



Instagram influencers and brand awareness: the impact on the youth followers in Singapore

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Abstract

Due to the proliferation of social media, such as Instagram and its influencers, brands have begun to leverage on the latter's large following to generate brand awareness for their products. The objective of this study was to conduct an exploratory research to examine if Instagram influencers have any impact on brand awareness. The study employed the use of focus groups and online questionnaires to gather primary data about the users' motivations behind following such influencers. Multiple regression techniques were used to calculate the significance of the independent variables of the study. It was found that followers were more likely to have a negative opinion of influencers, as compared to a positive opinion. Despite this, it was also found that they continue to follow them on Instagram due to the three main themes that were identified: an attractive influencer, a high number of followers, and nicely taken pictures. In addition, it was observed that the brand awareness that followers receive through an Instagram influencer's post, does not make any significant impact on the purchase intention of that product.

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1. Introduction

There has been a growing trend of brands leveraging on Instagram influencers to promote their products to their target audiences (Webster et al., 2005). Instagram influencers are individuals who have built a substantial network of followers and are considered to be reliable tastemakers in one or a few niches. This up-and-coming influencer community possesses a substantial amount of power over the perceptions of brands and products. A multitude of these influencers are continuously gaining a large share of voice due to Instagram's growth, simultaneously bringing together groups of people who share common interests (Booth and Matic, 2011).

This paper explores if Instagram influencers make any impact in increasing a product's brand awareness among their followers? The scope of this study will centre on Singaporean Instagram influencers and users. The target audience would be young adults aged between 18 to 25 years old, who are currently active users of their Instagram accounts.

2. Literature review

Instagram Influencers can be considered opinion leaders who are “likely to influence other persons. The three main factors that define these individuals, referred to as influencers in this study, namely, their “personification of certain values (who one is), their competence (what they know), and their strategic social location (who they know)”.

Therefore, due to the increasingly competitive business environment where retaining one's customers is of utmost priority, keeping customers engaged is an area of great interest. This is where brands engage digital influencers, because in addition to the above-mentioned characteristics, their opinions and experiences are communicated like electronic word-of-mouths (eWOMs)¹ (Cheung & Thadani, 2012), which are perceived by the consumers to be more reliable and trustworthy as compared to corporate messages.

One way that influencers' keep their followers' attention is their willingness to try new things. In marketing terms, that is described as being an early adopter in the Diffusion of Innovation theory (Hanlon, 2013). For the influencer, it aids in maintaining and increasing their status in the social media sphere (Gruhl, et al 2004). Whereas for brands, such influencers provide a platform for the launch of new products in a new market. With the injection of social media tools into the mix, people now have the ability to impact and influence the decision of their peers (Solis, 2007).

Brand awareness is defined as “a rudimentary level of brand involving, at the least, recognition of the brand name” (Hoyer & Brown, 1990). It is also described by Aaker (1991) as “a consumer's potential ability to recognise or remember the name of the brand”. More specifically, Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) noted that it is linked with the brand's strength in the minds of consumers, which is revealed in their ability to identify the brand in different situations.

This continues on to recognising and being knowledgeable in more detailed aspects of the brand, such as its logo and its range of products. Consumers were more likely to patronise from a brand that they recognised. Brand awareness plays a significant role in consumers' choice of products, including products of inferior quality.

According to Keller (2003), there are three benefits to brand awareness. First, the higher the level of brand awareness that a consumer has of a brand, the easier it would be for them to remember and learn about it. Secondly, brands with a higher level of brand awareness would surface more easily when consumers are considering to purchase from a selection of different brands. Thirdly, brand awareness provides brands with an added advantage in low-involvement purchase decisions, especially in the absence of a purchase motivation and/or ability.

¹ Electronic word-of-mouths (eWOMs) is a form of communication that is made by an individual about a subject to other persons via the Internet (Jalilvand et al., 2011).

2.1. Social media engagement

Engagement is generally defined as “an affective state that yields voluntary extra-role behaviours” (Kang, 2014; p.402). Users engage in social media when they “interact with, create, and/or share content (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2016). It is also characterised by “physical interactions with media and a cognitive experience that leads to user absorption with content, cumulating as behavioural outcomes in the form of outreach” (Oh & Sundar, 2016). Content published onto social media is more likely to be effective when users are engaged. Users who are engaged in social media may exhibit emotions ranging from feeling inspired, enthusiastic, or “affectively focused on media content” (Oh & Sundar, 2016; p. 178). Moreover, an engaged audience becomes participatory, where they participate in “ongoing real-time conversations” with brands and other users (Jiang et al 2016).

2.2. Purchase decision making

A purchase decision is defined as the “behavioural pattern of a consumer who determines and follows a decision process comprising various stages in order to reach a choice” (Erasmus, et al 2010). An extensively referenced purchasing behaviour model is a linear model that explains the general stages of the purchase process. It is a linear framework that comprises of the “need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour stages” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001). This model would be employed to examine the impact of Instagram influencers on the stages of consumers’ purchase decisions.

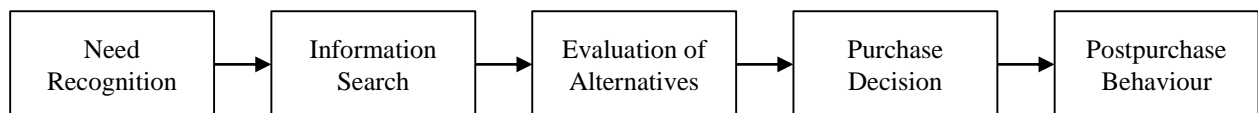


Figure 1. Consumer purchase decision making model

(Source; Kotler & Armstrong, 2001)

2.3. Need recognition

The process begins with need recognition, where a consumer recognises a need or problem. This is triggered by internal or external stimuli. Internal stimuli refers to a person’s physical needs, such as hunger. An external stimulus can be forms of advertising or conversations with others, for instance, that may trigger a need.

2.4. Information search

Consumers may search for more information about a product before buying it. These include personal (family, relatives), commercial (advertisements), public (Internet), and experiential (trying the product) sources. Personal sources are the most powerful, as they “legitimise or evaluate products for the buyer” (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001). Studies have shown that word-of-mouth plays the biggest influence in consumers’ electronics and apparel purchases (Kotler & Armstrong, 2001).

2.5. Evaluation of alternatives

Once consumers arrive at a final set of choices, they would evaluate them according to logic, intuition, advice from friends or online reviews.

2.6. Purchase decision

Consumers would be more likely to purchase their most preferred product. However, two factors come into play between the purchase intention and the final decision. First, the attitudes of others, such as a friend or an influencer, would influence their purchase decision. Second, unexpected situational factors, such as discounts on a competitor’s product, would influence their decisions as well.

2.7. Post-purchase behaviour

Post-purchase behaviours are determined by the consumers' level of satisfaction. Products that fail to meet consumers' expectations would disappoint them; if it meets their expectations, it would satisfy them; if it surpasses their expectations, it would delight them. The difference between the consumers' expectations and the product's performance determines their level of dissatisfaction. Nearly every product purchase results in cognitive dissonance, which refers to a "discomfort caused by post-purchase conflict".

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

The proposed approach was an exploratory study with the main aim of revealing the impact of Instagram influencers on a product's brand awareness among youth in Singapore.

Two focus groups discussions were conducted, which were held two weeks apart. The number of participants were chosen to reflect Singapore's national average for its ethnic groups, which were made up of Chinese (74.3%), Malay (13.4%), Indian (9.1%), and others (3.2%) (Singapore Demographics Profile 2018). After the first focus group was conducted, its overall design was re-examined, and adjustments were made to improve the second focus group. A comparison was made between the responses of both focus groups, of which the results were found to be consistent.

The online questionnaire was formulated based on the questions that were used during the focus group, and from past literature. Before it was officially disseminated, it was pilot-tested by a small group of participants. After receiving feedback on how to improve the questionnaire, it was edited and released to the public.

3.2. Data collection

3.2.1. Focus groups

Focus group was used to gain a deeper understanding of three main factors: Instagram influencers, its impact on brand awareness, and its impact on the consumers' purchasing decisions. It was used as a platform to dive deeper into the thoughts and opinions of the consumers, their motivations, and potential areas of these topics that have yet to be uncovered. The target audience of this focus group were both males and females, aged between 18 to 25 years old. A total of two focus groups were conducted. Each consisted of 10 people, with an equal representation of both genders and lasting for 90 minutes each.

A moderator facilitated the focus group using semi-structured questions to allow for a balance between an open-ended interview and a structured survey such questions would also allow the responses to flow flexibly and productively. Questions were designed to cover a range of topics that the research is focussing on. Both focus group discussions were video-recorded with the permission of the participants.

A checklist of the questions are as listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Checklist of questions used during the focus group discussions

About Influencers
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is your Instagram account a private or a public one? 2. When you think about Instagram influencers, what's the first thing that comes to mind? 3. Why do you follow them? 4. What do you think makes them an influencer? 5. What goes through your mind when you see your influencer post about a brand or product? 6. Why do you think other people follow influencers?
About Brand Awareness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What goes through your mind when your influencer posts about a brand/product you already know of? 2. What if it's a product that you have never heard of? 3. What would your opinions of the brand be after seeing it being endorsed by the influencer?
About Consumer Purchase Intentions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How likely/convinced would you be to find out more or purchase a product after you have seen your influencer posting about it? 2. If you influencer endorses aftershave, you really don't care about it. But in a situation that requires you to get a present for your male friend, for instance, and you are thinking of getting him a shaver, which shaver would you choose? One that the influencer has endorsed before? What would you thought process be like?

3.2.2. Analysis of focus group discussion

The discussions were transcribed, and an analysis was conducted to identify the general thoughts, attitudes, and experiences of the participants. A list of themes was generated after this process, which are summarised in figure 1, 2, 3, and 4.

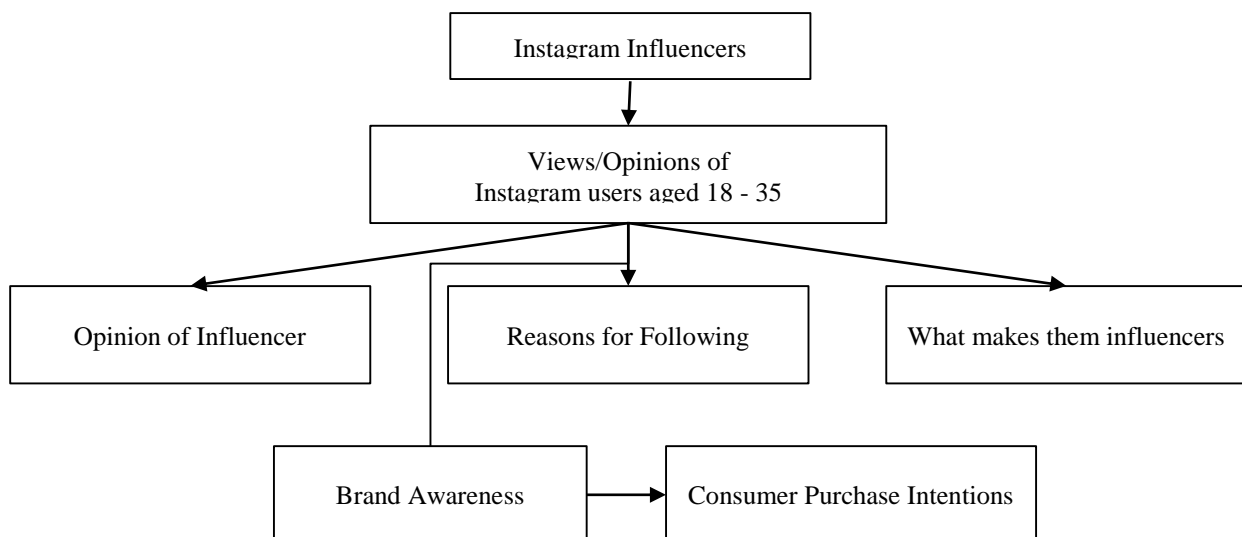


Figure 1. A flowchart showing the main topics that were discussed at the focus group

This flowchart shows the main topics that were discussed at the focus group. Each topic is further explored in detail in the following flowcharts (Figures 2, 3 and 4).

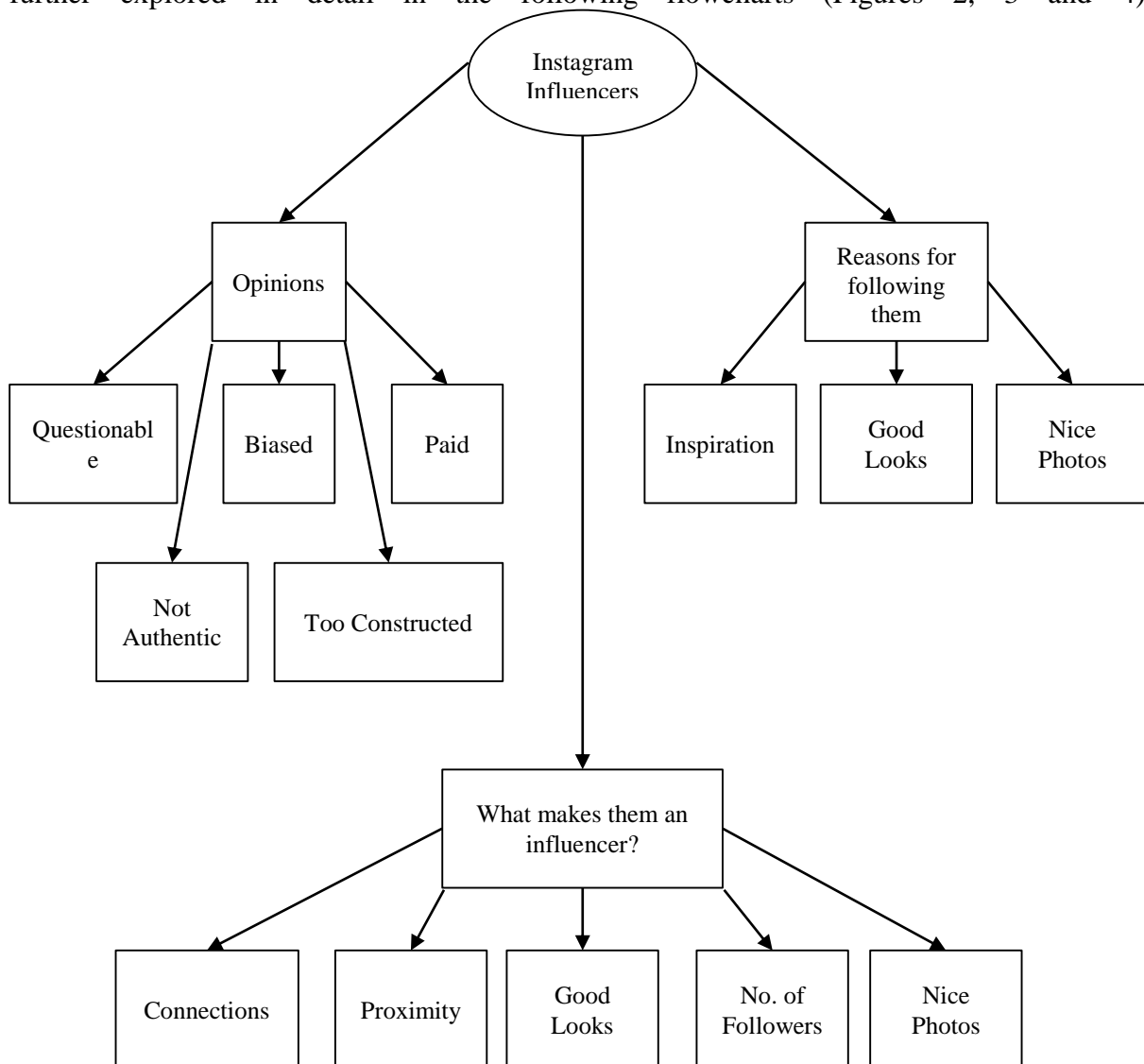


Figure 2. Themes covering the topic of Instagram influencers

Participants were asked for their opinions of Instagram influencers, the reasons for following them, and what they think makes them influencers. Their opinions of Instagram influencers were negative, with many of them using similar words like “questionable” and “biased” to express their views. As one participant explained, “*When I read their posts, it sounds very constructed. They try to make it sound very personal, but it triggers very big question marks for me.*” When describing their reasons for following them, they stated that they were sources of inspiration, were good-looking, and shared nice photos on their Instagram accounts. The participants shared that their connections to other influencers, proximity to their followers, good looks, number of followers, and nice photos, were what qualified them as influencers.

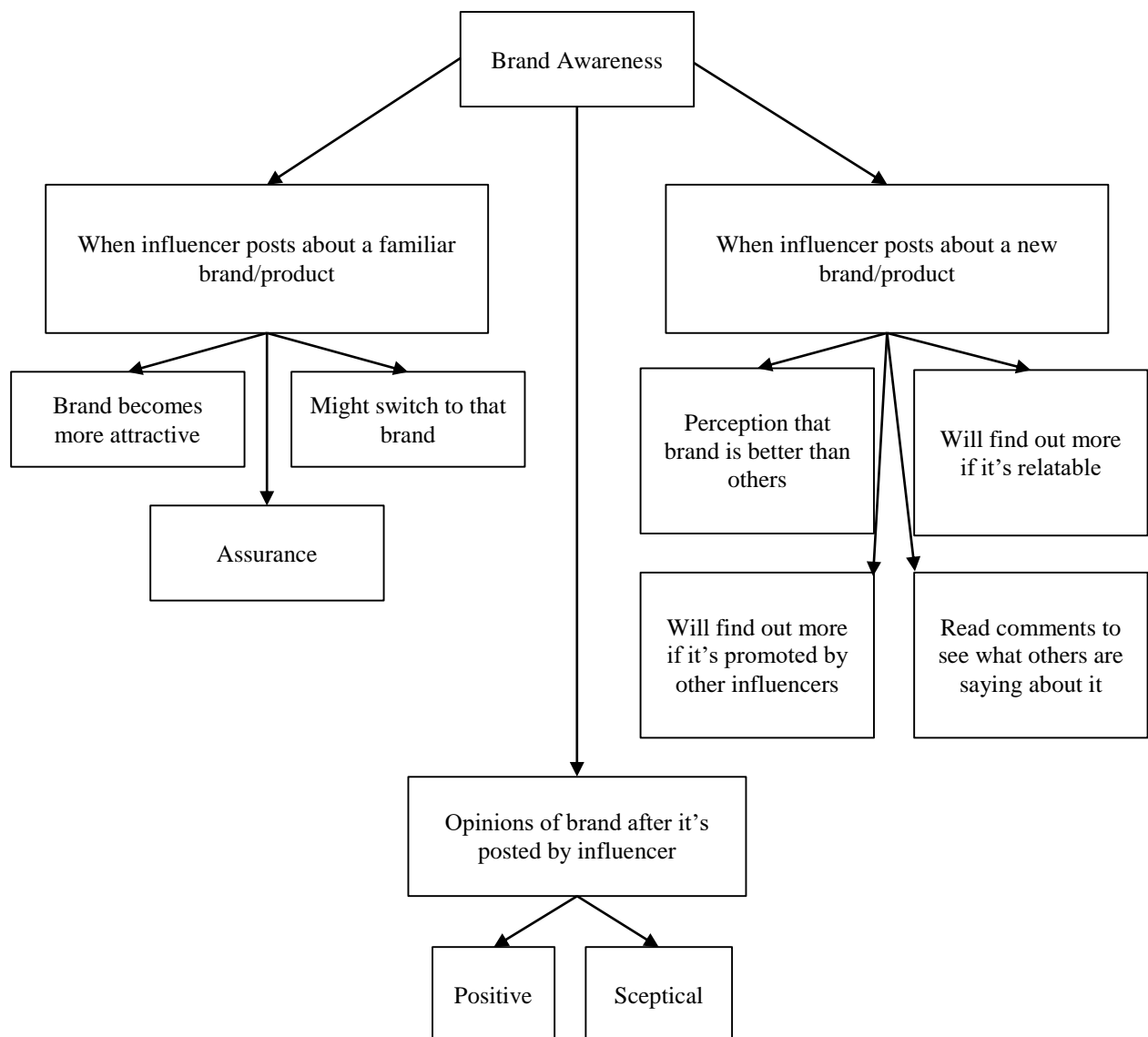


Figure 3. Themes covering the topic of brand awareness

Participants were asked for their views on whether Instagram influencers made an impact on their level of brand awareness of the brands and products featured. In response to being asked about their perceptions of familiar brands featured on an influencer’s post, all of their views were positive, and leaned towards the brand becoming more attractive and having a greater inclination to switch to that brand. It also evoked feelings of assurance, knowing that their influencer has used the product and finds it useful. As one participant mentioned, *“It would be comforting to know that someone’s writing something good about a product that I’m familiar with.”*

With regards to influencers posting about a new brand, participants shared that they would perceive the brand to be better than other brands. Some would find out more about the brand if it is relatable and is being promoted by other influencers. Some revealed that they would read the comments on those posts to find out more about what other people are saying about the brand. As one participant explained, *“If I’m interested in the product, I would do some research to see what other people are saying about it.”*

When asked about their overall opinions of the brand after its posted about by the influencer, two main sentiments were evoked - positivity and scepticism.

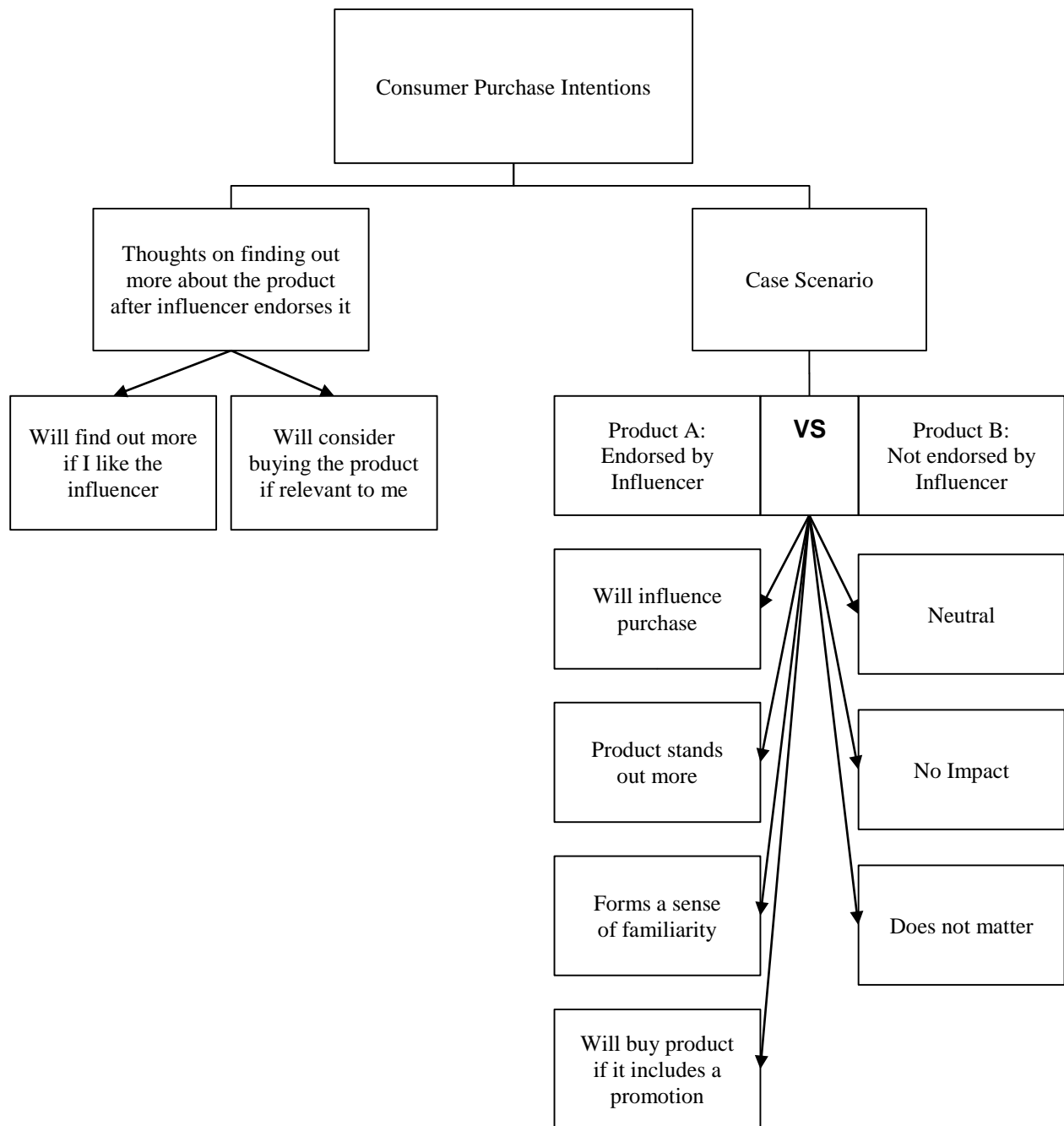


Figure 4. Themes covering the topic of consumer purchase intentions

Participants were given a case scenario that required them to express their views on a product that was endorsed by an influencer, and a product that was not. The premise was that both products were equal, except for their brands. This elicited both positive and neutral responses. Positive responses showed that influencers do make an impact on their purchase decisions, citing reasons such as the product standing out more, being able to form a sense of familiarity with the product, and purchasing the product if it includes a promotion by the influencer. One participant, in response to being asked this question, explained that he would be influenced by the influencer if the post included a promotion: *“I would factor in the influencer if he or she posted about a brand having a big sale. Then I would use the information that I’ve found out from this influencer, to make my purchases.”* Neutral responses showed that the endorsement did not make a difference in the participants’ purchase decisions. As one

participant explained, “*To me, I don’t think the influencer will make an impact on my purchase decision in this scenario.*”

3.2.3. Online questionnaire

The online questionnaire comprised of both multiple-choice and open-ended questions that were formulated based on the objective of the study and the insights gained from the focus group and past literature. These questions elicited information regarding their Instagram usage, where they were asked about the amount of time they spent on it, their purposes of using it, and whether they followed Instagram influencers (survey items 2 - 4). They were asked about their opinions of Instagram influencers, which asked about the topics that their influencers post about, their reasons for following them, why they think the influencers are influential, and their overall opinion of influencers (survey items 5 - 9). They were asked questions regarding the relationship between Instagram influencers and brand awareness (survey items 10 - 16). Questions about the relationship between Instagram influencers and the effect on their own purchase intentions were also asked (survey items 17 - 20). The survey concluded with questions about their personal particulars and demographics (survey items 24 - 27). Google Forms was used to construct and distribute the survey. The target audience of this study was Instagram users aged 18 to 24, who are existing followers of Instagram influencers. Convenience sampling was used to gather the respondents.

The total sample size was 139. The actual number of usable respondents who fulfilled the requirements of the research was 90.

3.3. Measurement of variables

The total score for brand awareness were calculated as the average of the sum of survey items 10 to 16, which were questions that asked about the relationship between Instagram influencers and brand awareness. The items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The range of possible scores for brand awareness was 1 to 5. The actual range from the respondents was 1 to 5, with a mean score of 2.496, and a standard deviation (SD) of 0.5733.

The independent variables in this study are Time Spent, opinions of Influencers, Gender, Occupation, and Education.

4. Results and discussion

This section comprises of a description of the characteristics of the sample and frequencies related to the research variables. Table 2 summarises the covariate statistics for this sample.

4.1. Regression analysis

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict the Brand Awareness (DV) based on the followers’ Opinion of Influencers (IV₁), their Gender (IV₂), Time Spent (IV₃), Occupation (IV₄), and Education (IV₅). Gender is coded as 1 = Female, 0 = Male. Time Spent is coded as 1 = Less than 1 hour a day, 2 = 1 to 2 hours, 3 = 2 to 3 hours, 4 = 3 to 4 hours, 5 = More than 4 hours. Occupation is coded as 1 = Student, 0 = Non-student (Executive/Managerial, Professional (Doctor / Lawyer etc), Academic/Educator, Service/Customer Support, Clerical/Administrative, Sales/Marketing). Education is 1 = Secondary School, 2 = Junior College, 3 = Polytechnic, 4 = Institute of Technical Education, 5 = University.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of variables

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	22	24.4
Female	68	75.6
<i>Time Spent</i>		
Less than 1hr	27	30
1 to 2 hrs	34	37.8
2 to 3 hrs	15	16.7
3 to 4 hrs	6	6.7
More than 4 hrs	8	8.8
<i>Occupation</i>		
Student	79	81
Business	7	7
Professionals	8	8
Support	3	3
Engineers	1	1
<i>Education</i>		
Secondary	1	1
Junior College	27	30
Polytechnic	31	34
Institute of Technical Education	2	2
University	29	32

The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.419162882. This indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables. This statistic, which ranges from -1 to +1, does not indicate statistical significance of this correlation. The coefficient of determination, R^2 is 0.175697521, or 18%. This indicates that close to 18% of the variation in the dependent variable (Brand Awareness) is explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R-square, which is a measure of explanatory power, is 0.126631898. The standard error is 0.543894389, which is an estimate of the variation of the observed opinions of influencers, about the regression line. A significant regression equation was found ($F(5,84) = 3.580867988, p < 0.005521202$), with an R^2 of 0.175697521.

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.419162882
R Square	0.175697521
Adjusted R Square	0.126631898
Standard Error	0.543894389
Observations	90

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	5	5.296481643	1.059296329	3.580867988	0.005521202
Residual	84	24.8489729	0.295821106		
Total	89	30.14545455			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	1.026481104	0.432547435	2.373106439	0.019922024	0.166313093	1.886649115	0.166313093	1.886649115
Opinion on Influencers (IV1)	0.293887459	0.079138844	3.71356774	0.000366801	0.136511188	0.45126373	0.136511188	0.45126373
Gender (IV2)	0.272014131	0.170186265	1.598331865	0.11372418	-0.066419922	0.610448183	-0.066419922	0.610448183
Time Spent (IV3)	0.036789232	0.057651086	0.638135982	0.525121063	-0.077856274	0.151434739	-0.077856274	0.151434739
Occupation (IV4)	0.071133935	0.159564842	0.445799555	0.656888974	-0.246178251	0.388446122	-0.246178251	0.388446122
Education (IV5)	0.045325108	0.052110965	0.869780638	0.38689896	-0.05830326	0.148953477	-0.05830326	0.148953477

Figure 5. Multiple regression table

The sum of squares regression, SSR, is 5.296481643. The sum of squares of residuals, SSE, is 24.8489729. The total sum of squares, SST, is 30.14545455. The F-test statistic is 3.580867988. The Significance F is 0.005521202. The smaller the F, the greater the probability that the regression is not by chance. From this observation, there is a 0.6% chance that the output was obtained by random chance.

An alpha of 0.05 was used. The p-values of some of the independent variables are greater than the alpha. These are namely their Gender (IV₂) = 0.11372418, Time Spent (IV₃) = 0.525121063, Occupation (IV₄) = 0.656888974, and Education (IV₅) = 0.38689896. The only variable that did not exceed the alpha was Opinion of Influencers (IV₁) = 0.000366801. Thus, opinion of Influencers (IV₁) is a meaningful variable in this calculation as it is related to the changes in the independent variable. It is the only significant predictor as compared to all the other predictors.

The resultant model tested is linear, with the model written as:

$$Y = \beta_1 \chi_1$$

Where:

Y = the behavioural response measure.

And where the following are the predictor variables:

χ_1 = opinion of Influencers

The resultant model with the coefficients are presented below.

Brand Awareness = 0.282 (*Opinion of Influencers*)

$$R^2 = 0.137416152 \quad F = 14.0190677$$

Another linear regression test was conducted to determine if Brand Awareness through an Instagram Influencer’s post, had any impact on the Purchase Intentions of that product. The total score for Purchase Intentions was calculated as the average of the sum of survey items 17 to 20, which were questions that asked about the relationship between brand awareness and purchase intentions. The items were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). The range of possible scores for purchase intentions was 1 to 5. The actual range from the respondents was 1 to 5, with a mean score of 2.528, and a standard deviation of 0.7892. The independent variable in this study is opinion of Influencers.

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.117312488
R Square	0.01376222
Adjusted R Square	0.002554972
Standard Error	0.788177617
Observations	90

ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	1	0.762847489	0.762847489	1.227975004	0.270820765
Residual	88	54.66770807	0.621223955		
Total	89	55.43055556			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	2.131530931	0.367103079	5.806355355	9.9475E-08	1.401990702	2.86107116	1.4019907	2.86107116
Average on B.A (IV)	0.159077201	0.143553299	1.108140336	0.270820765	-0.126204816	0.44435922	-0.1262048	0.44435922

Figure 6. Linear regression table

The multiple correlation coefficient is 0.117312488, which indicates that there is a positive correlation between the independent and dependent variables. The coefficient of determination, R^2 is 0.01376222, or 1.3%. This indicates that only 1.3% of the variation in the dependent variable (Purchase Intentions) is explained by the independent variable. The standard error is 0.788177617, which is an estimate of the variation of the Purchase Intentions, about the regression line. The sum of squares regression, SSR, is 0.762847489. The sum of squares of residuals, SSE, is 54.66770807. The total sum of squares, SST, is 55.43055556. The F-test statistic is 1.227975004. The Significance F is 0.270820765. From this observation, there is a 27% chance that the output was obtained by random chance.

An alpha of 0.05 was used. However, as the p-value of the independent variable, Brand Awareness is 0.270820765, it is not a meaningful variable in this calculation. Thus, it can be concluded that Brand Awareness through an Instagram Influencer’s post does not make any significant impact on the purchase intentions of that product.

5. Concluding remarks

The results reveal that the followers’ opinion of influencers is the factor that most significantly affects the brand awareness of a product. However, what remains is the question of what drives the followers’ opinions of influencers. In the survey, respondents were asked for their overall opinion of influencers with this question: “On a scale from 1 - 5, with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest, how would you describe your overall opinion of Instagram influencers?”. The majority of them, which consisted of 57 out of 90 respondents, or 63.3%, responded with an answer that was between 1 to 3. The remaining 33 respondents, or 36.7%, responded with an answer that was between 4 to 5. These results indicate that followers are more likely to have a negative opinion of influencers, as compared to a positive opinion. A parallel of these results can be drawn back to the responses of the focus group that was conducted. When asked for their opinions of influencers, the participants’ views were also negative, where words such as “questionable”, “paid”, and “not authentic” were used to articulate their opinions. Therefore, it seems that the followers’ perceptions of Instagram influencers are what drives their opinions. Through this study, it is evident that there is a higher likelihood of their perceptions to be more negative than positive.

A parallel can also be made between the qualitative questions that were asked in the survey, and the corresponding questions that were asked during the focus group discussions. For the question that asked: “What are your reasons for following these Instagram Influencers?” the main themes that emerged were their attractiveness, nice pictures, and useful/relevant content.

These same themes emerged when the same question was asked during the focus group discussion.

For the question that asked: “What comes to mind when you think of 'Instagram Influencers'?” and “What do you think makes them influential?”, the main themes that emerged were their attractiveness, number of followers, and nice pictures. Some of the respondents described that influencers are “*people who take high quality photos. Some have very nice aesthetics and looking at their photos makes me feel good.*” Another respondent went into further detail to explain that “*their influence can be due to the correlation between the creation of their own image as a 'tastemaker' and the sheer volume of image consumption in contemporary society.*” Similarly, these same themes emerged during the focus group discussions as well.

It can be deduced from these findings that although the respondents had a higher likelihood of having a negative opinion of Instagram influencers, they continue to follow them on Instagram due to the three main themes that were identified. Having said that, it appears that although there is a higher likelihood of followers bearing negative opinions of influencers, it might not necessarily mean that the influencers would generate lesser brand awareness for the products that they are endorsing. This means that Instagram influencers would still be able to generate brand awareness amongst their followers as long as their accounts meet three criteria: an attractive influencer, a high number of followers, and nicely taken pictures. Research conducted on the top 10 Instagram influencers in Singapore revealed that all of them met the aforementioned criteria (Singapore's Top Influencers List, 2018). Out of the 10 accounts, four were owned by male influencers, and six were owned by female influencers. The followers on each account ranged from 300k to over 2 million, with feeds that were filled with nicely taken pictures. The type of content posted are mostly about the latest lifestyle trends, fashion, and food. The influencers themselves are good-looking as well. These observations further confirm the findings of this study: Instagram influencers who meet the three criteria, would be able to become channels to generate brand awareness for businesses.

On the other hand, it can be observed from the study that the brand awareness that followers receive through an Instagram influencer’s post, does not make any significant impact on the purchase intention of that product.

The fact that Brand Awareness was measured based on a 5-point scale, and based on just seven questions, presents itself as a limitation. As Brand Awareness is a subjective factor to measure, each individual’s responses may not accurately reflect their true level of brand awareness of a product. This method of measurement also leaves open the possibility of other variables that may have contributed to the brand awareness of the product, as the questions only drew attention to Instagram influencers being the main channel of brand awareness. There is also a possibility that the way that the participants responded to the questions were subjected to self-representation bias.

When studying the correlation between brand awareness gained through Instagram influencers and that of the consumers’ purchase intentions, the price levels of the products were not considered. Taking into consideration that the chosen demographic of this study were participants between 18 to 24 years old, they might be more price-sensitive when it comes to purchasing things. This is due to the fact that members of this age group are still in school or have just begun their careers. Hence, price might have been a factor that contributed to their responses during the study. As one participant shared during the focus group, “*If the price of the item is too expensive for me, I would be better off buying the cheaper one. Doesn't matter if the influencer endorsed it or not.*” Hence, this is an area that further research can take into consideration.

It is recommended that future studies examine and conduct more in-depth research on how brand awareness leads to an actual purchase. The role of Instagram influencers too, needs to be

further studied to determine its effectiveness in generating the brand awareness of a product and in turn, the actual purchase of it. This consists of looking into the types of content that they post, the characteristics of their followers, and other factors that may play a part in the study. There may be a possibility that a certain type of Instagram influencer personality attracts a certain type of follower. If that is revealed in further research, brands may be able to leverage on this to their advantage. Furthermore, it may even be feasible for businesses to create and manage an Instagram influencer exclusively for their brand.

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