



THE IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMERS

PURCHASING BEHAVIOR IN THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY

A DISSERTATION

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Introduction

Social media marketing is one of the emerging trends that most organisations are adopting. This is attributed to the convenience, cost and the flexibility of the social media platforms that make it more reliable. Organisations have shifted to engaging social media influencers to market their products on their social media accounts and pages. These influencers use their fame and popularity to advertise various products to their fans prompting them to make purchases. This research puts forward the research topic, objectives of the research study, the rationale of the research, literature review related to the topic of study. The research topic for the study is

The role and impact of Instagram influencers on consumer purchasing behaviour. A case in the beauty industry.

Social media marketing is becoming one of the most common methods of carrying out marketing for businesses. Businesses use different social media platforms to create awareness concerning the different products they deal with and interact with their customers (Soegoto and Utomo, 2019). There are various platforms that businesses use to carry out marketing activities such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube. Marketing is achieved on these platforms in various ways. For example, a business can design an advert that displays the different products it sells and have them played on different platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Also, they can approach social media influencers to post the company's products on their timelines to attract more customers. YouTube is effective in carrying out promotion by creating traffic on the videos playing and showcasing products of a company with an intention to pursue customers to purchase the product.

Therefore, social media plays a vital role in a business' marketing efforts since it helps businesses to tell their story openly. Social media platforms offer an opportunity for the business to freely interact with its customers closely and efficiently. A business can easily post a given message on social media platforms and have its potential customers commenting on the post giving their reactions to a product. In this way, the business is able to respond to their comments, and obtain customers' immediate feedback. Therefore, this helps the company to easily identify with the customers, create a close relationship and healthy relationships.

Another advantage of using social media for marketing is that it helps an organisation to grow their customer base with a small budget hence cost effective. Apart from running ads on different social media platforms, a company can still grow their brand by establishing a strong brand name on their social media platforms. They can do this by consistently posting content relating to their products using the trending keywords (Constantinides, 2014). This will help in creating awareness about the organisation and their products among the audience. Consequently, the organisation will be able to grow its brand.

Social media marketing also helps in gaining information concerning competitors which may be useful in giving insights on the best strategies to adopt and attain a competitive advantage in the market. Social media platforms are open forums where businesses utilise to reach out to the target audience to market their brands. Therefore, a business can utilise the information their competitors post on social media to learn few tricks on what strategies to adopt and how to position on the market in order to attain market success.

Instagram is a social media platform which offers businesses a number of opportunities to advertise their products. It has slots for photo ads, video ads, story ads and carousel ads where businesses can choose any of the type to use for advertising their products (Saravanakumar and Sugantha Lakshmi, 2012). Through showcasing their products on the Instagram page, they are

able to attract potential customers to purchase their products. In the current century, digitization has taken over and most of the people spend their time on phone on different social platforms, Instagram being the most common. Therefore, this makes it the most perfect platform for showcasing the products and pursue them to purchase.

Instagram helps in identifying the behaviour of a given group of customers in the market. Through Instagram, a business is able to closely interact with customers on the comment section and through direct messaging hence able to learn of the customer behaviour, their likes and dislikes. Therefore, with this information, the business is able to make a decision on the most suitable designs for the customers, pricing strategies to use in the market and other necessary information that would make customers to choose their product over the competitors'. The business is able to provide them with the right information and pursue them to purchase the product.

Instagram and other social media platforms provide an essential platform for customer behaviour analysis which helps in the decision-making analysis. Customer behaviour analysis refers to the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data concerning the customers with an aim of gaining meaningful insights to identify the motives that make customers to purchase a product (Felix et al, 2017). This process involves basic metrics which involve identifying page views and monthly active users and track their interests and what drives them to make purchases. Therefore, a business can undertake this process by evaluating the customer entry points to purchase a product. Through this the business can focus on identifying the mostly searched products by the customer, the most popular paths to purchasing and the customer experience reviews.

An analysis of the consumer behaviour and the factors that contribute to them purchasing a certain product can be obtained by evaluating information available on different social media

platforms. A business can evaluate this by establishing how customers want to be treated, what they look for in a product and why they make purchase of some products. This information can be obtained from the customer comments on the posts made on a company's Instagram posts and ads (Bashar et al, 2012). They are the able to tell on what drives the customers to purchase their products hence strategically positioning the products to attract the customers and pursue them to make purchases.

Having analysed the impact of social media marketing in the success of most organisations, this research aimed at evaluating the role Instagram influencers play in marketing products in the beauty industry. Many companies within the beauty industry have resulted to associating their products with celebrities and public figures with an aim of increasing their sales. Companies such as Loreal Paris have endorsed influencers like Emily Canham and Kaushal Modha who are brand ambassadors for the company and it has contributed to the company's market performance (Hudani and Simorangkir, 2018). Therefore, this formed the motivation behind undertaking this research to identify the role influencers play and the impact they have in influencing success for companies operating in the beauty industries.

Research aim

The main aim of undertaking this study is to investigate the role and impact of Instagram influencers in influencing the purchasing behaviour of consumers in the beauty industry.

Research objectives

The objectives for this research include:

- ✓ To identify the role of Instagram influencers in the beauty industry
- ✓ To explore the factors that influence the purchasing behaviour among consumers in the beauty industry
- ✓ To analyse the relationship between Instagram influencers and the consumers

- ✓ To evaluate the impact of the influencers on the behaviour of different groups of consumers
- ✓ To suggest various recommendations that beauty companies can adopt to attract the interest of different groups of consumers including those who are not using social media.

Research questions

The leading questions for this study include:

- ✓ What is the role of Instagram influencers in the beauty industry?
- ✓ What factors have influenced the purchasing behaviour of customers in the beauty industry?
- ✓ What is the relationship between Instagram influencers and consumers in the industry?
- ✓ What impact do Instagram influencers have on consumer purchasing behaviour?
- ✓ What recommendations can beauty companies adopt to ensure they attract more customers including those not using Instagram and other social media platforms.

Research rationale

With digitisation and adoption of social media marketing, most beauty businesses are looking for better methods to adopt to maximise sales and reach new markets. This necessitates engaging Instagram influencers to help market their products since they believe they are more effective. This study therefore involved collecting relevant information to evaluate the existing relationship between Instagram influencers and the consumer purchasing behaviour. The study also focused on establishing the relationship between the Instagram influencers and consumers and how they influence the purchasing behaviour of the consumers. The research took a total of 11 weeks to come to completion.

Research methodology

The study applied interpretivism research philosophy whereby it gathered real data from respondents and interpreted to evaluate the scenario and the role Instagram influencers play in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour. The research also applied deductive research whereby conclusions and recommendations were derived from the data gathered. The research applied both primary and secondary research methods to gather quantitative data. Questionnaires were designed with close ended questions and issued at random to respondents within the beauty industry. An interview was also conducted to 2 managing directors operating beauty businesses. Secondary methods that were applied included deriving information from previous research conducted by researchers and recorded in journals, newsletters and online reports. The data gathered was then analysed and presented on bar graphs for easy interpretation.

Literature review

Instagram influencer defined

Instagram influencers are defined as individuals who play the role of a third-party endorser and manipulate the target audience's attitudes and perception of a given beauty brand (Hund, 2017). These individuals are considered popular and famous through their participation in different activities across social media platforms. They influence many people through the content they post on their platforms and in other cases the brands they represent which make them to earn more followers on their pages. Sometimes, brands approach these individuals to have their

products advertised on their pages and in other cases they also approach companies and advertise their products. They earn based on the sales made from the number of customer referrals they make. They influence customer sales through the posts they make on their Instagram platforms, YouTube channels, TikTok etc, and convince their followers that the products are the best in the market. Through their word of mouth and captivating captions on their posts, they are able to influence the choice of the customer when it comes to purchasing the products.

Influencers do not only have huge number of followers on their Instagram accounts but also have unique characteristics that make them suitable for marketing activities by different brands (Magno and Cassia, 2018). These individuals are verbal, smart, ambitious and have an aura to move masses and persuading them into making purchases of the various products. They are trusted by their followers and therefore this becomes an easy way to strike and convince them to make purchases. Their followers are usually loyal to them hence easy to purchase a product these influencers have recommended. In most cases, their followers usually follow them for various reasons such as inspiration, motivation or their opinions and ideas on different subjects. Therefore, they have the trust of their followers hence becoming easy for them to influence the decisions the followers make regarding the purchase of a brand. They trust them so whatever product they recommend for their followers they will easily purchase since they presume it to be of high quality and the best for them.

A study conducted by De Veirman et al (2017), defined Instagram influencers as individuals who have a high number of followers and are perceived to be likeable and considered more popular. Therefore, with the many followers on their accounts, they are preferred by most businesses to carry out advertisements for their products. The study suggests that with the many followers, they are likely to influence their purchasing decisions and have consumers purchasing these products. Moreover, these influencers are able to reach out to large numbers

of people thus likely to increase the company's customer base. There is easy accessibility to large markets thus likely to increase the company's sales. However, the study further outlines that this strategy may not be the best marketing method especially when promoting divergent products. This is because it decreases the perceived uniqueness of the product or brand since it is made available and accessible by large number of consumers which becomes common. Therefore, this negatively affects the brand reputation in one way or another.

Instagram influencers in brand marketing

In another research study, it is observed that Instagram is a popular platform that is mainly used for online shopping globally. From the findings, it was established that 44% of the active users of this platform mainly use it to search and discover new brands in the market while 53% of the users follow their favourite brands on this platform (Negi and Pabalkar, 2020). Therefore, businesses have found it easier and profitable to engage the influencers on this platform rather than celebrities since from the influencers' reviews, the businesses are able to obtain genuine reviews and feedbacks which are more reliable and influence the decision-making process. It is from these reviews that consumers are influenced especially when purchasing a product. They are able to analyse and evaluate the available decisions for them before purchasing products. The reviews are highlighted in the comments section where other customers state their experience regarding their interactions with different products. The study also highlighted that Instagram influencers play a role in helping consumers to choose their lifestyles through introducing them to the prevailing trends in the fashion world. Through these updates, consumers are able to adjust accordingly when making purchasing decisions on which they adjust accordingly to suit the existing trends.

In another study, an online survey was conducted whereby active Instagram users were selected and engaged on the role the influencers play in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour. From the sample size of 285 users that were selected, about 63% of the users noted that the

main dimensions that determine the credibility of an influencer are attractiveness and trustworthiness of the influencer (Rebelo, 2017). The study established that many females are perceived by the influencer's trustworthiness. Moreover, it was established that the credibility of an influencer usually affects the consumer's purchasing intentions since this character makes them outstanding and more reliable hence the information, they portray is likely to be reliable. Therefore, this study concluded that businesses need to measure and evaluate the credibility of the influencers before engaging them since they equally influence the consumers making purchases of the product. Apart from the purchasing intentions and decisions, influencer credibility also impacts on the consumer consumption of a product and the attitudes towards a given product or brand. This study was concluded by stating that influencer's reliability majorly influences women's purchasing decision more than it does for men.

Studies have also shown that Instagram influencers influence consumers' buying decisions especially for young people since they are active on the platform. It was established that having Instagram influencers to carry out brand awareness for products has become a common practice in the current business environment and is efficient in reaching out to the youths (Mlodkowska, 2019). The study involved respondents who filled an online questionnaire and established that Instagram influencers were effective in reaching out to the youths and gaining new customers from them. The influencers were responsible for sharing any information on their platforms regarding various products and the youths can easily access it and share with their colleagues. As a result, they are able to make informed decisions regarding the purchases they need to make hence increasing the overall sales since they bring new customers on board. Moreover, influencers are engaged by beauty companies as brand ambassadors whereby they dress in the existing fashions to display the products and brands existing in these houses. When they post them on their platforms, they influence the purchasing decisions since the youths would be interested in purchasing the products and associate themselves with the influencers. Therefore,

this contributes to increased sales by the beauty company. The study further established that these influencers are used to influence the purchasing decisions especially among the youths.

Instagram influencers play an important role in ensuring that brands reach their target audience in a more transparent and genuine way. Paco and Oliveira, (2017) established that most beauty companies are now preferring to reach out to customers in the market through influencers instead of direct selling. In this way, brands in the beauty industry are striving to find influencers with many followers on their Instagram profile and establishing good relationships with them. These influencers have a good relationship with their followers since they share many aspects with them. Therefore, the followers have a strong connection with these influencers and are loyal to them. Therefore, when they influence and recommend a given product to their followers, they are likely to consider buying it since they know that it is quality and will meet their needs. Consumers are likely to consider purchasing a product recommended by an influencer since they consider it to be of high quality and reliable compared to when they make blind purchasing before any recommendations. It has been established that 72% of Instagram users have agreed that they have previously made purchases for beauty products and fashion-related products which have been influenced by Instagram influencers and other iconic individuals in the beauty industry (Almeida, 2019).

Instagram influencers are also used by brands in the beauty industry to promote sales and increase revenues. In most cases, most influencers are usually made brand ambassadors for various beauty brands or products. Therefore, when they post these products on their platform, they are able to create an interest in their followers and an urge to purchase the products. Therefore, companies capitalise on this by providing them with unique codes whereby when customers purchase the product using the codes, then they are given a certain percentage discount for their purchase (Nandagiri and Philip, 2018). This method boosts the company's sales since the influencers will put more efforts to undertake a thorough campaign to promote

the brand. They will post the brand and persuade customers to make more purchases since they also want to earn more from the sales they make. In most cases, when the companies provide them with the codes, they guarantee them to earn a given percentage for every purchase made using the code.

Instagram influencers play different roles based on the needs of the different companies and the products to be marketed. Apart from influencing the purchasing behaviour of customers, they also act as intermediaries between the brand and its customers. They convey crucial information from the customers to the brand managers. They monitor the feedback provided by the customers and analyse useful information on what the customers think about the company and its products. Therefore, with this the company is able to design its products in a better way that meets the customer needs. They are also informed on the customer feedback and reaction towards a given product and communicating the message to the manufacturing companies. In this way, the company is informed and gets to adopt effective strategies that help it in ensuring that it meets customer needs thus translating to customer satisfaction which contributes to winning their loyalty.

Social influence theory

This theory helps one to understand why influencers are in a position to manipulate the customers decision when it comes to purchasing beauty products. The theory suggests that influencers usually influence the customer decisions based on the observable behaviour regarding the usage of certain products and the frequency they purchase these products (Spears, 2021). The theory further explains that influencers manipulate the purchasing decisions of their followers by evaluating the different products they are interested in then placing adverts for the most recommended brand they want them to purchase. Also, this theory suggests that customers will purchase the products that the influencers are using since they want to be associated with them. The theory adopts the concepts of ‘monkey see monkey do’ (Gass and

Seiter, 2018). Therefore, if the influencers are using a certain brand, then then their followers are also likely to purchase the same brand to resonate with the influencer. Therefore, with this, companies take time to find the most appropriate influencer with many followers since they are likely to bring more customers purchasing the products hence increasing the sales made by the company.

Instagram influencers and other social media influencers charge brands different amount based on the number of followers they have. The more followers an influencer has, the higher their rates are (Hudders et al, 2021). This is because when an influencer has many followers, there is a higher possibility that they will manipulate many of these followers to purchase a product hence resulting to higher sales revenues made. These influencers are usually on high demand and companies are usually willing to pay them the amount they demand since the return is equally higher. They usually achieve their targets by constantly posting the products on their Instagram accounts hence convincing their followers to purchase these products.

Instagram influencers are usually agents and ambassadors of a brand or a product by word of mouth on social media platforms. They achieve this by posting captivating photos and videos using these products and accompany them with captivating captions that persuade one to purchase the product. In doing this, they already create an interest in their followers since they also want to have flawless and glowing skin just like the one the influencer has (Snijders and Helms, 2014). Therefore, this will manipulate their decision when it comes to purchasing skin care products. They will ensure that they search for the similar product or brand. Since they trust the influencer, they are likely to consider the products the influencer put up on their pages. Therefore, they have a great role to play when it comes to influencing customer purchasing behaviour.

Another theory that can be used to define the role Instagram influencers play in marketing is attribution theory. This theory explains how a social perceiver uses the available information in providing explanations and conclusions that they make out of a situation. Attribution theory also explains why people develop a given behaviour which is influenced by various external factors prevailing in their environment or the internal characteristics of an individual (Spilka et al, 2019). This theory is relevant in understanding the role these influencers play in affecting the decisions their followers make regarding the purchase of a product. Apart from posting the products on their Instagram pages and other platforms, these influencers also influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers based on the comments and reviews they make on products. Suppose an influencer gives a positive remark or opinion on a product, then their followers are convinced that the product is of high quality and effective.

The reason for this perception and behaviour originates from the customers ability to trust the influencer. The followers have a certain level of trust and loyalty they have attached to these influencers hence believe any information they put across (Brown and Fiorella, 2013). Therefore, they are able to create a positive perception in the minds of the customers concerning the product. Also, they influence the behaviour and the perceptions of their followers by giving information concerning a product and the reviews of the same product. Therefore, they have the ability to change the attitude and the perception customers have concerning a given product or brand in the market.

Companies find influencers useful when it comes to improving their brand image and reputation in the market. They use the influencers to provide positive reviews and opinions concerning the brand hence changing the original perceptions and attitudes that the customers have concerning the product (Alves et al, 2016). Since the customers trust these influencers, any information they give them concerning the product will be true and reliable. As a result, they are able to change their attitudes and perceptions of these products. They are then able to

find them attractive and likeable hence consider them for purchasing. In this way, the influencers are able to purchase the products and the companies are able to correct their brand reputation in the market. Therefore, with the wide advancements in the digital technology, marketers are now prioritizing engaging influencers to have them promote their brands. They are proving to be more effective and increasing the sales for products. Most customers are now available across social media platforms thus engaging influencers becomes a more effective way of easily reaching out to customers to sell them the products.

Research methodology

Research methodology refers to the procedures and techniques that researchers apply when undertaking research in order to identify and select effective processes to analyse and present their findings on a certain research topic (Kumar, 2018).

Research philosophy

Research philosophy is the beliefs and assumptions revolving around the way certain data needs to be collected and analysed and appropriately used (Zukauskas et al, 2018). Research philosophies include pragmatism, realisms, interpretivism and pragmatism. The study applied interpretivism research philosophy whereby it gathered real data from respondents and interpreted to evaluate the scenario and the role Instagram influencers play in influencing consumer purchasing behaviour. The philosophy was termed effective since it involved critically evaluating the scenario in the industry through gathering data from stakeholders within the industry. The data gathered was then analysed and presented hence drawing conclusions from the same. Therefore, this was the most effective research philosophy to use since it ensured drawing conclusions from the data obtained by engaging the parties being affected. The data was obtained from the people working in the industry and also consumers

of the beauty products and how the Instagram influencers affect their decisions in regard to the purchase of the beauty products they use.

Research approach

A research approach refers to the specific procedures and research processes that cuts across all the research steps and assumptions to various data collection methods, analysis and interpretation (Crotty, 2020). A research approach can either be deductive or inductive. The research applied deductive research whereby conclusions and recommendations were derived from the data gathered. The research was about gathering data from primary sources such as the customers and the people working in the beauty industry. The individuals involved in providing data were termed to be reliable since they are the ones with first hand information and are aware of what is going on within the industry in regard to the Instagram influencers and the role, they play in manipulating consumer decisions. Therefore, to obtain a real picture of what is happening in the industry, it was important to analyse the data and draw conclusions thus a deductive research approach was the most effective to apply in this research.

Research methods

Research methods refers to the strategies and the processes that were utilised in the collection of data for analysis with an aim of discovering new information to understand a certain topic of discussion (Patten and Newhart, 2017). The research applied both primary and secondary research methods to gather quantitative data. Questionnaires were designed with close ended questions and issued at random to respondents within the beauty industry. An interview was also conducted to 2 managing directors operating beauty businesses. Primary research methods were important since they helped in obtaining first hand information from the respondents thus acquiring accurate and relevant data which would help in drawing the right conclusions from the research. Secondary methods that were applied included deriving information from

previous research conducted by researchers and recorded in journals, newsletters and online reports. This was necessary in order to establish a firm foundation for the research and also compare the results in this research and the research previously done concerning the research topic.

Research strategy

It is a step-by-step process that outlines the plan of action which issues directions and determines the efforts of the researcher towards attaining an effective and informative research (Gray and Malins, 2016). A research strategy can either be qualitative or quantitative depending on the type of data being used. The research also utilised both qualitative and quantitative research strategies in order to obtain useful and deductive information that satisfies and meets the research objectives. Questionnaires were used to obtain quantifiable data and information from the respondents. This information would be measured and hence draw satisfactory information that addresses the research questions and objectives. On the other hand, the two interviews conducted on the managers in the industry were used to obtain both qualitative and quantitative data which was also used to draw conclusions from the study. The qualitative data obtained from the managers was used to evaluate the extent to which Instagram influencers have managed to influence the customers purchasing decisions as far as beauty products are concerned.

Sampling methods

The research mainly applied random sampling whereby a sample size of 50 respondents were selected. This method was the most convenient since it ensured that consistency of the results would easily be obtained during data collection process. The sampling method provides a chance for carrying out data analysis without any risk of carrying an error since the research was conducted within specific boundaries which dictate effective sampling processes (Etikan

and Bala, 2017). The method allowed the research to focus on a wider population hence obtaining reliable data that cuts across the industry. Therefore, this helped in acquiring accurate and relevant information concerning the research topic. As a result, it was possible to meet the research objectives and address all the research questions.

Data collection and analysis

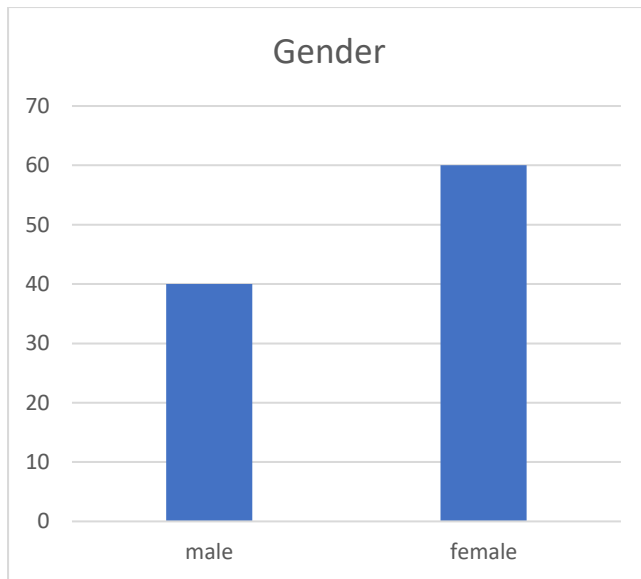
As earlier highlighted in this report, the research applied both primary and secondary data collection methods. The research applied the use of questionnaires to formulate relevant questions seeking to address all the research questions and meet the research objectives. A sample population of 50 respondents were randomly chosen and issued with the questionnaires. The questionnaires were shared to the respondents via their respective email addresses, required to fill them and then send them back on their emails.

Upon receiving the filled questionnaires, quantitative data from the questionnaires was interpreted using various statistical analysis methods then presented using visual diagrams such as tables and bar graphs for easy interpretation. On the other hand, qualitative data obtained from the research was analysed using content analysis whereby the data was categorised based on the behavioural data observed during data collection process. This data was mainly obtained from the interview held with the managers within the industry.

Data analysis

Q1. What is your gender? (Tick appropriately)

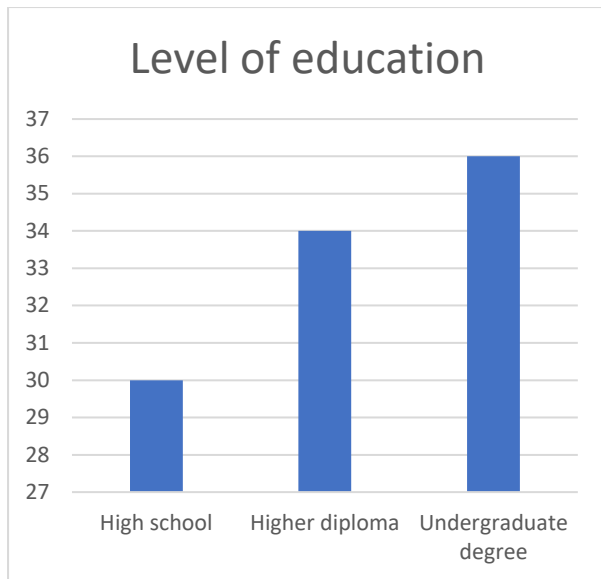
Gender	Frequency
Male	20
Female	30



From the sample population, 60% of the respondents were female while 40% were males. The beauty industry is majorly dominated by the female gender therefore, having more than half of the respondents as female was appropriate to obtain accurate and more reliable results from the research. The male gender was also incorporated to ensure that the data obtained is not biased based on the gender.

Q2. What is your highest level of education?

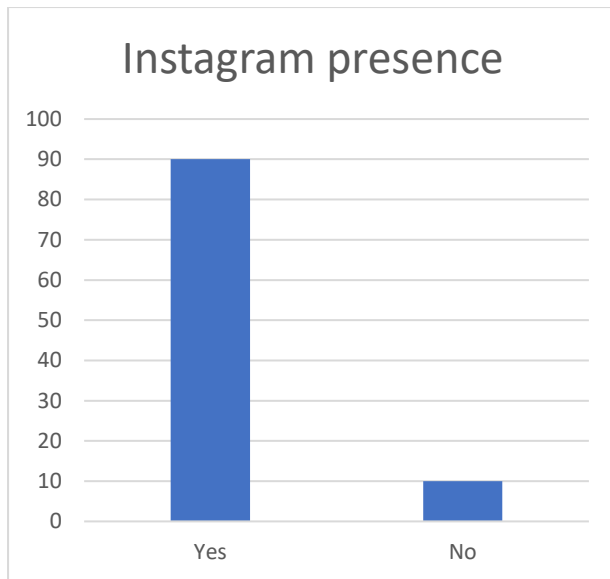
Level of education	Frequency
High school	15
Undergraduate degree	18
Higher diploma	17



The next aspect to evaluate was the level of education among the respondents. This was important since it would help to establish the relationship between the level of education and the frequency of using beauty products. From the results obtained, 30% of the respondents were still in high school, 36% were pursuing undergraduate degree while 34% were undertaking higher diploma studies in different institutions. Therefore, based on this factor, our respondents were learned.

Q3. Do you have an active Instagram account?

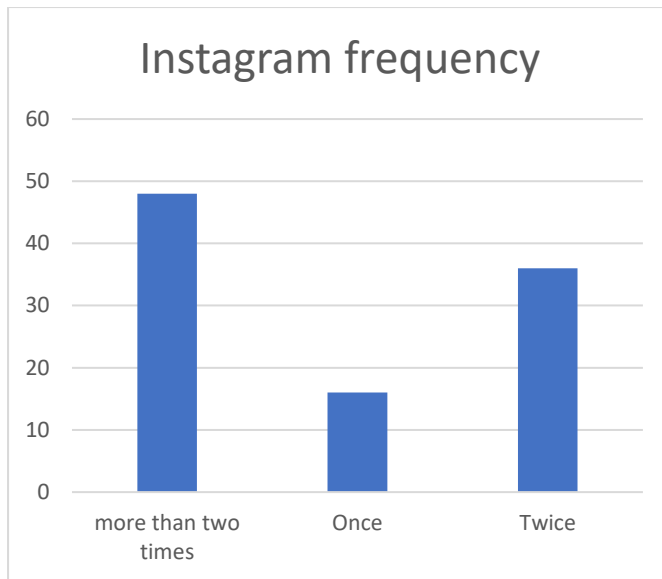
Response	Frequency
Yes	45
No	5



Out of the 50 respondents, 90% of them confirmed that they had active Instagram accounts and they could access them. Only 10% of the respondents denied having an active Instagram profile and account. This aspect was to help determine the extent to which individuals utilise the Instagram platform to run various activities. Therefore, majority of the respondents were active on Instagram platform hence reliable in helping with the research.

Q4. How frequent do you visit Instagram in a day?

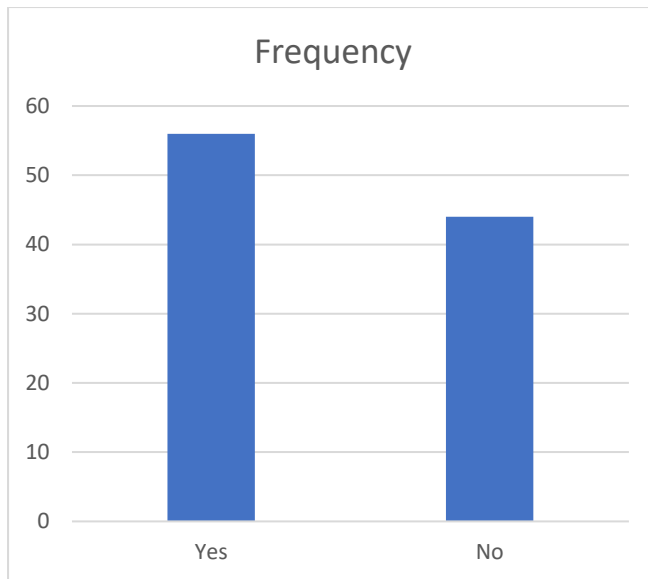
Frequency	Response
Once	8
Twice	18
More than two times	24



The next factor to evaluate was the respondents' frequency on using the Instagram application. This would help establish how likely it is for the respondents to come across these influencers and listen to them as far as beauty products were concerned. Therefore, based on the findings, the largest percentage of the respondents which was 48% of the total population acknowledged that they interacted with the Instagram application more than two times a day. This implied that they frequently visited the application hence increasing their chances of coming across and interacting with the Instagram influencers dealing with the beauty products. Consequently, this becomes an effective platform to engage the consumers and how they have influenced the consumers' purchasing decision.

Q5. Do you know of any Instagram influencer?

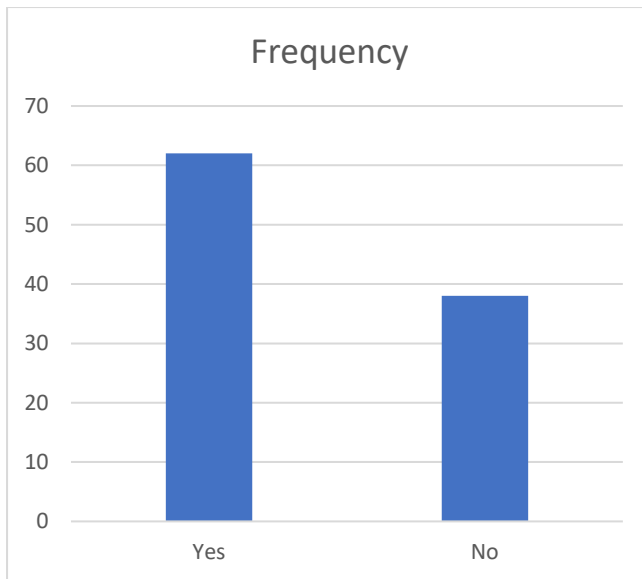
Response	Frequency
Yes	28
No	22



From the results recorded, 56% of the population noted that they were aware of Instagram influencers and the role they played in marketing. This helped in acknowledging that the topic being discussed was not new and that they understood the aspects concerned with the research topic. Only 44% of the population were unaware of any Instagram influencer in the market.

Q6. Do you think Instagram influencers impact on the consumer's purchasing behaviour?

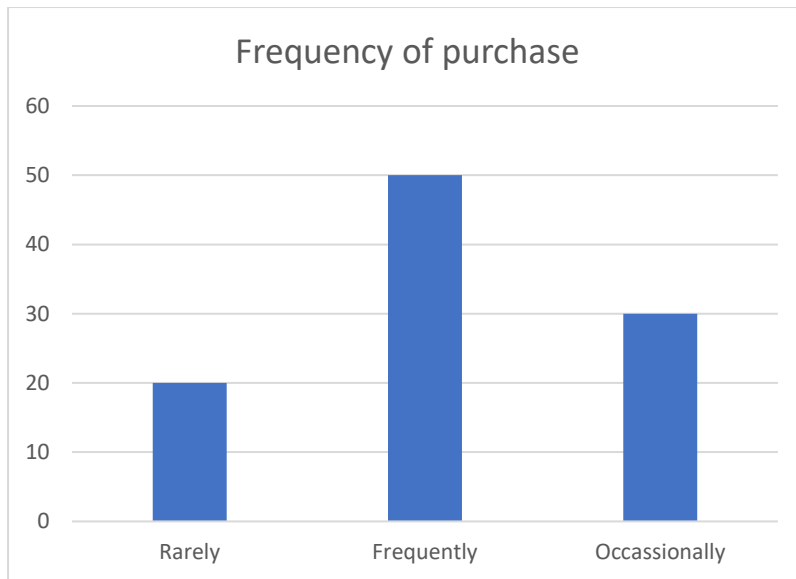
Response	Frequency
Yes	31
No	19



62% of the entire population agreed that Instagram influencers had an influence in the purchasing behaviour of the consumers. They noted that these influencers are likely to alter the perceptions and the attitudes of consumers when they want to purchase a product. Most of the consumers want to be associated with influencers, therefore, they are likely to purchase the products that the influencers are using so that they feel a sense of belonging.

Q7. How frequently do you purchase beauty products influenced by the Instagram posts viewed?

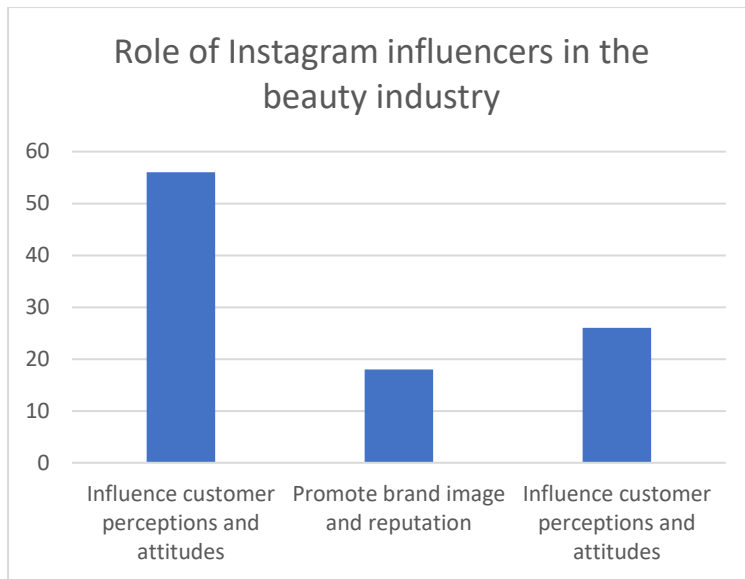
Response	Frequency
Rarely	10
Occasionally	15
Frequently	25



500% of the respondents agreed that they frequently purchased beauty products based on the posts they view on Instagram platform. Therefore, this helps in evaluating the likelihood of the respondents' decisions being influenced by the Instagram influencers. The results obtained proved that the information to be obtained was accurate and credible since the respondents would relate with the topic of discussion.

Q8. What do you think is the role of Instagram influencers in the beauty industry?

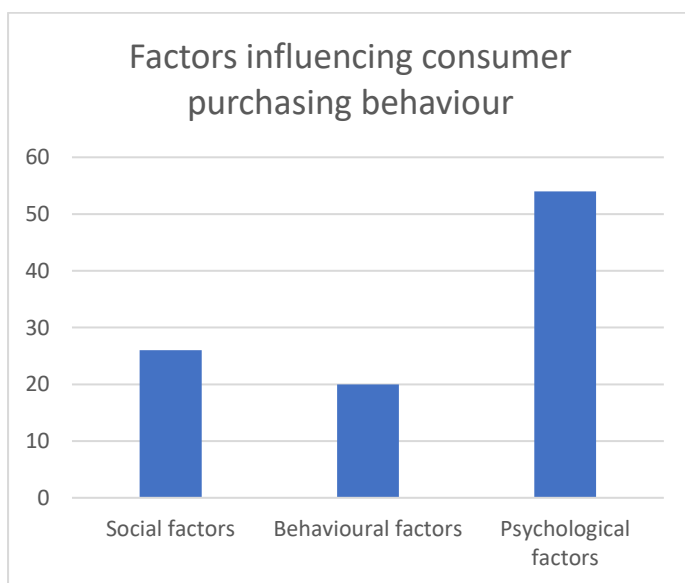
Role	Frequency
Increase sales	13
Promote brand image and reputation	9
Influence customer perception and attitudes	28



From the information gathered from the respondents, 56% of the sample population noted that Instagram influencers are mainly employed to influence the consumer's attitudes and perceptions. In the current era of digitization, influencers are being used by brands to boost the reputation and the brand image of brands and products in the market. Instagram influencers have strong relationships with their followers which translates to loyalty and trust (Jahnke, 2018). Therefore, any information the influencers put across concerning the product or a brand, the consumers can easily believe them hence changing their attitudes and perception concerning the brand. Therefore, beauty companies find this an effective way especially when they have a damaged public reputation. They will consider using these influencers in rebuilding the customer's trust and winning them back as well as restoring their public image and reputation.

Q9. What factors have influenced the purchasing behaviour of customers in the beauty industry?

Factor	Frequency
Social factors	13
Behavioral factors	10
Psychological factors	27

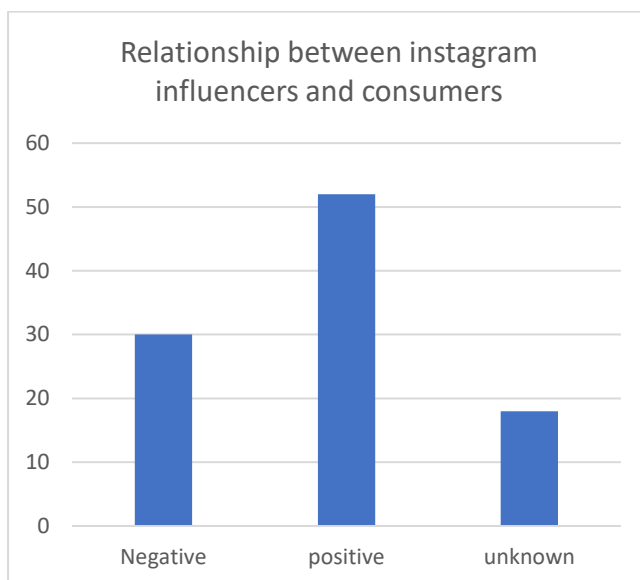


The research also tried to investigate on the factors that influence the consumers' purchasing behaviour especially within the beauty industry. 54% of the population acknowledged that the purchasing behaviour of consumers in the beauty industry was influenced by psychological factors. Therefore, Instagram influencers are effective in manipulating the psychological behaviour of the consumers when it comes to purchasing the beauty products. the influencers have the ability to play around with the consumer minds, change their perceptions and attitudes towards a brand (Kannan, 2017). Therefore, it makes them change their minds and influence them to purchase the products. this originates from the fact that the consumers trust any

information that comes from these influencers hence easily manipulating their behaviour and choice of the products to purchase.

Q10. What is the relationship between Instagram influencers and consumers in the industry?

Relationship	Frequency
Positive	26
Negative	15
Unknown	9

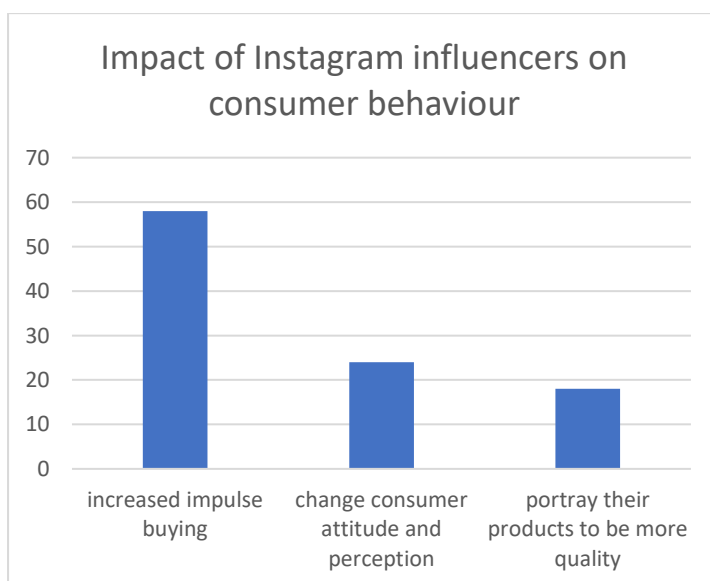


When asked about the existing relationship between consumers and Instagram influencers, 52% of the respondents noted that there exists a positive relationship between the customers and the influencers. This implies that the Instagram influencers impacted the behavioural aspects of the consumers in regard to their decisions they make on purchasing various beauty

products. According to Taylor (2020), influencers manipulate the purchasing decisions of the consumers by arousing their interests in a certain product or brand. At some point, consumers want to associate themselves with a certain brand simply because a certain influencer also uses the same product. Therefore, when making a decision to purchase a product, they look for a brand that they can identify with a certain influencer.

Q11. What impact do Instagram influencers have on consumer behaviour?

Impact	Frequency
Increased impulse buying	29
Change consumer attitude and perception	12
Portray their products to be more quality than the competitor products	9



58% of the sample population noted that Instagram influencers impacted on the consumer behaviour and resulted to consumers making increased impulse buying. The consumers were enticed by the numerous posts uploaded on Instagram by the se influencers in a captivating message. Therefore, viewing the products and how quality they are, consumers are enticed and tempted to purchase the products. this results to consumers buying products they have not even budgeted for.

Q12. What recommendations can beauty companies adopt to ensure they attract more customers including those not using Instagram and other social media platforms?

Recommendation	Frequency
Carry out marketing campaigns	5
Offer sales promotions	18
Direct selling	27



Companies operating within the beauty industry should increase its marketing efforts in order to reach a wider audience. This will not only increase the company's sales but also the overall market performance. Therefore, 54% of the respondents suggested that the most effective method companies within the beauty industry should adopt is the direct selling. This refers to a marketing strategy whereby sales people approach potential customers and persuade them to make purchases for the available products (Kotler et al, 2015). This is an effective way since it will provide a chance for the companies to establish a strong relationship with the customers and convince them on why they need to purchase the products. Also, through this, the companies will be able to have a one-on-one relationship and easily identify the underlying needs and concerns of the consumers hence addressing them effectively leading to customer satisfaction.

Interview 1

Q1. Do you make use of Instagram influencers at your company?

The manager agreed that they had embraced this strategy and had a few influencers on board. This was essential in assessing their continued efforts in embracing digital strategies in the current market.

Q2. So far, how can you rate its efficiency?

From the response, the influencers had been effective in their role and had greatly impacted the company for a short period they had been in the field. Therefore, this demonstrates that influencers play an important role in boosting the overall performance of the company and its efficiency. Therefore, this is an essential marketing strategy that the companies should adopt to improve their performance.

Q3. Has it had any impact on the company's performance?

The manager agreed that since adopting this strategy, the company has been able to establish and maintain good customer relations which is healthy for the company (Agnihotri et al, 2016). Through these relationships, the company is able to identify the existing needs and demands from the customers and find strategies to meet these needs. As a result, this has ensured customer satisfaction hence resulting to winning the loyalty of the customers.

Interview 2

Q1. Do you have any Instagram influencers on board who help in marketing the company and its products.

The manager admitted to having three influencers in their company who are used to increase the company's marketing efforts. Therefore, this is evident that companies within the beauty industry have embraced the digital trends of marketing hence engaging influencers who carry out e-marketing activities.

Q2. What is their main role?

The manager acknowledges that these influencers are responsible for persuading consumers in the market to purchase the company's products. Also, the company involves them to build the public image and reputation of the company hence influencing the perception of the consumers

regarding various products and brands in the market. As a result, this corrects the company's public image hence boosting its sales (Wielki, 2020).

Q3. How would you rate their efficiency?

These influencers have recorded a significance increase in the company's overall sales and performance in the market. The company's sales as well as the brand identity in the market had greatly increased. Therefore, this implied that the influencers had been efficient in executing their roles since the company had reached out to global markets.

Evaluation and recommendations

With advanced technology and increased rates of digitization in the market, companies are resulting to adopting digital ways of marketing their products in order to increase their market reach. Instagram influencers are individuals who are engaged by a company to help persuade customers to make purchases of the products. influencers are perceived to have a great influence in manipulating the customers especially when it comes to making purchasing decisions. Therefore, they help companies to improve their brand image and reputation in the public. As a result, this ensures that the company is able to reach to a wider market and hence improve the sales (Salleh et al, 2015). Through engaging influencers in marketing activities, companies are able to obtain relevant information which helps in the decision-making process to improve customers satisfaction and loyalty. The influencers interact and engage customers regularly hence are able to evaluate the demands put forward by the majority of the customers in the market. Through this, the beauty companies are able to establish the most appropriate products for the market. Also, they are able to understand their clients and segment the market appropriately to ensure that they address the needs in each group of customers present in the market.

Instagram influencers play a crucial role in dictating the customer choice when purchasing products. These individuals are considered to be icons for various brands and products and therefore, their followers are likely to trust them with the information they provide to them (Robertson, 2018). Apart from the followers wishing to purchase and use products that will associate themselves with the influencers, they also act as a bridge between the customers and the business. Therefore, the company can engage these individuals in passing information to the potential clients and also obtaining information from the customers. The influencers can be used to undertake research to identify the prevailing trends in the market. The trends may relate to the tastes and preferences that the customers may want. This information is crucial to the beauty companies and other businesses since it will inform the companies on the products, they would stock to ensure that they meet the needs and demands of customers in the market.

Therefore, based on the findings from the research, this report recommends that companies operating within the beauty industry needs to apply other marketing strategies in line with influence marketing to attain better market results. Beauty products are not basic needs, rather they are luxury goods. Therefore, they may not be a necessity or a priority for most of the consumers in the market (Ismail, 2018). Therefore, companies need to adopt alternative strategies such as advertising and direct selling in order to reach out to a wider audience and convince them on the need to purchase their products. this is likely to boost the company sales hence realising success. Additionally, in the current century, consumers have shifted and are available in different social media platforms. Therefore, it is essential for beauty companies to ensure that they have put in place adequate measures to capture all the customers across these platforms. This can be effective through engaging influencers.

Conclusion

Digital marketing is one of the most common prevailing trends in the current market. Rapid technological advancement is one of the reasons behind this situation. There are many digital marketing strategies including social media marketing. Through advanced technology, social media has made the world a village whereby individuals can easily connect. It has become easy for businesses to connect and communicate with their customers. Almost all consumers around the world are active on different social media platforms which makes it easy for the business people to interact with their customers. This form of marketing is convenient to most of the businesses since the consumers are easily reachable and the feedback obtained is instant. There are different forms of social media marketing such as social networks, media sharing, micro blogging, social review sites and bookmarking sites. The most common method which is applied by most organisations is social networks using platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. To effectively use these platforms, organisations usually ensure they consistently post on their pages to attract customers by creating awareness. Another effective way that organisations gain from this method is by looking for influencers. In this way, the influencers on different social media platforms will be responsible for marketing an organisation and its products. They are also in charge of creating a good reputation and image of the company.

Influence marketing is one of the trending marketing strategies. When an organisation applies this kind of marketing, they should ensure that they choose the most appropriate individuals who have unique features to manipulate and persuade customers to purchase a product. These individuals should be well-known with good reputation among the customers. Additionally, the company needs to set targets for each influencer or have an agreement on the percentage discounts they earn for every purchase made out of a referral or a secret code offered to these influencers. This will act as a way of accountability and encourage them to be more resilient

when seeking for potential customers to make purchases. Therefore, if well planned, influence marketing is the most effective for companies especially in the current digital era.

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