

**THE IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING AS A NEW
STRATEGY FOR BRANDS: A SURVEY ON CONSUMERS**

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**IŞIK UNIVERSITY
JUNE, 2021**

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THE IMPACT OF INFLUENCER MARKETING AS A NEW STRATEGY FOR
BRANDS: AS SURVEY ON CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT

In today's business environment, brands are associated not only with the products or services, but they are also associated with perceived quality, consumer life style, and social status/class. This thesis aims to understand the impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brands from the consumer's perspective.

The main research question of this thesis is; whether influencers have a positive role on purchase intention of the consumers, regarding the brands that are promoted using influencer marketing. In addition, it is aimed to investigate, if influencers affect consumer's opinion on certain brands. The approach used in this study is, to perform a survey analysis of 120 respondents using convenience sampling in Turkey, Morocco, and France and then analyzing the gathered data using a quantitative methodology.

The key results of this research indicate that; influencers do not directly affect consumer's purchasing buyer behavior but consumers' brand awareness, brand perception and knowledge on new products are found to be indirectly influenced. In some cases, influencers might find themselves in a bad situation like being in a scandal in their personal lives or improper news, it is found that the opinion of the consumers about brands does not change and as well as consumer's buying decision is not affected after these situations related with the influencer.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, social media influencers, brands, consumer decision

MARKALARA YÖNELİK YENİ BİR STRATEJİ OLARAK ETKİLEYİCİ PAZARLAMANIN ETKİSİ: TÜKETİCİLERE YÖNELİK ANKET ÇALIŞMASI

ÖZET

Günümüz iş ortamında markalar sadece ürün veya hizmetlerle değil, aynı zamanda algılanan kalite, tüketici yaşam tarzı ve sosyal statü/sınıf ile de ilişkilendirilmektedir. Bu tez, tüketicinin bakış açısından markalar için yeni bir strateji olarak influencer pazarlamanın etkisini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bu tezin temel araştırma sorusu; Influencer pazarlama kullanılarak tanıtılan markalara ilişkin olarak, influencer'ların tüketicilerin satın alma niyeti üzerinde olumlu bir rolü olup olmadığı. Ayrıca influencer'ların tüketicilerin belirli markalar hakkındaki görüşlerini etkileyip etkilemediğinin araştırılması amaçlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada kullanılan yaklaşım, Türkiye, Fas ve Fransa'da kolayda örnekleme kullanarak 120 katılımcıya anket analizi yapmak ve ardından toplanan verileri nicel bir metodoloji kullanarak analiz etmektir.

Bu araştırmanın temel sonuçları şunu göstermektedir; Influencer'ların tüketicilerin satın alma davranışını doğrudan etkilemediği ancak tüketicilerin marka farkındalığı, marka algısı ve yeni ürünler hakkındaki bilgilerinin dolaylı olarak etkilendiği tespit edilmiştir. Influencer'ların bazı durumlarda özel hayatlarında bir skandalın içinde olmak ya da yanlış haberler gibi kendilerini kötü bir durumda bulabileceği, tüketicilerin markalar hakkındaki görüşlerinin değişmediği ve sonrasında tüketicinin satın alma kararının etkilenmediği tespit edilmiştir. etkileyici ile ilgili bu durumlar.

Anahtar Sözcükler: etkileyici pazarlama, sosyal medya etkileyicileri, markalar, tüketici kararı.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ads:	Advertisement
E-WOM:	Electronic Word-Of-Mouth
ROI:	Return on Investment
SMIs:	Social Media Influencers
SPSS:	Statistical Package of the Social Sciences
UGC:	User Generated Content
WOM:	Word of Mouth

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

Influencer marketing is a type of marketing that relies on opinion leaders to promote a product or market the new idea (Eword, 2020). These leaders can be personalities or reference sites on a given topic. Influencer marketing identifies individuals or sites that influence potential buyers and guides marketing activities around these influencers.

Content created by influencers can be presented as a recommendation they pretend to be a prospective client or a third party. Third parties are either part of the supply chain (stores, distributors, manufacturers, etc.) or are value-added influencers (journalists, academics, industry analysts, professional advisors, etc.).

The aim is for an influencer to express their beliefs to a brand so that their audience can be influenced by goods and services that can impact them. The influencer has built a community of passionate individuals around a specific subject, which can be more or less broad. As a result, it can target a demographic that is becoming increasingly difficult to reach for brands.

The influencer marketing sector has grown rapidly in recent years and its overall value to Instagram is now estimated at US\$1.07 billion. One of the factors is limiting market development follower fraud. False accounts, fake influencers, and false comments constitute a "big parallel market". The stock of automated accounts is estimated at a minimum of 3.5 million in 2019. One of the facilitating factors is the development of influential marketing agencies or platforms, such as Influence4You, Kolsquare, and Hivency (Bouillet, 2020).

The influencer receives a brand advantage (free product or remuneration), she/he must communicate transparently about the perceived benefit to not fall within the scope of deceptive business practices. Therefore, influence marketing is subject to strict rules of transparency both legal and those brought by professional bodies such as the authority of professional regulation of advertising (Marketing, 2021).

1.1 Background

Every day, the number of people using social media grows across the world, and around a third of the world's population used it on a daily basis in 2017. Consumer buying behavior has changed as a consequence of the widespread use of social media, as has the way knowledge is shared between companies and customers. As a result, the marketing environment has changed dramatically, and networks of social media company marketing strategies have included them as an important component. These innovative marketing strategies were embraced by average citizens, not just those who already had a good public profile, for the introduction of Web 2.0 in the early 2000s (such as athletes, musicians, etc.). Despite the fact that personal websites and blogs have existed for a long time, outlets such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube have quickened the process of turning regular people into profitable social media influencers. (H. B. Virtanen, 2017). The term "influencer" was officially added to the English dictionary in 2019, and it's longed overdue. Influence marketing is a term that has been used for quite some time. We've always gotten ideas for purchases from our friends and family, as well as from successful individuals (Brooks, 2019).

In 1760, a potter called Wedgwood produced a tea set for Queen Elizabeth I of England, which was one of the first "influencer" collaborations. Given the monarchy's clout at the time, the brand's foresight in marketing its product as accepted by the Royals earned it the luxury status it still enjoys today (Brooks, 2019).

Marketers' objectives are most influenced by marketing on social media (Rhoades, 2017). The enormous social media's influence in causing a true revolution in the business world, marketing programs, job creation, these sites have contributed to the development of creative and modern ways that can help companies and entrepreneurs promote their goods, as well as the ability of these sites to guide public opinion and followers on a variety of social, sporting, political, and other issues, and

the ability of these sites to direct public opinion and followers on a variety of social, sporting, political, and other issues, and these sites have contributed to the creation of innovative and modern ways that can help businesses and entrepreneurs promote their products.

The emergence of a new generation of social media influencers who can convey marketing messages and drive the target audience dramatically and credibly towards clear targets is perhaps the most impressive of these platforms. The followers of each of these social media influencers are extremely satisfied.

Influencer marketing is a form of marketing that relies on marketing efforts on a select group of people, on prominent users of social media platforms who can effectively communicate the marketing message to the target audience. According to some estimates, more than 60% of businesses have budgeted for digital marketing, which includes social media influencer marketing (2017).

Influencer marketing has evolved into a viable alternative to conventional marketing communication, putting it in constant contest with the related area of social media merchandising. In addition, the influencer/brand match is critical for a brand's marketing message to be credible. As a result, companies who don't comprehend their audience and partner with marketers that are incompatible with the brand would be unable to use influencer marketing, which can damage the brand by making it appear real.

The influencing factors must be explained if companies continue to prioritize potentially negative influencer marketing over paid social media marketing. When customers actively and voluntarily engage with influencers, even brief exposition to social media or blog advertising can have a significant effect; indicate that even a few seconds of exposure to social media or blog ads can have a big effect. This suggests that various degrees of active customer participation in social media are needed to realize effect. Despite the significance of selecting, it has been determined who the right influencer is, no attempt has been made to evaluate how influencer marketing efforts impact a brand's customer perception.

This is a basic flaw in influencer marketing theory. Influencer marketing's branding effect should be studied not just to see how it works as a marketing tool, but

also to learn more about it. Understanding the type of customers, it attracts and how they view the brand (Elmira Djafarova, 2017).

1.2 Purpose of the research

The aim of this study is to learn more about the consumer's point of view on the brands that use influencers in social media as a new marketing strategy. It is aimed to answer the theory if the influencers influence the brand as well as the consumer in his/her opinion about the product and whether its effect is positive or negative.

1.3 Research questions

To achieve the goal of the study, this research will show the impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brands, whether it has affected consumer decisions about the positive or negative of influencer marketing.

As a consideration, the study questions were formulated in the following manner:

- Is influencer marketing a new marketing strategy that is helpful for the customers to choose a brand and purchase it accordingly?
- How influencer marketing is affecting consumer's decisions for certain brands?

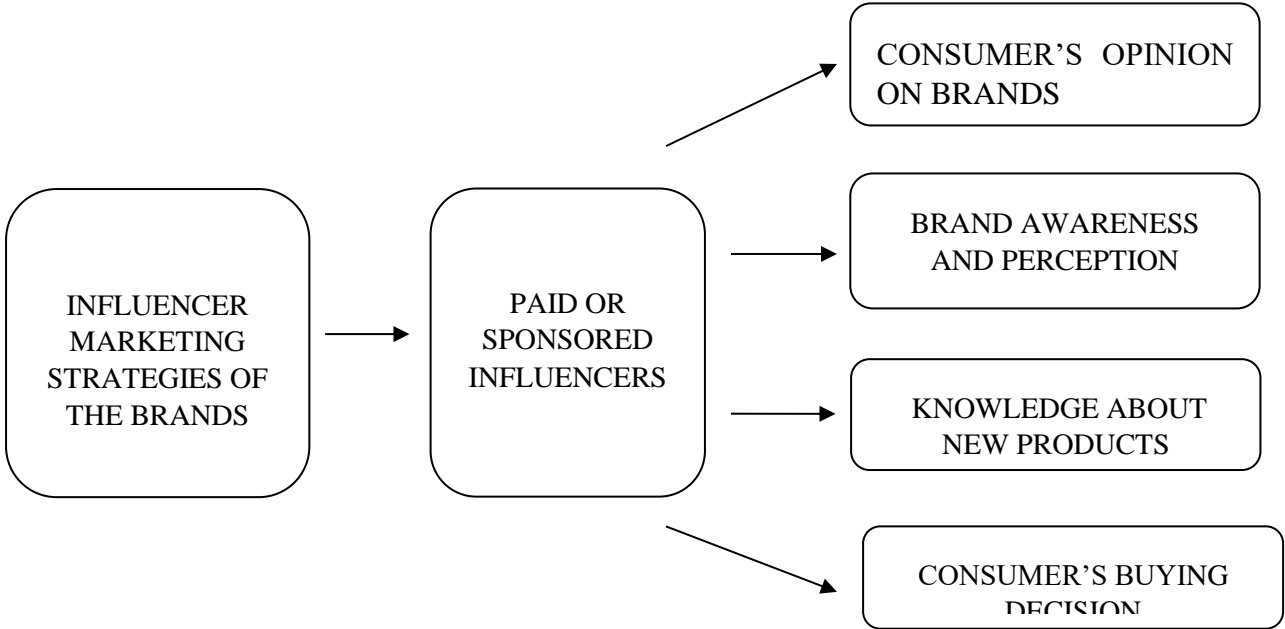


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The following sections provide a summary of the current literature in the theoretical fields mentioned below. To generate interest in this report, the following keywords will be used: influencer marketing, influencer reputation, social media marketing, social media influencer, and brands.

2.1 Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that enlists the assistance of key individuals or opinion leaders to increase brand recognition and/or purchasing decisions among customers (for example, by leveraging the influence of celebrities) (Duncan Brown, 2018). The influencer's influencing characteristics are crucial in attracting brands and advertisers to pay attention to them. In comparison to the exorbitant payments paid to sign one or more celebrities, more influential individuals can be selected at reasonable rates by brands (Hall, 2015). As a result, social media influencers have generally shown that they can really do so by focusing on particular areas. This suggests that when influencers work with brands that align with their personal areas of expertise, customers are more likely to accept, influence, or trust them (Hall, 2015). Accordance to a new study on social media trends, 94 percent of advertisers have used successful marketing strategies (Ahmad, 2018).

Influencer marketing has a return on investment (ROI) of 11 times that of conventional advertising, according to the same report. (Lou, Chen, 2019). Influencer

Marketing has evolved into a viable alternative to conventional marketing communication, putting it in constant competition with the related area of social media marketing, which is funded by each company's social media marketing budget. In addition, the influencer/brand match is critical for a brand's marketing message to be credible. As a result, Companies who don't recognize their target market and collaborate with influencers that are incompatible with the brand would be unable to use influencer marketing, which can damage the brand by making it appear real. Before using paid social media ads, advertisers must justify why they choose potentially negative marketing influencers. Make the case that even an exposure for a short time to social media or blog advertisements is critical, so consumers communicate with influencers freely and openly.

This demonstrates that several levels of active social media engagement by consumers are needed to realize their desired effect. Though the importance of selecting the right influencer was emphasized, no attempt was made to decide how engagement influences customer percept a brand based about the use of influencer marketing. The power marketing theory differs from that of traditional marketing. The value of researching influencer marketing's branding effect is not just because its effectiveness as a marketing tool is justified, but also because it is important to better understand the audiences it draws and how the brand is viewed (Elmira Djafarova, 2017).

Several researchers have discovered that consumers are often seen as ordinary people who spread more trustworthy e-WOM (electronic –Word Of Mouth) than brand promotion (De Veirman, 2017). As a result, traditional messaging is no longer as successful as it once was. Since influencers are also considered role models by their audiences, they help to create high supporter morale (Brown, 2008). As a result, some researchers argue that online advertising can be used in social media marketing campaigns (Booth N. &, 2011) (Djafarova, & Rushworth, 2017).

In addition, Gürkaynak, Kama, and Ergün (2018) visitors are more willing to listen to social media influencers, because they assume they aren't attempting to sell them anything. One of the explanations for this is the rise in popularity of influencer marketing and its use in recent years (Gürkaynak, 2018). One of the most challenging aspects of influencer marketing, according to others, is determining what influencers

are the best fit for your brand? This challenge, however, should not be taken lightly and should be a key component of every social media strategy that focuses on influencers (Booth N. &. 2011). Because of the massive growth of bloggers and their increased ability to influence customer perceptions, analyzing and evaluating the most prominent social media influencers has become increasingly relevant.

Furthermore, using social media influencers including celebrities and bloggers contributes to substantially more deliberate buying and branding, according to previous studies. Booth and Matic say that (2011), the capacity to identify influencers who integrate with a company's social media approach ensures consumer loyalty to visible results and contributes positively to a favorable view of the brand Furthermore, Kulmala, Mesiranta, and Tuominen (2012). Often emphasize the critical importance of a blogger's or influencer's personal style matching that of the brand, because if they don't, the ads will not be seen as trustworthy and authentic. A brand must understand what attracts the public in order to create appropriate marketing content for influencer marketing (Kulmala, 2012).

Furthermore, Mangold and Faulds (2009) discovered that when a brand's products support the self-image desired by consumers, customers are more likely to communicate with the brand. Since influencers are also used in their societies as role models (Sudha, 2017), it could be argued that they represent the idealized self-perceptions of customers to make certain that your social media campaign is a success, consumers must be able to respond to the sort of influencers a company selects for the purpose of ads (Djafarova, 2017).

2.1.1 Word-of -Mouth

When customers are happy or unhappy with particular items, word-of-mouth (WOM) is an informal way of sharing experiences and disseminating information (Anderson 1998, Mangold et al. 1999) (2012) (Yildirim). Customers are used to expressing their opinions and beliefs both inside and outside of their own social networks. Consumer networks are used in this marketing strategy to improve brand recognition by message delivery and self-replication (Christine Kiss), as well as to minimize the probability of customers making purchases. Dina Mayzlin (Dina Mayzlin, 2002). Many studies have been conducted to show the influence of interpersonal control by word-of-mouth interaction (NAIR2, 2016). As a result, word-

of-mouth marketing in both the business and academic communities is regarded as the most valuable, influential, and convincing method of marketing. According to Nielsen's 2015 an international study of advertising confidence, 83 percent of consumers prefer word-of-mouth marketing to all other forms of advertising, showing that word-of-mouth marketing is the most effective marketing model.

While the importance of word-of-mouth contact has long been recognized, specific organizational attempts to promote "buzz," or infectious word-of-mouth about products, services, brands, and concepts have recently increased (Walker, 2004). According to Walter J. Carl (2006), there are two forms of word-of-mouth: Buzz or word-of-mouth in daily life and buzz or word-of-mouth in institutions.

A commotion to sell new brands, marketing agencies either pay people or hire volunteers as part of a coordinated word-of-mouth campaign among their social networks. Buzz marketing, characterized as "the training of opinion leaders and their encouragement to disseminate information about a product or service to other members of their group", is one of the earliest forms of influencer marketing. (Philip Kotler, 2012).

2.1.2 Influencer's credibility

Celebrities have earned mainstream attention as a result of their talent (Kamins, 2017), making them famous with marketers when it comes to marketing their brands, goods, and services (Alexander P. Schouten, 2020). In other words, advertisers attempt to elicit purchasing intent from customers by converting celebrity images and characteristics to their brand (Atkin, 1983). Unlike celebrities, social media influencers gain respect for themselves by being genuine (Jiang, 2018), and identifying themselves as social media experts (Kamins, 2017). When a customer values authenticity, he or she develops a positive attitude toward the brand or product because it is viewed as actual, genuine, and true (Hoyer, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Hoyer (2012), authenticity establishes a connection between the consumers' perceptions and what they have learned from others. Influencers are considered to be trustworthy and powerful, according to

(Deatara E. Z. Karouw, 2019), since they vlog and expose their everyday activities to their followers. It establishes a bond, respect, and a special relationship with their

followers as a result of this. However, the authors claim that this only occurs if the audience has a favorable impression of the influencer. According to interviews with Instagram users (Djafarova E. a., 2017) influencers are seen as more trustworthy and relatable than conventional celebrities, and as a result, their followers' buying intentions are seen to be influenced significantly Sen & Lerman (2007) back up (Deatara E. Z. Karouw, 2019) findings by reporting that highly reliable communicators are more convincing than low-credibility communicators. Other researchers (Deatara E. Z. Karouw, 2019) claim that since followers are aware that celebrities are paying for their material, they have a negative view of influencers. According to Jiang, an extremely trustworthy influencer (2018), leads customers to assume that the product recommended was designed to raise the influencer's public profile, show genuine interest in the product, or demonstrate their willingness to help others. According to the source, consumers are less likely to resist a reliable influencer than a less credible influencer. This means that a "trustworthy celebrity has a positive influence on ad effectiveness, such as increasing consumer views of the ad, brand, and purchase intention" (Jiang, 2018).

2.1.3 Aims of influencer marketing

The main goal of this method of marketing, as stated in the concept of influencer marketing, is that these individuals use their power to promote WOM, help raise visibility and ultimately affect others' perceptions and buying decisions.

These aims reveal that the most significant targets of influencer marketing for advertisers are growth in interaction with branded content, a rise in the loyalty of prominent customers, and the creation of brand recognition, and the enhancement of social media posts of a brand. On the other hand, driving a brand's mobile app downloads and getting people to demand a discount or deal is less important influencer marketing objectives (Mavrck, 2016).

2.1.4 Potential mistakes and risks of influencer marketing

Influencers have the potential to bring multiple advantages to a company. There are still, however, a lot of things that can go wrong. With influencer marketing, the largest and most common mistake brands make is choosing the wrong influencers. For example, brands often find an industry influencer, but they fail to verify if this

influencer is also important to the brand's particular niche, implying that the influence does not have enough effect on the brand's target audience. Another mistake might be to choose an influencer with many followers but with a low engagement rate (Barker, 2016). Therefore, it is important to run them through the criteria as describe in chapter 2.3.4 selection of influencer.

What is most important with influencer marketing is the uniqueness of the influencer, which stems from the imagination and willingness of individuals to manage their own content. Brands also spend a great deal of time and money on designing the message about a product or service, though, and want to ensure that this message is successfully conveyed by asking influencers when and how to say it. This is, nevertheless, a risk because it undermines the authenticity of the influencer and therefore the advertisement that is then likely to fail to successfully hit the target audience. It is also important to create relationships with influencers, include them in the process of exploring advertising concepts and designing the advertisement and trust them to find the best ways to share the message of a brand. (Barker, 2016)

In addition, influencers are individuals and they often make mistakes, this can impact poorly on the credibility of a company (McGinty, 2017). Often, since a corporation does not govern how an influencer speaks about them, it can happen that advertising reviews, for example, turn out poorly. As a result, influencers may even reverse a lot of market loyalty or harm the reputation of a brand (Hausman, 2017).

Therefore, an organization must be mindful when working with influencers that there is no assurance that a plan can always turn out as planned and is often synonymous with risks.

2-1-5 Perception of influencer marketing

The effects of influencer marketing have been studied, and how it is viewed has been undertaken by Expert city, a forum for influencer marketing, they questioned 6,000 people from their network of influencers and the public online 82 percent of customers are extremely likely to obey a request made by an influencer. The analysis found it also showed that customers view influencers of product endorsements as 11 percent more reliable and trustworthy, and 10 percent more intelligent about products compared to an ordinary social media user (experticity.com. 2017). The explanation

why influencers look sincere and trustworthy, as mentioned before is that they manage their own content, not the brands themselves (Woods, 2016). According to a recent study, influencer marketing has the ability to generate 11 times more annual return on investment than other types of traditional marketing. (Kirkpatrick, 2016)

Another research showed that after watching an influencer doing it, 40 % of respondents ordered an item online (Swant, 2016). This also means, thus, the very favorable view of users of influencer marketing.

2.2 Social media influencers

Social media influencers are third-party endorsers who use blogs, tweets, and other social media outlets to shape the opinions of their followers. (Karen Freberg, 2011). With the aim of gaining a following and market recognition, social media influencers create content promoting brands on sites such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook. On the report of Freberg, the success of social media influencers is critical to marketers, so research has been developed to identify and track the relevance of influencers to an organization or individual. This software manages the amount of blog hits, the number of times a blog is shared, the number of views and comments, and the number of followers. Both of these factors play a role in a social media influencer's performance (Karen Freberg, 2011). Influencer marketing on social media gives marketers a new way to connect with their consumers in a more open, organic, and large-scale way (Adweek).

Social media influencers support brands through their personal lives, making them more relatable to the average consumer. "When one person tries to persuade another to take certain actions, a mechanism emerges that can alter the course and substance of their relationship," writes Ledbetter (Ledbetter, 2017). The overall relationship between a brand and its customers has a significant impact, because of their candor and transparency with customers. (Burgess, 2016), influencers have a strong media effect and credibility, which is why they are so famous. Influencers will focus on niche goals that have been unattainable until now, where conventional marketing is mainly aimed at mainstream markets (Ledbetter, 2017).

A social media contributor is someone who uses social media sites to share their thoughts on particular brands or goods in order to influence their captive audience. The

concept of an influencer is simple: it is a "natural individual" who serves the consumer, analyses and discusses openly products, and builds a trust relationship with his audience.

They can influence the purchase of such products by putting their authority, experience, reputation, control, or position of power within the company to the test, for example, via YouTube, Snapchat, Twitter, and In Station.

According to We Are Social and Hootsuite's Global Digital Stat, 3.196 billion citizens, or 42 percent of the world's population, use social media actively. You will literally reach millions of potential customers all over the world with the right marketing plan and digital campaign. When it comes to online shopping, 74% of people rely on social media to aid their decision-making. This suggests that three out of four social media users would consult their family, friends, and social media influencers before making a purchase, which is why power management has become such an important aspect in online marketing in the twenty-first century (Crook et al., 2018).

Influencer marketing is one way to consciously participate in users' feeds on social media by figuring out what makes them happy, what they value, and what they want to see on social media. Influencer marketing's rapid growth has resulted in a significant shift in social media brand advertisement strategies. These companies have realized the value of influencer marketing in terms of increasing brand awareness, targeting new markets, expanding brand presence, and, most significantly, increasing revenue conversion.

Finding the right influencer, on the other hand, is not always easy. Engaging the most successful influencer does not guarantee a better result. A lot of digital marketers are scratching their heads about this (ACTIVEWEAR, 2019).

Firstly, we need to know that there are three forms of influencers, Micro & Macro, and Celebrities their playground is Instagram:

There are three types of Influencers in Social Media:

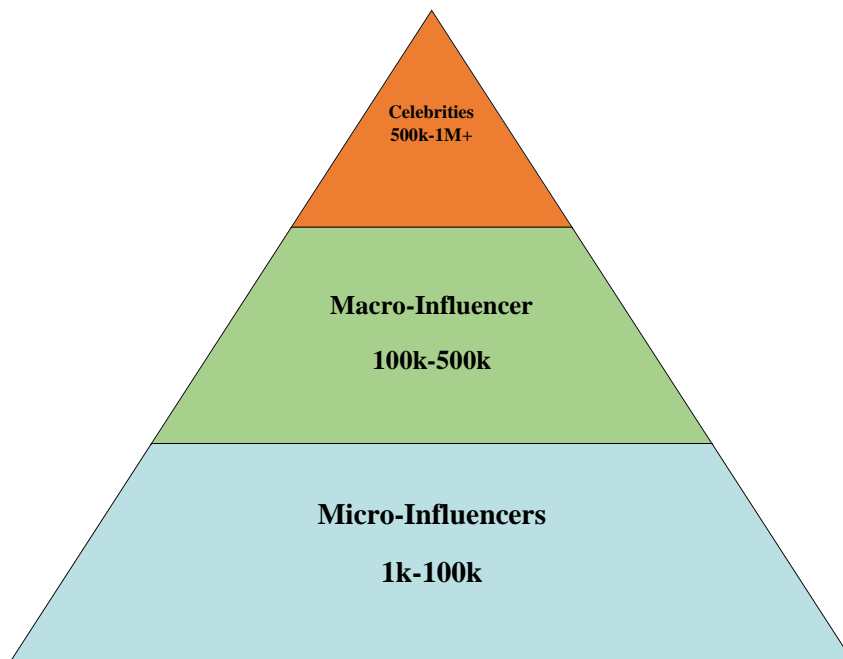


Figure 3: Three Types of Social Media Influencers.

The concept of marketing influencers is discussed in this chapter, and is broken into six subchapters. The first provides a description of influencer marketing, the second one influencer marketing and credibility. the third illustrates what has to be taken into consideration when choosing influencers, the fourth reveals the priorities of influencer marketing, the fifth outlines how it is viewed, while the sixth chapter addresses the possible errors and threats of this type of marketing.

2.2.1 Selecting the right social media influencers

“Influencer marketing, despite its obvious benefits, if you don't work with the right ones, is a wasted investment” (Hamann, 2017). In this context, the art is "to find the influencer who is already naturally enthusiastic about a brand" (Pophal, 2016).

It's also important to ensure that a brand's innovator marketing efforts are in sync with the company's overall marketing communication efforts (Pophal, 2016).

Most social media influencers call themselves influencers by accumulating larger followers, either organically or artificially, according to Amarasinghe (Amarasinghe, 2019). Therefore, there is a growing situation of artificially being social

media influencers as the assistance of certain third-party online resources can be accomplished (Rodrigo, 2018). These platforms are equipped with programmed computer bots that allow them to purchase larger quantities of fake social media (Instagram) followers. Likewise, paid services are accessible with the ability to generate likes, views, and commitments from genuine social media accounts (Instagram) (Gabriel, 2018). There is a question, however, as to whether these social media influencers are capable of generating a real effect on a brand (Amarasinghe, 2019). Not everybody can be real social media influencers only because a larger follower base has accrued (Rodrigo, 2018); (Amarasinghe, 2019), (Radey, 2015), also reported that, since they can easily be purchased, true power is not a matter of larger social media followers. Before partnering with social media influencers, Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017) (Veirman, 2017) indicated that it is important for brands to understand the topics explored by SMIs and the desires of their followers rather than only looking at the size of the follower base. It can also be argued that the actual SMI is someone who is beyond having a wider base of followers. In line with the above statement, Wong (2014) proposed the following formula that could be used to test SMIs. (Wong, 2014)

Social Media Influencers Power = Audience reach (Number of Followers) x Brand affinity (Expertise and Credibility) x Followers' relationship strength (Engagement Rate).

Therefore, when looking for online influencers, Hamann explains five aspects that need to be considered:

Relevance: Checking whether the content of the influencer suits the message of a brand is critical. For example, since a blogger posts recipes, it doesn't necessarily mean that they fit an organic brand as well.

Engagement: Engagement is a measure of how communicative the audience of an influencer is with the content. If they respond to, comment, and share the content and what percentages of readers/viewers are returning vs. fresh, it should be considered. This suggests substantive relationships if readers engage a lot with influencers and return to their pages/profiles regularly.

Reach: While it is not the most significant metric, it is definitely a legitimate factor for reach. The number of visitors and fans, however, is only significant if the

influencer also meets the target audience of a company. For example, a food brand should partner with a small-scale food blogger rather than a travel blogger who has 100,000 followers.

Frequency: Brands should look for influencers who regularly publish material of high quality, as readers are more likely to return and share as a result.

Authenticity: While truthful and non-sponsored posts may often not be in support of a brand, if an influencer has a smaller amount of sponsored content, it may help a business because they tend to appear more trustworthy and genuine. "True use or mention of a product, service, or brand is more trusted than straight product reviews." Therefore, these personal stories typically get more comments and shares than ordinary product reviews as well (Hamann, 2017).

Brands may perform research either on Google, in databases, in networks, or in marketplaces to identify influencers that can be judged by these five aspects.

Baer points out, however, that regardless of which methodology is used to define influencers, it will always be better to develop relationships with them in advance before they rely on the influencers. (Baer, 2017)

2.2.2 Marketing on Instagram

Instagram debuted in the social media world in 2010 and is still one of the most popular platforms today (Clement, 2020). As of June 2018, the social media network had more than 1 billion monthly active users worldwide, including 500 million daily active users. The United States is the largest market for photo-sharing apps, with over 120 million daily Instagram users (Clement, 2020). It, Users of other social media sites, such as Twitter, can easily share the content. It benefits from strong market interest and broad social convergence. Discovered that Instagram was the most common site for following brands in their analysis of consumer use of social media platforms. Thus, according to the sources, to Sheldon and Bryant (2016), it is also the fastest production social networking site (2015). For young consumers, Instagram is a popular social networking and inspiration platform (Lee E. L.-A., 2015).

Instagram serves as a platform for customers to connect with one another through pictures rather than text, as well as labels. Furthermore, claims that videos and

material that is visual help users better comprehend details and that it is a way for marketers in order to succeed the relentless barrage of information that viewers are bombarded with on a daily basis on the Internet (Miles, 2013). Instagram, as previously mentioned, is a popular and well-liked social media site. As a result, marketers must comprehend the basic reasons why customers use Instagram, as well as how a business can meet those needs and thereby improve the customer-brand relationship (September 2015, Sung & Moon)(2013, Neher). According to the report, Instagram has become one of the most successful social media marketing channels due to its broad user base and the benefits of visual content. Furthermore, according to the author, visual content is effective in growing brand recognition, dialogue, traffic, and distribution firms who use Instagram, but in the other side, should improve their visual storytelling rather than only providing textual details about their company or service (Virtanen H. B.2017). Stories have the power to give a brand meaning and reinforce the emotional bond between users and it (Singh, 2012).

In addition, Krallman, Pelletier, and Adams (2016) found that, as compared to other social networking platforms, Instagram users show the highest level of company interaction. As a result, marketers must Instagram can be included into their marketing campaign on social media, at the very least if they want to improve brand interaction (Krallman, 2016).

Furthermore, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) In order to integrate Instagram into a brand's social media marketing strategy effectively we encourage businesses to take the lead and participate. The brand or its products would not be able to manufacture or gain attention if this were not the case. Taking the initiative and being involved entails more than just uploading content to one's social media site. To put it another way, being able to create a strong social network entails being a social networking strategy (Fournier S. &. 2011). Furthermore, Consumers must be asked what they like and find useful, as well as what they want to see on social media (Kaplan, 2010). Influencer marketing is one way to effectively engage in consumer social media feeds.

The next chapter will describe concepts of brand awareness, brand equity, and brand attitude. After that, how influencer marketing affect brand image and brand equity will be explained.

2.3 Brands

For decades, branding has been used to differentiate between one manufacturer's products and those of another. When it comes to defining the term brand, however it's worth noting that there isn't a single right description. The word brand comes from the Old Norse word brand, which literally means "to burn." Indeed, in order to identify their animals, livestock owners now use tags (Keller K.2013). "A name, expression, style, logo, or other feature that distinguishes one seller's goods or services from those of others." accords to the American Marketing Association (A. Y. Lee, 2015). A brand, according to Kotler, is "a name, word, sign, mark, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the products and services of one seller or group of sellers and to distinguish them from those of competitors" (Lee A. Y., 2015). Given these definitions, the primary role of a brand is to differentiate a single manufacturer's products or services from those of its rivals. The fundamental a brand's attributes should ensure that its goods and services are regarded more highly than those of a rival brand that serves the same needs (Zeplin, 2006). Duncan's concept of a brand as "a belief arising from encounters with, and knowledge about, a business or a line of goods" suggests that the customer's experience with a brand is more relevant than the brand itself (Lee A. Y., 2015) A brand is also a pledge to its future and already current consumers, according to Lee at al., and stands for the desired consistency and emotions associated with using this brand's product or service (Lee E. L.-A., 2015)

Hence, it can be seen that the word brand has several meanings. It often refers, however, to something that distinguishes one producer's products or a service from another's and gives its customers a certain guarantee.

Moreover, a company's most important asset is usually its name. (Lee A. Y., 2015). Subchapter 2.3.1 explains the value to the customer of brands.

2.3.1 Relevance for the consumer

Many distinct and significant functions are given by brands to customers. First of all, a brand helps a client to quickly recognize the source of a product or service and to delegate responsibility to its suppliers and distributors. (Keller K. , 2013)

Another essential feature that a brand offers consumers is knowledge efficiency, as brands simplify the process of searching for product or service information. (Perrey, 2015) This implies that a consumer who already has some knowledge of a brand, either through past experiences or through the marketing program of the brand, does not need to look for any further detail or spend a lot of time on further factors to make a purchase decision. This is due to the fact that the customer already knows what to expect from this brand. For instance, the brand Bose is well known for their high-quality sound systems which mean that consumers can expect excellent products. Therefore, brands enable customers to reduce their search costs for products. (Keller K. , 2013)

The probability of purchasing errors for the customer is also minimized by a brand. Since brands build trust in the results that can be expected from their goods and also provide clients with consistent benefits, buying a branded product. The product decreases the (subjective) probability of a purchasing error by the customer. (Perrey, 2015)

In addition, by enabling customers to achieve a desired image through the purchase of a branded product, a brand may offer image benefits and prestige. This advantage may occur either externally when the brand is used by a customer to cultivate a certain public image or internally when the brand is used for the purposes of self-expression or to identify with certain beliefs and principles. (Perrey, 2015)

For example, products from the Apple brand are purchased mainly because of the image it implies and not because of the quality of their products. Therefore, brands may also help customers convey the type of individual they are or would like to be to others, or themselves. (Keller K. , 2013)

All in all, brands reflect major motivators relevant to customer behavior. Today, the image and reputation role of a brand has the most important significance, as noted by Meffert, Burmann and Kirchgeorg (Meffert, 2015).

2.3.2 Brand awareness

Marketers use social networking sites to build brand relationships as a marketing tool. Brand recognition has a major impact on consumer decision-making because it provides three benefits: learning benefits, consideration benefits, and preference

benefits (Keller K. L., 1998). Brand recognition is another important part of brand equity that is often overlooked. (D. A. Aaker, 1996) Consumers are exposed to brands, which results in brand recognition (Alba, 1987). The intensity of a brand's presence in a consumer's mind is known as brand awareness (Ross, 2006). Both Aaker (Aaker D. A., 1991) and Keller (Keller K. L., 1993) show that brand awareness is dependent on both brand identification and recall. Aaker (Aaker D. A., 1991) "The ability of a potential consumer to recognize and recognize that a brand belongs to a certain category of products," says the company.

Brand recognition is a crucial component of brand equity. Brand awareness (Aaker D. A., 1996) is the first step in building brand equity, and brand awareness is a source of brand equity, according to Tong and Hawley (Tong, 2009). Brand name recognition contributes to brand equity in four separate ways: building a brand node in the memory of the customer, providing a sense of brand familiarity in the mind of the consumer, serving as a sign of brand confidence, and providing ample justification for the consumer to include the brand in its collection of considerations (Gil, 2007).

One of the benefits of social media engagement is the opportunity to reach customers when they are looking for knowledge, growing brand recognition and assisting in the development of beneficial interactions that help to build a brand image. It was discovered that brand recognition has a positive impact on brand credibility (Juntunen, 2009). A high level of brand equity leads to brand awareness, according to (Ramos, (2005), Yassin et al (J Yasin, 2007). Brand recognition was discovered to have a beneficial impact on brand equity (Juntunen, 2009).

2.3.3 Brand equity

The brand equity is having an important role in assessing and making purchasing decisions, brands have been identified as one of a company's most important assets by numerous marketing managers and researchers (Kotler & K 2012). A company's brand is viewed as an identifier that distinguishes its products and services from those of rivals (Wood, 2000). It is the promise of a product's tangible and intangible qualities that will lead to a consumer's satisfaction (Ambler, 1992). Its abstract nature stems from the fact that it exists and lasts in the minds of customers who see it as special and important. According to Brown (1992), brands are "nothing more or less than the amount of all the mental interactions people have around them," and as a result, brand

studies have focused on customers. The word "brand equity" was coined as a result of the need for a deeper understanding of the substance of the consumer-brand relationship and the great efforts expended in it over the last decades (Wood, 2000)

2.4 Consumer decision

Consumer choices are made by individuals, groups, and organizations by choosing, buying, and utilizing goods, programs, ideas, and experiences that fulfil their needs and desires. It's a complicated and dynamic process. As a result of globalization and technological advancements, the way consumers behave and think is rapidly changing. Five phases of the mechanism of consumer decision-making are:

1) Identification of needs/problems, when a consumer finds a major difference in his or her present circumstance and a desired or ideal situation, this is what happens. The concept known as "social identification" describes how people today are concerned with how others view them. (M. Solomon, 2006). As a result, social media content inspires new consumer expectations. Each photo, video, message, commentary, and other piece of content shared on social media that reaches consumers helps to raise awareness of a new need (incentives).

2) Details in-formation: quest is the process by which a customer searches his or her surroundings for relevant information in order to make an informed decision. M. Solomon (2006, M. Solomon, M. Solomon, M. Solomon, M. Solomon The Internet is now one of the most commonly used information search sources, resulting in a transformation in the customer decision-making process the phenomenon of searching for information on Google, the first and most commonly used search engine, is referred to as "Googlization of search." (E. Helsper, 2010). Social networking feedback is often regarded as a valuable and trustworthy source.

3) Alternative assessment: Almost everybody nowadays seeks out online reviews, which provides more detailed, accurate, and reliable information since the input comes from those who have used the alternatives before. As a result, customers are more likely to consider the positive attributes of and choice, making it easier to choose the best one to purchase.

4) Buying: Many appealing social media posts and positive reviews from others may have an emotional rather than rational impact on a purchase, which is known as "spontaneous shopping." According to studies, other people's reviews are intended to sway customers' opinions about a product and persuade them to buy or not buy it (Parliament).

5) Post-purchase: Individuals may use social media to express their dissatisfaction with a purchase through writing company letters, publishing accounts on social media companies, commenting on public posts, and writing negative testimonials. According to traditional marketing theory, a frustrated consumer informs ten people. Nonetheless, He or she has the opportunity to claim ten million dollars in this day and age of social media (Gillin, 2007).

To sum up this part of research the influencer marketing us make comparison between social media marketing, and influencer markets. See (The table1).

Table 1: Comparison between Social Media Marketing and Influencer Marketing.

COMPARISON CRITERION	SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING	INFLUENCER MARKETING
PARTNERSHIP	It does not necessitate collaboration. The brands are not obligated to persuade anyone to advertise them.	It necessitates collaboration. The influencers' confidence must be earned by the brands. As a result, a lot of work has been done on it.
CUSTOMER PERSUASION	It's difficult to persuade a consumer to purchase their goods or services here.	They don't have to connect with the customer right away. Customers' confidence can easily be gained by influencers.
PRODUCT EVALUATION	To prove its products to consumers, the brand must go through different trials. They can also opt for free trials on occasion.	In addition to the other, the number of trials steadily decreases. The trial that is conducted in order to win the influencer is crucial.
PROMOTIONAL INCOME	To promote the products/services, the brand owner must invest in each network.	May be rendered in cash or by using their goods as compensation.
ANALYSIS OF COMPETITORS	On a daily basis, brands must conduct a strategic review of their rivals' social media pages.	There'd be no such thing as a brand comparison. However, they must ensure that they approach a more qualified individual than their competitors' Influencer.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods used to conduct explanatory research by using the survey method to generate empirical data and analyses it based on the empirical study results to determine which traits of online users possess that influencer marketing, a new marketing strategy that is helpful for the customers to choose a brand and purchase it accordingly, and if influencer marketing is affecting consumer's decisions for certain brands.

Definitions of terms relating to the method are set out, as well as the chapter provides information on how the data was generated, the participant information and explains the reasons for the chosen approaches.

3.1 Research design

An explanatory research design was chosen because the aim of this study is to discover relationships between characteristics that affect brand sales based on marketing impact as a new approach and characteristics that affect consumer purchasing engagement based on influencer influence. In order to explain events or circumstances, an explanatory research reveals a detailed review. (Martell & Sue Greener, January 2015).

The aim of this study is to see whether influencers have an effect on brands and customer engagement in purchases. To do so, researchers would look at the impact of influencer marketing on brands and whether influencers are trustworthy enough to influence consumer involvement in purchases. The descriptive research design was not chosen because it attempts to display a precise profile of individuals, incidents, or a situation (Saunders MN, 2011), which is incompatible with the topic of this report. Also, since this research is attempting to create a relationship between variables, an explanatory study was chosen (Saunders M. N., 2011), in order to identify the primary influences on brand decision-making.

3.2 Quantitative research method

This is a quantitatively based dissertation to explain the research method chosen in relation to the treated topic, it is important to understand the quantitative research method in general. A quantitative analysis approach is a research technique that deals with the quantification and interpretation of data (Bell E. B., 2018). Numerical analysis may be as straightforward as the astonishing frequency at which more complex data, such as stock prices and game scores, appears (Saunders M. N., 2011). Many businesses and management research projects need quantitative analysis because they are likely to include many types of numerical data. Analytical methods are used to explain, simplify, and make sense of the data obtained between variables that can help solve research problems (Saunders MN, 2011).

The main research design is explanatory in nature, defining relationships between variables and assessing outcomes once against the experience in which participants are evaluated before and after. Resource's research is either descriptive or experimental in nature, as the main research design is explanatory in nature, establishing relationships between its variables and evaluating outcomes once against the experience in which participants are evaluated before and after. The case that was investigated (McNabb, 2008). A quantitative method also aims to explain the magnitude of a phenomenon's effect on a new issue, circumstance, or individual.

The explanation for using quantitative analysis for this master's thesis is that it allows for a more in-depth study of the objects under investigation, and it helps to paint

an image of the impact of influencers on Internet users' and customers' attitudes, as well as how they influence brands.

As a result, this type of study necessitates the involvement of a large number of people who answer these needs through quantitative analysis.

3.3 Research method

The research for this thesis will start with a pre-survey investigation to decide the thesis's subject based on an examination of influencer followers' interests in order to concentrate the research on a much-needed research area. Inductive approaches are defined as an inductive approach to gather basic information to organize the fundamental basis of the research and a pre-survey that helped shape the topic at hand by gathering input from individuals regarding influencers to draw a narrower picture of the subject when they are combined. Finally, new data will be collected inductively by using survey questionnaires after the questions have been answered.

The inductive method begins with a case review, tries to develop initial assumptions, and brings preliminary ideas and ideas to generalize the investigation's case, and decides whether those generalizations can be applied to the incident while staying consistent and open to alternative interpretations (Hyde, 2000). The inductive methodology chosen for this form of study involves a combination of inductive and deductive approaches, allowing the researcher to start with known facts and work toward a solution. The inductive method is characterized as an interaction between the theory and the evidence, as well as the data and the theory (Dubois, 2002). In an inductive method, the researcher attempts to describe the underlying phenomenon in terms of social agent behavior, necessitating a review of relevant literature in order to comprehend the social environment (Ong, 2012), which in this case refers to brand influencers and their impact on consumer behavior. Despite the fact that the researcher examines current theory solely on the basis of empirical proof, an exclusively deductive approach would be unacceptable from an academic standpoint, owing to the pattern's under-researched nature. Since the aim is to put together diverse theoretical fields into a cohesive framework, the inductive approach is acceptable since the raw data can reveal new information (Saunders M. N., 2011). Another reason for using this strategy is that it recognizes that people's perceptions of their situations have an impact

on their actions. This ensures that the inductive strategy chosen for this study is appropriate (Reichertz, 2007).

3.4 Data collection method -survey

Researchers may use various data collection methods depending on whether they are conducting a qualitative or quantitative analysis (Bryman, 2011). This work is a quantitative analysis that does away with qualitative data collection methods. Focus group interviews, information to make, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured studies are all examples of unstructured findings. When conducting quantitative research, data is collected through experiments, systematic observations, formal interviews, or questionnaires (Ghauri, 2005).

To understand the relationship between influencer marketing, consumers, and brands, the primary method of gathering data for this study is to perform an online survey questionnaire. The results of the literature review and pre-survey investigation were used to create the survey's theoretical structure and questionnaire.

3.5 Survey question

A survey research methodology is designed to explain people's opinions on a specific subject by combining responses to similar questions from many people (Bryman, 2011). Questionnaires are common because they allow for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population at a low cost (Saunders M. N., 2011). The questionnaire items should be structured to allow for easy comparison, the surveys should be simple to read and understand, and people should be able to respond to the survey questions easily without feeling rushed, interrogator, which happens sometimes due to the people's indifference and the difficulty of the investigation (Saunders MN, 2011) (Albaum, 2010). The information gathered through the survey method can be used to describe the relationships between variables and to develop models for them (Saunders M. N., 2011).

A questionnaire is a survey method that organizes the questions that will be asked of the chosen sample. Each questionnaire begins with an introduction that explains the study's topic and the people who will be answering the survey questions

(2005, Proctor). In a survey, questions are usually divided into two categories: closed questions and open questions. Closed questions have a structure until all of the possible answer combinations have been added to the question. This means the dilemma can be dichotomous or multiple choice. The dichotomous type of questioning usually allows the respondent to choose between yes and no. A multiple-choice query implies that the respondent must choose between one and many options. Second: open-ended questions about receiving data from the respondent in one's own terms (Proctor, 2005).

The aim of the research was to obtain a global picture of the relationships between customers and influencers and the perception of influencers by consumers. Therefore, when affected by Instagram influencers, the research survey created for audiences consisted of nineteen questions, which were closed, dichotomous, and multiple-choice questions. (Table 3.1)

Table 3-1 Types of survey question

TYPES OF QUESTIONS	NUMBERS OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE SURVEY
Closed Questions	4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18
Multiple-Choice Questions	Gender, Age, Educational, Profession
Dichotomous Questions	1, 2, 3
Open-Ended Question	19

This thesis meets the above guidelines to create a high-level survey. The researchers have carefully selected many topics to allow respondents to participate in the study to develop a thorough knowledge of the phonemes of influencers. Since many influencer trials conducted thus far have primarily focused on a specific category of goods, this research is aimed at researching customers who follow influencers in general. It also aids in the creation of a subject of impact, which is the most widely used category on which few scientists have previously focused. Closed questions are included in the survey, which make it easier for respondents to respond and for the findings will be analyzed by researchers. The survey publishing method is a website

dedicated to surveys, with the aim of attracting as many respondents as possible (Christensen L, 2010).

3.5.1 Structure of the survey

In this analysis, two types of data were used: primary and secondary. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the consumer decision-making process, psychographic factors, and social media, secondary data was reviewed and investigated as part of a literature review. The thesis focuses mainly on primary data collected from an online consumer survey. Demographics of individuals (age, gender, and education) are collected, as well as more general advertiser issues like [what factors a person considers when following an influencer, whether their favorite influencer recommends a brand/product on Instagram, and whether influencers help people remember brands/products].

In the survey, 19 questions were asked to rate their responses on a scale of 1 to 5, which included Yes/No questions and the Likert Five-Point-Scale. On a collection of point scales, such as a 4, 5, 6, or 7-point rating scale, the Likert rating scale is used in this survey to assess how strongly a person agrees or disagrees with an argument (Sekaran, 2016). A five-point scale was included in this study to make it easier to differentiate between values on a rating scale and to reduce measurement errors (Saunders M. N., 2011). All of the questions were straightforward, basic, and understandable, and the survey had been double-checked for accuracy. The survey was created for visitors to a website that provides specific services (<https://docs.google.com/forms/u/1/>). To complete the questionnaire, respondents received it via e-mails and social media messages. If they press the "Done" button, their answers are saved right away. The questionnaire includes an annex to this document. The survey results were statistically evaluated and presented in number figures using arithmetic average, ratio, norm, and other methods. Using charts, tables, and term explanations, the results are interpreted and described in a more straightforward manner.

3.6 Selection of participants

3.6.1 Sample size

The data collection was done through the management of the sample survey. The total number of answers provided sample data to evaluate this research and create new insights. Since this study uses the quantitative approach, a significant number of the responses sent must be obtained from the survey to achieve the best results. A reasonable sample size for 50 answers (VanVoorhis, 2007), is appropriate when the study aims to relate variables. By publishing a survey connect online via social media outlets, influencer supporters can be reached by conducting the sample and to share the survey with others online (Goodman, 1961), and publishing the survey to students MBA and PhD at Işık University, and social media sites with personal and public media accounts to avoid the possibility of sampling distortions that are minimized by the use of multiple distribution platforms.

The survey reached 150 participants, but only 120 of them completed the survey, which is higher than the previous 50 answers that were considered fair (VanVoorhis, 2007). This results in a response rate of 80% (Bryman, 2011), with the highest reporters expected to be 18–21%, because of the large number of questionnaire respondents, this study's analysis is crucial. Since they meet the data analysis program criteria, 120 people responded to the survey, 90 percent of sample are under 40 years of age and only 10 percent are above 40-60 years of age.

3.6.2 The study framework

The sampling method must include complete, specific, and current components that accurately represent the target population (Saunders M. N., 2011) (Malhotra, 2003). The sample frame for this analysis is determined by the study's intent. The aim of this study is to explain the relationship between influencer marketing and brand participation in terms of consumer sentiment and influencer purchase participation. Author's network of friends shared the sample frame with their friends, and it was based on students from Işık University, especially MBA and PhD students.

3.6.3 The study's terms

Some constants were generated based on how the questionnaires were conducted and how the participants were chosen. Certain standards have been developed based on the literature review and theoretical context. As a result, there's also a strong level of dependability and efficiency.

For this research, rich information will be provided by gathering the answers of the respondents. The following are the conditions:

- Customers whom were aware of influencer marketing.
- Consumers whom track influencers on media platforms.
- Consumers who change their minds about brands after hearing from influencers that they have a poor image.

Therefore, of the 120 respondents, 89.2% are following influencers on Instagram, and 10.8% are not. In the next section, analyzing the result of the responses of 120 participants is using Instagram. In the results chapter, you will find the demographic data for participants and their influencers.

3.7 Method of data analysis

Following the data analysis on the questioner's website, this knowledge was then analyzed with the aid of a software framework that performs advanced statistical analysis. SPSS or Statistical Kit for the Social Sciences, the name of the program by using linear regression analysis, the data were evaluated to see if there were any relationships between the dependent and independent variables. A critical alpha of 0.05 was used in all experiments.

3.8 Research quality

To avoid having a problem with a bad research thesis in the first place, the validity and reliability of the research thesis must be confirmed (Saunders M. N., 2011). Validity refers to the process of determining whether a description actually measures what it appears to (Bryman, 2011). The test date, whether it influences the

outcome, and whether there was a major incident that could change the test results are all obstacles to authenticity that should be overcome in order to ensure successful testing (Saunders M. N., 2011). If the people chosen to take the test are concerned about their job security, they may give incorrect answers in order to keep their current position (Saunders M. N., 2011). Even if a considerable amount of time has elapsed and significant incidents have happened during the study period, longevity and development have an effect on the credibility of the studies (Saunders M. N., 2011). The reliability of a study is determined by whether the variables used in the research are right and if the experiment can be replicated several times and yield the same results each time (Bryman, 2011).

3.8.1 Validity

To confirm that the study questions and survey questions are valid for this thesis, they must accurately reflect and cover the subject matter of the investigation (Bryman, 2011). For this study's content validity, a series of questions were asked of students who were familiar with the idea of influencers, as well as influencer operation managers, who were asked for their thoughts and input on the questionnaire and its method. The survey was revised and strengthened with this amount of funding in order to obtain the content of validity that this study needs. The survey questions were carefully developed in this study using the theoretical framework. It means that the study's principles should be equivalent to previous research in order for it to be accurate, and that convergent validity should be calculated. If influencer marketing has a favorable or negative effect on customers or brands, the criterion validity investigates whether, for example, the hypothesis indicates that influencers influenced consumer decisions, suggesting that brands are influenced by influencers, and whether this research has defined measure validity for the variable. (See APPENDIX 1).

3.8.2 Reliability

The study's reliability assesses how detailed and reliable it is, as well as how likely it is that the same findings will be obtained if the analysis were done again (Collis, 2014); (Saunders M. L., 2016) (Bell E. B., 2019). As a result, quantitative research strategies are more often correlated with reliability than qualitative research strategies (Golafshani, 2003); (Bell E. B., 2019). A survey was performed in relation

3.8.3 Ethical consideration

When conducting research, ethical considerations are crucial (Saunders M. L., 2016). Two critical considerations are the security of participants' identities and privacy, as well as the guarantee that the study has no effect on anyone involved in the process (Fink, 2003) (Mauthner, 2012). (M. L. Saunders, 2016). We introduced the survey by providing background information on the research process and stating that participation in the survey was entirely anonymous and that the results could not have been linked to a particular person.

Participants might leave the survey at any time according to the researchers, if people thought intruded or annoyed for some other cause when addressing a particular question. When performing social research, it's critical to ensure that the participants' consistency is unblemished, as well as that In the meantime, their privacy is secured (Bell E. B., 2019). Respondents were informed about how the findings would be analyzed and published in a master's thesis. When collecting data from individuals, it is critical to recognize the value of providing background information (Fink, 2003) **(See APPENDIX 2).**

CHAPTER 4

4. RESULTS

4.1 Profiles of demographics'

One hundred and twenty people took part in this research. Males made up 39.2% of the 120 participants, while females made up 60.8 percent (Table 4.1). The majority of the respondents were under the age of 60: under the age of 20 (19.2 percent), between the ages of 21 and 30, (42.5 percent), between the ages of 31 and 40 (28.3 percent), between the ages of 41 and 50 (9.2 percent), and between the ages of 51 and 60 (0.8 percent) (Table4.2). According to (Table 4.3), (14.2 percent) High School graduates, (21.7 percent) High Undergraduate graduates, (46.7 percent) graduates, and (17.5 percent) Ph.D. Students (44.2%), employees (25%) and other (17.5%), free-lance workers are the most common participants (8.3 %), according to the findings in (Table 4.4).

Q1: What's your gender?

Table 4-1 Gender Distribution of the Respondent

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALIDPERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT *
MALE	47	39.2	39.2%	39.2
FEMALE	73	60.8	60.8%	100
TOTAL	120	100	100	

*Cumulative percent = 39.2%+60.8%=100

Q2: How old are you?

Table 4-2: Age Distribution of the Respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
-20	23	19.2	19.2%	19.2
21-30	51	42.5	42.5%	61.7
31-40	34	28.3	28.3%	90
41-50	11	9.2	9.2%	99.2
51-60	1	0.8	0.8%	100
61	0	0	0	
TOTAL	120	100	100	

Q3: What's your education level?

Table 4-3: The Education Level of the Respondents

EDUCATION LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
HIGH SCHOOL	17	14.2	14.2%	14.2
UNDERGRADUATE	26	21.7	21.7%	35.9
GRADUATE	56	46.7	46.7%	82.6
PhD	21	17.5	17.5%	100.1
TOTAL	120	100.1	100.1	

Education Level :

120 responses

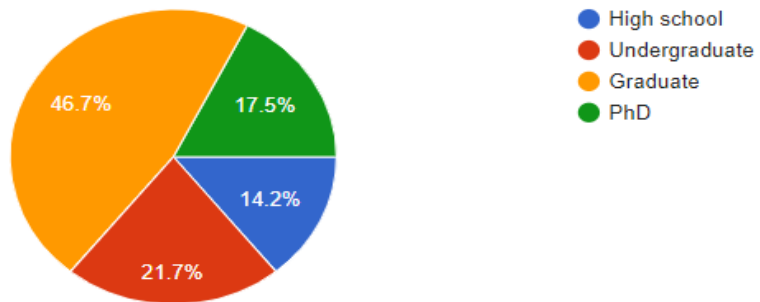


Figure 4-1: Educational Backgrounds

Q4: What's your profession?

Table 4-4: The Professions of the Respondents

PROFESSION	FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
STUDENT	53	44.2	44.2%	44.2
HOUSEWIFE	3	2.5	2.5%	46.7
WORKER	3	2.5	2.5%	49.2
FREE-LANCE	10	8.3	8.3%	57.5
EMPLOYEE	30	25	25%	82.5
OTHER	21	17.5	17.5%	100
TOTAL	120	100	100	

Profession :

120 responses

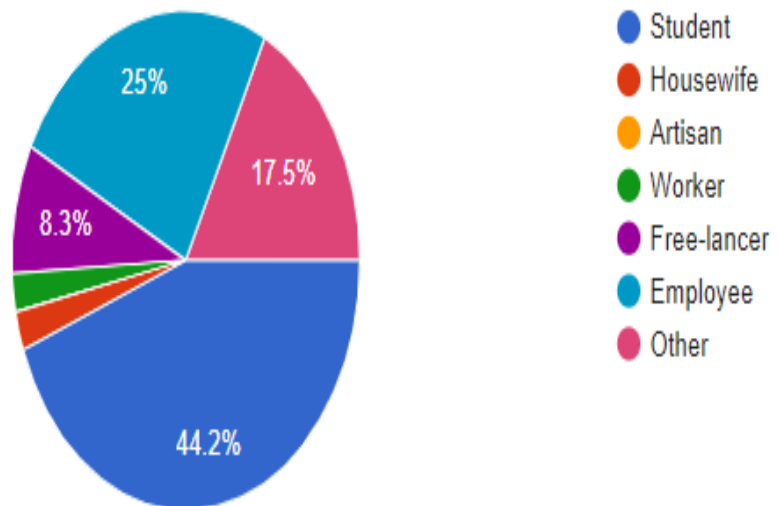


Figure 4-2: Professional Experience of the Respondents

4.2 Perception of consumers

4.2.1 Consumers perception on Instagram

The purpose of the first question asked by the respondents was to show that the sample was active on Instagram. Yes and no were the answers supplied to the question. A total of 107 respondents said yes, which is 89.2% of all respondents just 10.8% of those surveyed, or 13% of the total, said they did not use Instagram. According to the report, Instagram is their favorite social media site for following influencers (**Figure 4-3**).

Q1- Are you an active Instagram user?

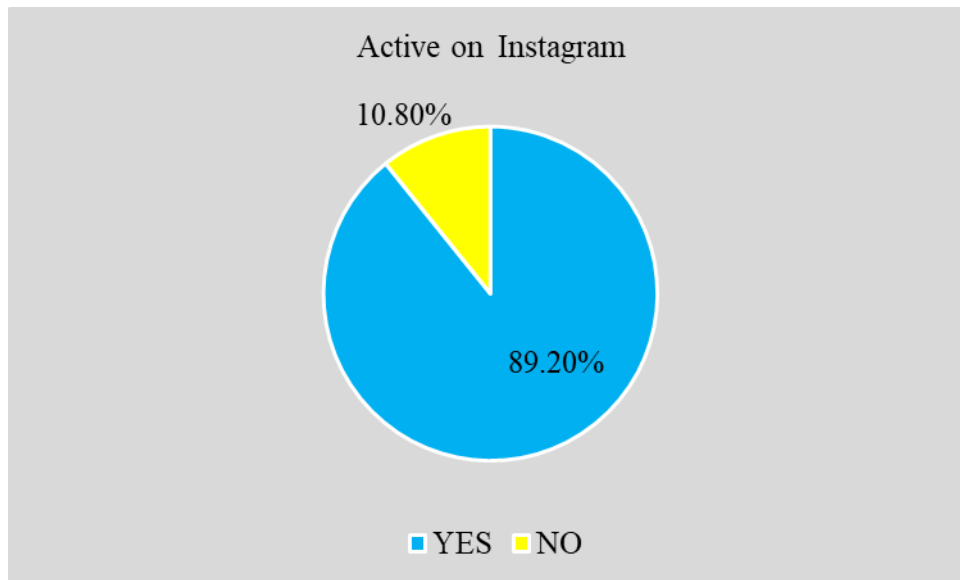


Figure 4-3: Respondents who are Active on Instagram

The survey was framed by this question: most respondents were active on Instagram. It was a general question to ensure that the participants understood the subject of the study.

The second question was posed by the respondents based on the study of how many audiences follow each influencer from the survey, 84.2% of all respondents said they followed an influencer while 15.8% said they did not follow the profile of any influencer on Instagram (**Figure 4-4**).

Q2 - Do you follow one or more social media influencers?

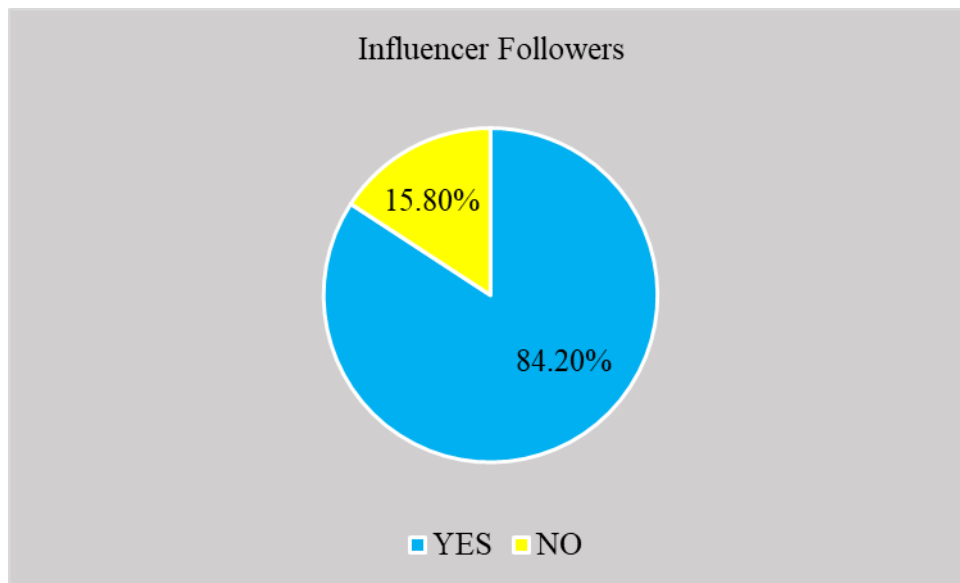


Figure 4-4: The Percentage of Influencers Followers

Yes and no were the responses to the question, which allowed researchers to look into the number of people who follow influencers on Instagram. The majority of respondents follow influencers, according to the results. This implies that the majority of respondents are a possible target to reinforce online word-of-mouth marketing power.

4.2.2 Influencers effect on consumers

The majority of respondents reported that they do not buy a product that is endorsed by influencers (51.7%), and that they do buy a product that is endorsed by influencers (48.3%) (Figure 4.5) Even the majority said no, but that does not mean they are not attracted by a product /brand which is endorsed by the influencer, the results in (table 4-5) display that (45.8%) of respondents are (agreed, totally agree) and (21.7%) have disagreed, totally disagree.

The influencers affected the consumers when they switch from regular products or brand to new ones when they're the favorite influencer promoted the product (50%) of them have agreed, while that (26.7%) have disagreed.

Q3- Do you buy a product which is endorsed by influencers?

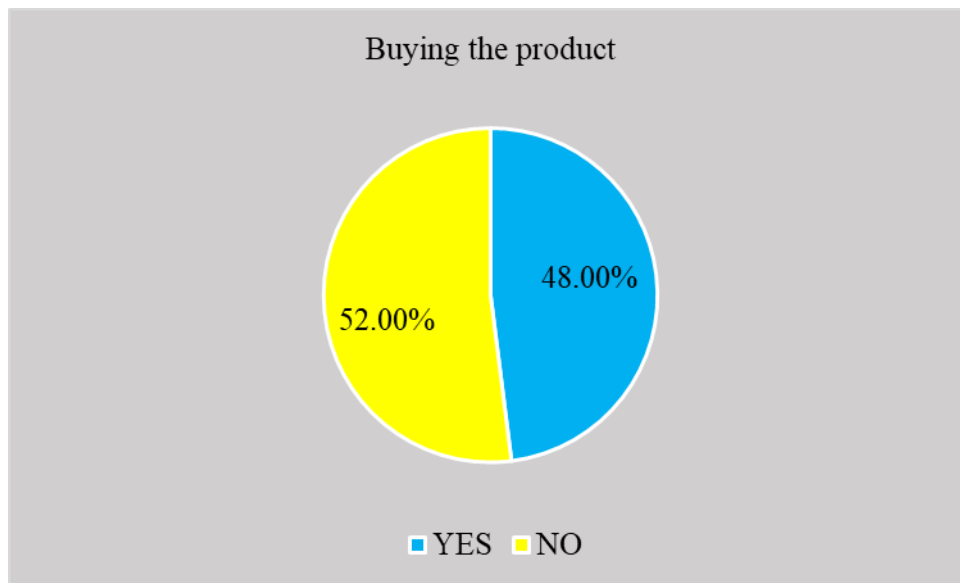


Figure 4 -5: The Percentage of Consumers who Buy the Products

Q4-I- Do you get attracted by a product/brand which is endorsed by an influencer?

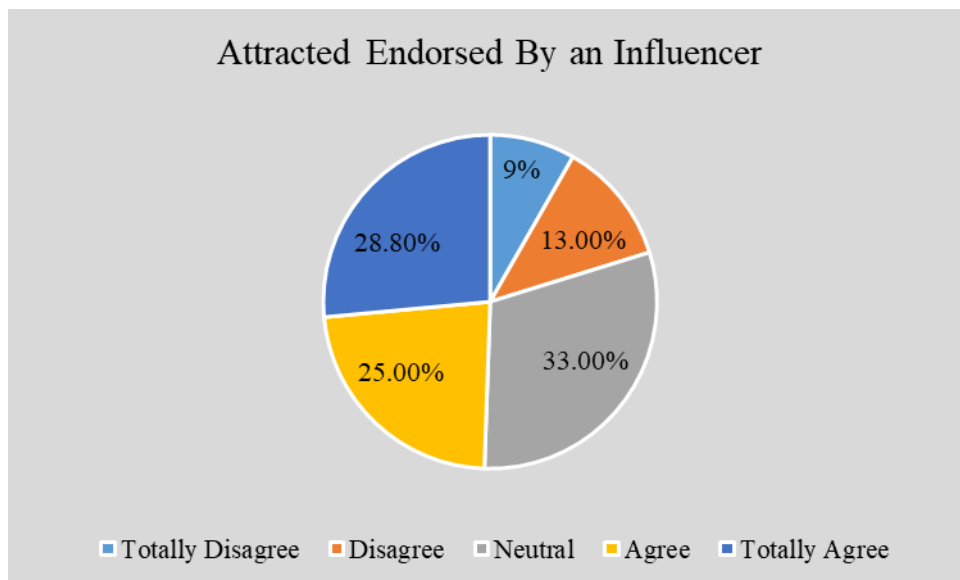


Figure 4- 6: Consumers Attracted Endorsed By an Influencer

This survey helped to analyze the number of respondents who are attracted to products endorsed by Instagram influencers. The responses to the question have

disagreed, agree, and neutral. The outcome suggests that the majority of respondents are interested in influencer-endorsed brands. Even the majority of respondents are neutral, but 45.80 percent support and fully agree with the outcome.

Q6- I would switch from my regular products to a new product which will be endorsed by my favorite influencer or celebrity.

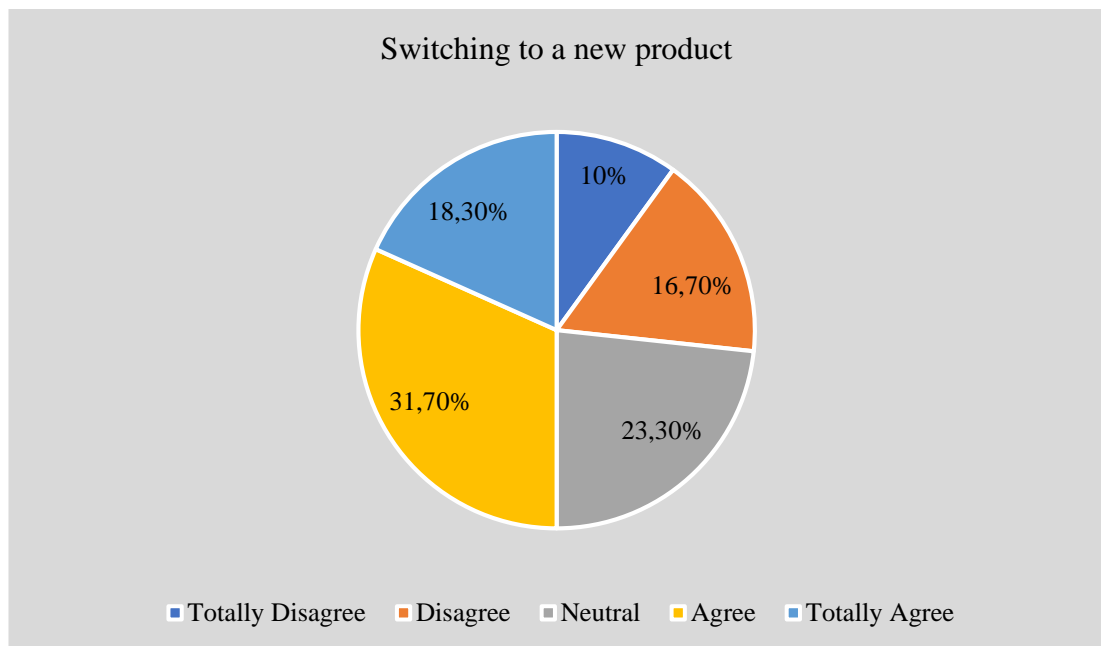


Figure 4-7: Consumer's Switching to a New Product

4.3- Positive social media influencers relationship with consumers

In this part, I add the positive effect of influencers on consumers. The question seven in the questionnaire found that the presence of influencers help the consumers to recognize a brand, 84 respondents totally agree (70%), neutral (14.2%), and (15.9%) have disagreed. See (Figure 4-8).

Q7- Presence of an influencer helps me in recognizing a brand.

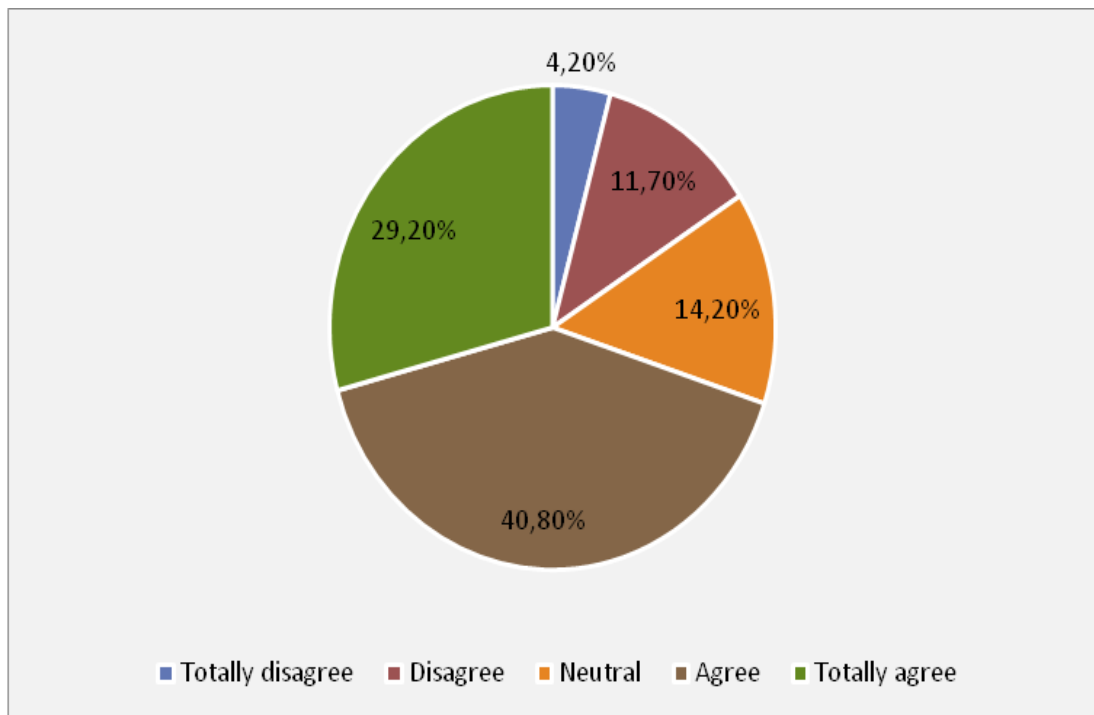


Figure 4- 8: Recognition of the Brands

Question 10 shows if the influencer recommends brands or products on Instagram the consumers more likely to try them. The findings of the question show up 70 respondents totally agree (58.3%), (16.7) neutral, and (25%) have disagreed. **(Figure 4-9).**

Q10- If my favorite influencer recommends a brand / product on Instagram; I am more likely to try it.

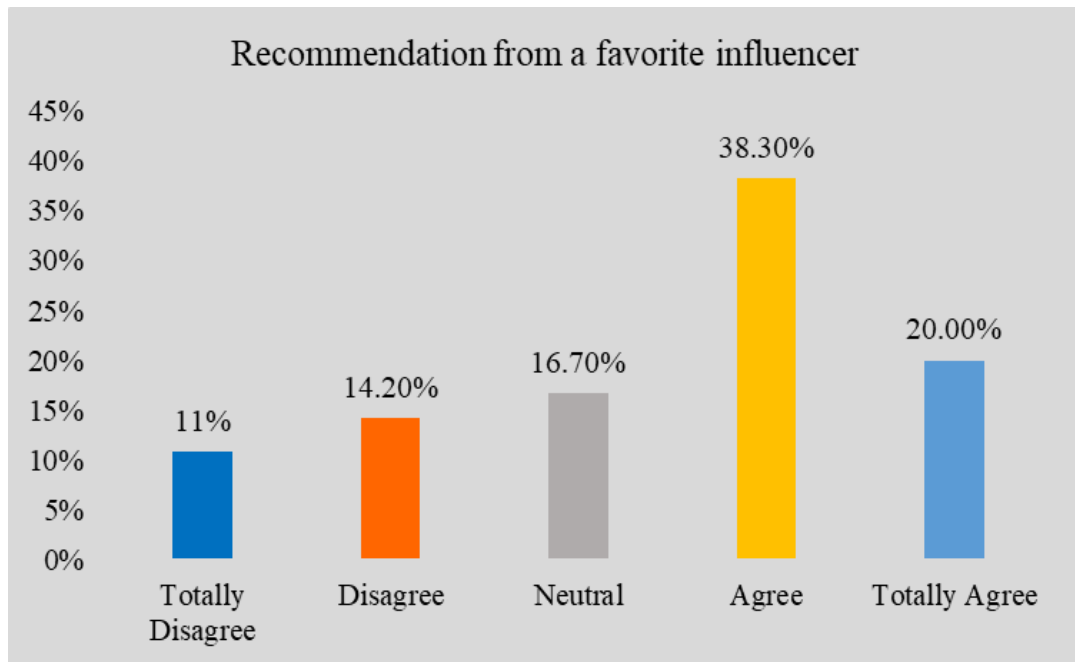


Figure 4 -9: Recommendation From a Favorite

Figure 4-10 illustrates in percent those influencers help consumers to remember a brand/product, the findings show that (69.1%) have totally agreed, neutral (17.5), and (13.3%) totally disagree. The interpretation of this results in the consumer's adaptation on Instagram influencers.

Q13 -Influencers help me more to remember a brand/product.

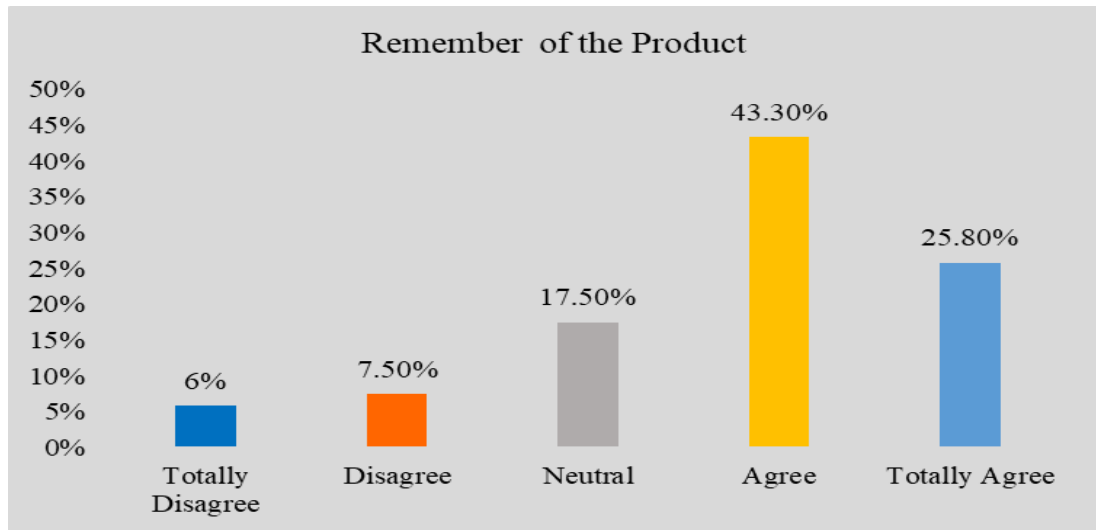


Figure 4 -10: Consumer’s Remembrance of the Product

Question 14 indicates that the majority of the respondents (70.8%) totally agree that the influencers give them a positive image of brands when are endorsed products, while (18.3%) are neutral, and just (10.9 %) have totally disagreed.

Q14- My favorite influencers give a positive image to the endorsed brand

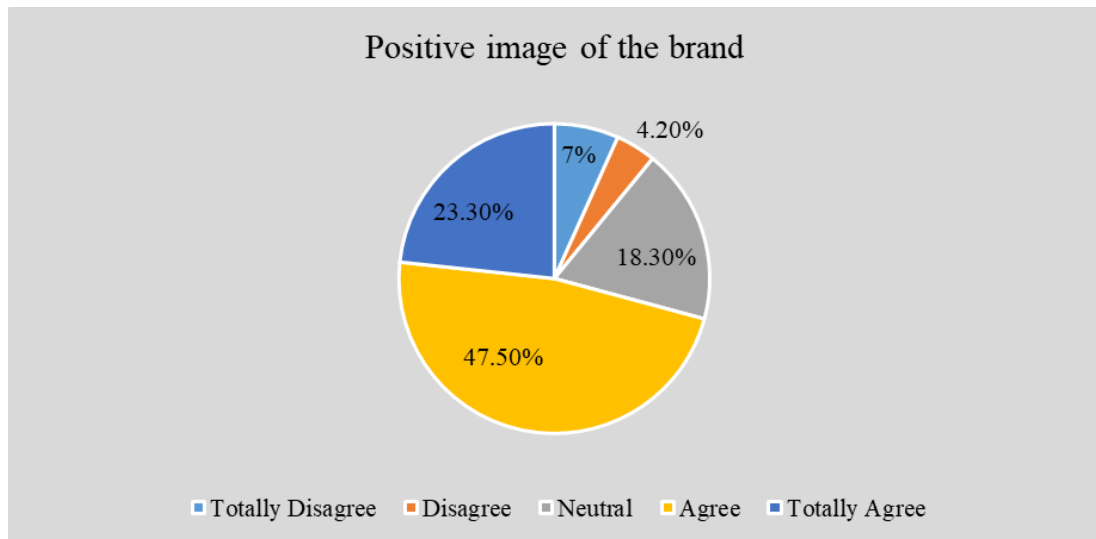


Figure 4 -11: Positive Image of the Brand

Question17 illustrates in percent the respondents are no different between who are totally agreeing (36.7%), and while who is totally disagree (36.6%). In this case, the influencers' endorsement is an important factor for consumer's decision.

Q17- I think influencer's endorsement is an important factor when I made my decision.

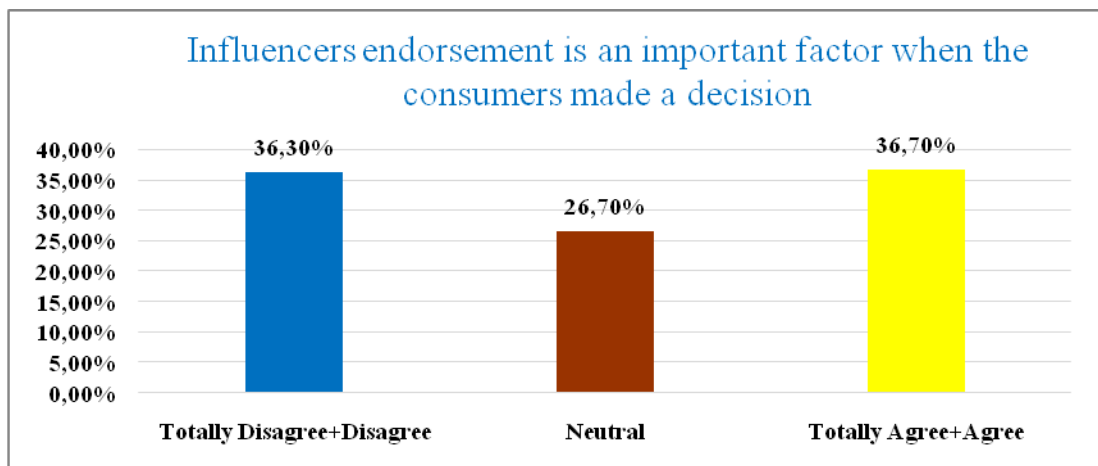


Figure 4 -12: Effect on Decision of Consumers

4.4 Influencers as a new strategy of advertising in brand marketing

In this part, the effect of advertisements of promotional products will be investigated. The following four figures description the results.

Question 5 displays the respondent's opinions about an advertisement by influencers on social media are more effective than those which don't have. The majority (63.3%) said to agree, while is (13.3%) was to disagree, and (23.3%) neutral.

Q5- I do think that ads having influencers on social media are more effective than those which don't have?

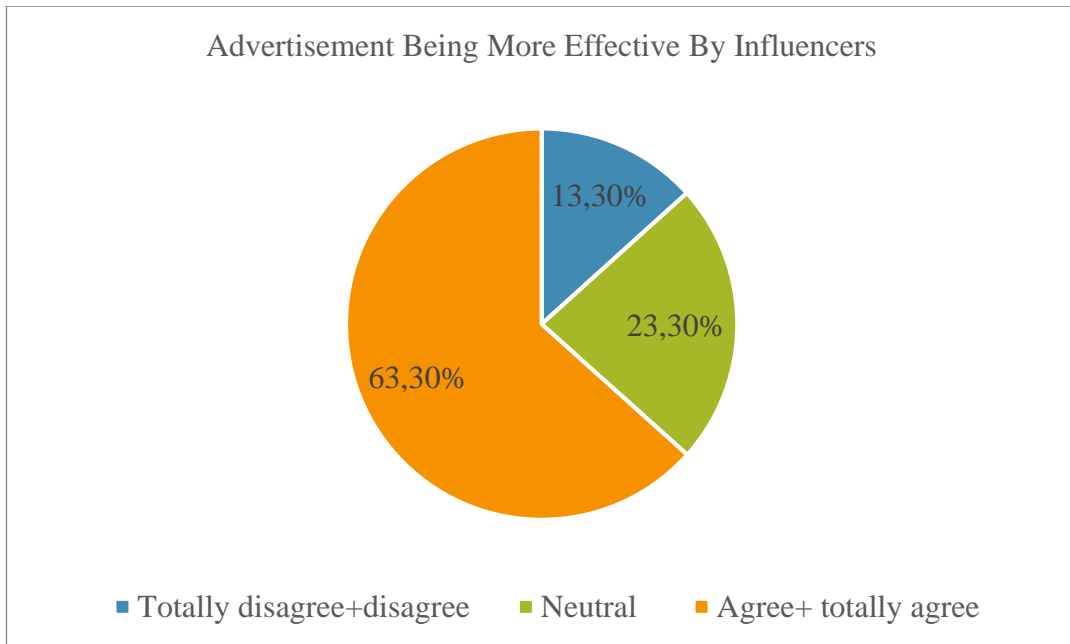


Figure 4 -13: Advertisement Being More Effective By Influencers

Q8 - Claims made in advertisements by influencers are reliable

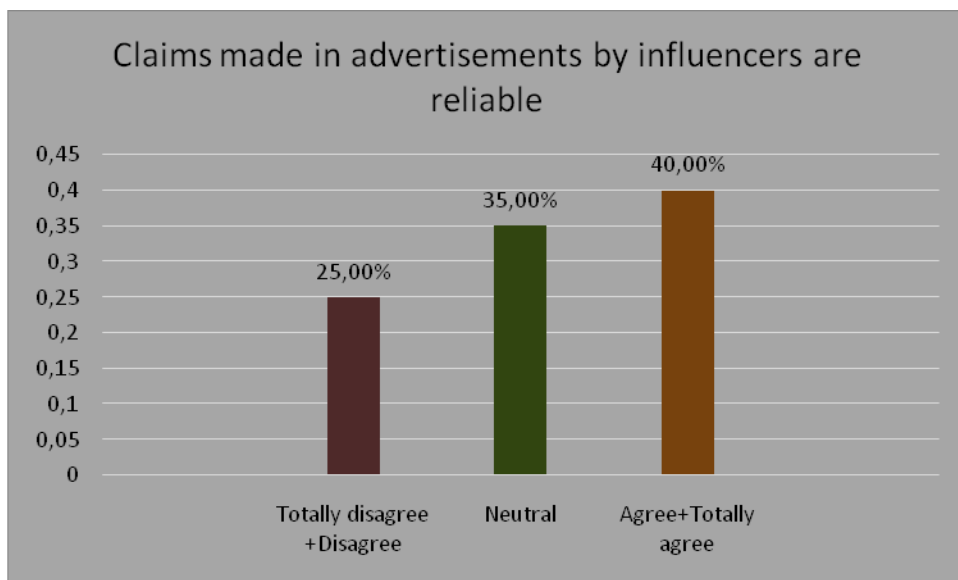


Figure 4 -14: Claims Made In Advertisement That Are Reliable

Figure 4-14 displays the opinions of participants, (40%) are agreed, neutral (35%), and (25%) disagree.

In the following questions shown below (9 and 12), they explained that influencers used the product endorse and the products they share with followers are interesting. The result in question 9, (44.2%) totally agreed, (28.3%) is neutral, and (27.5%) have disagreed. (Figure 4-15). Question 12 displays that respondents see the products are promoting by influencers are interesting. (45%) totally agree, while (35%) is neutral, and (20%) disagree (Figure 4-16).

Q9- Influencers also use products they endorse

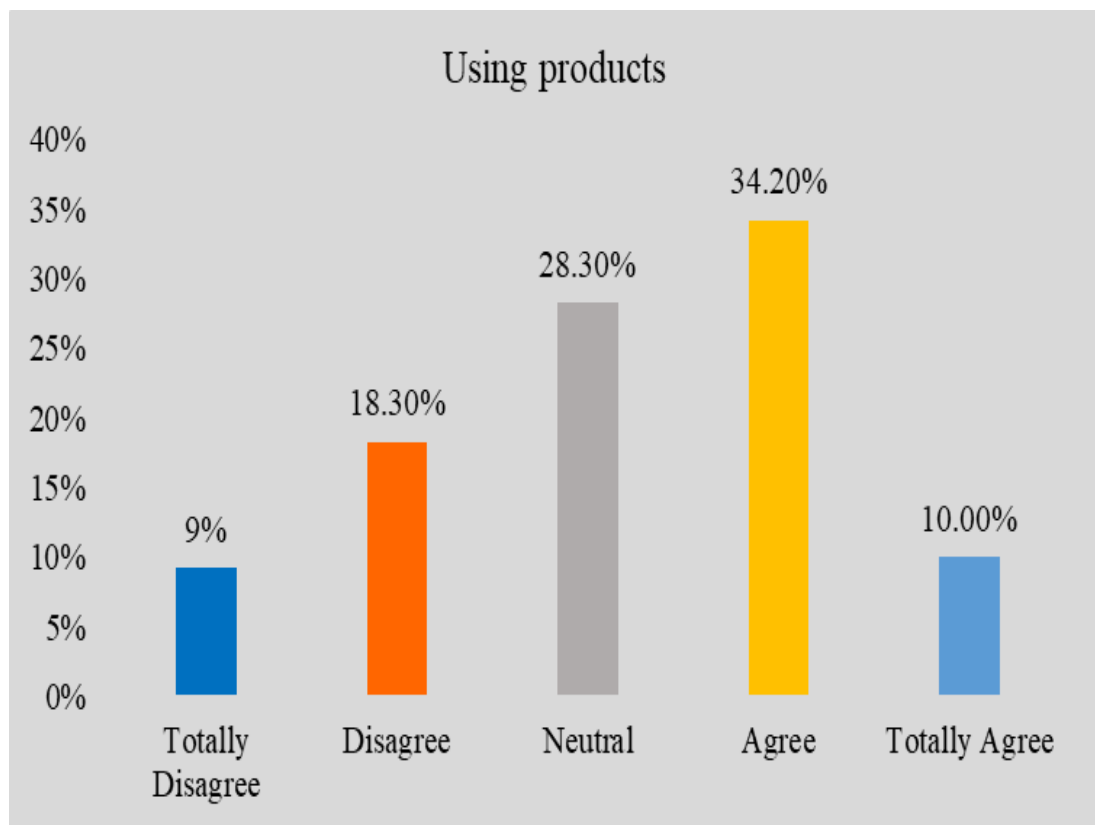


Figure 4 -15: Influencers Who Are Using the Products

Q12- I find product endorsed by influencer is interesting

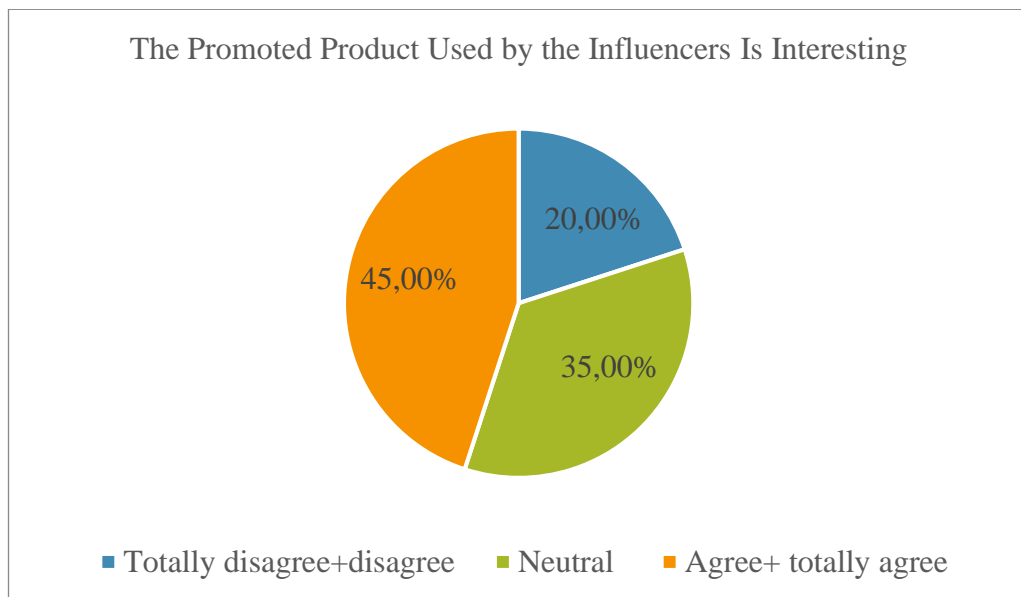


Figure 4 -16: Promoted Product Used by the Influencers

4.5 The negative image of influencers

In this part of the analysis, there are three questions on the negative image of the influencers and the view of consumers towards brands. The brand image is affected by these issues. The consequence of these questions displayed in question 11, if a hated influencer would endorse a brand often bought, does this change the interests of consumers. (55%) strongly disagree, (20%) is neutral, and (25%) agreed.

Q11- If an influencer I disliked would be endorsing a brand I often purchase, this changes my interest.

Consumers don't change their buying interest when they don't like influencers supporting their favorite brand.

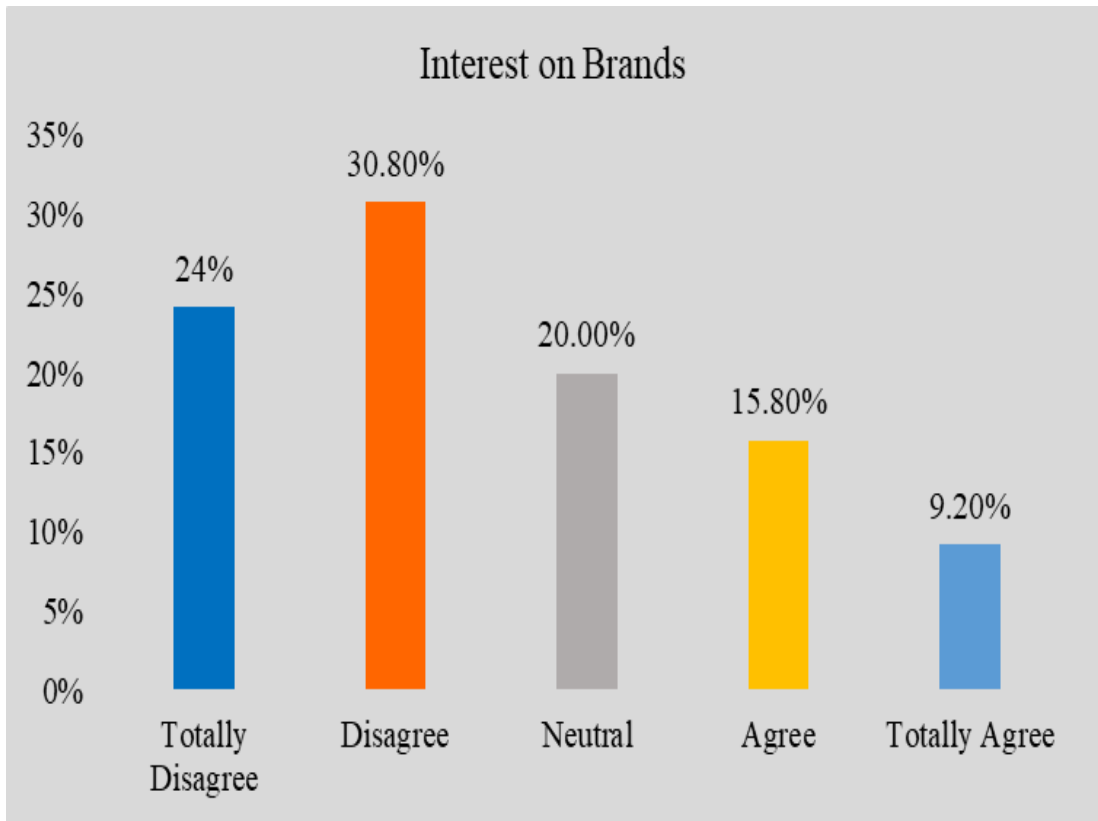


Figure 4 -17: The Percentage of Consumers Keep Their Interest on Brands

The question fifteen illustrates that negative publicity about an influencer can influence the decision of the consumers of buying brands. The analysis of the answer displays in figure (4-18), is (45.9%) it disagreed, (23.3%) is neutral, and (30.8%) was agreed.

Q15- Negative publicity about an influencer’s endorser can influence my decision of buying a brand.

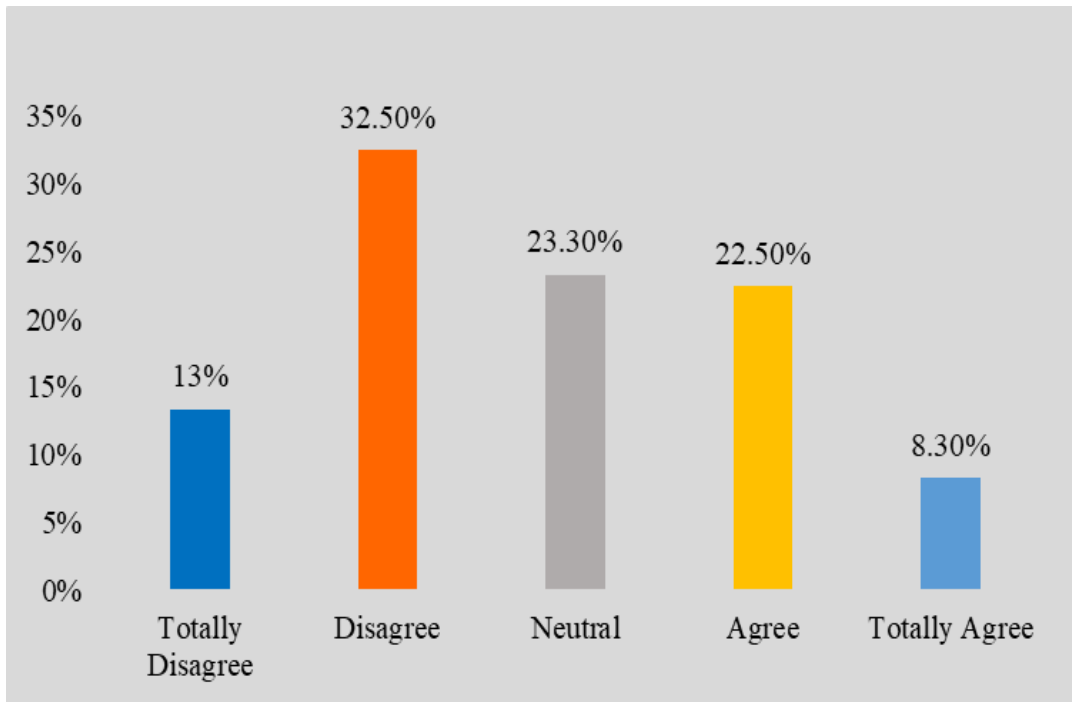


Figure 4 -18: The Negative Reputation of the Influencers

Figure 4-19 shows respondents whether they will stop buying a brand if the favorite influencer or supporting celebrity is involved in the scandal. The majority of respondents disagree (50.8%) and (24.2%) neutral, while (25%) agree.

Q16-I will stop buying a brand of my favorite influencer or celebrity endorsing it gets involved in the scandal.

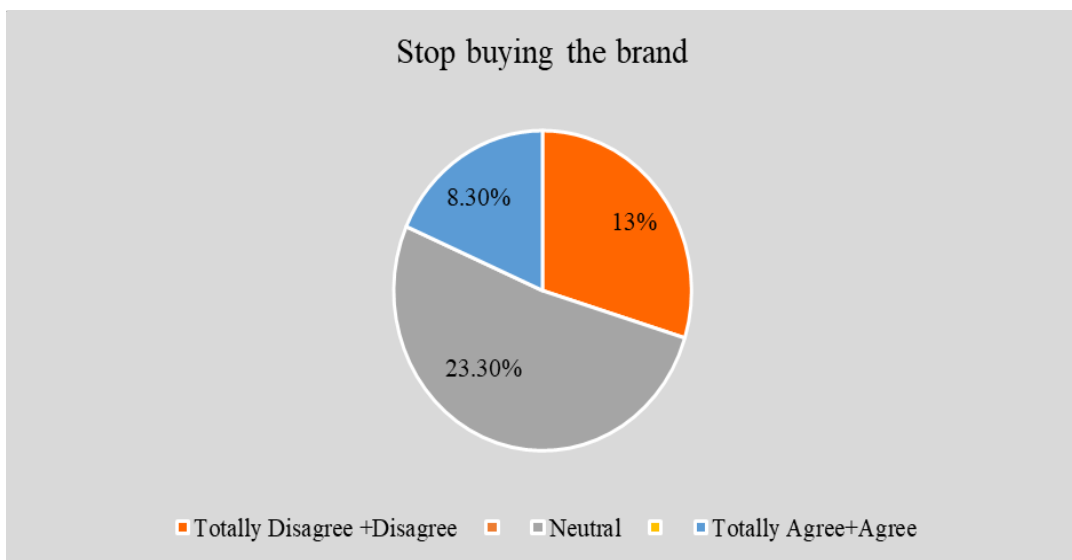


Figure 4 -19: Consumers Stop Buying the Brand

4.6 Influencers are important for social media marketing

Question 18 in the survey displays the answer to that question. The majority of respondents are totally agreed (78.3%) that influencers are important for marketing on social media especially Instagram, while (8.3%) was disagreed.

Q18- Influencers are important for marketing on social media.

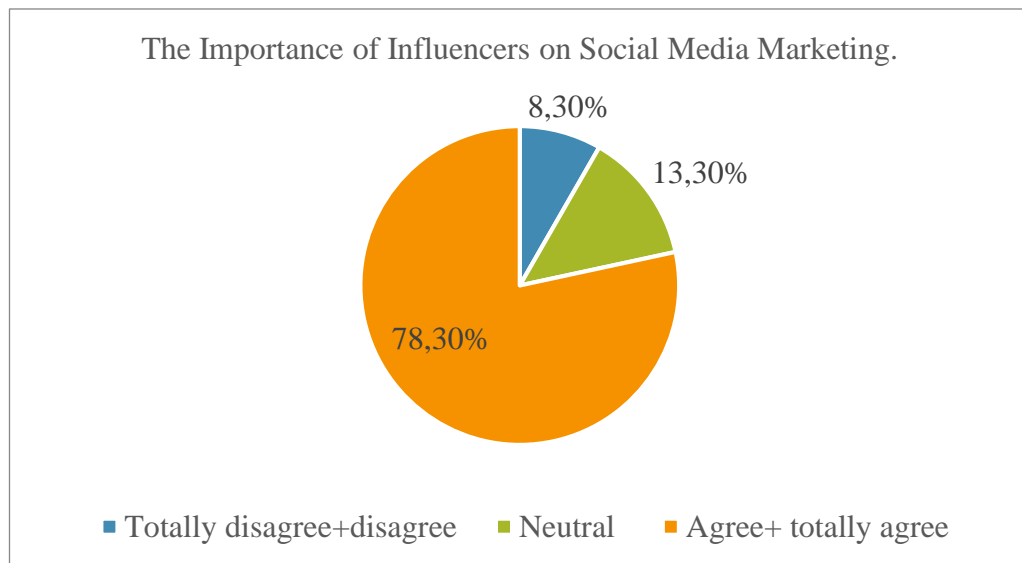


Figure 4- 20: The Importance of Influencers on Social Media Marketing

4.7 The views of participants toward influencers

Question 19 is about the opinion of the participants of influencers marketing on social media.

These are some views of participants about influencer marketing:

- “Nowadays, all brands promote their products through social media influencers and ads”.
- “Even I am not following influencers, this type of marketing will become more common in the future hence an important area for observation.”
- “Influencers help a lot to get an idea about the product that they endorse.”
- “I am not sure whether they are affecting consumers' purchase choices.”

- ✚ “Influencers are nowadays considered a new channel for marketing new products and can convey good information to their followers. They are working so hard to try products and judge them and are making their efforts to send always the purpose to their fans.”
- ✚ “It’s effective, but brands should choose wisely influencers.”
- ✚ “They help to make brands known to the world. There are so many good products I would've never known existed if it wasn't because of influencers. That said, there are very few influencers whose words I actually trust when they are sponsored by a brand. And I definitely wouldn't buy a product just because many influencers are talking about it. Sponsorships are not that genuine.”
- ✚ “I don't take influencers' opinions into consideration (Ad situation), because I know really well that they promote the product just to get paid.”
- ✚ “The influencer's marketing can help their followers to find and try new products that they didn't know before, so they can make their life easier.”
- ✚ “Most of the influencers will promote whatever just for making money. So, one must be careful who to follow. “
- ✚ “To be honest, I don't believe in many influencers, for this reason, I won't believe influencers marketing in social media; of course, they have an effect on marketing as I see but not on me.”
- ✚ “I think that influencers have an active role in order to affect the buying behavior of their followers I can't say that I am really into buying a product that influencers post on their accounts, but I can say that they help me have an opinion about the brands and products. Some influencers that I trust have a positive impact on me about having awareness about some brands. “
- ✚ “Influencers play a vital role in brand endorsement because their fan-following really catches the eye of what they represent.”
- ✚ “Make sure the influencer represents your niche to the highest levels. It can set your project straight to success or failure whether the influencer is a part of your targeted audience or not. In my humble opinion of course.”
- ✚ “It depends on how much I do trust the influencer and also how much often he or she tries to promote products like there are so many influencers that just I

don't trust anymore because they are publishing thousands of products every day. “

- ✚ “I think influencer marketing is very important at this time.”
- ✚ “I think it is necessary to reach a large circle of customers, It is kind of Marketing used nowadays, regarding the big influence of social media on the customer's orientation.”
- ✚ “It’s a good way to advertise your product but of course, you should choose a trustable influencer for your product/service.”
- ✚ “Most of the influencers talk positively about a product just because they get paid for it. This doesn't make me believe all the comments they say about it when an influencer doesn't make a lot of ads to brands, we can understand that the influencer may be right about what he says, and he makes us believe that it is his personal point of view. But overall, influencers help brands to raise and make them known the fastest way ever. Either they are good or not. I totally agree with this idea of influencer marketing, except that users will have to be careful before buying products. It's not always true what we see on social media.”
- ✚ “We should not believe everything they say, they are not always trust-worthy profit is always their number 1 priority.”
- ✚ “Social media marketing is very important because through this normal people can run easily their own business.”
- ✚ “It depends on the credibility of the influencer and social position a poor influencer won't deny \$1500 for a story of him talking about a brand.”
- ✚ “An influencer is an early adopter of new products and services, creating desire amongst their audiences.”
- ✚ “Influencer promotes the brand better than ads.”
- ✚ “For me, I don't get influenced by social media influencers when I like a brand, I will buy it that's all. It's similar to celebrity ads on TV but more personal as we follow these influencers mostly on the daily basis.”
- ✚ “Personally, I don't get influenced by people active on social media; maybe they help me get more information about some product. I mean I should try the product and then give my own opinion, day by day that social media becomes full of publicizes, and we shouldn't believe everything we see and hear, especially makeup and beauty because everyone going to rate it differently. Another point

sometimes we can really be influenced if the person or the influencer is really interested and worthy. Personally, I don't get influenced and when I really want to try something I ask people near to me, family, and friends. Influencers can lie only for money and personal staff.”

CHAPTER 5

5. DISCUSSION

This thesis studies influencer marketing as a new strategic social media marketing strategy, which is to make promotion about the new products through word of the mouth and which reaches the users through social media by influencers. The aim of this study is to determine whether influencer marketing has the power to change the decision of customers' behavior about branding and whether it affects the brand image (awareness and perception) from the consumers' side.

The results indicate that influencer marketing especially in the situation of the influencers' involvement in a scandal or having a bad reputation; does not affect the brand (in terms of the consumer's relationship with the brand). Normally the consumer thinks that, the influencer is the main problem, not the brand; and this incident might occur after the promotion of the brand. Due to this situation, the company will cancel the agreement and change the influencer. Otherwise, consumers are interested and attracted by influencers who promote products in certain collaboration with brands, when analyzing the results.

The study adds some insight to our understanding on the relationship between customers and influencers. Consumers find it difficult to trust influencers when it comes to their opinions on brands' goods and services. This may also clarify one of the studies other findings: Consumers follow a variety of influencers in order to obtain a variety of sources of knowledge from which to make a buying decision, as

They tend to take their time deciding which product to purchase.

In this thesis, the main research question about the subject is first established and studied. Two sub research questions are elaborated to find answers to main research question. The first question is: Is influencer marketing a new marketing strategy that is helpful for the customers to choose a brand and purchase it accordingly? Consistent with presented findings 84 % of consumers are following one or more than one influencer on social media, especially on the most used application which is the Instagram.

When the participants are asked if they buy products endorsed by influencers, they answered by 48 % that they do, and by 52 % they do not. When the percentage of people who buy the products when the influencer shares them and those who are not is examined, slight difference of 4 % is determined between these two categories. This outcome doesn't mean that people are not attracted by influencers when they endorse new product of brands. A number of people are seen switching from their usual items to a new one when it is recommended by a famous influencer or by celebrity. On the other hand, the influencer is helping the people to find more products when brands launch a new one and help them to remind the brands.

Furthermore, the consumers share opinions on social media about the products which have been promoted by influencers and which they are using 44 % of participants have seen that influencers are using the product and this is making them feel confident in purchasing products because of the influencers. Consumers rely on influencer recommendations in 49 % of cases. It has been demonstrated how important social media influences are for brands to connect with their customers. Not only 49 % of customers do depend on influencer tips, but 40 % of them have also bought something after seeing it on social media sites like Twitter, YouTube, or Instagram. Consumers are more likely to make a purchase if they trust on influencer's suggestion. Influencers' trust can be leveraged by brands (Marketing, 2018) and give opinions if the product is good or bad, but this does not mean that all influencers say the truth about the product because some of them promote the products just for their personal benefit (money).

The second question of the research paper is: How influencer marketing is affecting consumer's decisions for certain brands? Influencers do not have a negative impact effect on the brand, but rather have a positive effect on the commercial side. Most consumers had answers and ideas about the influencers having a positive influence on them in terms of reminding them of known and unknown new products. As well as caring about their interest in the brand and they also attempt to introduce the product them, and help them to make their decisions in terms of buying the product offered by influencers.

It is noticed that the advertisements provided by the influencers are new marketing strategy and in an innovative idea in commercial and industrial terms. The majority of the respondents in this survey expressed their interest and attract by influencers to promote a product. Also, they're helping them to recognize and reminded the brand. The majority of respondents were not affected when the influencers had a negative or scandalous image, so this means that the brand is not affected by these topics.

As a conclusion of the discussion of the results in general, the influencers have a positive influence on the consumer decision and the brand, and they do not affect them negatively.

5.1 Implication theory

This research study contributes to the fields of influencer marketing, social media marketing and consumer purchasing buying decision. It adds the value of consumer, which has received great attention in marketing in recent years. The thesis is providing results about the theory deducted from the answers given to these research questions. The extent of this theory is compared with some previous articles that were reviewed and which are related with marketing influencers. The majority of the articles are focused on issues that are related with consumers who are affected by an event such as tourism or by cosmetic sector or about Instagram influencers.

Influencer marketing helps the consumers in making their decision in terms of products, and gives them a clear idea that helps to understand and clarify the new product that posed is launched through brands or companies.

The theory of influencers who help the consumers is indicated by the results, as well as the commercial safety. Following that, it is discovered from the literature review that many studies show that the content and recommendations of influencers have resulted positively in brand recognition, brand attitude, and purchase intention (Djafarova, 2017). It is indicated that advertisements published by influencers have a higher positive impact than traditional firm advertisements. The results also back up one of the most powerful aspects of influencer marketing; word-of-mouth marketing (WOM) when compared to traditional marketing, the creation of positive WOM and other interpersonal sources have a considerable impact on consumer decisions (Goldsmith, 2008).

6. CONCLUSION

This master thesis aimed to determine whether influencers on social media are affecting the consumers who are following them, and whether they are affecting the consumers in changing their decisions about the brand. Hence, this study tried to determine consumer's points of view.

Based on the quantitative analysis of consumer's points of view about influencers, it can be concluded that influencers are helping consumers to remember the brands, and they are attracting consumers towards the brand. The results indicate that consumers believe that promoting which is done by influencers is interesting and good for understanding the products.

It can be concluded from this research; the consumers are not changing their decisions about some products or brands when the influencer had a bad reputation or involved in a scandal in their life. In the analysis of consumers' opinions, the majority are not affected by influencers in this respect because they see that brands are not involved in this incident or scandal.

Based on these conclusions, the influencer should spend more effort on their image and conduct more searches about marketing, because the consumers appreciate time and creativity spent on a new product when it comes to purchasing it.

6.1 Limitations and suggestion for future research

The limitation that is faced during the research part of this thesis is about not to be able to see the big picture in this subject. We could not gather qualitative data in terms of the interviews with companies and marketing influencers. The reason behind this limitation is because of some answers from brands and influencers were needed and they responded to neither the e-mail nor the messages which have been sent to them on Instagram, even the agencies have not responded in this case, any of these data that could not be gathered. This situation caused difficulty for interviews even in terms of online meetings. Letters were sent to several influencers in Turkish, Arabic, French, and English. However, only two or three of them responded to being insufficient for this study and not effective in terms of results.

Social media marketing is not a new aspect and it is always changing and evolving. There are many journals/articles on this topic but very few links social media with the changes in consumer side. The study is presented in a general manner.

Sample size was comparably small in terms of generalizability of the data. Sample size should be increased as it would cover more people in the society and help create a better and accurate set of results. Besides, the sample size of participants is 90 percent under 40 years of age, only 10 percent are above 40-60 years of age. In this research, we cannot generalize the findings to all age groups.

As cultures and values change from country to country, consumer's point of views may also vary. A study involving many countries can also be conducted on this topic for more accurate and generalized results. The study was limited to a specific time period, i.e., march 2021. Thus, it cannot be used to analyze behavior over a period of time; as the timing is not guaranteed to be representative.

In order to increase the level of focus of the study, objectives can be narrowed down and the research only contains information on what needs to be studied considering the objectives.

Future researches can be conducted through direct interviews with influencers, as this study is likely to be influenced by the continuous development of technology and social media platforms, another interesting aspect of future research could be looking at the different levels of consumer engagement on social media.

Influencer marketing dates back to medieval times, with fictional characters, celebrities in TV commercials, radio stations, reality shows, and social media, and more. It collects both praise and complaints. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many influencers have come under fire for their lack of self-awareness and ignorance of their privileges. While there is much debate about influencer marketing, about its effects on audiences and what it stands for, it doesn't seem to be going anywhere. For future research, I suggest researching influencer marketing in the COVID-19 period, if consumers are discovering more about influencers? If the influencers marketing are damaged in this crisis? What are the negative and positive properties influencers doing in the Covid-19 wave? Amidst the current issues that we are experiencing due to Covid-19, has the popularity of social media marketing increased?

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APPENDIX 1: CRONBACH'S ALPHA

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.894	.896	15

APPENDIX 2: FROM SPSS

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	120	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	120	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

APPENDIX 3: Confidentiality statement

the impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brands. As a survey

Dear participants,

I invite you to participate in a research study on title "the impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brand" As Survey. I am in the process of conducting primary research in the form of a survey.

The propose of the research is to determine the factors that affect the trustworthiness brands of influencers marketing as perceived by Instagram.

The completion of the following questionnaire will take approximately 10 minute. The participation is on a voluntary basis and there are no know risks to participation. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous, if you agree to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible.

APPENDIX 4: QUESTUIONNAIRE /SURVEY

The impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brands. As a survey

Dear participants,

I invite you to participate in a research study on title "the impact of influencer marketing as a new strategy for brand" As Survey. I am in the process of conducting primary research in the form of a survey.

The propose of the research is to determine the factors that affect the trustworthiness brands of influencers marketing as perceived by Instagram.

The completion of the following questionnaire will take approximately 10 minute. The participation is on a voluntary basis and there are no know risks to participation. Your responses will remain confidential and anonymous, if you agree to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible.

Gender:

For below questions, please check the appropriate reply.

- Female
- Male

Age:

- 20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60

Education Level:

- High school
- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- PhD

Profession:

- Student
- Housewife
- Artisan
- Worker
- Free lance
- Employee

- Other

1. Are you an active Instagram user?

Please answer below questions by YES or NO.

- Yes
- No

2. Do you follow one or more social media influencers?

- Yes
- No

3. Do you buy a product which is endorsed by influencers?

- Yes
- No

4- I do get attracted by a product/brand which is endorsed by an influencer.

Please reply below questions as per Likert Scale which is ; 1 - Totally disagree ; 2- Disagree; 3 - Neutral ; 4 - Agree; 5 - Totally agree.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5- I do think that ads having influencers on social media are more effective than those which don't have?

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6- I would switch from my regular products to a new product which will be endorsed by my favorite influencer or celebrity.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7- Presence of an influencer helps me in recognizing a brand.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8- Claims made in advertisements by influencers are reliable.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9- Influencers also use products they endorse.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10- If my favorite influencer recommends a brand / product on Instagram I am more likely to try it.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11- If an influencer I disliked would be endorsing a brand I often purchase, this changes my consumer interests.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12- I find product endorsed by influencer is interesting

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13- Influencers help me more to remember a brand /products.

1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14- My favorite influencers give a positive image to the endorsed brand

1

2

3

4

5



15- Negative publicity about an influencer's endorser can influence my decision of buying a brand.

1

2

3

4

5



16- I will stop buying a brand if my favorite influencer or celebrity endorsing it gets involved in scandal.

1

2

3

4

5



17- I think influencer's endorsement is an important factor when I made my decision.

1

2

3

4

5



18- Influencers are important for marketing on social media.

1

2

3

4

5



19- Can you give us opinion about influencer marketing?

Curriculum Vitae

IBTISSAM GHAZI was graduated from The University of Legal, Economic, and Social Sciences with a Law Degree in 2012.

After then, she continued her study at the Office for Vocational Training and Work Promotion in 2012, graduated as a Specialized Technician in Travel Agencies in 2014.

In 2012, she did an internship at Ground Stop Operations Department in Royal Air Maroc, Rabat, Morocco. She also made another internship at Rabat Airport, Morocco under the Information Hostess theme in 2013.

She has started MBA program at Işık University, İstanbul Turkey in 2019 and completed master's degree in 2021.