JBMS

AL-KINDI CENTER FOR RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT

| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Influencer Marketing Factors Affecting Brand Awareness and Brand Image of Start-up Businesses

Alexis Keith Bonus[1], Jasmin Raghani[2] ✉ **John Kenneth Visitacion[3] and Mary Caroline N. Castano, Ph.D.[4]**

[123]*Student, Marketing Department, University of Santo Tomas College of Commerce and Business Administration, Manila, Philippines*
[4]*Associate. Professor, Marketing Department, University of Santo Tomas College of Commerce and Business Administration, Manila, Philippines*

Corresponding Author: Jasmin Raghani, **E-mail**: jasmin.raghani.comm@ust.edu.ph

| **ABSTRACT**

Influencer Marketing has become a trend recently. Influencers have loyal fan bases who trust their taste in products and support them through their endorsements. With the rising number of start-up businesses in the country, this study was conducted to discover whether or not Influencer Marketing affects the brand awareness and reputation of start-up businesses and the consumer's purchasing behavior. The study focused on five Influencer Marketing factors: influencer's online presence, influencer's expertise, content attractiveness, consumer's desire to mimic, and consumer's preferred platform. Using a quantitative research method, the study revealed that all five factors are essential to consumers and have a low to moderate positive relationship with one another. However, only three have a significant impact on increasing the brand awareness and reputation of start-up businesses: Influencer's Online Presence, Consumer's Desire to mimic, and Consumer's Preferred Platform.

1. Introduction

The number of Filipinos starting their businesses is rising due to the millennial generation's ability to create opportunities for themselves and the government's recognition for the role of entrepreneurship and start-ups in the economy that will play in the future (Aguilar, 2018). Furthermore, with the pandemic, start-up businesses continue to rise due to the increasing unemployment rate. According to the DTI's Business Name Registration (BNR) Division, total registrations reached 916,163 in 2020, of which 91% percent were considered new while the rest were renewals. Total registration is nearly 44% higher than the total registration in 2019 at 637,567 (Roy Stephen, 2021). However, the increasing opportunity for new entrants to enter the market can threaten their ability to stand out, be known, and stay in a competitive market, especially with the fact that start-up businesses have little to no budget for marketing campaigns. With this in mind, the researchers would want to know if Influencer marketing can help start-up businesses be known by increasing their brand awareness and helping them stand out by creating a good brand image.

A decade ago, social media influencers were limited to celebrities and a few dedicated bloggers but are now open to social media users whom many would never consider themselves famous in an offline setting. Influencers in social media have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. They can generate a large group of enthusiastic and engaged followers who pay close attention to their views. They appear trusted and influential in one or several niche markets (Influencer marketing hub, 2021). Therefore, influencers have the power to affect people's purchasing decisions.

Influencer Marketing is a hybrid of old and new marketing tools. It takes the idea of celebrity endorsement and places it into a modern-day content-driven marketing campaign (Influencer marketing hub, 2021). It is the practice of taking advantage of

influencers to drive a brand's message and reach a target market. Today, social media influencer marketing has become a powerful marketing tool for brands worldwide, resulting from the popularity and wide acceptance of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. It has enabled ordinary, everyday people to become social media influencers (Khamis et al., 2017). Therefore, as the popularity of the internet has brought about a new class of 'celebrities' or influencers, marketers need to seize this unique opportunity or adapt to this new reality.

1.1 Narrative Sequence
This study will show its focus on the effect of Influencer Marketing on start-up businesses, the consumers' purchasing behavior, and the various factors that can affect brand awareness and image. The general and research objectives will be discussed to clarify how this study can contribute to the industry and its problems. The study will also include reviews of related literature to discuss more information that can help prove the hypotheses. The hypotheses and research problems will be discussed briefly as well. The survey results using google forms will be analyzed, discussed, and connected to the hypotheses. The results will tell whether or not Influencer Marketing affects the consumer's purchasing behavior when it comes to start-up businesses and if the various factors of Influencer Marketing can lead to good brand awareness and reputation.

1.2 Influencer Marketing on Start-up Businesses
This study revolves around the effect of Influencer Marketing on start-up businesses. The study aims to discover if Influencer Marketing can significantly affect consumers' purchasing behavior in start-up businesses. This marketing strategy has been proven effective in large enterprises and has been used by many in the industry lately. With this, the researchers wanted to know if Influencer marketing would still be effective in increasing brand awareness and brand image for start-up businesses, especially today where influencer marketing is extensively used and with the rising number of start-up businesses in the country.

1.3 Influencer Marketing Factors
Based on previous studies, the researchers discovered various factors as to how Influencer Marketing is effective when it comes to gaining consumer trust and persuading them into buying for the past years. Hence, the researchers collected some of those factors from different studies to see if these factors are significant in the effectiveness of Influencer Marketing. The Influencer Marketing factors present in this study are influencers' online presence, expertise, content attractiveness, consumer's desire to mimic, and consumer's preferred platform. This study specifically aims to find out whether or not these influencer marketing factors can positively affect a start-up business' brand awareness and brand image or not.

1.4 General Objectives:
This study can be used in the industry of start-up businesses, marketers, and influencers. Start-up business owners could benefit from this study by understanding what consumers like to see in advertisements and realizing where they should invest their marketing funds, while marketers can benefit from this study by understanding what type of influencer is suitable for their company and products and how it could help their sales revenue. Furthermore, give them ideas on what strategies to use to incite consumer behavior. Influencers, on the other hand, could benefit from this study by understanding what people look for in an influencer and what type of activities they should do to influence their followers effectively and thus, be able to collaborate with more brands. This study could also guide future researchers who would like to write about influencer marketing or be helpful as a reference in their papers.

1.5 Research Objectives:
The collaboration of brands and a new class of 'celebrities' are now widely used. Thus, it is becoming increasingly clear that influencers can influence consumer opinion and purchasing behavior. The research is about the correlation between the effects on consumer purchasing behavior by a set of factors in influencer marketing: Influencer's online presence, Expertise, Content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform.

The set of factors mentioned is from previous research and the researcher's observation. This study aims to know if the factors mentioned above lead to consumer purchasing behavior or not, which can also lead to increased brand awareness and good brand reputation of start-up businesses. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand if consumer purchasing behavior from those factors significantly impacts start-up businesses in the Philippines using influencer marketing to increase brand awareness and form a good brand reputation. Thus, the research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of consumers purchasing behavior in terms of the following:
   a. Influencer's online presence (consistent posting)
   b. Influencer's expertise
   c. Influencer's content attractiveness
   d. Consumer's desire to mimic

e. Consumer's preferred platform
2. Is there a significant relationship among the influencer marketing factors?
3. Does influencer marketing increase brand awareness and create a good brand image/ reputation for start-up businesses in the Philippines?

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study
Ho1: Influencer's online presence has no significant relationship to Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho2: Influencer expertise has no significant relationship to influencer's online presence, Influencer's content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho3: Influencer content attractiveness has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho4: Consumer's desire to mimic has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho5: Consumers' preferred platform has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, and Consumer's desire to mimic
Ho6: Influencer marketing factors do not have a significant influence on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses.

2. Literature review:
2.1 Influencer Marketing Factors:
2.1.1 Consumer's desire to mimic
Consumer's desire to mimic describes the phenomenon in which individuals mimic others' consumption behavior intentionally in response to a desire to look or behave like those they are modeling. Adopting a role model perspective, Ruvio et al. (2013) proposed theoretically and demonstrated empirically that a consumer doppelganger mimics the consumption behavior of people s/he views as consumption role models intentionally. As Groenewald says, "brands have realized that the greatest success is when satisfied customers tell their story of the brand" (Groenewald 2018). According to another study by King and Kim, consumers increase their likelihood of purchase intentions towards the brand that the influencer is endorsing through the consumer's desire to mimic. Findings show that social media influencers who showcase attractive, prestigious, expert, informative, and interactive content were positively correlated to target consumers' attitudinal responses in evaluating social media influencers as taste and opinion leaders. With these positive consumer attitudes, their desire to mimic social media influencers is greatly affected and thus induces purchase behaviors (King, C., & Kim, Y.-K.,2019).

In addition, research shows that consumers are drawn to less friendly and sincere social media influencers because of the consumers' desire to strive for a superior self, which is called consumer envy. Hence, advertisers frequently and purposefully stimulate envy to encourage consumers to desire to be like the influencer they follow through purchasing the advertised products (Lee & Eastin, 2020). With this, research indicates that envy towards social media influencers is positively associated with more favorable perceptions toward social media influencers (Jin, Muqaddam, and Ryu, 2019). Data findings show that those influencers who are perceived to have high sincerity illustrate an extent where consumers wish to mimic them to share an influencer's life and purchase the same product that the social media influencer owns (Ki & Kim, 2019). Thus, influencers with high sincerity were not influenced or driven by consumers' envy. However, for influencers perceived to be less friendly and less sincere, consumers tend to feel a higher level of envy because they engage in more significant social comparisons.

Nevertheless, it will still lead to favorable purchase intention attitudes because of the Social learning theory of A. Bandura and R. Walters, wherein people usually learn from other people through observation, imitation, and modeling that indirectly influence consumer purchase decisions (Leparoux et al.,2019). Therefore, it is interesting to note that consumer envy only occurs toward influencers who appear unfriendly, inhospitable, and less sincere. In contrast, influencers with high sincerity identification will not be driven by consumers' envy but through other factors (Lee & Eastin, 2020).

2.2 Influencer's Expertise
Social media influencers with expertise have demonstrated better opinion leadership than those with less expertise (Nadanyiova et al., 2020). According to McQuarrie et al. (2012), expertise is the quality of having more knowledge and experience (in making product choices or decisions) than others. When an influencer shows professional expertise regarding the product they are endorsing, the social media audience will deem that as a display of sophisticated taste rather than just a personal statement or opinion (Ki & Kim, 2019). Thus, various studies prove that influencer marketing influences consumer purchase intention because of its power on trust. Their influence is because of their ability to create interest in a product that does not appear as direct advertising. Influencers make it appear natural to give information about products, from prices to honest reviews, which consumers

perceive as "friendly" advice from someone sympathetic about their situation. Thus, influencers viewed as genuine and bias-free affect consumer thinking and buying behaviors, leading to a change of values and lifestyles (Nadanyiova et al., 2020).

2.3 Content Attractiveness

Social media influencers who have engaging content have been found to demonstrate better opinion leadership than those that do not (Nadanyiova et al., 2020). Attractiveness generally means how a subject is visually or aesthetically appealing, but it depends on an individual's preference. Consumers usually find content attractive when influencers keep their followers involved. They do not want influencers to talk to but talk with them instead (Levin, 2019). Consumers want to stay entertained, and social media influencers are ideal for this responsibility (Moravcikova & Kicova, 2018).

Studies show that consumers have lost confidence in the usual way of advertising as they click less on banners and skip advertisement videos online. However, they still believe in their families and friends (Sammis et al., 2016). Consumers seem to like the personal approach that Influencers have when advertising a product because it feels like they listen to the people they know personally. It appears more genuine and trustworthy (Nadanyiova et al., 2020).

2.4 Influencer Marketing on Different Platforms

The progression of technology and the rise of social networking platforms have changed consumers' purchasing behavior. This transformation has led to many opportunities and challenges, especially for social media influencers who create content on different platforms as a living (Castelo & Santiago, 2020). A sponsored content from an Influencer affects their engagement depending on the characteristics of the influencer and the content that they post; the more experienced they are on the product they are advertising, the more effective their advertisement is. However, it is not the same for all platforms. Sponsored content on Facebook does not gather much engagement despite the source having a high level of expertise because people prefer hedonic content on that platform (Hughes et al., 2019).

On the other hand, Instagram has been chosen as the preferred social site to create campaigns with influencers because of the way the content on this platform appears instantaneous (Influencer Marketing Hub, 2019). The most popular form of content on Instagram is anything related to beauty, makeup, and wellness. The way influencers endorse these products is through sponsored posts, stories, and TVs. It can be a simple picture, video, or a full-out tutorial or haul (Casaló et al., 2018).

2.5 Social media influencer's online presence

Online presence is the influencer's ability to keep in constant relationship with their followers by consistently posting. Influencers' online presence can persuade customers by being kind, funny, authoritarian, or showing reciprocity to engage their audience with their posts. With this, they can win followers and loyalty, especially when they reciprocate through giving discount codes to their followers that show the influencer's concern for them. Also, having a robust online presence makes the influencer more credible because studies show that people tend to believe that a familiar thing is trustworthy (Leparoux et al.,2019). If consumers find the influencer reliable, it will lead to positive brand awareness and a significant increase in purchase intentions ((Lou & Yuan, 2019). Finding the Right Influencer to Improve a Company's Brand Reputation.

A digital influencer's endorsement raises the expectation of simulating favorable attitudinal and behavioral responses toward the endorsed brand. Moreover, using influencers to improve brand reputation is proven because it builds a vast social network of followers who trust and view the famous personality they follow as credible through their attractiveness and congruence with the brand. Thus, it increases the likelihood of consumer purchase intentions (Torres et al.,2019). However, collaborating with just any influencer with many followers is no simple task. If a company chooses the wrong influencer to advertise its brand, consumers may feel that the influencer is inauthentic and not credible. This situation can happen when the promoted product does not fit the individual's lifestyle, personality, and overall identity, negatively affecting a brand's reputation (Moulard, Garrity, and Rice 2015). In finding the right influencer, it is important to note their perceived personality and not merely their area of expertise or number of followers. In addition, it is essential to identify potential influencers by paying attention to the following characteristics – relevance, engagement, reach, frequency, authenticity (Vodák et al., 2019). After considering this, brands must decide which type of influencers to use, whether macro or micro-influencers, to satisfy the company objectives. Some brands may opt to use macro-influencers that have a broader reach and engagement. The fisherman's influence marketing model suggested by Brown and Fiorella (2013) is advisable for companies who want a more extensive network or reach for it to decide on a broader network to catch as many fish as possible. This model results in influencing the most significant social community to achieve purchasing results. However, social media is highly saturated, so macro-influencers often reduce trustworthiness and authenticity, unlike in using micro-influencers that have higher credibility for consumers because they are usually closer to their "narrower" audience (Nadanyiova et al.,2020). So in choosing the right influencer to improve a brand, whether macro or micro, it is essential to have an influencer with a solid online presence that is an integral part of the target markets' life (Leparoux et al.,2019). It is important to

remember that the attitudes toward the endorsement and influencer significantly impact and reflect the attitudes toward the brand, which, in turn, impact purchase intentions (Torres et al.,2019).

2.6 Influencer identification
Research studies show that only very few consumers know the said high-quality branding, but most of them are looking for a brand endorsed by a famous and well-known influencer/endorser (Taylor & Francis 2016). Define and control the impact ways that lead to consumer acquisition from brand awareness. Nowadays, people are against a new adversary who is extremely powerful and frustratingly elusive: the "wisdom of crowds." Through social media, consumers can reach the opinions and feedback from their most active peers. These are the viewpoints that influence purchasing decisions and the perspectives people should form and employ (Brown, D. 2013). Intercontinental Travel Relish; International Mass Media Revelation; Self-identification to Global Consumer behavior; and Purchasing of branded clothes from shops around NCR. This revelation translates that consumers' purchase intention between foreign and domestic clothing brands is somehow because of their self-identification as cosmopolitans. (Cruz, P. C. M. 2014). This result is why celebrities, particularly online, have such a powerful influence on the minds of their followers, as many people admire them. They have a significant impact on viewers because of the positions they perform on screen. As a result, there are connections between them and the positions they fill (Dizon, A. O. T. 2008). This research witnessed influencers' roles transform and expanded into something that some people could have fantasized about when social media first bloomed. "It has unrivaled insight into where the branded content industry was, where it is, and where it is going." (Hennessy, B. 2018)

2.7 Influencer marketing on Start-up firms
According to TechTarget, a startup is a newly formed business with particular momentum based on perceived demand for its product or service. A startup intends to overgrow due to offering something that addresses a specific gap in the market. However, to reach their goal and overgrow, they must use marketing campaigns. Marketing campaigns are one of the essential tools to promote a brand and competitively sustain the business. In startup firms, they need to exert extra effort to stay in the market and be profitable. With that, startup firms should know the needs and wants of their target market and focus on brand promotions to be known in the market and run the business successfully (Gupta, 2020). Influencer marketing is about finding the right people who significantly influence their audiences to increase brand sales and revenue. According to Baumöl, Hollebeek & Jung (2016 p.200), influencers deliver the key messages of firms to the customers to assure their engagement. Influencer marketing is divided into two divisions: earned influencer marketing and paid influencer marketing. The former influencer promotes a brand based on their customer experience and recommends it to their followers. The latter is a sponsored or paid type of influencer who makes content and takes part in a brand's promotional activity in exchange for money (Gupta, 2020).

2.8 Social media content and Influencer marketing
Influencer marketing has often appeared as native advertising, branded entertainment, or even a highly credible electronic word of mouth. This type of sponsored content is integrated into the daily lives of social media influencers which they share with their followers (Breves et al., 2019). Social media content and influencer marketing are phenomenal persuasion tools as they hold significant influence over the consumers' opinion (Gundová et al., 2018). Social media has also improved the accessibility of brands; it is considered a crucial platform for brands to reach their target markets in the most approachable way possible as it is considered less invasive than traditional marketing methods (Groen, 2020). Although social media influencers are legally required to indicate the persuasive nature of their content (Boerman et al., 2017), studies show that consumers are more likely to interact with content that does not have a clear disclosure of sponsorship (Lou et al., 2019). Since influencer marketing includes actual interaction between the influencer and the consumers, it can create a relationship. Thus, the consumers have continuous exposure to the advertised brand; this level of intimacy cannot be achieved using traditional marketing methods (Groen, 2020).

2.9 The Relationship Between Social Media Influencers and Consumers (Parasocial)
With social media accessible to everyone, adolescents can witness influencer marketing campaigns and often create parasocial relationships with influencers and even see them as their friends (Hwang & Zhang, 2018). With adolescents thinking that they have an excellent parasocial relationship with these people, they would not expect ulterior motives. The vulnerability of adolescents and the lack of disclosure of online content creators have raised concerns about the ethics of influencer marketing (Dam & Reijmersdal, 2019). Since adolescents are highly receptive to online content while ignoring the sponsored intention, their situational advertising literacy seems below. Thus, they are highly susceptible to integrated persuasive messages (Hudders et al., 2017).

Social media is a place where people interact despite not knowing each other in real life, which is why aspiring influencers can create strong relationships with followers (Yuan & Lou, 2020). Studies have shown that consumers trust social media influencers that are familiar to them much more than those who are less familiar (Chung and Cho, 2017). The familiarity of a consumer with a social media influencer can often block out other factors related to the influencer and brands they are endorsing; this is the halo effect where influencers create a positive halo around them, which erases their other characteristics (Breves et al., 2019).
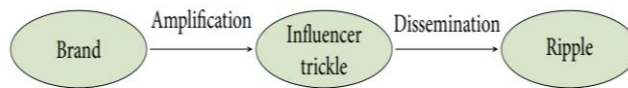
2.10 Theoretical Framework

Figure 1: Trickle Stage and Ripple Stage of Influencer Marketing (adapted from Brown and Fiorella 2013)

According to Brown and Fiorella (2013), there are two main stages in each influencer marketing campaign: the 'trickle and ripple phase' or the stage of launching and the ripple/wave stage. In the first stage, the brand message will be distributed when launched to a small audience (influencers) to avoid unnecessary social media noise, leading to many unsuccessful attempts. However, to effectively disseminate a brand message to a larger audience (target market), companies, together with influencers, need to identify essential tracker information about their followers, namely: The time when they are most often online, platforms on which they are located, people with whom will communicate, topics about which will speak, and activities they will be performing. To segment and segregate potential influencers to communities that will respond well to the company's brand message. Thus a company's success is likely when it goes from the trickle phase to the ripple phase. At the latter stage, the influencer community notices the brand message and spreads it within their community, creating a wave of brand awareness.
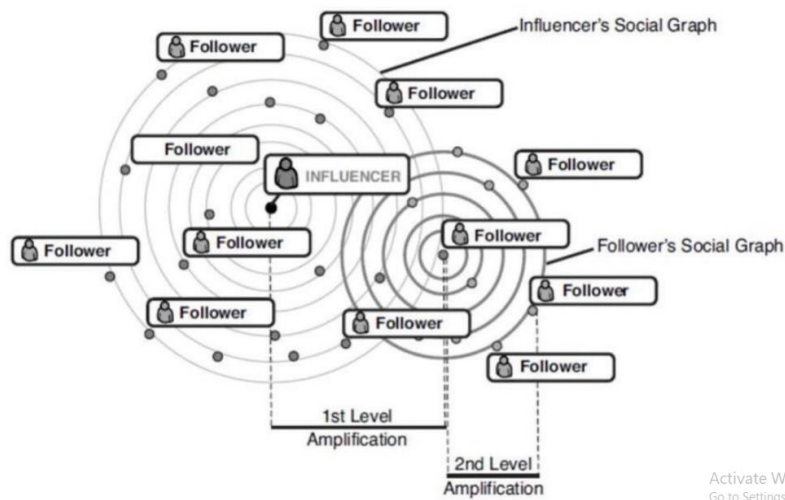

Figure 2: Fisherman's Model of Influence Marketing (adapted from Brown and Fiorella 2013)
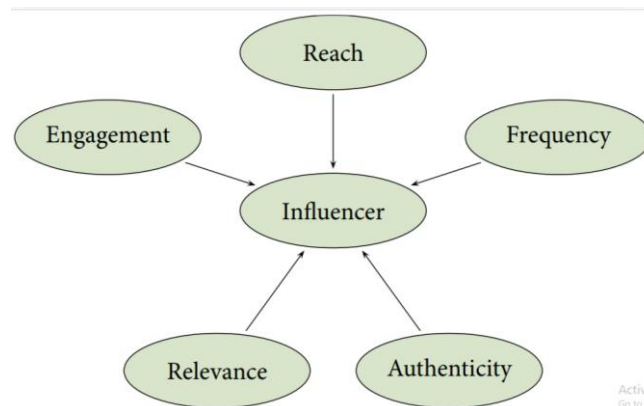

Figure 3: Characteristics of influencers (Vodák et al., 2019)

This framework is Fisherman's influencer marketing model. Based on the findings of their paper, this model can help brands find potential influencers whose communities are part of the brand's target market. This model implies using the concept of deciding a broader network to catch as many fish as possible. This concept means influencing the most significant social community to achieve purchasing results (Brown and Fiorella 2013). This model suggests that people pay attention to the characteristics listed

above to find potential influencers. The first is relevance. In this situation, it means how the content or branding of the influencer content is in line with the brand. Next is engagement which indicates how well the influencer communicates with their followers based on their content's views, likes, comments, and shares. The third characteristic is the reach. Brands should consider the audience of the influencer if they want to focus on their reach. Hiring an influencer would be useless if their audience does not include the brand's target market. Frequency is fourth on the list, and it indicates how active an influencer is according to the posts or videos that they publish. Lastly, authenticity is a characteristic where influencers with less sponsored content than others are more authentic.
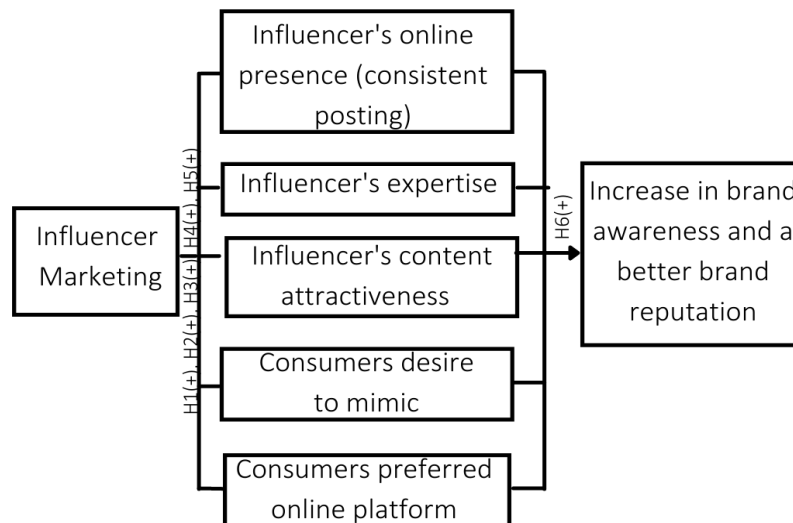
2.11 Conceptual Framework

Figure 4: Effect of Influencer marketing on start-up businesses' brand awareness and reputation

In this study, the researchers aim to correlate the following factors: influencer's online presence, expertise, content attractiveness, consumer's desire to mimic, and consumer's preferred platform with consumer behavior and find out if there is a significant relationship between the said factors which can be related or associated with each other. The researchers will compare and see if these patterns apply to start-up businesses through the data gathered. The conceptual framework above also aims to prove that when start-up businesses use influencer marketing, there is an increase in brand awareness and better brand reputation. The above factors lead to this assumption and why consumers follow influencers' endorsements and engage with advertised brands.

3. Research Methodology:

3.1 Research Design

The researchers will be using a quantitative research design by gathering quantifiable data that will help the researchers know if there are any significant correlations between the variables in this study. This research will use statistical analysis to test the hypotheses and to interpret the data. Furthermore, the researchers will be using a descriptive method to analyze the data collected to describe the phenomena currently happening in influencer marketing.

3.2 Research Instruments

The researchers used a self-constructed questionnaire inspired by other existing literature and formulated based on the research's needs to answer the research problem. The questionnaire will be administered through google forms to gather data. The first part of the questionnaire is about the demographic of the respondents; this includes profiling questions to see if they are qualified to be a respondent of the survey. The second part is about the influencer marketing factors (Influencer's online presence, Expertise, Content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform) to determine whether or not the factors affect consumer purchasing behavior. The third part is to find out if the factors stated above contribute to increased brand awareness and create a good brand reputation. The third part also determines the impact of using influencer marketing to endorse start-up businesses in the Philippines. Professionals will validate the content of the questionnaire to ensure that it is appropriate for their paper. The researchers did a pilot test on 30 respondents to test the reliability of the survey using Cronbach's alpha. After doing so, the Cronbach's alpha per factor shows acceptable to good reliability or internal consistency, so the researchers opted to continue with the gathering of data.

3.3 Data Gathering procedure

The researchers used google forms to gather data from their respondents using a self-constructed questionnaire approved by their statistician. The questionnaire has three parts, including the profiling of the respondents, to address the research problems. The researchers used purposive sampling in selecting respondents and approached individuals according to specific characteristics. In this study, the requirements of the respondents should belong to ages 18-40 that use social media and live in NCR, follow influencers, and have already made purchases because of social media influencers. The selected respondents will first answer pre-survey questions to know if they're qualified or not before taking the survey. Those who are qualified will be the only ones allowed to proceed and take the survey. After collecting the data, the researchers will move the responses to Microsoft Excel and compute the appropriate statistical tools. They will then proceed to the analysis of the results.

Age	f	%	Social Media	f	%
18-20	113	29.43%	Facebook	199	51.82%
21-25	231	60.16%	Instagram	85	22.14%
26-30	21	5.47%	TikTok	42	10.94%
31-35	10	2.60%	Twitter	36	9.38%
35-40	10	2.60%	Youtube	21	5.47%
City			No answer	2	0.52%
Caloocan	69	17.97%	**Reason for following influencers**		
Las Pinas	6	1.56%	I find their lives interesting	125	32.55%
Makati	8	2.08%	I like their taste	58	15.10%
Malabon	19	4.95%	Their expertise	31	8.07%
Mandaluyong	5	1.30%	They humor me	82	21.35%
Manila	70	18.23%	They inspire me	89	23.18%
Marikina	9	2.34%	**Reason for buying endorsed products**		
Muntinlupa	7	1.82%	Be updated in current fashion trends	1	0.26%
Navotas	3	0.78%	Because I find it useful	222	57.81%
Paranaque	9	2.34%	Because I trust the taste of the social media influencer that I follow	85	22.14%
Pasay	9	2.34%	Because I wanted to have something that matches with the social media influencer I follow	26	6.77%
Pasig	23	5.99%	Because I'd like to try the product as well	1	0.26%
Quezon city	72	18.75%	I like the product	1	0.26%
San Juan	2	0.52%	It's good merch that fits my style	1	0.26%

Taguig	11	2.86%	Just to see if it really is good	1	0.26%
Valenzuela	63	16.41%	To show my support for the social media influencer, I follow	46	11.98%
			No answer	1	0.26%

Table 1: Sample Characterization

3.4 Sample Characterization:

The subjects or the respondents are social media users from Gen Y and Z ages 18-40 years old and are living within the National Capital Region (NCR). The respondents should be following influencers and have made purchases because of them in the past. The researchers will be using pre-survey questions to ensure that the respondents who will participate in the research are eligible or qualified.

The whole population are social media users in NCR, with an estimated population calculation of 6,960,190 based on the data of Datareportal, Digital 2021. A minimum sample of 385 was surveyed with a margin of error of 5%. With this, the sampling technique used in this study is a non-probability, purposive sampling method. The researchers would have to rely on their judgment or decide on the given criteria before asking respondents to participate in the study.

Most of the respondents are ages 21-25 then, followed by ages 18 to 25; these age groups are most qualified in answering the survey, while ages 26-40 are not that inclined to purchase products from influencers. The respondents are living within NCR, and the majority of the respondents are living in Quezon City. The respondent usually uses Facebook as their main social media platform, followed by Instagram. Most of the respondents answered that they find the lives of influencers interesting that's why they follow them, and they usually buy endorsed products by the influencers they follow because they find them to be useful also in their lives.

3.5 Mathematical or Statistical Treatment of Data

To answer the research questions above and to test the hypotheses, the researchers used weighted mean and standard deviation, regression, and correlation for this study. Mean and standard deviation was used to statistically measure data gathered from the Likert scales by computing the range, bracket, and class interval to interpret the mean. This statistical treatment of data will answer the question, "What is the level of consumer purchasing behavior in terms of the influencer marketing factors?". Then the researchers used correlation to test if factors in influencer marketing have a significant relationship with each other. This statistical treatment will also test the validity of Ho1 - Ho5. Finally, the researchers used regression to see if there are significant influences in using influencer marketing to increase brand awareness and create a good brand image for small businesses and to also test the validity of Ho6. The researchers also used percentage distribution in profiling (Table 1) for supplemental statistical treatment of data to determine data distribution by expressing individual class frequencies as percentages.

4. Results and Findings

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Online_Pres	3.32	.5128	Very high
Expertise	3.46	.4880	Very high
Attractiveness	3.39	.6262	Very high
Desire_Mimic	3.05	.6369	High
Platform	3.16	.6487	High

Table 2: Influence level of Influencer marketing factors to consumer purchasing behavior

To find out the level of consumers purchasing behavior in terms of Online Presence, Influencer Expertise, Content Attractiveness, Consumers' Desire to Mimic, and the Consumers Preferred platform, the researchers made use of mean and standard deviation as seen in the table. A mean value of 1-1.74 would indicate a very low-level impact on consumer purchasing behavior, while a mean

value of 1.75-2.49 would indicate a low-level impact on consumer purchasing behavior. Whereas a mean value of 2.5-3.24 would indicate a high-level impact on consumer purchasing behavior, while a mean value of 3.25-4.0 would indicate a very high level of impact on consumer purchasing behavior. Data shows that the Online Presence, the Influencer's Expertise, and Content Attractiveness are of very high importance to consumers when purchasing products endorsed by influencers, while their desire to mimic and preferred platform is high in importance. This implies that all the Influencer Marketing factors stated to affect the consumers' purchasing behavior even for start-up businesses.

	Online Pres	Expertise	Attractiveness	Desire to Mimic	Platform
Online Pres		.544**	.578**	.480**	.480**
Expertise	.544**		.510**	.365**	.345**
Attractiveness	.578**	.510**		.407**	.410**
Desire to Mimic	.480**	.365**	.407**		.503**
Platform	.480**	.345**	.410**	.503**	

Table 3: Significant relationship of influencer marketing factors to each other

To determine if there is a significant relationship among the influencer marketing factors, the researchers used Correlation. Based on the gathered data, Online Presence has a moderate positive relationship with the Influencer's Expertise, Content Attractiveness, Consumers' Desire to Mimic, and the Consumers' Preferred Platform. Influencer's Expertise, on the other hand, has a moderate positive relationship with Online Presence and Content Attractiveness and a low positive relationship with the Consumers' Desire to Mimic and Preferred Platform. While Content Attractiveness has a moderate positive relationship with all the other Influencer Marketing Factors. The Consumers' Desire to Mimic has a low positive relationship with Influencer's Expertise and a moderate positive relationship with Online Presence, Content Attractiveness, and Consumers' Preferred Platform. Lastly, the Consumers' Preferred Platform also has a low positive relationship with Influencer's Expertise and a moderate positive relationship with Online Presence, Content Attractiveness, and Consumers' Desire to Mimic. Therefore, Ho1-Ho5 is rejected because this implies that there is a significant relationship between all of the Influencer Marketing Factors.

Ho1: Influencer's online presence has no significant relationship to Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho2: Influencer expertise has no significant relationship to influencer's online presence, Influencer's content attractiveness, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho3: Influencer content attractiveness has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Consumer's desire to mimic, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho4: Consumer's desire to mimic has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, and Consumer's preferred platform
Ho5: Consumers' preferred platform has no significant relationship to Influencer's online presence (consistent posting), Influencer's Expertise, Influencer's content attractiveness, and Consumer's desire to mimic.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.575	.149		3.866	.000

Online _Pres	.294	.050	.288	5.824	.000
Expertise	.028	.047	.026	.595	.553
Attractiveness	-.002	.039	-.002	-.042	.966
Desire_ Mimic	.233	.036	.284	6.488	.000
Platform	.243	.035	.302	6.922	.000

Table 4: The effect of influencer marketing factors on start-up businesses' brand awareness and brand image

Multiple regression was calculated to predict the influence of various influencer marketing factors on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses. A significant regression equation was found ($F_{(5, 379)} = 82.872$, $p < 0.00$), with adjusted $R2$ of 0.516. The respondents' predicted brand awareness and brand image is equal to 0.575 + 0.294OP + 0.233DM + 0.243PP, where OP is an online presence, DM is a desire to mimic, and PP is the preferred platform. Expertise and attractiveness were found to be insignificant to brand awareness and brand image. This means that the respondents' predicted brand awareness and brand image increases by 0.294 for every one unit increase in online presence. Similarly, the respondents' predicted brand awareness and brand image increases by 0.233 for every one unit increase in desire to mimic and 0.243 for every one-unit increase in the preferred platform.

Based on the gathered data, Ho6 is partially rejected because influencer marketing factors, namely: Online Presence, Desire to Mimic, and Preferred Platform, have a significant influence on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses. However, the research data also fail to reject Ho6 because influencer marketing factors Expertise and Attractiveness are found to have no significant influence on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses. This implies that influencer marketing factors, Online presence, Desire to Mimic and, Consumer's preferred platform increase brand awareness and create a good brand image/ reputation for start-up businesses in the Philippines. On the other hand, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether Influencer marketing factors, Expertise, and Attractiveness increase brand awareness and create a good brand image/ reputation for start-up businesses in the Philippines or not.

Ho6: Influencer marketing factors do not have a significant influence on brand awareness and brand image.

5. Discussion:
5.1 The level of impact of Influencer marketing factors on consumer purchasing behavior
It was already proven that influencer marketing is effective in persuading consumers to buy endorsed products; however, this research aims to determine the level of impact of the marketing factors: Online Presence, Influencer Expertise, Content Attractiveness, Consumers' Desire to Mimic, and the Consumers Preferred platform to consumer purchasing behavior on start-up businesses. Based on the results, influencer marketing factors have very high importance to consumers in their decision to purchase endorsed products of start-up businesses. And, from the answers filled out by respondents, influencer marketing is becoming one of the tools to reach consumers to buy, especially if it was given as an honest product review. As people nowadays are finding wisdom from the crowd through social media, feedback and viewpoints from active peers can influence purchasing decisions (Brown, D. 2013).

5.2 Significant relationship of marketing influencers to each other
Previous studies have shown that Influencer Marketing has different factors that can affect the purchasing behavior of consumers; however, this study aims to find out whether or not these factors are significantly related to each other. By using a correlational analysis of the results, it has been concluded that there is a low to moderate positive relationship between the Influencer Marketing factors. This implies that consumers somewhat relate these factors to each other and consider them whenever faced with products or services that are promoted through Influencer Marketing. This also implies that since there is a low to moderate positive relationship with each factor, they are somewhat interconnected in increasing the chance of influencing consumers to purchase a product if all factors were to be present.

5.3 Impact of influencer marketing factors in increasing brand awareness and creating a good brand image for the start-up

Based on the results, Online Presence, Desire to mimic, and Consumer's Preferred Platform have a significant impact in increasing brand awareness and creating a good brand image for the start-up. These three influencer marketing factors impact brand awareness and brand image even for start-up businesses because influencer marketing has become a phenomenal persuasion tool for it holds significant influence over the consumers' opinion (Gundová et al., 2018). This influence is achieved because studies show that consumers are more likely to interact with content that does not have a clear disclosure of sponsorship (Lou et al., 2019). To further explain Online Presence's impact, studies show that people tend to believe that a familiar thing is trustworthy; thus, influencers who have a strong online presence appear to be more credible (Leparoux et al.,2019). Also, people nowadays tend to mimic others' consumption behavior intentionally, especially to those who they always see online, in response to a desire to look or behave like those they are modeling (Ruvio et al.,2013). However, it is important to take note that the effectiveness of influencer marketing differs on different platforms (Hughes et al., 2019). But all in all, the mentioned factors have a significant influence on a start-up's brand awareness and brand image.

On the other hand, also based on the result, Expertise and Content Attractiveness was found to not have a significant influence in increasing brand awareness and creating a good brand image for start-up businesses. However, the sample of the study may be limited to assume that Expertise and Content Attractiveness have really no significant influence. Thus it is safe to conclude that there is insufficient evidence to determine the significant impact of Expertise and Content Attractiveness on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses. Studies show that when an influencer shows professional expertise regarding the product they are endorsing, the social media audience will deem that as a display of sophisticated taste rather than just a personal statement or opinion (Ki & Kim, 2019), and social media influencers who have engaging content have been found to demonstrate better opinion leadership than those that do not (Nadanyiova et al., 2020). Thus, this leads to a change of consumer values and lifestyles, which may also affect start-up businesses' brand awareness and brand image.

6. Conclusion

From the data obtained and the analysis conducted in this study, it can be concluded that:

a. Online Presence, the Influencer's Expertise, and Content Attractiveness are of very high importance to consumers when purchasing products endorsed by influencers, while their desire to mimic and the preferred platform is high in importance.
b. There is a low to moderate positive relationship between the Influencer Marketing factors, which implies interconnectivity with each other
c. Online Presence, Desire to Mimic and Preferred Platform have a significant influence on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses. While there is insufficient evidence to determine whether Expertise and Content Attractiveness have a significant impact on brand awareness and brand image of start-up businesses

6.1 Limits and Recommendations

This study is limited to the behavior of those from ages 18-40 who live in NCR, Philippines. The researchers have gathered 385 respondents to participate in this study. Although it is appropriate for the number of people in NCR, future researchers need to conduct a broader study containing a larger group of people from different parts of the country. This is to understand further their behavior towards the use of Influencer Marketing in Start-up Businesses and to generalize the findings of this study. This would be interesting to see as they might have other factors affecting their behavior as consumers. Another way to go about this topic would be to create specific studies on each social media platform to assess the way consumers react to the content there. Travel, for instance, as a genre, is mainly enjoyed by consumers on Instagram because of its visual content (Chopra et al., 2021). Having specific information like those could help marketers, influencers, and start-up businesses understand which platform they should use and what they should post on different ones.

Furthermore, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether Influencer marketing factors, Influencer Expertise, and Content Attractiveness increase brand awareness and create a good brand image and reputation for start-up businesses in the Philippines or not. This confusion is caused by the limit of the scope of the area where the study was conducted. According to previous studies, the effectiveness of using Influencer marketing is based on their authority, credibility, and the way they are linked to the product or service they are promoting (Wielki, 2020). Thus, future researchers can create a more in-depth study solely about it and a broader sample to develop more accurate results. Lastly, this study has limited the Influencer Marketing factors based on other studies to five for a more comprehensive outcome. Based on other studies, the relationships between influencers and followers continually evolve (Belanche et al., 2021). Therefore, there could be more out there, which gives room for future research.

References:

[1] Aguilar, J. (2018, September 16). Philippine startups rising. Inquirer.net. https://business.inquirer.net/257319/philippine-startups-rising

[2] Boerman, S. C., Eva A. Van R, and Peter C. N. (2012), Sponsorship Disclosure: Effects of Duration on Persuasion Knowledge and Brand Responses, *Journal of Communication*, *62* (6), 1047–64.

[3] Breves, P. L., Liebers, N., ABT, M., & Kunze, A. (2019). The Perceived Fit between Instagram Influencers and the Endorsed Brand: How Influencer-Brand Fit Affects Source Credibility and Persuasive Effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, *59(4)*, 440–454. https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2019-030

[4] Brown, D. (2013). Influence marketing: how to create, manage and measure brand influencers in social media marketing / Danny Brown, Sam Fiorella. UST MDB Library Catalog, xii, 227 pages : illustrations ; 23 cm. http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=6&sid=2f54d067-3cd0-478b-954b-7ccc9dd660ba%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=ust.b1464877&db=cat07174a

[5] Casaló, L. V., Flávian, C., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2018). Influencers on Instagram: Antecedents and consequences of opinion leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, *117*, 510-519. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.005

[6] Chung, S., and Cho. H (2019). Fostering Parasocial Relationships with Celebrities on Social Media: Implications for Celebrity Endorsement." Psychology & Marketing 34, 4 (2017): 481–495. Influencer Marketing Hub. (2019). Influencer marketing benchmark report: 2019. https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-2019-benchmark-report/

[7] Cruz, P. C. M. (2014). The Effects of consumer cosmopolitanism on purchase intention of domestic clothing brands in Metro Manila / Patrice Charmaine M. Cruz. Clothing trade -- the Philippines, 99 pages; 28 cm. UST MDB Library Catalog. http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=13&sid=2f54d067-3cd0-478b-954b-7ccc9dd660ba%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=ust.b1457379&db=cat07174a

[8] Dizon, A. O. T. (2008). Consumers' responses to celebrity endorsers of selected TV commercials / Arsenio Oliver T. Dizon. Endorsements in advertising Marketing -- Management, 127 p.; 28 cm. UST MDB Library Catalog. http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=8&sid=2f54d067-3cd0-478b-954b-7ccc9dd660ba%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=ust.b1317913&db=cat07174a

[9] Gajanova, L., Majerova, J., & Nadanyiova, M. (2020). The Impact of Influencers on the Decision-Making Process Regarding the Purchase of the Brand Product. Business, Management & Education / *Verslas, Vadyba Ir Studios, 18*(2), 282–293. https://doi.org/10.3846/bme.2020.12608

[10] Groen, M. (2020). Swipe Up to Subscribe: The Law and Social Media Influencers. *Texas Review of Entertainment & Sports Law*, *21(1)*, 113–135.

[11] Gupta, A. (2020). Factors affecting influencer marketing campaigns among startup firms. Grin. https://www.grin.com/document/594760

[12] Haenlein, M., Anadol, E., Farnsworth, T., Hugo, H., Hunichen, J., & Welte, D. (2020, Nov). Navigating the New Era of Influencer Marketing: How to be Successful on Instagram, TikTok, & Co. Business Source Ultimate, 63(1). 10.1177/0008125620958166.

[13] Hennessy, B. (2018). Influencer: Building Your Personal Brand in the Age of Social Media. Self-presentation Success in business Internet marketing Branding (Marketing) Online social networks Social media, Print/Save 100 pages Copy/Paste Restricted. eBook Index. http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=19&sid=2f54d067-3cd0-478b-954b-7ccc9dd660ba%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmU%3d#AN=1626975&db=edsebk

[14] Hudders, L, De Pauw, P., Cauberghe, V., Panic, K., Zarouali, B., & Rozendaal, E. (2017). Shedding new light on how advertising literacy can affect children's processing of embedded advertising formats: A future research agenda. *Journal of Advertising*, *46*, 333-349. https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2016.1269303

[15] Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. (2019). Driving Brand Engagement Through Online Social Influencers: An Empirical Investigation of Sponsored Blogging Campaigns. *Journal of Marketing*, *83(5)*, 78–96. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919854374

[16] Hwang, K., & Zhang, Q. (2018). Influence of parasocial relationship between digital celebrities and their followers on followers' purchase and electronic word-of-mouth intentions, and persuasion knowledge. Computers in Human Behavior, 87, 155-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.05.029

[17] Jarrar, Y., Awobamise, A. O., & Aderibigbe, A. A. (2020). Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing vs Social Media Sponsored Advertising. *Utopia y Praxis Latinoamericana*, *25*, 25. Academic Search Ultimate. 10.5281/zenodo.4280084.

[18] Kemp, S. (2021, February 11). Datareportal. DIGITAL 2021: THE PHILIPPINES. https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-philippines

[19] Khamis, Ang, & Welling. (2017). "Self-branding, 'micro-celebrity' and the rise of Social Media Influencers. *Celebrity Studies*, *8(2)*, pp.191-208.

[20] Ki, C., & Kim, Y.-K. (2019, Oct). The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic. *Psychology & Marketing*., *36(10)*, 18. Business Source Ultimate. 10.1002/Mar. 21244.

[21] Krywalski Santiago, J., & Moreira Castelo, I. (2020). Digital influencers: An exploratory study of influencer marketing campaign process on Instagram. *Online Journal of Applied Knowledge Management*, *8(2)*, 31–52. https://doi.org/10.36965/ojakm.2020.8(2)31-52

[22] Lee, J. A., & Eastin, M. S. (2020). I Like What She's #Endorsing: The Impact of Female Social Media Influencers' Perceived Sincerity, Consumer Envy, and Product Type. *Business Source Ultimate, 20(1)*, 16. 10.1080/15252019.2020.1737849.

[23] Leparoux, M., Minier, P., & Anand, A. (2019). THE ONLINE INFLUENCERS STRATEGIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CONSUMER'S DECISION PROCESS. Vestnik of Saint Petersburg University. *Management, 18(3)*, 29. Business Source Ultimate. 0.21638/11701/spbu08.2019.305.

[24] Levin, A. (2019). Influencer marketing for brands: What YouTube and Instagram can teach you about the future of digital advertising. Apress. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4842-5503-2

[25] Lou, C., Tan, S.-S., & Chen, X. (2019). Investigating Consumer Engagement with Influencer- vs. Brand-Promoted Ads: The Roles of Source and Disclosure. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, *19(3)*, 169–186. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2019.1667928

[26] Micro-Influencers Marketing and Brand Image to Purchase Intention of Cosmetic Products Focallure. (2020). *In Business Horizons*, *10*.

ScienceDirect. 10.1016/j.bushor.2020.03.003

[27] Moravcikova, D., & Kicova, E. (2018). Brand as a strategic marketing tool of a company in conditions of globalization. In T. Kliestik (Ed.), Globalization and its socio-economic consequences (pp. 755–762). The University of Zilina.

[28] Nadanyiova, M., Gajanova, L., & Majerova, J. (2020). INFLUENCER MARKETING AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER LIFESTYLES. *Forum Scientiae Oeconomia.*, *8(2)*, 12. Business Source Ultimate. 10.23762/FSO_VOL8_NO2_7.

[29] Roy S, C. (2021, January 21). Pandemic gives rise to new entrepreneurs. Inquirer.net. https://business.inquirer.net/316169/pandemic-gives-rise-to-new-entrepreneurs

[30] Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2012) "Research Methods for Business Students" 6th edition, Pearson Education Limited.

[31] Stephanie G. (2015). Cronbach's Alpha: Simple Definition, Use, and Interpretation" From StatisticsHowTo.com: Elementary Statistics for the rest of us! https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/statistics-definitions/cronbachs-alpha-spss/

[32] Stephanie G. (2015). T-Test (Student's T-Test): Definition and Examples. From StatisticsHowTo.com: Elementary Statistics for the rest of us! https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/t-test/

[33] Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Matos, M. (2019, Dec). Antecedents and outcomes of digital influencer endorsement: An exploratory study. *Psychology & Marketing*, *36(12)*, 10. Business Source Ultimate. 10.1002/Mar. 21274.

[34] Van Dam, S., & van Reijmersdal, E. A. (2019). Insights in Adolescents' Advertising Literacy, Perceptions, and Responses Regarding Sponsored Influencer Videos and Disclosures. *Cyberpsychology*, *13(2)*, 1–19. https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-2-2

[35] Vodák, J., Novysedlák, M., Čakanová, L., & Pekár, M. (2019). Who is Influencer and How to Choose the Right One to Improve Brand Reputation? *International Research Journal*, *17(2)*, 14. Academic Search Ultimate. 10.26493/1854-6935.17.149-162. https://wearesocial.com/blog/2020/01/digital-2020-3-8-billion-people-use-social-media

[36] Yuan, S., & Lou, C. (2020). How Social Media Influencers Foster Relationships with Followers: The Roles of Source Credibility and Fairness in Parasocial Relationship and Product Interest. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, *20(2)*, 133–147. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2020.1769514