



**CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY DESCRIBING
THE IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER MARKETING WITHIN A SOUTH
AFRICAN CONTEXT.**

By

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ABSTRACT

When consumers are looking for reviews and recommendations, they often turn to someone they know who is authentic, shares the same values as them and who is honest (Estay, 2021). It is very rare that a consumer will purchase a product just by taking a stranger's word for it. This is because the more interaction a consumer has with the product the more comfortable and familiar, they will be when making a purchasing decision (Estay, 2021). And this can be attributed to a combination of Instagram and influencer marketing which generates the right amount of luxury and exposure for brands and products (Estay, 2021). It is for this reason that many brands have turned to Instagram and influencer marketing to help drive marketing campaigns and increase sales through a human touch (Estay, 2021). It was for these reasons that the researcher had taken an interest in the topic and had chosen to centre this dissertation around if and how Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumers buying behaviour. To help understand this phenomenon the researcher conducted four semi-structured in-depth interviews and sent out eleven questionnaires to help support the findings of secondary research. Once all the data was obtained and analysed the researcher discovered that many consumers base their purchasing decision around the reviews and recommendations of the Instagram influencer and the consumers only trusted these reviews and recommendations because they found the Instagram influencers relatable, authentic, and honest. Henceforth, the findings obtained by the researcher imply that Instagram influencer marketing does have an impact on consumer buying behaviour. By the end of this dissertation the reader will be able to determine whether Instagram influencer marketing does impact consumer buying behaviour or whether this phenomenon needs to be researched further to gain a greater depth of knowledge to come to a conclusion.

Key Words: Consumer buying behaviour; Instagram; Influencer; Influencer marketing; Consumer.

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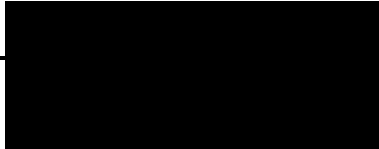
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DECLARATION

I, Kayleen Moodley, hereby declare that this Research Report submitted for the qualification Bachelor of Arts Honours in Strategic Brand Communication to The Independent Institute of Education (IIE) is that of my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the student.

Signature

29 November 2021

Date

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

An increasing number of consumers have turned to social media platforms, either for entertainment or to satisfy a need. It is especially common in millennials as they move from traditional media platforms to new digital platforms such as Instagram. Within these social media platforms there have been certain influences which impact behaviour, intentions, and emotions. More specifically it is 'influencers' who are paid by a brand to market their product or service to the intended target group (Avhad, Chropra and Jaju, 2020). This is because more brands are becoming aware of the power that influencer marketing has on consumer buying behaviour (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). With an increasingly digitized world and an oversaturated market, brands must find new innovative ways to connect with their consumers, the effort put into creating content will help influence whether consumers purchase a product thus, a great detail must be put into creating an effective marketing strategy. The digital revolution is continuously re-shaping how consumers perceive the world around them, often consumers cannot remember an advertisement, nor can they recall the message the advertisement wished to convey, thus, to create an unforgettable emotional connection between the brand and its consumers many brands have turned to influencer marketing to help build a personal relationship with their consumer (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). By introducing influencer marketing, brands aim to reach a larger audience in order to grow their brand and increase their profits. Although there is an abundance of information on social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour (Alalwan, 2018), there is a limited supply of information on Instagram influencer marketing and little is known on whether influencer marketing specifically on the social media platform Instagram, impacts consumer buying behaviour and if so, to what extent.

1.2 Rationale

FitzGerald (2019) has stated that many brands have used social media to build brand awareness. Thus, marketing on social media sites such as Instagram is a key component in ensuring that a brand thrives. This research paper is relevant as it will give brands insight on whether Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour. It will provide insight on how consumers behave after they are exposed to the content created by Instagram influencers when they are marketing a product or services. This is because it has become impossible to look through Instagram without coming across a influencer post and this can be attributed to influencer marketing being a great strategic marketing tool (Corbitt, 2021). Brand can use Instagram influencer marketing to help build brand awareness, increase sales and promote the brands name and identity to new consumers and with more people choosing to become influencers the possibilities and opportunities for brands to excel is limitless (Corbitt, 2021). Henceforth, brands can benefit immensely from this research dissertation as it will open the door for brands to start looking into Instagram influencer marketing.

1.3 Problem Statement

Social media such as Instagram has become an irreplaceable social media platform in the daily lives of consumers, thus, many brands have turned to social media in order to reach their target market through online advertising (FitzGerald, 2019). Many brands have turned to Instagram influencer marketing as it helps reach a larger audience and a variety of consumers from different demographics, thus, the chances of consumers purchasing products from a specific brand will increase. However, there is limited research on how Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour. It is for this reason that more research should be conducted specifically within a South African context, focusing on if and how Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour.

1.4 Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to collect useful, qualitative data which describes the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour. To collect this data, this study focused on followers of the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo. Furthermore, as many consumers use social media sites such as Instagram, they are constantly exposed to many marketing campaigns and sometimes these marketing campaigns can influence them to buy a product (FitzGerald, 2019). Thus, the content of this research paper will provide insight to brands on whether Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour. This will make brand owners aware of whether consumers buying behaviour is positively or negatively affected once exposed to Instagram influencer marketing. Furthermore, this research dissertation can also contribute to brands developing a better brand communication strategy through Instagram influencer marketing as many influencers are choosing to market to their audience through real and raw content which makes them relatable to the everyday consumers and thus, persuades the consumer into trying the brands they market and use on a daily basis (Corbitt, 2021).

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Research Question One

Does influencer marketing on Instagram impact consumer buying behaviour?

1.5.2 Research Question Two

To what extent does Instagram influencer marketing impact consumer buying behaviour?

1.6 Research Objectives

1.6.1 Research Objective One

To describe the impact of influencer marketing on Instagram on consumer buying behaviour.

1.7 Research Outline

1.7.1 Chapter One

Chapter one has looked at the why this research dissertation is worth investigating and the possible contributions that this research dissertation may make to brands looking to use Instagram influencer marketing in its brand communication strategies.

1.7.2 Chapter Two

Chapter two will look at two theories which explain why consumers are persuaded by social media marketing as well as previous literature which supports this research dissertation. Chapter two will also highlight some of the key concepts used within this research dissertation which will help the reader better understand these concepts.

1.7.3 Chapter Three

Chapter three will introduce the research methods used to obtain the findings used for this research dissertation. This chapter will also cover the research approach used, the methods used to find and analyse the relevant data and the sample and population that make up this research dissertation.

1.7.4 Chapter Four

Chapter four will cover the researcher's presentation and interpretations of the findings collected from the questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interviews. The findings will be presented in a series of images which highlight the key facts shared by the participants and respondents.

1.7.5 Chapter Five

The final chapter of this research dissertation will cover the conclusion the researcher has come to based on the primary and secondary findings presented in this research dissertation and any further recommendations the researcher makes for future research to be conducted in this field.

1.8 Chapter Summary

As Instagram is a vital tool in the everyday life of consumers it is only sensible for brands to use this platform in order to grow their brand and raise awareness (FitzGerald, 2019). This is due to many consumers turning to Instagram and influencers for information, recommendations, and reviews on certain products (Riedl & von Luckwald, 2019), thus, brands may take advantage of the platform by using it to market their products. Given this information there is no doubt that Instagram marketing is becoming a great asset to a brands marketing strategy. Chapter two will highlight a very important model used to understanding the influence Instagram marketing has on consumers and will help support the information presented in this research study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Due to the digital age which we live in many brands have opted to have more of an online presence to engage with their younger, on the go audience. Many brands have created an Instagram profile for their brand and have used this to communicate with their consumers, they use this platform to promote the brand and build brand awareness (Biaudet, 2017). Fitzgerald (2019) revealed that up to 71% of consumers are influenced to purchase a product based on social media referral alone, therefore, brands must align themselves with social media influencers that have a large following and a powerful influence on that following. By introducing influencer marketing, brands are aiming to reach a larger audience in order to grow their brand and increase their profits. As stated although there is an abundance of information on social media marketing and consumer buying behaviour (Alalwan, 2018), there is a limited supply of information on Instagram influencer marketing and little is known on whether influencer marketing specifically on the social media platform Instagram, impacts consumer buying behaviour and if so, to what extent.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

Social media is no longer a phenomenon, it is an attitude and a new approach to the way consumers see the world, taking this into consideration many brands have had to adapt to this shift by finding new innovative marketing strategies this is because social media has become the forefront of marketing communication (Fitzgerald 2019; Ahmed and Raziq, 2018). To help understand how consumers are impacted by social media and Instagram influencers in particular, this research will look at the Use and Gratification Theory as well as the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ahmed and Raziq, 2018).

2.2.1 Use and Gratification Theory

The Use and Gratification Theory seeks to understand how and why consumers use the media and what gratifications are met thereafter (Tanta, Mihovilovic and Sablic, 2014). This theory states that through positive motivation and continuous exposure to media content, recipients gratify their needs, these needs can be grouped into five basic human needs such cognitive, affective, personal, integration or social interaction and escapism (Tanta *et al.*, 2014). This theory is relevant to this research as it relates to consumers use of the media and the media's influence on them through gratification (Ahmed and Raziq, 2018). Consumers follow Instagram influencers to keep up with the latest trends or because the content posted by these influencers satisfy their needs (Riedl and von Luckwald, 2019). Instagram influencers are aware of this and create their content based on these factors. When marketing a product, Instagram influencers will provide all the necessary information needed for consumers to start thinking about the product such as price, the pros of that product and the benefits of that product this gratifies consumer cognitive needs (Shah, Aziz, Jaffari, Waris, Ejaz, Fatima and Sherazi, 2012), thereafter, influencers will relate their experience of the product and how the product has helped them, thus, fulfilling affective needs by forming an emotional connection with the consumer (Tanta *et al.*, 2014). The influencer will then focus on personal needs by targeting the confidence of the consumer by talking about how the product has impacted their overall well-being be it in physical appearance or health wise as this creates a need for that product (Tanta *et al.*, 2014) thereafter, the influencer will address how the product has changed their social life either by making them seem or feel better than others thus, gratifying the social interaction need. Lastly, the influencer will provide an escape from everyday life either through relatable or humorous content (Tanta *et al.*, 2014), by doing so they build trust and a personal relationship with the consumer which makes them more reliable and more influential on that consumers behaviour. This theory is important to this study as it will aid in understanding how and why consumers are impacted by social media marketing tools such as Instagram influencer marketing.

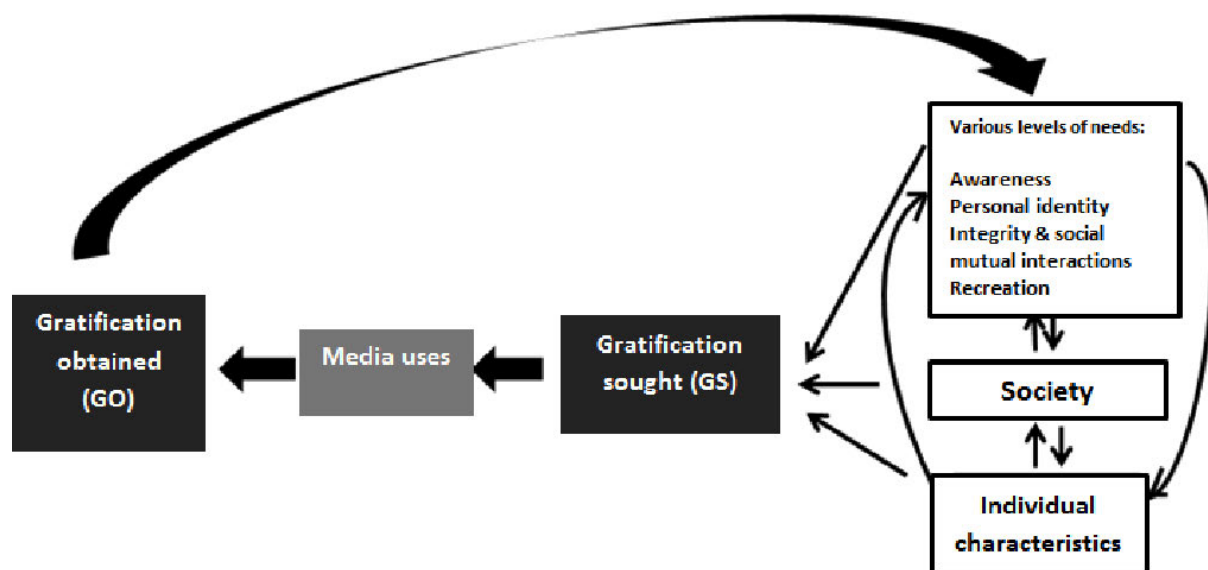


Figure 2.1: Mehrad, J. and Tajer, P. 2016. *Uses and Gratification Theory in Connection with Knowledge and Information Science: A Proposed Conceptual Model*. [Online].

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Uses-and-Gratification-Theory-in-Connection-with-A-Mehrad-Tajer/126c0c43127298491042715611ce8b14811d1a80>

2.2.2 Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action states that an individual's intention to behave in a certain way is predicted through their attitude toward that type of behaviour thus, this theory helps researchers understand that an individual's behaviour is influenced by attitudes and social factors (Kim, Lee and Yoon, 2015). Individuals construct attitudes towards behaviour based on their evaluation of it, thus, if the behaviour is positive and rewarded positively it is likely that an individual will behave that way (Kim *et al.*, 2015). Subjective norms also play a vital role in this theory as it states that pressure perceived from social network sites can influence behaviour therefore, a person who is greatly influenced by behaviour and who is strongly pressured into that behaviour will find themselves partaking in that behaviour (Kim *et al.*, 2015). This theory relates to this research as influencers have a very specific task which is to ensure consumers purchase a product or service this is the desired behaviour influencers aim to achieve. This suggests that consumers will see a certain influencer using a product or service and listen to how that product or service has positively impacted them, the consumer will then have the intention to go out and purchase the product and will then be further influenced by subjective norms which will be followers of that influencer going out and also purchasing that product or service. These factors will create a desire to recreate that behaviour in order to fit the social norm and the desired outcome is achieved by the influencer.

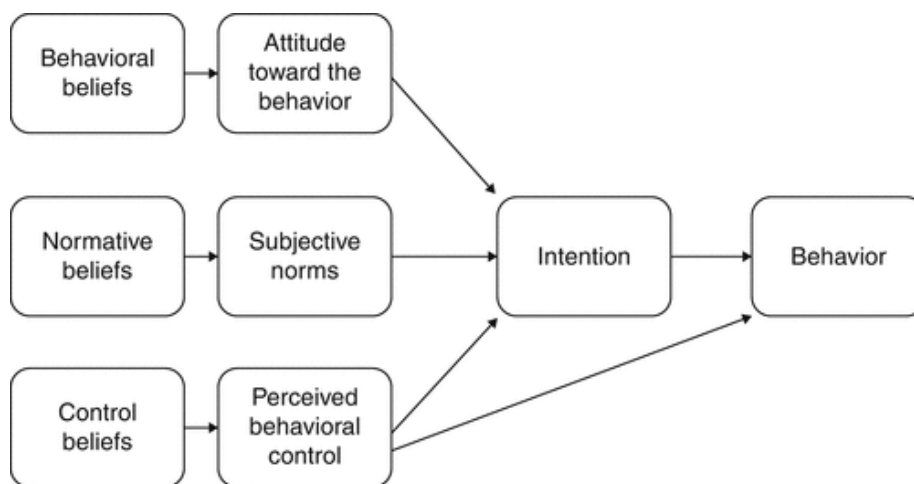


Figure 2.2: LaCaille, L. 2013. *Theory of Reasoned Action*. [Online].

https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4419-1005-9_1619

2.3 Review of Previous Literature

2.3.1 Influencer Marketing

An influencer is a person who has a large following on social media and who use their influence to persuade their followers (Johansen and Guldvik, 2017). Biaudet (2017) explains that influencers and brands work together to create influential content which can be incorporated in the brands marketing campaigns or through the influencers Instagram page, the influencer also acts as a brand ambassador for the brand which will lead their followers to become loyal to the brand. Influencer marketing is centred around the content influencers create and post, content created by an influencer must impact the consumer on four levels namely: an increase in brand awareness, expertise in that particular subject matter, a preference for the brand being marketed and preference as a whole (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). The key to successful influencer marketing is finding the right influencer to market a product or service, the right influencer will be one that gives advice, creates a story for the product and engage with the intended audience (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). Instagram has become an integral part of communication from a brand to its consumers, in order to reach the consumers on an online platform massive spending is being put into influencer marketing (Riedl and von Luckwald, 2019). Influencers with a larger following will be able to reach the intended target audience, these followers will associate that influencers image with the product that they are marketing leading to a positive image transfer (Riedl and von Luckwald, 2019). This suggests that influencers are successful as they are seen as authentic and have a loyal following, therefore, when an influencer recommends a product their followers trust them more than any other advertising this is because an influencer alone is powerful enough to affect consumer buying behaviour due to their authority, knowledge, position and relationship (Biaudet, 2017).

Findings provided by Grafström *et al.*, (2018) explain that consumers follow influencers that they see as a role model and self-reflection, research has proven that many consumers believe that a personal bond needs to be created between the influencer, the consumer and the brand, if the consumers form a connection with that influencer, the brand that influencer is promoting must align with the personal brand of the influencer, by doing so the consumers following that brand will trust the recommendation of that influencer. Johansen and Guldvik (2017) state that the

benefit of influencer marketing is its 'return investment' this is because influencer marketing has a higher success rate than any other form of marketing, influencer marketing also creates a halo effect for the brand being marketed. Influencer marketing ensures the brands products are carefully marketed and with the relevant information thus, creating a higher value on the brand and product (Johansen and Guldvik, 2017). Influencer marketing is relevant to this research as it provides factual information on why brands choose influencer marketing and why influencer marketing is so successful. If influencer marketing plays a role in impacting consumer behaviour it is 8 only because of the personal relationship followers have with that influencer (Johansen and Guldvik, 2017).

2.3.2 Consumer Perceptions and Attitudes

Riedl and von Luckwald (2019) state that an attitude is a learnt and almost permanent tendency whereby, an individual acts positively or negatively towards a behaviour, object, or person. The credibility of the influencer also impacts consumers attitudes and perception toward both the influencer and the brand or product being marketed. Thus, Riedl and von Luckwald (2019) argue that the credibility of an influencer must positively impact the cognitive processes of the consumer for their beliefs and behaviour to be adopted. The credibility of the influencer should be measured through their competence and trustworthiness (Raktham, Chaipooipirutana and Combs, 2017). This is supported by Lee and Ma (2012) as they state that a consumer's behaviour should be understood through their attitudes. Research conducted by Jones, Reynolds, Arnold, Gabler, Gillson and Landers (2015) have shown that many consumers have a positive attitude towards influencer marketing. However, more consumers are becoming aware of paid partnerships and are thus, more critical of the reviews that influencers may give as they may see their opinions as not being genuine (Grafström *et al.*, 2018). For influencers to create a positive perception in the minds of consumers they must accept marketing collaborations from companies which match their values and personality without worrying about financial gain (Grafström *et al.*, 2018).

The attitudes and perception of the consumer can also change based on the company and marketing strategy that the influencer uses, consumers can distrust the influencer, this can negatively impact both the influencer and the company in

question (Grafström *et al.*, 2018). Hoyer and MacInnis (2013) state that there are five dimensions in influencer marketing which affect consumer attitudes. First is favourability (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2013), this how much the consumer likes or dislikes the influencer or product being marketed. Second is attitude accessibility (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2013), this how easy consumers find it to remember the attitude they have towards the influencer or product. Third is attitude confidence (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2013), this is how strongly the consumers feels about holding onto that attitude. Fourth is attitude persistence (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2013), this is how long the consumer is able to maintain that attitude towards the influencer or product. Lastly is difficulty in changing that attitude (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2013) which is the consumers ability or inability to change their attitude towards an influencer or product. Consumer attitudes and perceptions are relevant to this study as it is the link between influencer marketing and consumer behaviour. The consumers attitude plays a vital role in determining whether the product that the influencer is marketing will impact the consumer buying behaviour. Therefore, consumer attitudes and perceptions lead to consumer behaviour.

2.3.3 Consumer Behaviour

Individual's search, select, purchase and use goods and services to satisfy their needs (Ertemel and Ammoura, 2016). Furthermore, they explain that the buying process in consumers starts with an unsatisfied need, this leads to need arousal which can be triggered by external and internal environments, a response to this problem is the search for information (Ertemel and Ammoura, 2016). This is supported by Riedl and von Luckwald (2019) who argue that consumers are influenced through the cognitive response approach whereby, the influencer would add their own information into the marketing strategy therefore, if the information conveyed by the influencer evokes a positive thought in the consumer, the consumer will be more likely to perform the behaviour in question. Shah *et al.*, (2012) state that consumer behaviour can be described as a cognitive process whereby consumers evaluate whether to purchase a product or not. This is supported by Spears and Singh (2004) who believe that a consumers behaviour requires conscious effort to determine whether a product should be purchased. It is for this reason that consumer buying behaviour is viewed as a complex intentional process with purchasing intention being a key part in the process (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010).

Being able to understand and decipher consumer buying behaviour is vital, if understood correctly it can aid in predicting the buying process of consumers after they have been exposed to influencer marketing (Johansen and Guldvik, 2017).

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) explain that consumer must past five stages in the buying behaviour process. First is need recognition (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), whereby the influencer creates a need for the product in the consumer. Second is information search (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), in order for the consumer to satisfy this need they will turn to the influencer for more information on that product. Third is evaluation 10 of alternatives (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), at this stage the consumer will be in search of alternative products and reviews to form an attitude to the influencer and the product being marketed. Fourth is purchase decision (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), after reviewing the alternatives the consumer decides on whether or not they will purchase the product that the influencer is marketing or another similar product. Lastly is post purchase behaviour (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010), this is after the consumer has used the product and they decide on whether they will trust that influencers reviews and whether they will purchase that product again. These steps are crucial when it comes to predicting and understanding consumer buying behaviour and will aid brands in creating a good marketing strategy (Johansen and Guldvik, 2017). Consumer behaviour is relevant to this research as it forms the foundation for the study to be conducting. Without consumer behaviour there is no other viable variable to measure the impact of influencer marketing against.

2.4 Conceptualisation

- Consumer buying behaviour – This is the selection, purchasing and consumption of good and services by consumers (Ramya and Ali, 2016). For the purpose of this research consumer buying behaviour will refer to the decision making of whether a consumer will buy a product or not.
- Instagram – This is a social media platform which can be accessed through mobile devices and allows for the sharing images and videos (Grafström, Jakobsson and Wiede, 2018). For the purpose of this research Instagram will be the social media platform chosen as it is the platform most millennials are familiar with.
- Influencer – An influencer is a person who has a large following on social media platforms (Grafström et al., 2018). For the purpose of this study an influencer is a person who has a large Instagram following and who is used as a marketing tool to market products and services.
- Influencer marketing – This a new marketing strategy used by brands where a third party is hired to market a product or service in order to persuade consumer to purchase that product or service (Biaudet, 2017). For the purpose of this research influencer marketing will be used to describe the impact an influencer on Instagram has on their audience.
- Consumer - An individual that makes use of economic goods (Webster, 2020). For the purpose of this research paper consumer will refer to an individual who seeks to use, reject or buy a product which has been marketed by an Instagram influencer.

2.5 Chapter Summary

As Instagram is a vital tool in the everyday life of consumers it is only sensible for brands to use this platform in order to make grow their brand and raise awareness (FitzGerald, 2019). This is due to a large number of consumers turning to Instagram and influencers for information, recommendations and reviews on certain products (Riedl & von Luckwald, 2019), thus, brands may take advantage of the platform by using it to market their products. Insights derived from influencer marketing suggest that Instagram is a platform diverse in its uses and should be utilised as a marketing campaign tool. Furthermore, to enhance the impact the impact that Instagram has on consumers, brands should adopt influencer marketing to help reach a larger target audience, this can be done by brands finding a suitable influencer that resonates with consumers values as well as the brands values.

Further insight derived from consumer attitudes and perceptions suggest that consumers must find the influencer to be credible and trustworthy before they can purchase any product that the influencer markets. Furthermore, the brand which the influencer chooses to partner with will also play a role in the consumers decision to purchase the products being marketed. Lastly insight derived from consumer behaviour suggests that consumers purchase products to satisfy their needs therefore, the marketing strategy implemented by the influencer must appeal to the consumers cognition and the influencer must provide the necessary information in order to persuade the consumer. This literature review has discussed the link between influencer marketing, consumer attitude and perception and consumer behaviour. The relationship between these three components helps drive this study forward. By looking into the uses and gratification theory as well as the theory of reasoned action this research demonstrated how each theory is linked to impact of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Paradigm

3.1.1 Interpretivism

This research aligns to the paradigm of interpretivism as the main objective of interpretivism is to gain a deeper understanding into human behaviour and thereafter, describe this behaviour from the point of view of those being studied (du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout, 2014). The selected paradigm sheds light on how time and the environment can influence human behaviour (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014), thus, this research conforms to interpretivism as the goal is to understand and describe the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour from the consumers point of view. The epistemology of interpretivism stems from interpretivists believing that humans are guided by common sense thus, to understand why humans, behave in a particular way, one must grasp their what they believe is common sense (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The epistemological position of this research will be to understand and describe what aspects of Instagram influencer marketing appeal to consumers to the extent at which their buying behaviour is influenced.

The ontology of interpretivism comes from the belief that human reality is a mere social construct and is given meaning only through the experiences and interactions of others (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The ontological position this research holds is based on the fact that consumers rely on Instagram influencers to help determine the meaning and value of a product or service before they purchase that product or service. Thereafter, the consumers reality will be shaped by the influencers experience and interaction with the product. Lastly, the axiology of interpretivism is understanding the value in unique realities and sharing the values which contribute to that research (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The axiological position that this research takes stems from the information being collected from the consumers as they are able to share their own unique experience which will in turn contribute to the foundation of this research.

3.2 Research Approach and Design

Qualitative research encompasses using a humanistic approach to research, this type of research aims to understand people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviour (Pathak *et al.*, 2013). This research forms part of qualitative research as it involves non-numerical data such as questionnaires and semi-structured in-depth interviews. This research is based off answers from eleven questionnaire and four interviews as the focus of this research is to describe the impact that Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer buying behaviour.

3.3 Population

For this study the units of analysis were users that follow influencers on Instagram. The population characteristics for this research study consisted of Instagram users that follow the Instagram influencer Selina Naidoo. This study was opened to all of Selina Naidoo's Instagram followers and attempted to understand the impact that influencer marketing had on consumer buying behaviour as well as some of the influencer's characteristics that influence consumers buying behaviour. When identifying the participants and respondents for this research study age, gender and geographical location were not considered as the most important and similar characteristic throughout were that participants and respondents must follow Selina Naidoo on Instagram. The target population for this research study were Instagram users that follow influencers on Instagram while the accessible population was Instagram users that follow the influencer Selina Naidoo on Instagram.

3.4 Sampling

This sample included fifteen volunteers that follow Selina Naidoo on Instagram. However, only eleven volunteers completed the questionnaire and four participated in the interviews. By using a smaller sample size, the researcher is able to arrange and analyse data easier and faster as well as gain in-depth information and clarification from the participants and respondents if needed. The researcher was able to achieve enough data needed to meet the aim of this research study despite the small sample size.

This research study conforms to non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is used if the entire population being studied is impossible to determine or if the researcher cannot gain access to that entire population (du Plooy Cilliers *et al.*,

2014). In this research study the researcher did not have access to every person that follows the Instagram influencer Selina Naidoo therefore, the researcher's sample was limited to those that volunteer to participate in the questionnaire and those that were asked to participate by the researcher. Taking this into consideration the sampling method used in this research study was purposive sampling which consists of purposefully choosing elements based on specific characteristics that the researcher included in their sample (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014).

Purposive sampling was used for this research study as the researcher purposely chose the participants who follow the influencer Selina Naidoo on Instagram to answer the questions. Given the characteristics of purposive sampling, this sampling method was implemented when choosing the participants for the in-depth interviews as well. This is because the researcher purposely picked the participants that follow Selina Naidoo on Instagram. Volunteer sampling is the second sampling method used in this research study and includes participants that have volunteered to be a part of the sample for the research (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Given the characteristics of volunteer sampling, this sampling method was effective in gathering participants for the questionnaire. Volunteer sampling was used as the researcher asked Selina Naidoo to post a message to her followers and ask them if anyone is interested in answering a questionnaire for research purposes.

3.5 Data Collection Method

This research study made use of the two data collection methods namely a questionnaire and an in-depth semi-structured interview. A questionnaire is a set of questions which are both open and closed-ended, contain checklists and rating scales (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The questionnaire was selected as a data collection method as it provides a benchmark to obtaining consumers answers and further insights (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The questionnaire was selected as a data collection tool as it was quick and easy for respondents to answer, and it was practical for the researcher as it allowed the researcher to gather data effectively and efficiently and makes comparing and analysing the respondents answer easy for the researcher. A questionnaire was sent electronically via email to all the respondents that volunteered to participate in the research study.

The researcher used a combination of closed and open-ended questions in the questionnaire (Annexure F). The questions selected for the questionnaire contributed

to understanding the impact that Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer buying behaviour. Question one of the questionnaires is aimed at gaining an overview of the type of influencers the respondents follow. Question two of the questionnaire aimed to understand why the respondents follow the influencer/s. Question three of the questionnaire helped the researcher understand what makes the influencer/s appealing to the respondents. Question four of the questionnaire aimed to understand the type of content the influencer/s creates that relates to the respondents. Question five and six of the questionnaire aims to determine if the influencer/s market products for brands and if the respondents have ever purchased these marketed products. Question seven of the questionnaire aimed to understand what influences respondents to purchase these products. Question eight of the questionnaire helped the researcher understand respondent's feelings towards Instagram influencers. Question nine of the questionnaire aimed to understand the thought process behind the respondent's purchasing behaviour. Question ten of the questionnaire aimed to gain an understanding on respondents over all opinion on influencer marketing. However, a questionnaire alone was not sufficient to collect the necessary data therefore, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted on four participants via zoom meeting. In-depth semi-structured interviews were chosen as a data collection method as it allowed the researcher to collect information rich data on certain questions as well as allowing for clarification of certain questions asked in the questionnaire. The interviews also provided detailed information on questions that could not be asked in the questionnaire. The interviews were conducted on zoom as this was the safest option for both the researcher and the participants due to Covid-19. The interviews were around ten to fifteen minutes long and a slide show was shared with the participants to help them better understand the questions being asked.

3.6 Data Analysis Methods

Data was analysed through qualitative content analysis as the aim of this data analysis method was to identify themes and patterns within text (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Content analysis was chosen it was efficient for the researcher during the transcription process. Content analysis allowed the researcher to directly analyse the answers that were provided by the participants and respondents during the interviews and questionnaire. By looking directly at the answers provided by the respondents and participants the researcher was able to categorise key words and phrases that will be imperative to answering the research questions.

Coding will be used as a form of data analysis for the data collected from the questionnaire and in-depth interviews. When a researcher codes data they carefully examine the contents of the data and take note of the most meaningful and important sections and items (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Selective and line-by-line coding will be used to analyse the data collected. Selective coding requires researchers to select core codes that are closely linked with the type of behaviour the research is focused on (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Selective coding allowed the researcher to carefully and thoroughly read through the data in order to select the key words and phrases needed to form the themes of the research study. Through selective coding the researcher was able to use the data analysed to reinforce the secondary data collected in the literature review. Therefore, the themes identified in the literature review corresponding with the data analysed from the participants and respondents.

Line-by-line coding requires the researcher to read through all the data collected and mark specific key words that are relevant to the research (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Once selective coding was complete the researcher reverted back to the data collected and analysed the data line-by-line. This allowed the researcher to thoroughly review the data once again and form a deeper understanding to the data. The process of line-by-line coding allowed the researched to form a more thorough an in-depth understanding to the data therefore, the researcher was able to link the data codes back to the research study.

3.7 Chapter Summary

The research process presented in this research report conform to that of an interpretivist nature and seeks to understand the human nature under the influence of Instagram marketing. The information provided in this section aims to draw a correlation between the research questions and the data collected from primary research.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

In today's technologically driven world, brands must find ways to stay relevant to their target audience, in order to do so they opted to increase their social media presence and employ the help of influencer marketing to build brand awareness and promote products (Biaudet, 2017). Fitzgerald revealed that up to 71% of consumers are influenced to purchase a product based on social media referral alone (Fitzgerald, 2019), therefore, brands must align themselves with social media influencers that have a large following and a powerful influence on that following.

This chapter will focus on the presentation and interpretation of the data collected from the qualitative questionnaire and the semi-structured in-depth interviews. In order to effectively analyse the data collected, the researcher made use of qualitative thematic content analysis. A total of eleven responses were collected for the questionnaire and a further, four semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted.

4.2 Presentation of findings

4.2.1 Presentation of Questionnaire Findings

Question 1

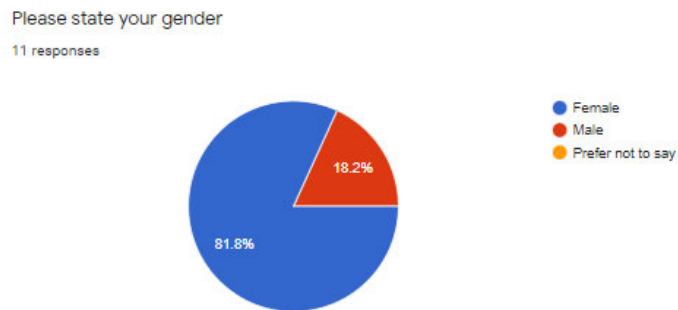


Figure 4.2.1.1 Question one developed from study. 2021.

Question one of the questionnaire was used to determine the gender of the respondents. This question was vital as the researcher aimed to conduct research using both male and female participants to avoid any bias. A total of eleven responses were collected and of that eleven, three respondents were male and eight were female. Each participant met the criteria of following the Instagram influencer Selina Naidoo and were therefore, selected due to this.

4.2.2 Answers based on influencer marketing

Question 2

Does the influencer/s you follow promote product/s and service/s for other brands?

11 responses

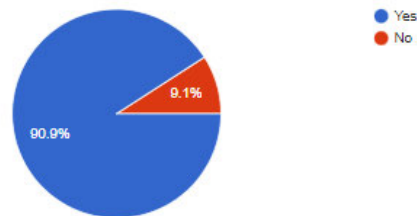


Figure 4.2.2.1 Question two developed from study. 2021.

Question 2 was asked by the researcher to help narrow down the characteristics of the respondents as the respondents must follow an influencer that promotes products in order to fit the criteria of this research study.

Question 5

Which Instagram influencer/s do you follow?

11 responses

@sanesh_makeup @selinanaidoo @thedailyreev
Selina Naidoo, Tasarnia Dhuloo, Nadia Jaftha
Mssheenad, Selina Naidoo, Miss Dhanusha, Writtenbynona
Usually influencers who deal with makeup and fashion
N/A
Selina Naidoo, Saneshnie Naidoo, Gwen Huang, Karabo Mokgoko, Kavisha Govender, Jessica van Heerden, Bilqees Baker, Diipa Khosla and so many more
Nadia Jaftha
doppestciqq, selena naidoo

Figure 4.2.2.2. Question five developed from study. 2021.

Question five is asked in order for the researcher to gain a basic understanding of the type of Instagram influencers the respondents choose to follow. This question will allow the researcher to compare the different Instagram influencers and take note of the similarities and differences.

Question 9



Figure 4.2.2.3 Question nine developed from study. 2021.

Insights gained from question nine show that many consumers believe that influencer marketing is useful and effective. Some consumers believe that is good exposure and advertising for brands and allows for brands to promote more of the product to larger audiences. One consumers believes that Instagram influencers influence others to take up influencer marketing as an influencer can earn a salary from the work they do.

4.2.3 Answers based on consumers attitudes and perceptions

Question 6



Figure 4.2.3.1 Question six developed from study. 2021.

Insights gained from question six showed that many consumers followed their respective influencers because they found the content produced to be relatable and authentic. Many believed that the content created by their respective influencers were highly relevant to issues currently faced in South Africa while others shared that they enjoy following the makeup and fashion trends posted by the influencers.

Question 7



Figure 4.2.3.2 Question seven developed from study. 2021.

Insights derived from question seven showed that yet again many consumers enjoyed the content which was most relatable to them. Some enjoyed the home and beauty content while others enjoyed that the influencer was straight forward and to the point. Others enjoyed the influencers honesty and the content which showed brands that align with their personal beliefs and values.

Question 8



Figure 4.2.3.3 Question eight developed from study. 2021.

Insights derived from question eight showed mixed messages. Many consumers enjoyed the relationship advice, tutorials and makeup content while others enjoyed the household, mental health and relatable content. One consumer was very open about the influencer they follow being open about personal issues that most South Africans face and topics which are seen as taboo.

Question 11



Figure 4.2.3.4 Question eleven developed from study. 2021.

Insights derived from question seven show that many consumers believe Instagram influencer marketing has a great impact on consumer buying behaviour. One consumer believed that influencer marketing can be so potent that followers become so engrossed in that influencers life that they want to be that influencer. Others believe that influencer marketing can either make or break a brand by building the brand up or tarnishing the brands reputation. Other consumers believed that some influencers can so influential that they can persuade people to do just about anything. Thus, it can be said that Instagram influencer marketing can impact consumer buying behaviour to a great extent.

4.2.4 Answers based on consumer behaviour

Question 3

Have you purchased a product/s or service/s that this infleuncer/s promote?

11 responses

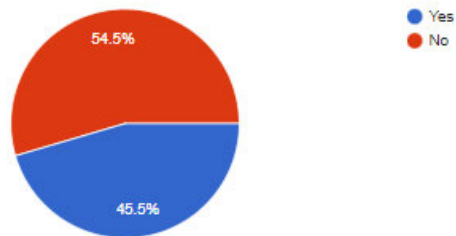


Figure 4.2.4.1 Question three developed from study. 2021.

Insights gained from question three showed that 45.5% of consumers have purchased a product that an influencer has marketed. This remaining 54.5% have not purchased any products from influencers. These insights show that there is no definite answer to how many people are willing to purchase products that were promoted by influencers as the sample size for this research dissertation was fairly small.

Question 4

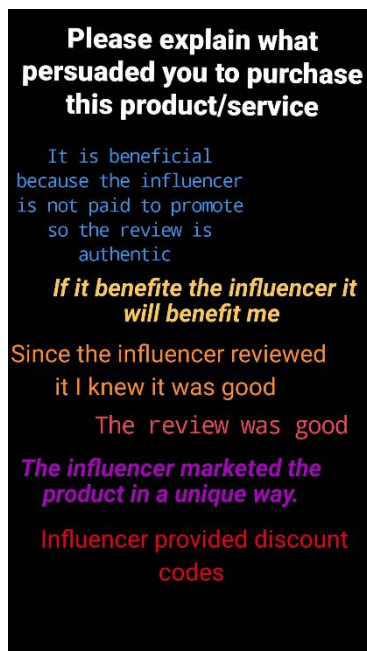


Figure 4.2.4.2 Question four developed from study. 2021.

Insights derived from question four showed that many consumers purchased products promoted by influencers solely because of the reviews and recommendations that the influencer gave. Some believe that influencers doing reviews are convenient as the consumer does not need to go out and do their own research as someone has already done it for them. Others shared that the way the product is marketed by the influencer was appealing to them while others believe in simply supporting local brands that influencers promote.

Question 10

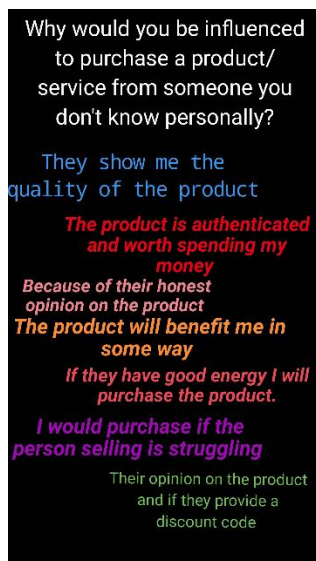


Figure 4.2.4.3 Question ten developed from study. 2021.

Insights derived from question ten show that many consumers would purchase products marketed from an influencer that they do not know if they find that influencer to be reliable, honest and authentic. Others shared that if the influencers had similar personality traits, interests or experiences they would purchase the product because if it worked for the influencer, it will work for them.

4.2.5 Presentation of Interview Findings

Interview 1



Figure 4.2.5.1 Key codes developed from interview one. 2021.

Interview 2



Figure 4.2.5.2 Key codes developed from interview two. 2021.

Interview 3



Figure 4.2.5.3 Key codes developed from interview three. 2021.

Interview 4



Figure 4.2.5.4 Key codes developed from interview four. 2021.

The findings from these interviews can be broken down into three parts. These insights are fairly similar to those from the questionnaire but should be discussed on their own due to the nature of the data collection method. These three elements are as follows:

4.2.5.5 Reviews

Insights derived from both the interviews and the questionnaire suggest that the participants and respondents find the reviews of Instagram influencers very informative and impact and have thus, purchased some products reviewed by the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo. One of the respondents of the questionnaire stated that the content they enjoy most from the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo is “product reviews.” Another respondent states, “The convenience of influencers sourcing and reviewing products so I knew exactly what to expect when making a purchase and them providing a discounted code when making a purchase.” A participant in the interview explained that she had purchased a Handy Andy cleaner once the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo had done a review on it. The insights derived from the responses have helped the researcher understand that many participants and respondents find the product reviews both useful and impactful when choosing to purchase a product.

4.2.5.6 Relatability

Insights derived from the participants and respondents suggest that the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo is popular amongst the respondents and participants because of her relatability and authenticity. Many respondents and participants shared that Selina Naidoo’s most admirable quality is that she shares every aspect of her life and does not only share the positive aspects. One of the respondents stated, “These influencers share content that is relatable, share products and advice that is relevant and are an inspiration to women and men around them.” Another respondent says,

“They create content which I can relate to and often speak on issues or concerns that we face as a country.” Based on the findings mentioned above the researcher has determined that the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo is popular amongst her followers due to her relatability, this also leads to her followers being persuaded into purchasing the products, she markets.

4.2.5.7 Knowledgeability

Insights derived from the findings suggest that many respondents and participants believe that Instagram influencer marketing is a positive method of marketing on behalf of businesses. One respondent has stated, “It’s a good way for businesses to get advertising done.” Another participant noted, “I think it is a great way to reach the masses and an exceptional way for the company to put their product or service out there.” Many of the participants and the respondents share the same beliefs on Instagram influencer marketing, they believe the influencer marketing a new and creative way to promote brands and products. Based on the insights derived from these findings the researcher can determine that the participants and respondents share similar beliefs on Instagram influencer marketing.

4.3 Findings in Context

This research study is based on the impact Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer buying behaviour. This research study contributes to an existing body of literature on influencer marketing but focuses specially on the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on the buying behaviour of consumers. The existing literature states that in order to create a marketing campaign which the consumer will remember, it is important for the brand to create an emotional connection with their target audience, and it is for this reason that influencer marketing is adopting in the marketing campaign (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). In order to find sufficient information to correlate with the secondary research findings, the researcher conducted primary research which consisted of a questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interviews. The findings of the primary research have been discussed throughout this research assignment and will be related to the secondary research below.

As part of a brand's marketing campaign, the marketing team must provide new and creative solutions for the brand to attract new consumers, influencer marketing provides this new and efficient way to market a brands products and services through the brand's collaboration with influencers Biaudet (2017). This statement is reinforced by the responses received from both the questionnaire and the interview. A respondent stated, "I think it is a great way to promote products or services which is guaranteed to reach multiple audiences." A participant shared that she believes influencer marketing is very lucrative at the moment and prefers this form of marketing over traditional forms of marketing such as television and radio. These findings relate back to the secondary findings identified in the literature review.

This is because brands have invested massively into marketing on the online platform and especially into influencer marketing (Riedl & von Luckwald, 2019). Furthermore, Influencers are successful as they are seen as authentic and have a loyal following, therefore, when an influencer recommends a product, their followers trust them more than any other advertising this is because an influencer alone is powerful enough to affect consumer buying behaviour due to their authority, knowledge, position and relationship (Biaudet, 2017). This is represented in the primary data findings as a respondent shared, "They are authentic and promote local South African brands." Many participants also shared the same beliefs as one participate shared that when 19 an influencer gains the trust of their followers it helps

boost the engagement that the influencers social media post gets as well as increases the likelihood of a follower purchasing the product or service that the influencer has marketed. With these findings the researcher was able to link the primary findings with that of the secondary findings. These findings contribute directly to the theme of influencer marketing.

Research conducted by Jones *et al.*, (2015) have shown that many consumers have a positive attitude towards influencer marketing. However, more consumers are becoming aware of paid partnerships and are thus, more critical of the reviews that influencers may give as they may see their opinions as not being genuine (Grafström *et al.*, 2018). Insights taken from a participant suggest that many followers choose to follow a specific influencer due to the type of content they produce, the participants shared the opinion that if an influencer is paid to review a product and reviews the product truthfully and honestly then that review is authentic as many people have created a stigma around paid content. Meaning that many people believe that because an influencer is paid to review a product, the influencer may only speak positively about that product and withhold any negative comments about the products because they are paid. For influencers to create a positive perception in the minds of consumers they must accept marketing collaborations from companies which match their values and personality without worrying about financial gain (Grafström *et al.*, 2018).

During an interview a participant mentioned that she resonates with the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo because of the spiritual content that she creates and promotes, the participant shared that she identifies deeply with Selina Naidoo as they share similar interest and this has helped her build a relationship with the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo. Another participant shared that she resonates with Selina Naidoo due to her ability to touch on taboo topics within the Indian community, the participant shared that she identifies with Selina Naidoo as she uses her platform to not only market products but to also address topics of stigma and taboo and impart advice to others that may be experiencing a similar situation. Based on these primary findings the researcher understands that consumers must have a good perception and attitude toward the influencer they follow in order to create a meaningful relationship with that influencer. Once that relationship is established the consumer will be more inclined to try and test the offerings of the

influencer. These findings contribute directly to the theme of consumers perceptions and attitudes.

The key to successful influencer marketing is finding the right influencer to market a product or service, the right influencer will be one that give advice, create a story for the product and engage with the intended audience (Avhad *et al.*, 2020). This statement is supported by a respondent who shared, "Following someone who has previously made purchases or actively promotes known authentic products is beneficial to me as it provides a gateway for me to make my purchase with the knowledge that my funds will not be misused." This indicated that the participant will be more inclined to purchase a product if an influencer they follow and have built a relationship with has purchased the product and is now promoting the product because the product is useful to them. Findings provided by Grafström *et al.*, (2018) explain that consumers follow influencers that they see as a role model and self-reflection, research has proven that many consumers believe that a personal bond needs to be created between the influencer, the consumer and the brand, if the consumers form a connection with that influencer, the brand that influencer is promoting must align with the personal brand of the influencer, by doing so the consumers following that brand will trust the recommendation of that influencer.

During an interview a participant disclosed that she was persuaded to purchase a product that the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo reviewed due to the fact that both she and Selina Naidoo are homeowners and Selina's use of the product in her review persuaded this participant to purchase this product and use it in her own home. The participant further shared that she will also be purchasing a product that Selina Naidoo promoted on her Instagram page for her kitchen, and this is because she believes that she shares many commonalities with Selina Naidoo. Based on these findings the researcher has determined that the participants and the respondents are inclined to purchase a product if they similarities with the influencer marketing the product or if the influencer is promoting the product truthfully. These findings contribute directly to the theme of consumer behaviour.

4.4 Trustworthiness, Validity and Reliability

4.4.1 Trustworthiness

Researchers conducting qualitative studies do not use numerical evidence, rather they use different criteria to determine how trustworthy and credible the findings of the research are (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Thus, the term trustworthiness is used to indicate reliability and validity in qualitative studies however, trustworthiness can be further broken down into credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). For the purpose of this research only credibility, dependability and confirmability will apply.

4.4.2 Credibility/Validity

Credibility refers to how accurately the researcher has analysed the data provided by the participants (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). This research would be credible as the researcher would analyse the data collected from consumers participating in the questionnaire for a long period of time to ensure that the information collected, carefully details consumers feelings and behaviour towards the impact of Instagram influencer marketing. The researcher would then carefully detail each participant's feedback to come to a logical, relevant, and accurate conclusion which contributes to determining the impact Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer behaviour.

4.4.3 Dependability/Reliability

Dependability refers to the meticulous quality of integrating data collection methods, data analysis methods and theory which has been generated from the data (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). This research would be dependable as the researcher would carefully analyse the data collected from participants in order to find keywords and phrases which apply and are relevant to the research being conducted. The researcher would, thereafter, spend a long period of time grouping these keyword and phrases in order to analyse and detail the findings in a manner which proves to be relevant in describing the impact Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer behaviour.

4.4.4 Confirmability/Objectivity

Confirmability refers to how accurately the researcher is able to use the data collected from participants to support their findings and interpretations (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). This research would confirm that there is a relationship between consumer buying behaviour and Instagram influencer marketing as the researcher would use the 17 data collected from participants to show the correlation between consumer behaviour during and after viewing an Instagram influencers marketing campaign for a product or service. The researcher would also describe the process of creating the questions for the questionnaire and how these questions are relevant to the topic being studied and how the nature of the research has contributed to describing the impact social media advertising has on consumer behaviour.

For these reasons the research would be trustworthy as it encompasses the attributes of credibility, dependability and confirmability.

4.5 Chapter Summary

The research findings from the questionnaire and semi-structured in-depth interviews have generated great insights needed to solidify this research dissertation. The primary research findings collected with the secondary research findings thus, showing implying that Instagram influencer marketing does indeed impact consumer buying behaviour.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. Introduction

5.1 Research Questions and Objectives Addressed

5.1.1 Research Question One

Does influencer marketing on Instagram impact consumer buying behaviour?

This is the primary question of this research study and aims to describe if a consumer behaviour is impacted by Instagram buying behaviour. The data collected and analysed from both primary and secondary research support that a consumer's buying behaviour is indeed impacted by Instagram influencer marketing, this is evident 45.5% of respondents stated they have purchased products marketed by an Instagram influencer and two out of four participants have shared that they have also purchased products marketed by Instagram influencers.

5.1.2 Research Question Two

To what extent does Instagram influencer marketing impact consumer buying behaviour?

This question was asked to help the researcher understand the extent at which consumers are influenced to purchase products marketed by Instagram influencers. The findings concur that many participants and respondents will purchase a product if the product is honestly and authentically reviewed by the influencer even if the influencer is paid to promote the product. This is because the participants and respondents trust the reviews of the influencers and have built a relationship with that influencer.

5.1.3 Research Objective

To describe the impact of influencer marketing on Instagram on consumer buying behaviour.

The findings of this research study have shown that the buying behaviour of both participants and respondents were determined by their perception of the Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo. The respondents and participants believe that the honesty, authenticity and the relatability of Selina Naidoo make her a successful influencer and also persuades her followers into purchasing the products she reviews and promotes. The participants and respondents shared that the similarities they share with Selina Naidoo have helped shape their attitudes towards the

products that she uses and promotes. One of the participants has even placed a special order for jar labels that Selina Naidoo uses in her kitchen because she has been persuaded into purchasing 22 these products after hearing Selina Naidoo speak about how convenient it has made her daily life. Therefore, the researcher concludes that Instagram influencer marketing does impact consumer buying behaviour.

5.2 Anticipated Contributions

Social media is a growing phenomenon and can be harnessed and used for expanding a brand's brand image and help grow a brand's awareness. This is supported by FitzGerald (2019), who states that many brands use social media to build brand awareness. Therefore, social media advertising has become a key component in ensuring that brands thrive and in determining whether the advertisement of products influence consumer behaviour. This research proposal will contribute to brands, scholars and researchers as it will give them insight on whether Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour. It would also provide insight into how consumers behave after they are exposed to Instagram influencer marketing which can aid brands when drawing up social media marketing campaigns (Ertemel and Ammoura, 2016). This will help narrow down whether consumers react positively or negatively to Instagram influencer marketing and which aspects of influencer marketing impact their behaviour the most. This research proposal will help brands, scholars and researchers understand what needs and wants consumers aim to gratify and what consumer intentions are after being exposed to Instagram influencer marketing (Ahmed and Raziq, 2018). With the aid of this research proposal, brands, researchers and scholars would be able to understand what information influences consumer choices and consumer behaviour when looking at an Instagram marketing campaign (Ertemel and Ammoura, 2016). The aim of any brand is to make a profit therefore, the data provided in this research proposal will ensure brands understand that using and adapting to social media and its different tools is vital towards becoming successful (FitzGerald, 2019).

5.3 Ethical Considerations

For participants:

- Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher first asked Selina Naidoo if she could possibly help by asking her followers to participate in the research study. Once followers of the influencer Selina Naidoo shared that they are willing to participate in the research the researcher explained what the research was about. Once followers of Selina Naidoo confirmed their interest in the study a consent form was sent to all respondents. This was how the researcher gained consent.
- The researcher did not ask personal and sensitive questions to the consumers participating in the questionnaire nor did the researcher ask questions which reflected their personal feelings and behaviours.
- The researcher did not and will not in future reveal the identity of the consumers participating in the questionnaire and did/will ensure that the consumers participating remain anonymous as stated on the questionnaire form.

For researcher:

- The researcher did not change the data collected from consumers participating in the questionnaire in favour of the research being conducted.
- The researcher did not distort results obtained from consumers participating in the questionnaire by exaggerating certain aspects over others.
- The researcher did not misuse the information obtained from consumers participating in the questionnaire by giving it to a third party or others.
- To protect the privacy of the participants and respondents and abide by the guidelines set out in the consent forms all transcripts are in a password protected secure folder.

5.4 Limitations

The limitations of this study include some consumers not responding to the researcher's invitation to participate in the questionnaire and interviews. Some consumers participating in the questionnaire did not answer all the questions or and some did not return the completed questionnaire by the date which the researcher stipulated on the form. The researcher was not able to include all the data collected

from consumers participating in the questionnaire and the interviews as some data was irrelevant, the researcher did not extend the amount of time needed to analyse all data collected due to mitigating factors. Some consumers participating in the questionnaire did not give accurate and relevant answers and some consumers participating in the questionnaire and interview found it too time consuming and did not attempt completing the questionnaire or participating in the interview. The questionnaires and interviews were opened to both males and females however, only three males and eight females participated.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Studies

For future studies, researcher can build upon the current findings found in this research dissertation. Researchers can also pick one or two recurring themes such as reviews or relatability to focus their research on. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the researcher was unable to conduct face-to-face interviews or hand out questionnaires, thus, for future studies researcher can abide by all Covid-19 protocols and conduct interviews face-to-face so that they have a better understanding of the participants/respondent's body language and can ask as many follow up questions needed without time running out. For future studies, this research can be conducted focusing on different race groups, age groups, genders and location e.g. How does Instagram influencer marketing impact the consumer buying behaviour of 18–25-year-olds in London? Future studies can also investigate new phenomenon's which can be adapted to this study such as How does Instagram influencer marketing during the Covid-19 pandemic impact consumer buying behaviour? These are some of the recommendations that the researcher offers to future researchers taking on this topic or anything similar.

5.6 Conclusion

Through the use of primary and secondary research, this research dissertation was able to gain relevant insights in order to address the relevant research questions and objectives. The primary research conducted and obtained does support the secondary literature that the researcher identified and thus with all the data collected the researcher can firmly say that Instagram influencer marketing does impact consumer buying behaviour.

Annexure A: Consent form for audio and visual recording

Consent form for participants	
I, _____, agree to allow Kayleen Moodley to audio record my interviews as part of the research about the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour	
This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that: • My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private; • The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer; and • Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (Kayleen Moodley) will have access to these recordings.	
Signature: K.M	Date 16/06/21

Annexure B: Participants consent form

CONSENT FORM

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants To whom it may concern, My name is Kayleen Moodley and I am a student at the IIE's Vega Durban. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Cameron Belling about the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of how Instagram influencer marketing can impact consumers buying behaviour. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study? I would like to invite you to participate in this research because your input will be highly valuable in completing my research study. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like you to answer a few questions in a questionnaire. You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study? Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your experience with influencer marketing. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study? • Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary; • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so; • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected? I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, and I will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at the IIE Vega Durban, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.
What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Kayleen Moodley



The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:



Participant or respondent consent

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Kayleen Moodley about the impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

- I agree to be interviewed for this research.
- My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
- My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
- I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
- I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature: K.M

Date:
16/06/21

Annexure C: Ethical clearance letter



Date: 4 July 2021

Student name: Kayleen Moodley

Student number: [REDACTED]

Campus: Vega Durban

Re: Approval of RESE8419 Proposal and Ethics Clearance

HONOURS ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and your supporting documents and instruments are in order to proceed. We hereby provide you with permission to proceed with your research.

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

GENERAL CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED IN RELATION TO RESEARCH

Permission is granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted.

Please note: The panel has not considered the merits, accuracy or ethical soundness of the research.

Permission is granted subject to the following conditions:

1. The researcher(s) will need to obtain informed consent in writing from all of the participants in his/ her sample if the study is not anonymous.
2. The researcher(s) may only use the data collected for research purposes and in no other way.
3. Photographs of human subjects may only be taken if relevant to the research, informed consent was obtained, and even with informed consent, the photographs may not be published on any online platforms.
4. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
5. No names or identifying information of participants may be used within the research and the research must be voluntary.
6. Please make it clear that the information will not be used punitively in any way and participants may in no way be counselled/advised based on this.



Supervisor name: Cameron Belling

Signature: [REDACTED]

Signature:

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator (CPC)

7 July 2021

Annexure D: Ethical checklist



Vega Ethics checklist: RESE8419/p/w

Student Details	
Title	Prof ☐ Dr ☐ Ms ☒ Mrs ☐ Mr ☐ Mx ☐
First name(s)	Kayleen
Last name(s)	Moodley
Title of study	Consumer buying behaviour: An exploratory study determining the impact of Instagram influencer marketing
Qualification	BA Hons: Strategic Brand Communication

Supervisor Details	
Title	Prof ☐ Dr ☐ Ms ☐ Mrs ☐ Mr ☒ Mx ☐
First and last names	Cameron Belling
Co-supervisor Details (if applicable)	
Title	Prof ☐ Dr ☐ Ms ☐ Mrs ☐ Mr ☐ Mx ☐
First and last names	Click or tap here to enter text.

Explaining your research process													
Philosophical paradigm	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Positivism ☐</td> <td>Interpretivism ☒</td> <td>Constructivism ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Realism ☐</td> <td>Objectivism ☐</td> <td>Pragmatism ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Functionalism ☐</td> <td>Subjectivism ☐</td> <td>Humanist ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Other:</td> </tr> </table>	Positivism ☐	Interpretivism ☒	Constructivism ☐	Realism ☐	Objectivism ☐	Pragmatism ☐	Functionalism ☐	Subjectivism ☐	Humanist ☐	Other:		
Positivism ☐	Interpretivism ☒	Constructivism ☐											
Realism ☐	Objectivism ☐	Pragmatism ☐											
Functionalism ☐	Subjectivism ☐	Humanist ☐											
Other:													
Research design:	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Interview ☒</td> <td>Questionnaire (self administered) ☒</td> <td>Focus group ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ethnography/ Observation ☐</td> <td>Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis ☐</td> <td>Action Research ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Case Study ☐</td> <td>Design Research (Practice based) ☐</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Other (if so, state): ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.</td> </tr> </table>	Interview ☒	Questionnaire (self administered) ☒	Focus group ☐	Ethnography/ Observation ☐	Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis ☐	Action Research ☐	Case Study ☐	Design Research (Practice based) ☐		Other (if so, state): ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.		
Interview ☒	Questionnaire (self administered) ☒	Focus group ☐											
Ethnography/ Observation ☐	Artefact analysis/website/ social media analysis ☐	Action Research ☐											
Case Study ☐	Design Research (Practice based) ☐												
Other (if so, state): ☐ Click or tap here to enter text.													
Brief explanation of the population and number of participants/items	15 females and 15 males that follow the influencer Selina Naidoo												
Target group sampling methods/artefact (No under 18's or vulnerable groups allowed)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Purposive ☒</td> <td>Random ☐</td> <td>Snowball ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Convenient ☐</td> <td>Stratified ☐</td> <td>Census ☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3">Explain selection process: The researcher will pick the participants on purpose according to the characteristics relevant to the research.</td> </tr> </table>	Purposive ☒	Random ☐	Snowball ☐	Convenient ☐	Stratified ☐	Census ☐	Explain selection process: The researcher will pick the participants on purpose according to the characteristics relevant to the research.					
Purposive ☒	Random ☐	Snowball ☐											
Convenient ☐	Stratified ☐	Census ☐											
Explain selection process: The researcher will pick the participants on purpose according to the characteristics relevant to the research.													

Ethics											
Documentation submitted with proposal	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)</td> <td>☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff</td> <td>☐</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Participant or respondent consent form</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)</td> <td>☒</td> </tr> </table>	Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)	☐	Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff	☐	Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)	☒	Participant or respondent consent form	☒	Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)	☒
Gatekeeper's letter (institutional consent)	☐										
Completed Annexure E if you conduct research on IIE sites/students/staff	☐										
Instrument(s) (interview schedule or questionnaire)	☒										
Participant or respondent consent form	☒										
Audio-visual consent form (if applicable)	☒										

Campus ethics committee recommendation	
Proposal has been reviewed by the supervisor and necessary ethics considerations have been included. ☒ Accepted as is and provide letter ☒ Accepted with provisions: Nature of provision: e.g. instrument is not sufficient / included and need to be signed off by the supervisor ☒ Major issues: Student should not continue with fieldwork. Actions to be taken: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervisor signature	2021/07/04
Co-supervisor/Campus ethics panel member signature	

Campus ethics committee recommendation	
Proposal has been reviewed by the supervisor and necessary ethics considerations have been included. ☒ Accepted as is and provide letter ☒ Accepted with provisions: Nature of provision: e.g. instrument is not sufficient / included and need to be signed off by the supervisor ☒ Major issues: Student should not continue with fieldwork. Actions to be taken: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Supervisor signature	2021/07/04
Co-supervisor/Campus ethics panel member signature	
	2021/07/07

Annexure F: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed for research purposes only and will aid in understanding if Instagram influencer marketing impacts consumer buying behaviour.

This questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The researcher will

appreciate it immensely if you are able to complete this questionnaire by the end of this

week and email it to [REDACTED]

NB: The participants of this questionnaire will remain anonymous.

1. Which Instagram influencer/s do you follow?

2. Can you please explain why follow this influencer/s?

3. What aspects do you enjoy about this influencer/s?

4. What content does this influencer/s create, that you enjoy most?

5. Does the influencer/s you follow promote product/s and service/s for other brands

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

6. Have you purchased a product/s or service/s that this influencer/s promote?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

7. If yes, please explain what persuaded you to purchase these product/s or service/s?

8. What is your opinion on Instagram influencer marketing?

9. Explain why you would be influenced to purchase a product/s or service/s from

a person whom you do not know personally?

10.To what extent do you believe an influencer can impact a consumers buying behaviour?

Annexure G: Interview Questions

In-depth interview question.

1. Name the influencers you follow on Instagram?
2. Why do you follow these influencers?
3. Have you purchased any products that the influencer/s has promoted?
4. Can you explain the steps you would take before you purchase a product?
5. What are your opinions of Instagram influencers?
6. Do you believe that Instagram influencer marketing has the power to impact consumer buying behaviour?
7. To what extent do you believe consumer buying behaviour can be impacted by Instagram influencer marketing.
8. What are some of the characteristics you believe Instagram influencers require to be successful?

Annexure X: Concept Table

ANNEXURE X: FINAL RESEARCH REPORT/MINI-DISSERTATION/ DISSERTATION/ THESIS SUMMARY DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

TITLE: CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOUR: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY DESCRIBING THE IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER MARKETING WITHIN A SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT.

Research Purpose/Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/Sources	Lit Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Key Findings	Recommendations
To describe the impact that Instagram influencer marketing has on consumer buying behaviour.	Does influencer marketing on Instagram have an impact on consumer buying behaviour.	This study is relevant as it will help businesses create effective brand communication strategies.	Alalwan, A. A., 2018. Ammoura, A. & Ertemel, A. V., 2016. Biaudet, S., 2017.	Theme 1: Influencer marketing. Theme 2: Consumer attitudes and perceptions. Theme 3: Consumer behaviour.	Paradigm Interpretivism. Epistemology To understand and describe what aspects of Instagram marketing impact consumer buying behaviour. Ontology Consumers rely on Instagram influencer marketing to determine the value of a product and whether to purchase it or not.	Qualitative Population Population Parameters Followers of Instagram influencer, Selina Naidoo Sampling	Questionnaires and in-depth interviews	Receive participants consent. Protect participants identity. Receive consent for recording. Do not tamper with data.	Consumers rely on influencer reviews and recommendations. Consumers will purchase based on their relationship with the influencer.	Future studies should focus on one phenomenon such as impact of Instagram influencer marketing on consumer buying behaviour during Covid-19 pandemic or focus on different locations other than South Africa.
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/Hypotheses/Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories							
Does Instagram influencer marketing have an impact on consumer buying behaviour.	To what extent does Instagram influencer marketing have an impact on consumer buying behaviour.	Consumer buying behaviour. Instagram. Influencer. Influencer marketing. Consumer	Theory of reasoned action. Use and gratification theory.		Axiology Consumers are able to share their own personal and unique experience.	Probability or non-probability Probability. Sampling method Volunteer and purposive. Size: 15	Unit of Analysis Instagram followers of Selina Naidoo Data Analysis Method(s) Coding	Did get equal sample of males and females. Late response from candidates.	That brands should focus some of their budget on influencer marketing which is proving to be an asset due to interpersonal relationships that consumers need with brands.	

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