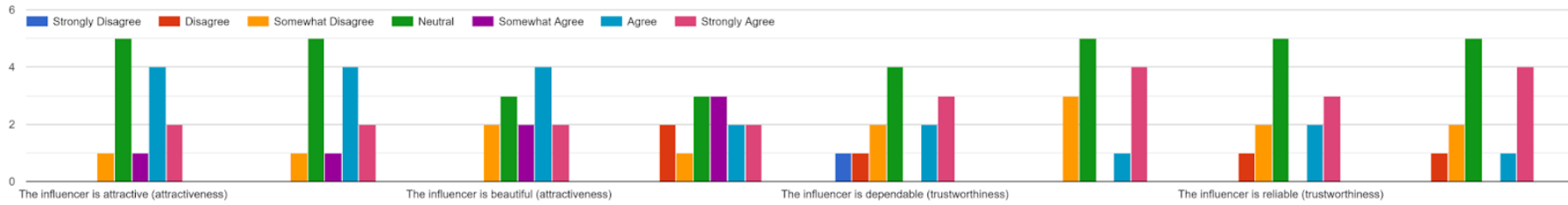


Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.

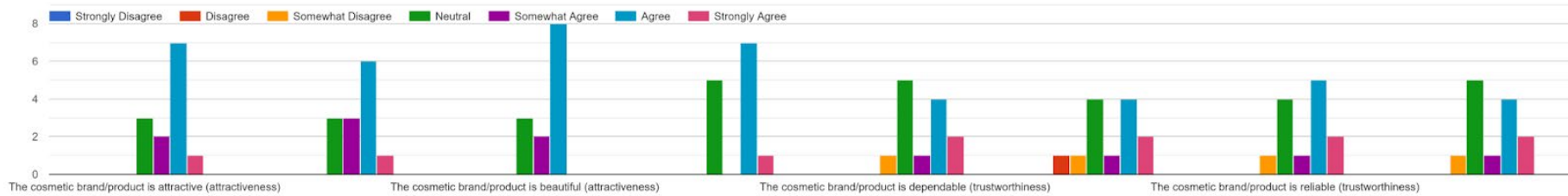




Please, reflect on your experience with a particular influencer that recommends cosmetic products on social media and rate how you agree with the following statements.



Please, reflect on the cosmetic brand/product that the social media influencer recommends and rate your agreement with the following statements.



Please, do you have any suggestion that would improve this questionnaire/survey?

13 responses

Nil

No

How do you evaluate a social media influencer?

None for now

No

None

Nothing for now

NA

I don't remember answering if I have purchased any cosmetic product because of an influencer

None

The End!