

https://dspace.org/

The impact of social media influencer attributes on brand awareness and on the strength of brand associations and the effects on consumers, using the AIDA model

Kholoane, Lebogang

2020
https://hdl.handle.net/10539/37099

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/



Title

The impact of social media influencer attributes on brand awareness and on the strength of brand associations and the effects on consumers, using the AIDA model

A research report submitted to fulfil requirements of the course

BUSA7364A: Research Methodology course submitted by

Lebogang Kholoane

0113208R

for the degree MMSM

Supervisor

Dr. Y. K Saini

ABSTRACT

The power of social media has been experienced in various ways and in the last few years, social media has seen a sharp increase in the use of social media influencers, who are regarded as experts in their respective fields. Some consumer brands have realised the powerful impact of social media influencers to their brands, which has seen well-known social media influencers endorsing certain brands.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact that social media influencer attributes have on brand awareness and the strength of brand associations. The study further investigated the relationship between social media influencer attributes and the impact on consumers, using the AIDA hierarchy of effects model. The dimensions of the hierarchy of effects model (HOE model) that are based on the AIDA model are attention, interest, desire, and action. The study investigated which social media influencer attributes impacted brand awareness and strength of brand associations, and how these brand elements have an effect on consumers in terms of consumer attention, interest, desire and action.

The methodology used in the study was a self-administered electronic questionnaire that focussed on the following constructs: social media attributes; strength of brand associations; brand awareness; attention, intention, desire, and action. The requirement was that respondents had to be users of at least one of the three social networking sites, namely, Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram. The questionnaire was posted online on all three of the social media platforms. The number of respondents who completed the online survey is 217 social media users who completed the survey on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Hypotheses were formulated to test the relationship between the constructs.

By using a quantitative data analysis method, the results of the study showed that there is a positive correlation between attributes of social media influencers and brand awareness and brand association strength. The results also revealed that consumers are impacted by social media influencer attributes through consumers' awareness, interest, desire and purchase of promoted brands. It was recommended that future studies, which will have managerial impact, should include a bigger sample and should

make a comparison of various brands that are promoted by social media influencers who have contrasting attributes.

Keywords: AIDA Hierarchy of Effects, brand awareness, brand association strength, social media influencer attributes

DECLARATION

I, **Lebogang Kholoane** (student number **0113208R**), declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management in Strategic Marketing at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in this or any other University.

Lebogang Kholoane

Signed at…….

On the……day of…….20……

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Oarabile Kholoane, who has been my pillar of strength when I thought of giving up. You are the reason I overcame the challenges I faced while completing this report. Let your mother's dissertation be a reminder to you to be resilient in all circumstances and to put all your faith in God to see you through in whatever you are faced with in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to God the Almighty for guiding me and blessing me throughout my studies.

I would like to express special thanks to the following people who continuously supported me throughout my dissertation as the completion of this paper would not be possible without their encouragement:

- Thank you to my family for cheering me on when I thought I just could not do it anymore. My deep gratitude goes to Mapule, Conny, Thabelo, my dad Johannes and my dearest mom, Lumka, for encouraging me at all times.
- My supervisor, Dr Yvonne Saini. You were more than a supervisor to me, you provided me with invaluable lessons about life in general and your genuine concern about my wellbeing truly humbled me.
- Thank you to Emmanuel Quaye for your guidance in Dr Saini's absence. Your vision for my study renewed my confidence towards this report.
- Lastly, thank you to Dr Sam February, for not only editing my report but for helping me approach my work from a different perspective during the last stretch.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT ii

DECLARATION iv

DEDICATION v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vi

TABLE OF CONTENTS vii

LIST OF TABLES xiv

LIST OF FIGURES xvi

1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Purpose of the study 1

1.3 Context of the study 2

1.3.1 The use of Social Network Sites (SNS) in South Africa 2

1.3.2 Why people use SNS 3

1.3.3 Vehicle sales and marketing 4

1.4 Problem Statement 6

1.4.1 Main problem 6

1.4.2 Sub-problem 1 7

1.4.3 Sub-problem 2 7

1.4.1 Sub-problem 3 7

1.5 Research Questions 8
1.5.1 Research questions: Sub-problem 1 8
1.5.2 Research questions: Sub-problem 2 8
1.5.3 Research questions: Sub-problem 3 9
1.6 Significance of the study 9
1.7 Delimitations of the study 10
1.8 Definitions of terms 11
1.9 Assumptions 11
1.10 Conclusion 12
2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 13
2.1 Introduction 13
2.2 Brand Communications on SNS 13
2.3 Influencer Marketing 15
2.3.2 Six principles of persuasion 20
2.3.3 Proposed influencer attributes 21
2.4 Hierarchy of Effects Model 22
2.4.1 The AIDA Model 23
2.5 Brand Equity 25
2.5.1 Brand knowledge 26
2.6 Hypothesis Development 32

2.6.1 Influencer attributes, brand awareness and strength of brand associations 32
2.6.2 Consumer effects and influencer attributes 34
2.6.3 Consumer effects and brand awareness and image 36
2.7 Conceptual Model....38
2.8 Conclusion....38
3 CHAPTER 3: research methodology....40
3.1 Introduction....40
3.2 Research paradigm 40
3.3 Research design....41
3.4 Population and sample 42
3.4.1 Target population....42
3.4.2 Sampling frame 42
3.4.3 Sampling method....43
3.4.4 Sampling size 44
3.5 The research instruments....44
3.5.1 Research instrument items....45
3.6 Data Collection 46
3.7 Data Analysis 47
3.8 Study limitations 48
3.9 Validity and Reliability....49

3.9.1 Pilot testing 49
3.9.2 Results of the pilot study 50
3.10 Ethical Considerations 50
3.10.1 Anonymity and confidentiality: 51
3.11 Conclusion 51
4 CHAPTER 4: research results 52
4.1 Introduction 52
4.2 Descriptive Data Analysis 52
4.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS 52
4.2.2 SUB-PROBLEM 1 RESULTS: INFLUENCER ATTRIBUTES 57
4.2.3 SUB-PROBLEM 2 RESULTS: Consumer effects and influencer attributes 67
4.2.4 SUB-PROBLEM 3 RESULTS: Consumer effects, Brand awareness and strength of brand associations 72
4.2.5 SECTION E: CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA 77
4.2.6 INFLUENCERS 77
4.3 Reliability 78
4.3.1 The Cronbach Test 79
4.4 Conclusion 80
5 CHAPTER 5: discussion of results 83
5.1 Introduction 83

5.2 Demographic Results 83

5.1 Sub-problem 1 discussion 84

5.1.1 Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness. 85

5.1.2 Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations 86

5.2 Sub-problem 2 discussion 87

5.2.1 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer attention 87

5.2.2 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer interest 88

5.2.3 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer desire 89

5.2.4 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer action 90

5.3 Sub-problem 3 discussion 91

5.3.1 Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations 91

5.3.2 Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations 92

5.3.3 Consumer attention have a positive impact on strength of brand associations 93

5.3.4 Consumer desire have a positive impact on strength of brand associations 94

5.3.5 Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness.....95
5.3.6 Consumer interest have a positive impact on brand awareness.....95
5.3.7 Consumer attention have a positive impact on brand awareness.....96
5.3.8 Consumer desire have a positive impact on brand awareness 97
5.4 Conclusion.....97
6 CHAPTER 6: conclusion and recommendation.....98
6.1 Introduction.....98
6.2 Conclusions of the study 98
6.2.1 Sub-problem 1 99
6.2.2 Sub-problem 2 100
6.2.3 Sub-problem 3 102
6.3 Implications of the study 103
6.3.1 Academic or theoretical implications 103
6.3.2 Management implications 104
6.4 Limitations of the study.....105
6.5 Opportunities for future research.....105
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....107
APPENDIX A: Measuring Tool 122
APPENDIX B: consistency matrix 153
APPENDIX C: CRONBACH RESULTS FOR PILOT STUDY.....155
APPENDIX D: PILOT TO DETERMINE SOCIAL MEDIA ATTRIBUTES SCALE 156

APPENDIX C: Cronbach Results……..138

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Influence Attributes - Attractive....58

Table 4.2: Attractive - Summary....59

Table 4.3: Influence Attributes - Expertise....59

Table 4.4: Expertise - Summary....60

Table 4.5: Influence Attributes - Familiarity....60

Table 4.6: Familiarity - Summary....61

Table 4.7: Influence Attributes - Inspirational....61

Table 4.8: Inspirational - Summary....62

Table 4.9: Influence Attributes - Likability....62

Table 4.10: Likability - Summary....63

Table 4.11: Influence Attributes - Similarity....63

Table 4.12: Similarity - Summary....64

Table 4.13: Influence Attributes - Trustworthy....64

Table 4.14: Trustworthy - Summary....65

Table 4.15: Influence Attributes - Entertaining....65

Table 4.16: Entertaining - Summary....66

Table 4.17: Summary of Influencer Characteristics....66

Table 4.18: Brand Awareness....73

Table 4.19: Brand Awareness - Summary....73

Table 4.20: Strength of brand associations....74

Table 4.21: Strength of brand associations - Summary.....74

Table 4.22: The Lays Brand 75

Table 4.23: Lays Brand - Summary.....76

Table 4.24: Brand Equity Summary.....76

Table 4.25: Consumer Effects - Action.....68

Table 4.26: Consumer Action - Summary 68

Table 4.27: Consumer Effects - Attention.....69

Table 4.28: Consumer Attention - Summary 69

Table 4.29: Consumer Effects - Desire 70

Table 4.30: Consumer Desire - Summary 70

Table 4.31: Consumer Effects - Interest.....70

Table 4.32: Consumer Interest - Summary.....71

Table 4.33: Consumer Attitudes towards Influencers 77

Table 4.34: Consumer Attitude - Summary 78

Table 4.35: Case Processing Summary 79

Table 4.36: Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient.....79

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Graph depicting network of influence for car brand choice…….. 5

Figure 1.2: Relationship model of influencer marketing, brand awareness, strength of brand associations and consumer effects 10

Figure 2.1: Ohanian source credibility model 18

Figure 2.2: Six principles of persuasion ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Figure 2.3: The AIDA Model 24

Figure 2.4: Aaker's Brand Equity Ten model 25

Figure 2.5: Keller's Brand equity model.....32

Figure 2.6: Preliminary conceptual model of brand equity and customer equity relationship 37

Figure 2.7: Conceptual framework of the study.....38

Figure 4.1: Gender Analysis.....52

Figure 4.2: Age group analysis.....53

Figure 4.3: Provincial Analysis 53

Figure 4.4: Ethnic group analysis 54

Figure 4.5: Education level analysis.....54

Figure 4.6: Social Media Usage Analysis 55

Figure 4.7: Time spent on Social Media.....55

Figure 4.8: Social media personality type.....56

Figure 4.9: Years living in SA 57

Figure 4.10: Social Media influencers 57

1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed overview of the study and it will introduce key marketing concepts around brand management and consumer effects. The chapter includes the following sub-sections:

- Purpose of the study
- Context of the study
- Problem statement, which will summarise the issues that they study aims to resolve
- Significance of the study
- Delimitations
- Research questions, and
- Study assumptions

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to apply AIDA's Hierarchy of Effects (HoE model) in understanding the effects of influencer marketing on brand awareness and strength of brand associations. Marketers seem to be using social influencers without a deeper understanding of its effect on consumers, which ultimately impacts consumer purchase behavior (Bognar, Puljic & Kadezabek, 2019). There are various objectives that brands want to reach with their marketing and advertising campaigns and some of these include educating consumers on their product offering, creating awareness, convincing them to purchase or even convert them to brand loyalists by encouraging repeat purchases. Whatever the goal of the advertising campaign might be, understanding the target market and how the brand message is delivered, are key to elevating the brand. Advertising is no longer one-way push communication with the aim of increasing sales. Through social media platforms, consumers and brands can now engage with each other to build sustainable relationships directly (Belch & Belch, 2017). Influencer

marketing has become popular where brands use well-known individuals who have a positive influence on the target market, to drive their brand message (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Influencer marketing is also about relationship building and humanising brands by allowing well-known faces to represent them. Using social influencers amplifies brand messages, delivers them appropriately through various promotional channels to the relevant target market, and allows for two-way communication, thereby giving value and benefits for using the product (Belch & Belch, 2004).

The use of social media influencers has an impact on the buying behaviors of consumers and this behavior can either negatively or positively affect brand equity, depending on how the consumer perceives the influencer (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Consumers now want to participate in the journey of brands they feel represent them and through the combined use of social media and influencers, this has become possible, thereby empowering consumers in the purchasing process and giving less power to brands (Belch & Belch, 2017). For this reason, it is important for brands to know what the needs of their customers are, and to understand the effects of their marketing campaigns on these customers.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of social media influencers on the two elements of brand knowledge; brand awareness and strength of brand associations, with specific focus on attributes of the influencer and how the consumer behavior process is impacted when consumers receive the brand message from the influencer.

1.3 Context of the study

1.3.1 The use of Social Network Sites (SNS) in South Africa

The power of technology and the use of social media has been experienced in various ways, whether it is to promote a social cause, to create an awareness on current affairs or for general communication purposes such as expressing an opinion. Social networking sites (SNS) have provided consumer brands with innovative ways of reaching their target market, as well as to engage with them personally so they can

use the feedback to understand their customers so they can offer value and benefits relevant to these customers.

For consumers, the over-reliance on technology in daily life does not come easy, especially to poor South Africans who cannot participate in online conversations due to the high cost of data in South Africa and the limited availability and maintenance of free Wi-Fi. A 2018 article by Research Africa ICT found that South Arica's data cost is the highest in Africa. Even though internet data costs might be the highest in the continent, findings from a research report by technology research company, World Wide Worx, show that South Africa ranks high in terms of social media users in Africa. The report states that South Africa has "16 million Facebook users, followed by Twitter with 8 million, LinkedIn at 6.1 million and Instagram and You Tube at third and fifth place respectively" (South African Social Media Landscape, 2017). A survey conducted by the Global Web Index indicates that social media topped the list for the activity that most users spend their time on their mobiles, with South African users spending most of their time on WhatsApp, Facebook, and Twitter. The survey forecasted that South Africa's internet penetration rate, which is defined as the number of internet users per 100 people, will be over on 65% percent by end of 2020 (Global Web Index Report, 2018). The survey went on to breakdown how users are turning to mobile as a primary means of accessing current news, followed by keeping in touch with friends and lastly for engaging with brands they like or brands they are considering making purchases from (Global Web Index Report, 2018).

1.3.2 Why people use SNS

It is important for brands to understand why consumers use social media so they can respond accordingly by packaging their messaging in a way that appeals to customers in order to promote action, which usually takes the form of a purchase. Jenkins (2006) states that media convergence is not created by technology but rather by its users who have shifted their thinking to allow for more interaction and participation, thereby resulting in these users forming their own opinions which they then share on the internet. Zimmer (2008) adds that SNS are regarded as participatory media platforms due to user-generated content and the ability for users to express themselves.

Hoffman and Novak (2011) added that there are four reasons why people use social media; to connect, to create, to consume and control. Users connect by allowing more interaction and online participation; they create by forming their own opinions by posting online, writing blogs, responding to other users; they consume by actively participating in social media conversations or by making an online purchase, and they are able to control their online behaviour through privacy settings which allows or limits what other users can see.

A study by Lin and Lu (2011) applied the motivation theory to investigate why people use social media and found that enjoyment, peer pressure and usefulness were the top three reasons why people used SNS. Although the sample used in the study was Taiwanese university students; a similar approach can be used to investigate how and why consumers use social media, which can allow brands to position their messaging in such a way that it appeals to their target market, ultimately leading to an increase in brand awareness and sales.

1.3.3 Vehicle sales and marketing

There are various industries that use social media influencers to increase brand equity. One such industry is the motoring or vehicles industry that uses influencers to boost sales. According to South Africa's TransUnion Vehicle Pricing Index (2019), car sales are at their lowest due to petrol increases and overall constrained economy. This volatile situation in car sales is at an advantage to consumers as they are in a better position to negotiate with dealerships to get better deals as these dealerships are desperate for sales. Dealerships are also becoming aggressive in their marketing efforts to boost sales. Although television commercials are still the preferred platform by most dealerships, Morrissey, Stricker, Tsang & Zayer, (2017) state that a majority of new car sales start online. This is because dealerships are able to use social media platforms to fulfil more goals than television. Morrissey et al., (2017) further state that research of the vehicle purchasing industry in the US, Germany, UK, China and India, revealed that consumer purchasing behaviour is changing with the introduction of online sales, especially since digital natives are becoming mainstream buyers who have expectations of how their online sales experience should be. Morrissey et al.,

(2017) assert that a consumer looking at purchasing a vehicle is firstly influenced by friends and family members, followed by reviews or other users of the car model, then lastly by dealers. This partly focuses on reviews as influencers are promoters who have knowledge and experience of the specific brand. Social media allows dealerships to take potential customers on a visual journey in their cars; allows for live streaming so followers are part of the experience; is aesthetically appealing, provides a platform that will cover more features and specifications of the vehicles all at a fraction of the price when compared with costs of a television commercial (Hart, 2019). Murad-Patel (2018) states that influencer marketing has become popular in the automotive industry and the buzz started with celebrity endorsements to increase brand awareness, then ultimately sales. But a recent trend has seen popular vehicle brands using ordinary people as influencers. Murad-Patel (2018) distinguishes between macro and micro influencers. Macro influencers are well-known celebrities who usually position brands to millions of their followers, increasing brand awareness, while micro influencers are credible and approachable, they may have a smaller following, but they provide authority, which in turn can bring in brand loyalists for the dealership. It is advantageous for dealerships with a heterogeneous customer-base, to use both marketing strategies that will see the use of micro and macro influencers.

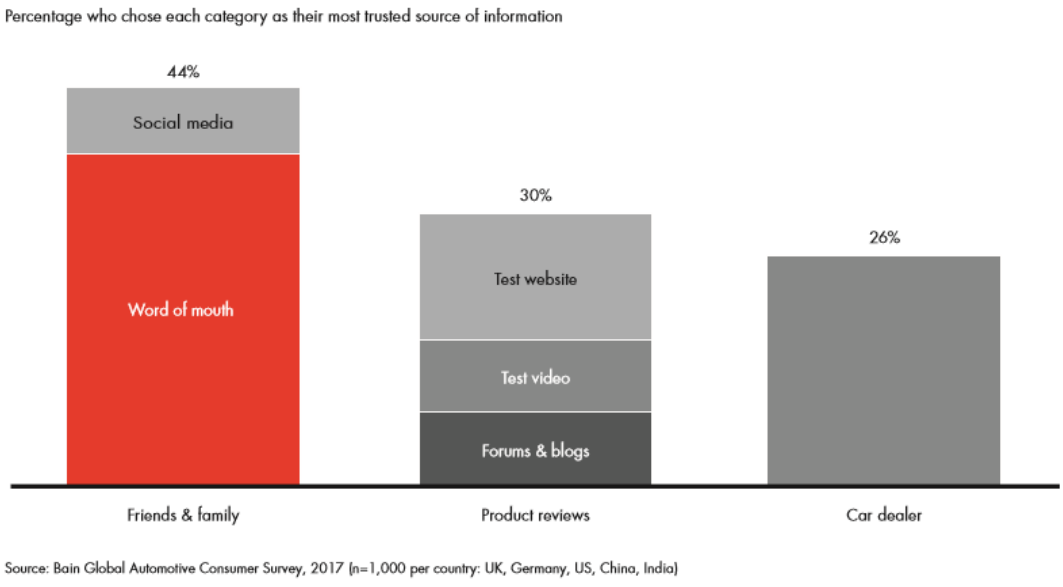

Figure 1.1: Graph depicting network of influence for car brand choice (Bain Global Automotive Consumer Survey, 2017)

1.4 Problem Statement

There is a lack of deeper understanding on the impact of social media influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations, and the effects on consumer purchase intention (Sadek & Elwy, 2018; Lamapeitl & Aberg, 2017; Severi & Ling, 2012). With the growing trend of using social media influencers to promote brands, there has been an increase in research over the last five years, on understanding the impact of influencers on brands but not enough research on the attributes scale that will ensure influencers are the correct fit for the brand they are representing and to ensure that the effect on consumers is favourable.

The need for this study emanates from a study by Sadek & Elwy (2018), which looked at the effects of the constructs of brand equity, namely brand awareness, perceived quality, brand association, brand loyalty and brand trust on brand communication through Facebook**.** The study focused on the strength of brand equity and the relationship it has with its constructs and how these impact brand communication. This study will look will at the relationship between some constructs of brand equity and social media influencer attributes. The study will attempt to assess the impact of social media influencer attributes on two of the constructs of brand knowledge: brand awareness and the strength of brand associations, which is one of the four sub-constructs of brand image (Keller, 1993). Another element of the study will look at the effects of the communication aspect between the social influencer / brand and the consumer. This was a limitation in the study by Lim, et al. (2017) as they asserted that in order for brands to create value for consumers, they need to create dialogue with their target market without considering the effects of that dialogue; therefore the study will explore whether attributes of social influencers, such as authority, likeability, attractiveness and resonance have an impact on brand awareness and strength of brand associations and how these impact the consumer purchase decision process.

1.4.1 Main problem

To establish a scale for social media influencer attributes and determine if the attributes positively impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations and the effects

on consumers in order to help guide brand managers when appointing social media influencers to represent their brands (Severi & Ling, 2012; Hassan et al., 2005; Booth & Matic, 2011).

1.4.2 Sub-problem 1

The first sub-problem will investigate the effects of influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations.

$H1_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect brand awareness.

$H2_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations.

1.4.3 Sub-problem 2

The second sub-problem will investigate the effects of social media influencer attributes on consumer, using the AIDA model.

$H3_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer attention.

$H4_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer interest.

$H5_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer desire.

$H6_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer action.

1.4.1 Sub-problem 3

The third sub-problem is to evaluate if consumer effects – using the AIDA model – impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations.

$H7_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H8_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H9_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H10_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H11_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H12_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H13_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H14_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on brand awareness

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions identified for this study are based on the above sub-problems:

1.5.1 Research questions: Sub-problem 1

- Do influencer attributes have an effect on brand awareness?
- Do influencer attributes have an effect on the strength of brand associations?

1.5.2 Research questions: Sub-problem 2

- Do influencer attributes affect consumer attention?
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer interest?
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer desire?
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer action?

1.5.3 Research questions: Sub-problem 3

- Is there a relationship between consumer attention and brand awareness?
- Is there a relationship between consumer interest and brand awareness?
- Is there a relationship between consumer desire and brand awareness?
- Is there a relationship between consumer action and brand awareness?
- Is there a relationship between consumer attention and the strength of brand associations?
- Is there a relationship between consumer interest and the strength of brand associations?
- Is there a relationship between consumer desire and the strength of brand associations?
- Is there a relationship between consumer action and the strength of brand associations?

1.6 Significance of the study

For companies to build strong brand experiences, companies need to know what the needs of their target market is, so they respond proactively, thereby increasing the value to their brand (Yasin & Zahari, 2011). At the basis of building and increasing brand equity, is communication. SNS has changed the communication landscape and allows a wider reach of information, which in turn provides brands with useful feedback through engagement. How the brand-related communication is packaged, forms part of the marketing mix and how consumers perceive the brand, will impact brand equity. Studies have been conducted around the impact of brand equity on purchase intent, the impact of customer perception on brand equity and on the impact of social media influencers on purchase intent (Cobb-Walgren, Beal & Donthu, 1995; Lassar, Mittal & Sharma, 1995; Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Brands often focus on the popularity of the influencer and seldom focus on how the consumer interacts with the influencer and how they perceive the influencer or how brand awareness and brand associations are impacted by the attributes of the influencer used in the campaign (De Veirman,

Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017). Very few of the existing literature focuses on the relationship between the customer and the social influencer that the brand has chosen to build brand awareness and strong brand associations. The hierarchy of effects model will be used to assess how the consumer responds to brand communication when delivered by social influencers based on a several personality attributes.

The outcome of this study will be significant to brand marketers when they consider using social influencers; in that they would not only look at the popularity of the individual, but also consider the relationship between the brand and the consumer; the effects of influencer attributes on consumers and which influencer attributes will be effective in reaching their marketing objective. Brands will also need to differentiate between popularity – which is based on number of followers one has – and influence, which is about being credible and authoritative in order to offer advice to current customers for retention purposes, as well as influential in order to attract new customers (De Veirman, et al., 2017).

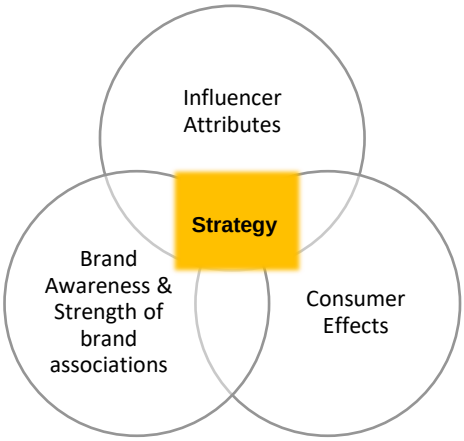

Figure 1.2: Relationship model of influencer marketing, brand awareness, strength of brand associations and consumer effects

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The nature of the study is exploratory, with specific focus on social media influencer attributes and their impact on brands and consumers. The primary data collection method used was an online questionnaire, with respondents delimited to social media

users even though non-social media users may be familiar with social media influencers.

1.8 Definitions of terms

Influencer Marketing: Influencer marketing is the use of social influencers to deliver brand message to the target market (Lim, et al., 2017). Sudha & Sheena (2017) define influencer marketing as a marketing process where brands identify and select individuals who have influence over the brand's market segment in order to help the brand increase its sales, reach or engagement levels. Influencer attributes are traits that influencers need to possess for consumer persuasion to be deemed possible. Influencer marketing and social influencers will be used interchangeably in the study.

Social Networking Sites (SNS): These are computer-mediated platforms that allow for the exchange of information by users and content producers which can be used for various reasons. It is usually free to be a member of SNS and requirements include internet access, registering a profile and selecting groups of interest to follow to access the information (Sledgianowski & Kulviwat, 2015). Facebook is one example of a social networking site which requires one to register their details and complete a profile in order to share and create content, while also being able to access information on the platform.

Social influence: This concept states that people who belong to a certain network, usually disregard their own personal opinion over the position of others who belong in that network (Friedkin & Johnsen, 2011). The theory recognises that interpersonal influences and attitudes play a role in shaping individual perceptions.

1.9 Assumptions

- Respondents answered questions truthfully and based their responses on their own personal perspectives.
- Respondents are not necessarily active social media users but they all have one or more social media accounts on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

- The study assumes that all respondents know of at least one social media influencer.
- It is assumed that the findings of the study can be generalised across other brands besides Lays potato chips.

1.10 Conclusion

The inference of this study is theoretical and managerial. Chapter 2, the literature study, reports on the theoretical implications of the study while Chapter 3, 4 and 5 address the managerial implications on how brand managers can elucidate the sub-problems.

2 CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review chapter will focus on scholarly articles on the hierarchy of effects model as a way to understand how consumers receive brand communications through the use of social influencers, with the intention of increasing brand knowledge. The dimensions of brand knowledge that will be covered are brand awareness and strength of brand associations – a construct of brand image. Since the focus of the study is limited to SNS, the structure of the literature chapter will start with a review of communication as it forms the basis of all integrated marketing communications plans. Research studies on communications are far and wide so this will only be covered within the context of consumer engagement on SNS.

The dimensions of the hierarchy of effects model will be reviewed based on how consumers receive and process messages from social influencers. The study will present hypotheses on the relationship between a social media influencer attributes and the consumer's purchase process regarding the brand being promoted by the influencer. This is an important research area as it will ultimately impact brand knowledge based on how consumers receive and store brand messages. The literature review will focus on Keller's (1993) study on brand equity, with particular focus on brand awareness and the strength of brand associations. Strength of brand associations is one of four dimensions of brand image. (Refer to Figure 2.5)

2.2 Brand Communications on SNS

The internet revolution has changed the communication landscape in terms of how people communicate and how this type of communication has impacted their interactions with other users, as well as interactions with brands they follow. Social media has also altered the advertising landscape as the dissemination of content is no longer solely reliant on marketers through their advertising campaigns but now customers can have a direct impact on brands and their reputation (Brown, 2009; Solis & Breakenridge, 2009).

Vance, Howe & Dellavalle (2009) state that SNS have increased individuals' connectivity and enabled users' direct participation in the journeys of their preferred brand, which enables users to be more independent in their thinking and be able to create their own online identities, relative social standing and the therapeutic value of expressing self. This has blurred the boundary between content producers and content consumers as audiences are now becoming amateur journalists, which means that every individual who has internet access has the power to produce their own story without relying on messages produced by marketers or those published on traditional media platforms such as television (Deuze, 2006). This is the promise of the digital revolution introduced by the interactive functionality of the internet and has reshaped what brand communication means.

The Internet and its web 2.0 technologies is interactive and allows for user-generated content of which social networking sites are in abundance. SNS has provided a platform for users to be empowered in that they can freely express themselves and according to van Dijck (2013), sites are popular for self-expression, communication and self-promotion, which help shape public identities. This form of empowerment has also changed the brand communication landscape as consumers can take to SNS to have discussions on certain brands, which can impact how users perceive those brands. In the digital world, brand communication focuses on creating awareness of a product or service, building and maintaining consumer relationships, as well as creating value for customers (Rowley, 2002).

Brand communication on social networking sites takes various forms of brand-related communications that is distributed on social media with the purpose of engaging targeted audiences with deliberately packaged messages that can be shared, re-created or even rejected (Alhabash, et al., 2017). What distinguishes brand communication on SNS from traditional media like newspaper advertising is that the interactive component is almost non-existent in traditional media platforms. While the objective of both forms of brand communication are to expose consumers to the brands they like, SNS has allowed the value of brands to be maximised in terms of unprompted recall, brand loyalty and awareness by consumers (Panda, 2004). SNS has taken power from brands and placed it in the hands of consumers as they can produce their

own content relating to brands, drive these conversations, which can ultimately make or break these brands (Deuze, 2006). Traditional forms of brand communication entailed the sender, the message and the receiver of the message. SNS has altered this process in that there can be several senders of the communication, the message can be packaged in several ways, which takes into consideration the type of platform being used such as blogs, videos, short-to-the-point content, images and games. The receiver can actively respond to the content in several ways like sharing it, re-creating the message or directly responding to the sender. User-generated messages relating to brands carries weight when it comes to reviews and recommendations as word of mouth is considered more trustworthy and credible (Karakaya & Barnes, 2010). This phenomenon has given rise to the use of social media influencers as part of brand communication to expand the value of the brand in a way that is thought to be reliable.

2.3 Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is the use of influencers as endorsers who will drive and deliver brand communication in a form of advertising, to the target market (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey & Freberg, 2011). Weimann (1994) defines influencer marketing as part of the marketing mix and is a process that drives brand communication by strategically identifying influential individuals who are active on social media, to deliver carefully structured messages to the target audience with the objective of increasing brand awareness, sales and loyalty. Chaudhuri and Holbrook's (2001) notion of influencer marketing includes brand effect and is defined as the use of an influential person to highlight the brand's potential and use, in order to prompt a positive emotional response in the average consumer. Influencer marketing is a form of advertising that enhances brand awareness by using social influencers to expose customers to brands (Aaker, 1991; Batra et al., 1995). Several studies have been conducted which confirm that the use of social influencers brings personality to brands; gives brands a face and derives value such as brand awareness, brand loyalty and positive brand image (Freberg et al., 2011; Booth & Matic, 2011). A study by Sudha & Sheena (2017) on the use of social influencers in the fashion industry, differentiates between earned influencer marketing that focuses on engaging consumers around the brand and paid influencer marketing that is concerned about brand awareness and brand loyalty.

Earned influence marketing usually uses unknown bloggers who are experts in their field, to establish relationships with brands for the sake of relationship building or for them to grow their social presence. A study by Forbes (2016) looked at personality traits of unknown make-up artists and selected influencers who were relatable, knowledgeable, helpful, confident, and articulate to represent Maybelline, the make-up brand. A study by Gretzel (2018) also found that unknown bloggers who were travel experts were effective in enhancing brand awareness.

Once brands recognise these influencers, their following grows. There are some who become popular and move to become paid influencers. Paid influencer marketing uses well-known endorsers who have a high social media following and can be in a form of advertorials, sponsorship, testimonials, or ambassadorship (Gladwell, 2000). Social media influencers are mediators between brands and consumers and help build positive, likeable brand image for the brands, while encouraging brand loyalty and entrenching brand knowledge (Booth & Matic, 2011).

On the other side of the influencer conundrum are negative feelings that may come about as the result of brand promotion by the social influencer, especially if it is luxury brands that some consumers cannot afford. In psychology, this negative emotion is known as envy and it emanates from social comparison, when one person is aware of the social advantages of another person who is similar to them (Festinger, 1954). Social media influencers are relatable to the target market, and this suggests that consumers may envy the life of the influencer, which may ultimately result in a negative brand association for the brand (Smith, 2004). To avoid envy, brand managers need to ensure that their target market can relate to the social influencer they have selected as a mismatch between the social influencer and the target market can lead to a negative brand association and ultimately a decline in sales.

In order to achieve its objectives of influential marketing, brands need to consider all aspects of the conundrum such as:

- The brand equity dimensions, they want to measure,
- The platform they want to use to communicate the brand message,
- Time frame,

- The influencer's attributes,
- Understand how their target market processes the brand's messaging and
- Reviewing the criteria for selecting their influencer, and
- Measuring their campaign objectives against the results.

Several studies have been done on how social influencers impact purchase intention, consumer attention, what the effects of influencer marketing are on brand equity, on the consumer decision making process and on the impact of eword-of-mouth and reviews (Freberg et al., 2011; Booth, 2011; Wijaya, 2012; Yun Yoo et al., 2013). Some studies have also focused on consumer attitudes towards influencers and how this impacts their buying behaviour. One such study is that of Gageler & Van der Schee (2016), which found that there is a strong purchase intention if the consumer has a positive attitude towards the social influencer, combined with how the product image is portrayed in the brand communication.

Very few studies have focused on the characteristics of influencers as there is no influencer attributes scale to benchmark against (Sudha & Sheena, 2017; Lim et al., 2017; Ho-Dac et al., 2013; Schivinski, 2013). Hoyer and Brown (1990), asserted that the use of influencers was popular amongst brands that involved high involvement purchases where the level of brand awareness was low and required cognitive effort and more time spent on research before a purchase is made. These high involvement purchases are usually lifestyle brands, like purchasing a vehicle.

Very few studies have focused on how consumers experience a product endorsed by a social influencer, whether their behaviour changes simply because of the personality traits of the influencer or due to a combination of factors like pre-existing brand knowledge combined with liking the social influencer selected.

According to Fowles (1996), consumers buy-in towards products that are endorsed or recommended by influencers that they like. The question is, how do marketers know that the influencer they have selected is revered by their target market in such a way that it will help them reach their marketing objectives? There are several factors that brand managers need to consider when selecting an influencer to represent their brand. These include the number of followers an influencer has, how an influencer

uses referral links, the frequency of their posts and engagement rates (Chatterjee, 2011). Other factors that determine if an influencer will be the correct fit for a brand are based on personality traits. Although there are no influencer attributes models or scales, a study by Freberg et al. (2011) showed that influencer traits that were appealing to respondents included intelligence, attractiveness, ambitious and poised and they contributed to enhanced awareness and an increase in return on investment for brands. A study by Lou & Yuan (2019) found that influencer credibility and perceived trust are other traits that influencers have to possess in order for followers to positively react to branded posts. According to the source credibility model, credibility asserts that the effectiveness of a message depends on perceived level of expertise and trustworthiness in an endorser (Dholakia & Stemthal 1977). Ohanian (1990) added a third element to the source credibility model, which is attractiveness and affirms that it gives rise to the message source or influencer's likeability, thereby increasing a consumer's interest in what the influencer is saying.

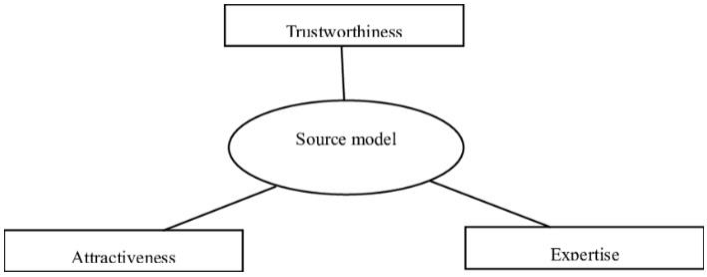

Figure 2.1: Ohanian source credibility model (Ohanian, 1990)

The use of social influencers is important for brands that want to build relationships with their target market in order to convert them into loyalists through credibility and trust. Other positive drivers of influencer marketing are reach, relevance and resonance (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Booth & Matic (2011) describe these drivers as participation level, frequency of activity and prominence in the market. Resonance, reach and relevance as outlined by Sudha & Sheena (2017), will be discussed in detail as they form the foundation for the selection of social media influencers.

a. *Resonance*

According to Keller (2010), brand resonance is about the degree in which the consumer resonates with the brand. In influencer marketing, resonance is based on the appointment of a suitable influencer who is popular to the specific target market and they can identify with. Resonance refers to both the individual's characteristics and the type of content they publish. Brand managers will count the number of followers an influencer generates through published content, how they engage with followers or simply by the number of people they follow as this shows that they can maintain relationships with their audience, thereby giving rise to consumer trust (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). When followers can relate to the social media influencer, they can borrow aspects of these influencers in order to look like them, which raises an opportunity for brand awareness as followers would want to own what the influencer owns (Peter & Olson, 2004; Boon & Lomore, 2001).

b. *Reach*

The number of followers reflects one's network size, which measures reach (De Veirman, et al., 2017; Sudha & Sheena, 2017). A study by De Veirman, et al. (2017) looked at the criteria that brand managers use to select influencers who will represent their brand and the study found that the number of followers an influencer has should be the starting point but not the only criteria to be used as other factors such as the kind of topics discussed, and the type of audience reached are more important than the size of the audience. Miles (2014) states that through influencer reach, a brand can also increase its reach, as well as generate sales through influencer recommendations.

c. *Relevance*

Once awareness of the brand is achieved, the message has to crafted in such a way that it is relevant to the target market to avoid them asking, so what (Sevier, 2001)? This is especially true in social marketing as the influencer represents the brand, therefore his message needs to be relevant to the target audience and depict a level of expertise about the product they are promoting. The use of social influencers to drive brand communication should be designed with the receiver in mind as it is about the

careful selection of the influencer who will not only drive awareness, but ensure that the message is delivered in the most relevant way to promote the desired effectiveness (Sevier, 2001). Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández (2019) support this notion by asserting that brand managers should first assess that consumers have a positive perception of the influencer before investing in that social influencer who should be suitable in driving the message. Therefore, careful selection of influencers should be considered as these individuals should not promote products that are not relevant to them, as consumers will be able to notice the incompatibility between product and the influencer (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). A study by Brown and Fiorella (2013) on increasing car sales through the use of influencer marketing, found that they had selected the correct influencer for the campaign, which the target market could identify with and carefully crafted messages that prompted engagement from the target market but did not result in an increase in vehicle sales. On close inspection of the campaign, they found that their target market was at different stages of the decision-making process and therefore the effects of the messaging was processed differently. This resulted in the campaign being re-evaluated and messages to be crafted in such a way that it was relevant to consumers at different levels, making the study of consumer effects an important aspect in influencer marketing.

2.3.2 Six principles of persuasion

Various studies extensively outline factors that influence persuasion in different disciplines such as psychology and advertising (Ledgerwood, Chaiken, Gruenfeld & Judd, 2006; Watkins, 2001). These factors are said to guide people in their decision-making process. Cialdini & Rhoads (2001) came up with six principles of persuasion that are used to coerce one into giving in. The principles can be used in relation to attributes that social influencers should possess to effectively guide consumers through the attention, interest, desire and action (AIDA) process. Cialdini's six principles of persuasion are:

Authority: This principle states that people will generally listen and follow those who they deem as experts or credible.

Consistency: In order for persuasion to be possible, people need to be consistent by writing or publicly committing to doing something.

Consensus: The consensus principle states that when people are in doubt about the next plan of action to take, they will look at the actions and behaviours of those around them in order to make a decision.

Liking: The principle asserts that a person will agree to or buy into an idea if the source is someone they like.

Reciprocity: People will respond and exchange things with others.

Scarcity: This principle is of the idea that when people know that a product is limited or hard to find, then they are likely to be interested in owning it. (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001)

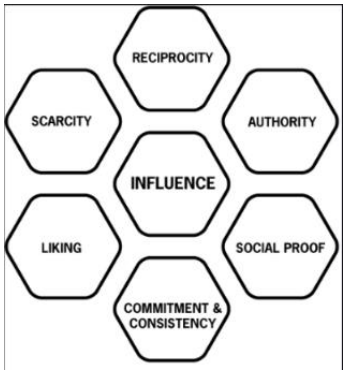

Figure 2.2 portrays Cialdini's six principles of persuasion, with influence being central to each element (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001).

2.3.3 Proposed influencer attributes

There is no readily available scale that measures influencer characteristics; therefore, a pilot survey was conducted to extract information from consumers on which social media influencer characteristics are important to them when they see a social media post from an influencer. The results of the pilot showed that consumers follow and engage with specific influencers based on aesthetics and personal perceptions towards the influencer. The top reasons that were mentioned for following influencers

included: they look fun; attractive; comes across as clever (expert); I just like the person (likeability); always responds to my comments (engagement); seems like a person who can be my friend (resonance) and I aspire to be like them. By integrating the source credibility model, some of the principles of persuasion, as well as the results of the pilot survey, this study proposes four attributes in relation to the effectiveness of influencer marketing. To measure social media influencer attributes that are most effective in driving strength of brand associations and brand awareness, this study will measure expertise (authority), likeability (liking), attractiveness, familiarity, entertaining, inspiration, trustworthiness, and resonance (similarity).

2.4 Hierarchy of Effects Model

The emergence of brand communication through social media has had an impact on how consumers process information relating to their favourite brands (Keller, 2009). For the purposes of this study, Brown and Fiorella's (2013) interpretation of the use of influencer marketing will be used, which states that it is about using various marketing tools over customers to exert influence that will result in desire and awareness of the product, ultimately leading to purchase, which is known as action in the AIDA model. Marketers identify social influencers by the number of followers they have, which reflects network size and serves as an indication for popularity. Accordingly, higher numbers of followers may result in a higher reach for the brand, but few strategies and marketing campaigns focus on how the consumer processes messages contained in an influencer's social media post and how certain traits of the influencer can impact the brand's awareness and image. There are few hierarchy of effects (HoE) models which all state that consumers process advertising messages in an orderly way, cognitively, affectively and conatively (Egan, 2007). Cognitive is about consumers' mental state when they engage with the message, affective is their feelings or attitudes towards the brand communication and conation is the action or behaviour consumer will take as a result of the message (Keller & Kotler, 2016). However, this consumer effects sequence is not always practical or applicable in this exact order, but it is vital for marketers to understand the stages that consumers might go through (Bovee et al, 1995). For marketers, the HoE models offers information on how their target market will respond to the message by predicting their action at each of the stages, meaning

that through the brand communication campaign, marketers can choose which of the stages they would like to focus on. The model assumes that the target market moves through several stages from awareness, to knowledge, to liking, to preference and intention before taking action which is usually the purchase (Tolba & Hassan, 2009). Technology has shifted how consumers process information but still allows for consumers to go through the steps of the HoE model, like how eword-of-mouth can negatively impact a brand through negative online reviews, which will affect the cognitive stage.

2.4.1 The AIDA Model

The AIDA model focuses on attention, interest, desire and action that a consumer will take after engaging with a brand. This model was created by Strong (1925) and encourages consumer action from unawareness to acquisition through marketing campaigns. The AIDA model states that brand awareness precedes interest, then desire and action as these steps cannot happen without a consumer being aware of a brand, and ultimately alters attitudes toward the brand (Miller & Lisette, 1998). The use of social influencers is just one of the many marketing tools that takes consumers through the four stages. Few studies that have been conducted, show that influencer marketing has a positive impact on consumer effects; taking a consumer from awareness, to preference then to purchase or purchase intention (Rawal, 2013; Ghirvu, 2013; Yun Yoo et al., 2013). The AIDA model has been applied in traditional marketing campaigns such as above-the-line advertising but has received less attention regarding social marketing or the use of social influencers to promote a brand. As previously mentioned, that brand communication is about brand awareness of a product or service, enhancing the image of the brand, building relationships and creating customer value, this can be achieved by using the AIDA model (Rowley, 2002).

According to Kojima et al. (2010), the AIDA model is a psychological process that guides the steps of a consumer from awareness of a product to purchase. Wijaya (2012) states that the final stage of the model, action can be interpreted in many ways as social media has redefined action and is no longer just about purchase. Action can

be an online review, can be adding a product into a cart without checking it out or can even mean engaging with the brand online. Lagrosen (2005) asserts that attention in the first step of the AIDA model is weak when it comes to online marketing, compared to traditional promotions campaign. This is because there is a lot of clutter online which makes it challenging for marketers to grab the users' attention, but creating interest is more successful online as information can be packaged in various ways that ensures that the user's interest is ignited. Using social influencers is one way to address the challenge with grabbing the user's attention as messages proclaimed by influencers are said to have more influence and credibility than traditional promotional platforms (Freberg et al., 2011). A study by Ghirvu (2013) found that it is easier for marketers to measure attention and action, but more challenging to measure interest and desire of the consumer as some consumers may be aware of a product, express interest and desire to purchase it, but never reach the final stage of doing the actual buying. This notion is supported by a study by Yun Yoo et al., (2013), who found that there is lack of evidence in successfully applying the complete AIDA model in marketing campaigns as attention and purchase are easier to measure. Each stage of the AIDA hierarchy of effects model can be successfully measured if done so over a longer period for causal relationships to be concluded (Barry, 2002; 1990). This may be the reason most research studies focus on one stage, which is usually the final stage: action.

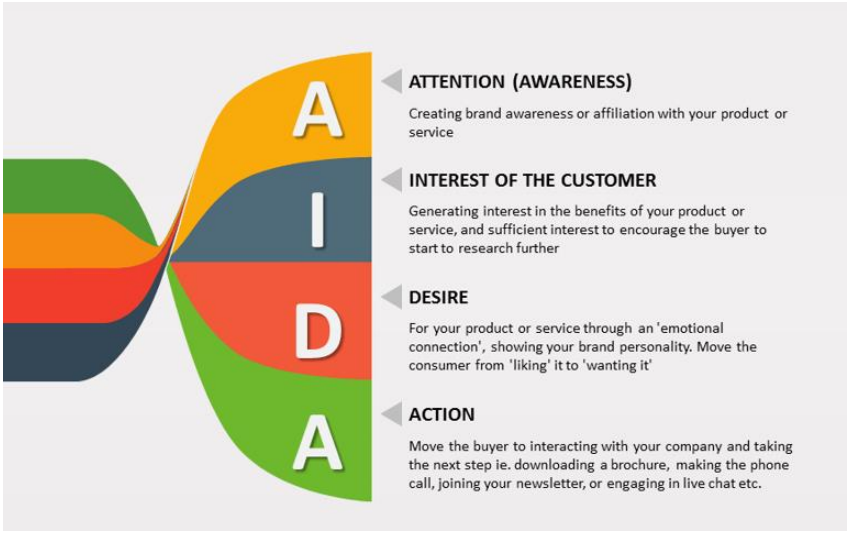

Figure 2.2: The AIDA Model (Strong, 1925)

2.5 Brand Equity

According to Keller (1993), customer-based brand equity is about how consumers' brand knowledge will influence their responses when they engage with the marketing of that brand. Brand equity is also about influencing customers' hearts and minds in order to have better brand knowledge over competitors (Power & Hague, 2008). For brand managers to know the strength of their brands, the starting point is to know how to measure brand equity. Keller (1993) asserts that the two main reasons for measuring brand equity are for financial and strategic reasons. Financial in order to assess the value of the brand for return-on-investment purposes and strategic to drive marketing campaigns once marketers have a better understanding of consumer behaviour. Brand equity is the difference in outcomes arising from the added value that a brand endows on a product (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Brand equity provides a unique selling point which will ultimately maintain a sustainable competitive advantage and dominance over competing brands. Aghaei et al., (2014) categorised brand equity into customer attitude (brand awareness and perceived quality) and customers' attitude (brand loyalty). Aaker (1996) proposed the Brand Equity Ten, a measuring tool that is grouped into five categories, four of the categories being from the four dimensions that make up brand equity and the fifth category measuring market behaviour. The four dimensions are brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand associations and perceived quality (Aaker, 1991). Brand equity exists when the customer is familiar with the brand and holds some favourable, strong, and unique associations in memory. Of all the definitions of brand equity, Aaker (1996) and Keller (1993) have the most influential and widely used elements.

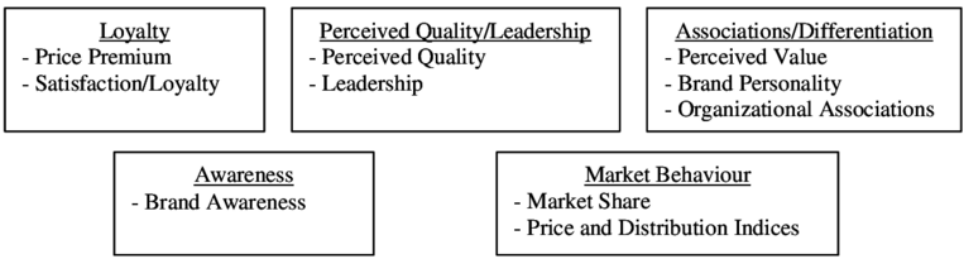

Figure 2.3: Aaker's Brand Equity Ten model (Smith, Gradojevic & Irwin (2007)

There are various measurement scales for brand equity, and these include price premium, customer satisfaction and attitudes through surveys, as well as product distribution coverage amongst others. Brands that have a high brand equity measurement, are better positioned to be resilient against competitors, are more successful in brand extensions and can form more solid barriers of competitor entry (Farquhar, 1989; Rangaswamy et al., 1993). For brand equity to be strong, the customer has to have existing knowledge that is stored in their memory (Keller, 1993). Marketers need to understand the impact of brand knowledge on future marketing campaigns.

2.5.1 Brand knowledge

In order to initiate customer-based brand equity, the starting point for marketers is to present brand knowledge to the consumers' minds (Hague & Jackson, 1994). This is the first step in the AIDA model, which is about attention and creating awareness. Brand knowledge will help with brand awareness and imagery which mean that the memory of the brand is etched in the consumer's mind and when given a cue, they can be able to recognise the brand or recall it. Customer-based brand equity refers to the value that customers link to the brand based on what they have directly or indirectly experienced about that brand (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Keller (1993) asserts that brand knowledge comprises of two components: brand awareness which is the likelihood of a brand name easily being recalled or recognised, secondly brand image which is the attitude about a brand based on the brand associations that are in the consumer's memory. Baalbaki and Guzman (2016) assert that brand association and brand knowledge are more challenging to measure as they are based on the consumer's subjective perception of the brand. For marketers, brand awareness is easy to measure in terms of recognition and recall. Recognition is the extent in which consumers are able to recognise a brand if given a cue and recall is their ability to remember the brand name when provided with the product category (Baalbaki and Guzman, 2016). While measuring brand image is seen as a near impossible task as marketers do not have total control over consumer associations about a brand, they can however use marketing mix tools that can lead to favourable and strong brand image (Baalbaki and Guzman, 2016).

For the purpose of this study, focus will be on brand awareness and the strength of brand associations (brand image); the two components of brand knowledge from the brand equity model as depicted by Keller (1993). Brand knowledge is important in the consumer decision making process as it explains what comes to mind when a consumer thinks about a specific brand (Keller, 1993). Keller (1993) further adds that brand knowledge consists of brand nodes in consumer's memory, which has brand associations. Brand image has four categories, namely; types, favourability, uniqueness and strength of brand associations (Keller, 1993). As previously mentioned, the study will focus on brand awareness and the one brand image sub-construct: strength of brand associations.

a. *Brand Awareness*

Brand awareness is the unaided ability of a customer to recall and recognise the brand under various conditions and it is the first step in creating brand equity (Keller & Sood, 2003). Rossiter & Percy (1987) inferred that brand awareness is mental in that it is about how strong and quickly a memory regarding a certain brand will come to mind under different conditions. Brand recall and brand recognition are two of the elements that make up brand awareness even though recalling a brand is not necessary for a purchase to happen (Rossiter & Percy, 1987). Aaker (1996) adds brand knowledge, brand opinion and brand dominance to the definition of brand awareness and states that these elements are necessary for brand recall. In order for brand awareness to be possible, the consumer needs to be exposed to the brand-related stimuli in order to recall and recognise the brand even though it might not lead to a purchase (Lynch & Srull, 1982).

Brand awareness is a key element in the AIDA effects model, which predicts consumer response and helps marketers predict how a consumer will move through the stages of the effects model (Hutter, Hautza, Dennhardt & Fuller, 2013). Awareness also forms part of the first step of the AIDA model, and it is when the consumer first attains information or knowledge about the brand, then develops a positive attitude about the product if they are interested in it and desire to have it, before taking action (Kotler & Bliemel, 2001).

For marketers, creating the awareness in consumers' minds is critical, but marketing strategies also have to know how to measure the awareness of their brand against competitors in order to acquire a higher brand position in the minds of the target market. Aaker (1996) set out four criteria for measuring the elements of brand equity. Firstly, that the measurement tool should be strategically designed to measure brand equity and not the marketing plans initiated to promote brand equity. The measure set has to be flexible and responsive to stimuli so a true measurement can be determined; thirdly, brand managers have to select brand equity elements that they know will have a positive impact on profit or sales when measured and lastly, measurement tools need to be generic so they can be applied across different product categories. According to Baalbaki and Guzman (2016), brand awareness is the easiest brand equity dimension to measure as it is based on the consumer's ability to recognise the brand when prompted and to recall it when provided with product category. A research study by Lehmann et al. (2008) on how brand awarenessis measured, revealed that survey-based brand metrics that follow the HOE's AIDA model, can be used to measure a brand's performance. The study acknowledges that the challenge with measuring a brand's performance is that different cultures may interpret the survey questions differently or may even have opposing views of the brand, meaning that the findings cannot be generalised geographically (Lehmann et al., 2008). To prevent this, the study was applied in two nations, the USA and China, in order to assess whether culture and consumer behaviour had implications on a brand's performance. A similar study by Hakala et al. (2012) measured top-of-mind brand awareness across different product categories and different countries to mitigate generalised findings. What is common in these studies is that the data collection method used was the same; questionnaires or surveys as these allow for a bigger sample across different cultures.

b. *Strength of brand associations*

Strength of brand associations is one of the key drivers of brand image. Brand image is the general perception and feelings that consumers have regarding a brand (Zhang, 2015). Abratt and Kleyn (2012) add that brand image is associated with the physical and behavioural attributes of a brand and these attributes include tradition, service, the people and experience. Keller (1993) defines brand image as perceptions of brand

quality held in consumer memory, which gives rise to their attitude towards the brand. For a brand to have a positive brand image, marketers ought to create unique brand associations that highlight the brand's attributes and benefits (Bullmore, 1984; Kapferer, 1994). Strength of brand associations is one of four types of associations making up brand image as depicted by Keller's (1993) brand equity model (Figure 2.5). The strength of brand associations is about how brand communication enters consumer's memory and how it is stored. Strength is about quality and quantity of the brand-related information; how the consumer thinks about the information and the manner in which they think about the information (Keller, 1993). The longer the consumer takes in thinking and processing the information they are receiving, the stronger the association in their memory, which translates to ease of retrieving the information through prompted and unprompted stimulation. Therefore brand associations help consumers make decisions about brands and purchases. Brand attributes are descriptive features that characterise a product and brand benefits have to do with the value and meaning consumers attach to the product. Aaker and Biel (1993) contend that brand associations can be tangible like premium price or number of years being operational, or they can be soft and emotive like innovative or fun. They further state that strength of brand associations has three components which may not always be present in the brand communication (Aaker & Biel, 1993). Namely the image of the service or product provider, image of the user and an image of the actual product or service. With consumer products that use social influencers to promote awareness, most brands will have their corporate icon, image of the product, and replace the image of the user with that of the social influencer in order for the target audience to form strong brand associations of the product being endorsed by the influencer. Hermanda, Sumarwan & Tinaprillia (2019) measured the relationship between influencer attributes (attraction, visibility, credibility and power) and brand image, brand associations and purchase intentions for cosmetics products. The findings of their study found that the four influencer attributes have a positive effect on brand image, brand associations and purchase intention. Influencers can help strengthen brand associations when a consumer relates product information to their existing brand knowledge or if the influencers' attributes are relatable to the customer and their needs (Bendixen, Bukasa & Abratt, 2004).

Low & Lamb Jnr (2000) made the assertion that it was a challenge for academic scholars to measure brand associations as previous studies have always been specialised and could not be applied to general studies on brand image. Low and Lamb Jnr (2000) further add that dimensions of brand association can be different for consumers who have a deeper knowledge of their brands as more dimensions can be entrenched in their memory. Brand association needs to be measured as part of a product category, which can include competitors and cannot be measured independently as the dimensions may be too vast and too different. The dimensions of brand association that need to be measured, depend on the product category, market segment and individual brand knowledge (Low & Lamb Jnr, 2000). Unlike the measurement scales for perceived quality and brand attitude, which are extracted from available literature, the measurement scales for brand association are determined by the brand manager, in terms of what they would like the target market to specifically associate their products with when prompted. For example, if they want to measure how useful their product is, they determine their scale using usefulness / not useful as a measurement scale (Low & Lamb Jnr, 2000). Guzmán and Sierra (2009) used five measurement scales (handsome, agreeable, open, empathy and competence) to assess the associations of presidential candidates in Mexico's 2006 elections as they determined that these were the factors that voters took into consideration when casting their votes. Guzmán and Sierra (2009) extracted their five measurement scales from Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale and Caprara, Barbaranelli & Zimbardo's (2002) candidate personality scale. The reason these were combined was that Aaker's scale was generic and could not necessarily be applied to human beings, while Caprara et al's (2002) scale could measure personalities as brands.

Positive and unique brand associations that exist in the consumer's memory, usually lead to strong, favourable beliefs and emotions towards a brand (Aaker, 1991). Marketers need to outline which associations they want their target to have in their minds when they think of the brand. Through marketing communication campaigns, the quality and quantity of the information has to be effective in such a way that the consumer knows more about the brand and its products, over competing brands so a strong association can be made (Keller, 1993). For the purpose of this study, strength of the brand association will be measured in terms of how social media influencers can

have an effect on how strong the connection is between the brand and the consumer. The strength of the brand association depends on how the consumer receives the information and stores it in their memory; how much effort and depth they take in encoding the brand message when they see or hear it (Keller, 1993). The study will look at how social media influencers with specific attributes can enhance the strength of brand associations for the brands they are representing. Consumers can have a negative attitude towards adverts as they may be perceived as disruptive but when the brand message is delivered by an influencer they admire, it becomes an added advantage for the brand as the influencer's followers already have a strong association with him / her, otherwise they would not be following them. This enhances the strength of the brand association for consumers, association of the product or service, with the influencer.

Keller (1993) outlines two approaches to measuring brand equity; the indirect approach focuses on the source of brand equity while the direct approach measures the impact of brand knowledge based on how consumers respond to marketing campaigns. The study will use the direct approach to measure the effects of influencer attributes on consumers. Keller (1993) mentions the conjoint analysis approach, which is the effects of the brand and other marketing mix elements to promote consumer action. This study will use the conjoint approach to rate respondents' belief of associations using brand name, combined with the attributes of a social media influencer. The use of influencers causes a secondary association for the brand as the consumer will have added associations linked to the influencer. The strength of the brand association will therefore be linked to both the consumer's attitude towards the influencer based on the influencer's attributes, as well as the consumer's perception about the brand.

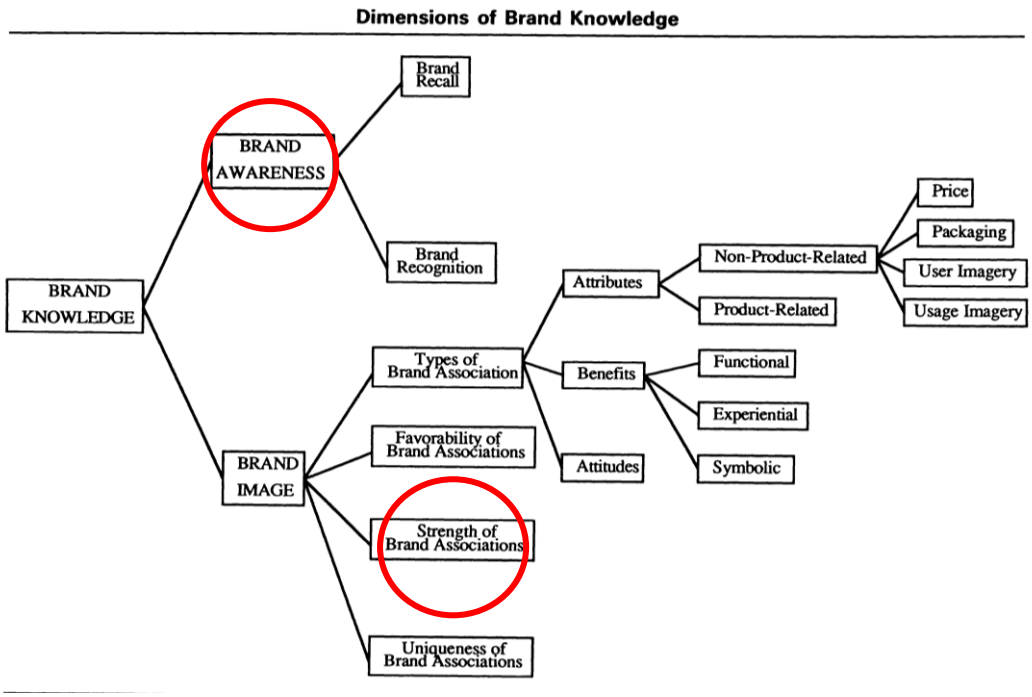

Figure 2.4: Brand equity model, (Keller, 1993)

2.6 Hypothesis Development

2.6.1 Influencer attributes, brand awareness and strength of brand associations

Few studies have investigated the relationship between attributes of social influencers and brand awareness, more specifically, whether the use of social influencers has a positive effect on brand awareness and the strength of brand associations. Lagrosen (2005) states that creating product attention is weak in online marketing compared to traditional marketing as consumers rarely search for brand information unless prompted and the use of social influencers does exactly that. Brands that frequently use social influencers are business to consumer (B2C), but in 2017, a business to business (B2B) engineering company sought the services of a social influencer to increase brand awareness by attracting new customers (Meltzer & Zech, 2018). At the end of the campaign, the engineering company had an increase in their You Tube

views, 20% lead generation and conversion rate and 11 000 Twitter impressions (Meltzer & Zech, 2018). Booth & Matic (2011) emphasise the importance of setting clear, measurable objectives before embarking on an influencer marketing campaign as some brands will see a change in their brand awareness but cannot contribute it to the influencer as the goals set were not clearly related to the campaign. Booth & Matic (2011) identify the importance of this study, which is to align the marketing goal with the characteristics of the selected influencer. A study by Jiménez-Castillo & Sánchez-Fernández (2019) looked at how digital influencers promote brand engagement, which may lead to brand value and intention to purchase. Although their study was based on engagement rather than awareness, it showed a positive relationship between the use of an influencer and brand engagement. There is little evidence to understand the relationship between the use of a social media influencers and brand awareness, whether specific attributes of the influencer are the correct fit for the brand.

Strength of brand associations is about how much a consumer thinks about a brand and the meaning associated with that brand (Keller, 1993). De Veirman, et al., (2017) found that specific influencer attributes such as likeability play a role and that the more followers a social influencer has, the more they are liked or perceived as a knowledgeable leader. The argument is that if the social influencer has attributes that are liked by social media users, then this will lead to stronger of brand association between influencer and the brand they are representing. The same approach is adopted regarding a social influencer who is not liked or is perceived negatively; that this may also negatively affect the brand. De Veirman, et al., (2017) contend that if a social influencer does not engage with his or her followers, then this can affect their likeability and therefore weaken the brand association of the brands they are associated with.

Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

> $H1_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness.
>
> $H2_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations.

2.6.2 Consumer effects and influencer attributes

AIDA's Hierarchy of Effects model is one of several effects model that a consumer follows while forming brand attitudes and prior to making a purchase or accepting a new product or service (Dudley, 1993). Influencer marketing is one form of advertising that takes the target market through the steps of the HOE model which comprise of the cognitive, affective and conative stages (Smith, Chen & Yang, 2008). Employing social influencers to create brand awareness by means of attention and interest, is the first step of AIDA's Hierarchy of Effects model, known as the cognitive processing step (Smith et al., 2008). There are several studies on the relationship between advertising and HoE models and how advertising impacts customer purchase intentions. Very few, if none, of the studies test the relationship between social influencers and hierarchy of effects models on brand equity, as this may provide marketers with insight on how effective the use of social influencers is in the information processing steps of AIDA's HoE model. While it is a requirement by the Advertising Regulatory Board that adverts using social influencers to promote their brands should disclose that the content is in fact advertising, a study by Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun (2017), found that consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions become negative once they establish that the social influencer is being paid to promote content. To intercept getting negative feedback for campaigns using social influencers, it becomes vital for brand managers to understand how consumers process the information in each step of the AIDA model so they know which step is critical for yielding positive results and understanding which influencer attributes will help catch the attention of the consumer. The cognitive phase in the AIDA model consists of attention and interest, which are two elements that facilitate brand awareness (Smith et al., 2008). Customer interest is stimulated once the consumer accepts the message claims made by the social influencer (Smith et al., 2008). Mackey (2005) states that interest is maintained when the customer realises a benefit that is presented to them.

Desire forms part of the affective stage of the AIDA model, which focuses on feelings that the consumer has towards the product or brand, resulting in the consumer being inclined to wanting to acquire the product (Hadiyati, 2016). This stage has some doubts and hesitation in the consumer's mind; therefore, this becomes the crucial step in

convincing the consumer that that they need the product to solve a particular problem. For marketers, how they deliver the message becomes critical in this phase, therefore a correct fit between attributes of the social media influencer and brand is key so that the target market is convinced and negates any hesitations that might come up in the consumer's mind. Although being one of the most important steps for marketers in occupying a top position in the mind of the consumer, there is very little understanding of the relationship between the use of social influencers and bolstering customer desire.

Action represents the final stage of the AIDA model and is when the consumer finalises the steps with an actual purchase or acquisition of the product or service. Measuring this step in social marketing is deemed as the easiest step of the AIDA model as click through rates and online purchases can be tracked (Hoek & Gendall, 2003). The relationship that needs to be determined, is whether brand awareness and strength of brand associations through the influence of social influencers, increases the likelihood of a consumer making a purchase or takes any other form of action such as making an enquiry, referring friends and family members, or simply visiting the website.

Thus, the following hypotheses are established to test the relationship between the consumer effects as outlined in the AIDA model, and influencer attributes:

$H3_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer attention.

$H4_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer interest.

$H5_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer desire.

$H6_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer action.

2.6.3 Consumer effects and brand awareness and image

There is extensive research on customer effects and brand equity, but the research looks at these two models separately (Ambler et al., 2002). There are studies that assess how marketing campaigns drive customer equity and on the other hand, studies that look at the association between marketing campaigns and brand equity. Brand equity is about the perceived value that customers place on a brand, and as a result of this added value that customers endow on a brand, customers will behave, think and talk about the brand in a particular way (Keller, 2003). The AIDA model is one example of how customers react to the impression that the brand makes. There are few studies on assessing a link between brand and customer effect needs to be made. A similar study was by Gani and Größler (2014), which looked at the relationship between customer equity and brand equity by using a system dynamics methodology assessed a causal relationship between two or more complex variables. Although their study focused on post-purchase behaviour of consumers using the ATR model (awareness/ trial/ repurchase), their research found that there are strong linkages between customer equity and brand equity but the marketing strategy should be the foundation of both these equities rather than having strategies that focus only on one.

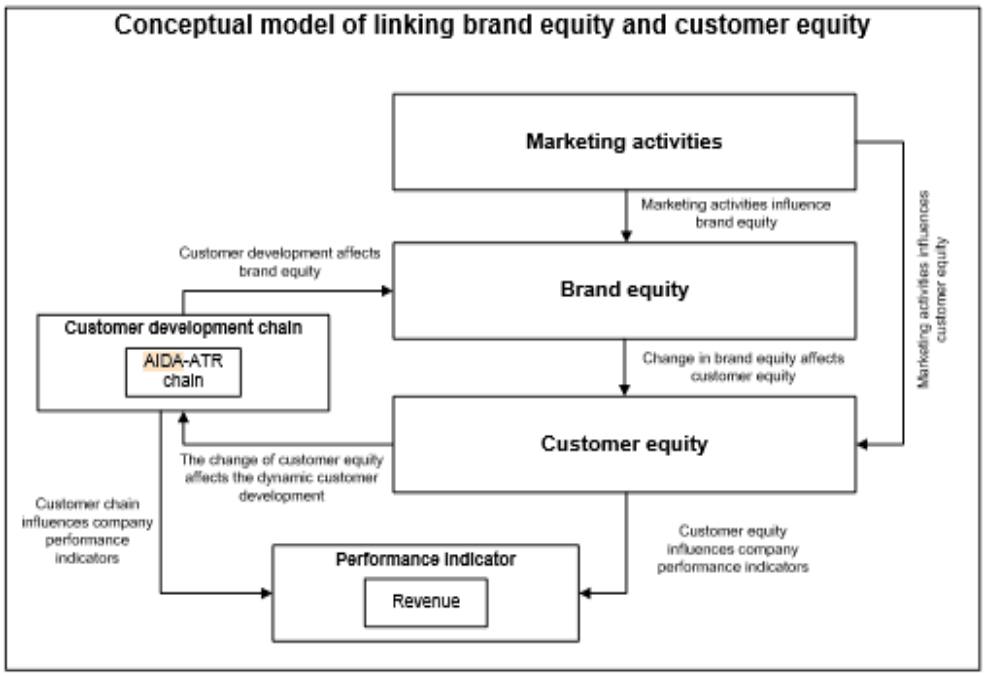

Figure 2.5: Preliminary conceptual model of brand equity and customer equity relationship (Gani and Größler,2014).

This study looks at the relationship between the AIDA hierarchy of effects model and two components of brand knowledge - brand awareness and strength of brand associations. Brand and customer effects go hand in hand as the one cannot exist without the other (Keiningham et al. 2005). Strength of brand associations and brand awareness are examined as part of brand knowledge, which has to do with how the customer retains brand-related memory, which are then expressed in their behaviour (Woodward, 2000). To test the relationship between AIDA and brand awareness and brand association strength, the following hypotheses are formulated:

$H7_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H8_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H9_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H10_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

$H11_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H12_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H13_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on brand awareness

$H14_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on brand awareness

2.7 Conceptual Model

The proposed conceptual model is based on the literature study that outlines the multi-relationship between attributes of social media influencers, brand equity and the hierarchy of effects consumer model. The framework depicts the study's hypotheses on the positive impact of individual or multiple social media influencer attributes on strength of brand associations and brand awareness; if individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect the elements of the AIDA Model and lastly, whether elements of the AIDA Model positively affect strength of brand associations and brand awareness.

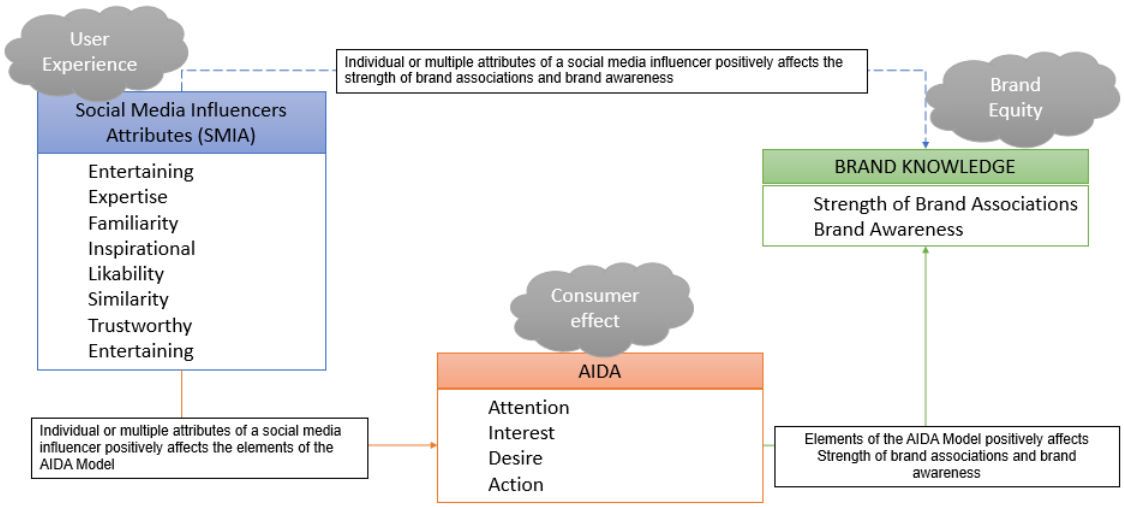

Figure 2.6: Conceptual framework of the study

2.8 Conclusion

The literature review highlights that there are several factors that brand managers consider before selecting influencers, with popularity and number of followers being

the main criteria that is used. Influencer marketing is about the strategic use of an influential person to amplify the brand message and communicate the brand's use in such a way that it creates a desire and a need in the consumer's mind, which will prompt a positive response in a form of making a purchase. The goal of the influencer is to boost the brand's awareness and image, while guiding the consumer through the AIDA process, which will ultimately lead to a purchase. The scholarly articles refer to various influencer attributes which suggests that there are no accepted set of attributes yet that brands need to consider. Social media influencer attributes depend on how suitable and relevant they are to a specific brand. The decision for the study to only focus on these attributes: expertise, likeability, attractiveness, familiarity, entertaining, inspiration, trustworthiness, and resonance, is based on them repetitively being mentioned by different scholars.

3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section will describe the research methodology in terms of how the data was collected and analysed to investigate the research problem and test the hypotheses relating to the impact of social influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations, with focus on AIDA's hierarchy of effects model. The data collection method seeks to test the assumption that brand campaigns that use social influencers are more impactful to consumers in terms of awareness of the product, interest and desire, which will result in the consumer taking positive action in a form of making a purchase, an enquiry or a referral.

3.2 Research paradigm

This study seeks to better understand the effects of influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations, as well as the resulting effects on consumers. To measure the consumer effects, consumers need to understand the role of social media influencers to brands, therefore the research sample needs to be defined from social media users as that is where the interaction with social media influencers takes place. Since the study is exploratory, it seeks to highlight the gaps and weaknesses found in influencer marketing, through the research questions and proposed study framework. The study does not seek to offer conclusive solutions to the sub-problems raised. Singh (2007) noted that exploratory research studies form the basis of future studies as it challenges research problems on which little or no existing study has been conducted. Singh (2007) further adds that since exploratory research can take various directions, the best data collection method is unstructured interviews. The current study could not allow for unstructured interviews as convenience sampling method was used based on a chance willingness of participants to partake in the study. The approach of the study is to answer the research questions, understand the sub-problems while being cognisant of the research assumptions.

There is extensive epistemological evidence that covers influencer marketing, brand awareness, strength of brand associations and the AIDA model. While the literature review is based on authoritative knowledge, the study is distinctive in that it seeks to find associations amongst the various studies (Davidson, 2000). The quantitative approach of the research study allows for the use of mathematical statistics to generalise findings as very little knowledge exists on the topic; it reduces the complex relationships that are tested by focusing on specific variables and can test hypotheses (Sandelowski, 2000).

3.3 Research design

With research methodology, there are various steps that a researcher can adopt in studying a research problem along with trying to explain the logic behind the research problem, which will enable conclusions to be drawn and to assess if a relationship exists between the use of social influencers and brand knowledge, as well as the impact of social marketing on how consumers process the messages (Fox,1958). Therefore, the research design must be specific to solving this research problem as designs differ from problem to problem.

The qualitative research methods try to answer the whys and hows of human behaviour, opinion, and experience. This approach collects information that would be hard to gather through quantitative methods. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people view the world and how their experiences and opinions shape them, and data collection methods include in-depth interviews, focus groups and observation (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research is after meaning and it is about the “social meaning people attribute to their experiences, circumstances and situations as well as the meanings people embed into texts and behaviours” (du Plooy, 2009: 143). This form of research has more depth and richness of context as the number of respondents is generally small and entails a longer and more flexible relationship between the researcher and respondents (Kumar, Aaker & Day, 2002).

According to Hopkins (2008), quantitative research methodology determines the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable in a

population. Quantitative research designs can be descriptive where they are analysed once or experimental which looks at the before and after (Hopkins, 2008). A descriptive study only looks at the relationship between variables. An experiment assesses the connection between cause and effect.

3.4 Population and sample

3.4.1 Target population

Wimmer and Dominick (2006:88) state that an entire population cannot be examined or take part in a research study due to time and resource constraints, so a sample is selected once the research methodology has been formulated. The target population is the entire population of respondents which we want to base the generalised results on (du Plooy, 2009). The target population in this study is as follows:

- SNS users: respondents have to be active users of Instagram, Twitter or Facebook.
- Have internet access.
- Respondents have to be South African citizens; and
- Over the age of 18.

Questions to determine these factors will form part of the survey.

3.4.2 Sampling frame

An online survey was developed using Wits' Qualtrics. There is no readily available database that exists of the sample, so a convenience sample was used, which means each unit or responded accidentally forms part of the unit of analysis based on their availability or acceptance to participate (du Plooy, 2009). This form of non-probability sampling involves respondents who are conveniently available or happened to see the survey link online while doing other things. The survey link was published on the researcher's personal social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for

interested participants to click and complete the survey. The participants are the researcher's Twitter followers, LinkedIn connections and Facebook friends who are already social media users. An introduction outlined the objective of the study, requested for participation and asked the participants to also share the survey link with their social media connections, increasing the likelihood of attaining between 200 and 250 participants. Convenience sampling was selected as it is cost effective and can get a positive response from the sampling units, while the main disadvantage is that it is not directly representative of a definable target population, therefore results cannot be generalised to the entire population, and hence the research is exploratory (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). The progress of the responses was closely monitored, and the response rate was slow with only 55 responses after four weeks on the survey being posted. The researcher then sponsored an advert on Facebook – which is the most cost effective platform – and the advert set-up included a heading, text (study objective) and url or survey link. Facebook's advertising platform allows for population parameters such as age, gender and location to be defined. The parameters selected were social media between the ages of 18 – 55, not gender specific and only South African citizens could participate. Then based on these parameters, Facebook provided an estimated sampling frame or reach, based on advert duration and budget. The advert ran for two weeks on a budget of R220, VAT inclusive and reached 246 respondents. A total of 29 respondents were disqualified for not completing the survey.

3.4.3 Sampling method

It is unrealistic for researchers to study entire populations; therefore, sampling allows researchers to extract information from a subset of the population (Ben-Shlomo, Brookes & Hickman, 2013). This study used the non-probability sampling method, which has no sampling frame and allows for respondents to have no equal chance of completing the questionnaire if they do not have a social media profile required for the study (Ben-Shlomo et al., 2013). The form of non-probability sampling method used is convenience sampling, which is based on the availability and willingness of respondents to complete the questionnaire (Du Plooy, 2009). Convenience sampling method is considered as the least reliable form of sampling method as participants may not necessarily be representative of all the characteristics such as gender, level

of education, but it is the best method for the study as it allows for data collection that would not be possible with probability sampling method as that would have required a sampling frame (Du Plooy, 2009).

3.4.4 Sampling size

The sample size can either be determined through the use of statistical techniques or ad hoc methods such as comparable studies (Kumar, Aaker & Day, 2002). This study based its sample size on comparable studies, whereby similar studies have used a sample size of between 200 and 300 respondents (Sudha & Sheena (2017; Lim et al, 2017; Buil & Martinez, 2013). This study targeted a sample size of 250 respondents. A larger sample size that is greater than 200 will be sought in order to be able to eliminate potential respondents who do not qualify or who do not complete the questionnaire.

3.5 The research instruments

The next step was to establish the most effective way of extracting information from respondents. There are several methods in which this can be done, and these include observations, surveys, and self-administered questionnaires amongst others. For the purpose of this research study, the data collection method that was used is an online survey as these allow for a high response rate and costs are low to medium. (Savin-Baden & Howell, 2013). Since this study focuses on social media influencers, it was a requirement that respondents be active users of social media and therefore have internet access. For this reason, the link to the self-administered survey was published on three of the social media accounts (LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook) and a paper-and-pen option will not be used as an alternative. A similar study by Sudha & Sheena (2017), which looked at the impact of influencers on the consumer decision making process in the fashion industry, utilised a structured online and offline questionnaire that targeted 200 respondents using primary and secondary data.

Self-administered surveys must be worded carefully to ensure that the correct data is extracted since the researcher is not present to ask follow-up questions. Surveys allow

for data to be collected from a large number of individuals, in order for the study to learn about the larger target population (Dillon, Madden, Firtle, 1987). The starting point of this kind of questionnaire is the introduction, which needs to clearly outline the purpose and objectives of the study, introduce the researcher, and have the closing date of the survey (DuPlooy, 2009).

3.5.1 Research instrument items

Since an online survey means that the researcher has no contact with the respondents, the questionnaire had to be designed in a clear and concise manner. The questionnaire was designed in a simple manner, providing clear instructions of how it should be completed as respondents were completing it independently. The questionnaire was divided into five sections, with each section dedicated to the type of information required. The introduction page included the purpose of the research study, which is for academic reasons; details and contact details of the researcher, what the research was about, approximate duration to complete the survey and a voluntary agreement clause. The introduction also included a definition of what social media influencer is as the term was salient to the study.

Section A asked qualifying questions so the researcher can qualify the results in terms of the research criteria set. This included age, of the respondent, description of social media behaviour, nationality and to name their favourite social media influencers.

Section B focused on the first hypothesis to assess the effect of social media influencers' attributes on brand awareness. This section also assessed which attributes were important to respondents, which is important information for brand managers when appointing influencers to represent their brands. Questions in Section C tested the hypothesis on the impact of social media influencers' attributes on strength of brand associations and brand awareness. The section used a case study with a well-known lifestyle influencer who is promoting Lays Potato Chips. Using the same Lays Potato Chips case study, Section D tested hypothesis on how influencer-determined strength of brand associations and awareness can have an effect on purchase intention which is classified using the AIDA model (attention, interest, desire

and action). To acquire a general overview of the respondents' perception of social media influencers, Section E asked respondents to provide their level of consciousness if and when they choose to follow an influencer. Lastly, Section F focused on extracting demographic data from respondents such as their education background, gender, age and racial group. Section F questions were not included at the beginning of the questionnaire as part of section A as some respondents will not continue with the survey if they perceive that the researcher is asking for personal information.

The survey used closed-response questions in a form of a Likert scale which measures intensity of attitudes and feelings (Kumar, Aaker & Day, 2002). This study will use the five-point Likert scale which has the following options: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. One of the main advantages of the 5-point Likert scale compared to the 7-point scale is that it is easy for respondents to understand and complete as it does not give them too many options to choose from, which can distort the truthfulness of the responses. To test the truthfulness of the responses, statements that are unrelated to the objective of the research were included in the various sections. The statements are:

- I sometimes like to gossip
- I always try to practice what I preach.
- I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas quite different from my own.

3.6 Data Collection

The data collection method that was used was electronic questionnaires, with the link to that survey being posted on personal social media platforms, namely: Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Accompanying the link, was an introduction of what the survey was about, request for participation including a participation clause and information of how long the questionnaire would take to be completed.

After four weeks of publishing the survey online, there were only 55 completed responses. The second stage of the data collection process was to advertise the

survey on Facebook. The reason Facebook was chosen over the other platforms was that it was the most cost-effective advertising platform, while guaranteeing a wider reach within South African social media users. A total of R220.00 was spent in two weeks, which yielded 191 respondents, combined with the 55 organic responses. A total of 29 respondents were disqualified. Pen and paper questionnaires were not going to be viable as the criteria included respondents being social media user and this form of survey was not going to be able to prove the truthfulness of the answers that indeed respondents are active social media users as posting the survey link on social media showed that respondents accessed the survey through their social media accounts.

3.7 Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis usually involves analysing verbal or written content derives from subjects to confirm existing theories or to form new ones (du Plooy, 2009). For this reason, qualitative designs are flexible as they may start with one objective in mind, then can transform to another based on data collected. In contrast, quantitative data analysis starts with hypotheses and uses data collection methods such as questionnaires to numerically prove or disprove the hypotheses such as proving relationships or frequencies of variables (Kumar, Aaker & Day, 2002).

The data analysis was conducted using statistical methods of data analysis. These included the Cronbach alpha test, frequency tables, crosstab analysis, factor analysis and regression analysis. As in all social science studies, the data was analysed with a significance level of $p<0.05$ (5%) (Du Plooy, 2009).

The data was sourced from responses provided on Excel; the responses were encoded into numeric values. As single source of data and no file integration was required. Data cleansing actions were performed. No modification was applied, and only records removed that does not qualify with research criteria. Initial EDA was done using RStudio version 1.2.5019 statistical software. Factor analysis and Regression analysis was done using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.

The Cronbach Alpha test (2016) was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency in measurement tools. To guarantee reliability in this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient test was used to investigate the internal consistency of the results. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher was accepted for the purposes of this research.

Factor Analysis, according to Khan (2018), is a useful tool for investigating variable relationships for complex concepts such as socioeconomic status, dietary patterns, or psychological scales. The key concept of factor analysis is that multiple observed variables have similar patterns of responses because they are all associated with a latent (i.e. not directly measured) variable. The eigenvalue is a measure of how much of the variance of the observed variables a factor explains (Khan, 2018). Any factor with an eigenvalue ≥1 explains more variance than a single observed variable (Khan, 2018).

To establish relationships, an ordinal regression analysis is suitable (Lunt, 2001; Long & Freese, 2006). Ordered logit models are used to estimate the relationships between the dependent variable and a set of independent variables (Lunt, 2001). Principal component analysis (PCA) is a statistical technique used for data reduction (STATA, 2014). It is a data reduction method which picks out factors that are critical in each dimension in affecting another dimension.

3.8 Study limitations

In most research studies, a researcher will come across factors that are beyond her control and these are called limitations and they have an impact in the findings (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). These limitations must be reported once identified. For this study, the limitations that are envisioned have to do with the sample of respondents. Since these social media platforms are free, anyone can have access to the questionnaire, which will impact on the sample not meeting the parameters set or being untruthful in their responses since the survey is anonymous, meaning the findings cannot be generalised to the target population. Results of this type of non-probability sampling method may not be generalised as the survey leaves out a large

number of the population; which are those who may have social media accounts but are passive users or those who do not have social media accounts.

Another study limitation which may impact the results of the study is that it is a cross-sectional study, which means that it was conducted over a short space of time. Many types of quantitative surveys become increasingly accurate with time as respondents become aware of the variables mentioned in the survey, therefore a longitudinal study would be recommended to negate this limitation (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006).

3.9 Validity and Reliability

Patton (2002) states that validity and reliability are two factors which any researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study. Reliability is ensured through the trustworthiness of the information extracted from the respondents and whether there was any researcher bias that could influence the findings of the study. Validity is to reflect reality as closely as possible in the study, so there are less of chances of generalisation of the findings (Du Plooy, 2009). Validity and reliability testing acts as a form of quality check for research studies and this can include a pilot pre-testing questionnaire or a pilot study to ensure that there is no researcher bias that will affect the data collection process, thereby influencing the results.

3.9.1 Pilot testing

A pilot study was undertaken to ascertain the reliability of the research design or any potential issues with the questionnaire (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). The purpose of the pilot study was to establish the feasibility of the intended approach that will be used in the main, large scale study. Due to the size of the sample, a pilot study does not test hypotheses, but rather tests reliability and validity (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). The link to the pilot study was posted as a WhatsApp status, requesting contacts to please partake in the study and offer their general overview of the study.

Respondents found the questionnaire easy to comprehend and questions to be clear. Some respondents commented that the survey was too long and some of the questions

were repeated. This resulted in the questionnaire being reduced from 72 questions to 5 main sections, with a total of 18 questions by removing the repeated questions, using one influencer case study, rather than two case studies and removing negatively-phrased statements, which could cause confusion. Therefore, the main study is feasible, with changes to the protocol.

3.9.2 Results of the pilot study

The Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency in measurement tools. The questionnaires used as measuring instruments contained simple, unambiguous questions with a structured response format. This aims to make the instrument very reliable. To guarantee reliability in this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient test was used to investigate the internal consistency of the results. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher is deemed acceptable for research purposes of this kind (du Plooy, 2009).

The alpha coefficient for the 26 items is .915, suggesting that the 26 items have relatively high internal consistency.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations are about the researcher's integrity and maintaining the respondents' privacy. The researcher has to ensure that the research design (methods and techniques) is suited to the objectives and nature of the research problem or and hypotheses to be tested (Gray, 2004). Obtaining informed consent is required protocol as the researcher has the responsibility to explain to respondents as fully as possible what the research is about and why they are participating in the survey (Bell, 2010).

Before respondents can start the survey, there is an introduction that provides an overview of the study by introducing the researcher, what the study is about as well as contact details should the respondent want to reach out to the researcher. The cover page also informs participants about their informed consent, which is their right to participate or not participate in the study and that their participation is voluntary; that they were not paid or coerced into participating (du Plooy, 2009).

3.10.1 Anonymity and confidentiality:

The Wits Business School Faculty Academic Ethics Committee reviewed the research proposal and questionnaire and granted an ethical clearance certificate before the research was conducted, particularly to ensure that no harm would befall respondents.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter summarises the research findings and answers the research questions. By identifying the gaps and limitations in the study, recommendations for future research studies will be conducted.

This is an exploratory study on the impact of social influencers on brand awareness and strength of brand associations and how consumers process the brand messaging delivered by these influencers. The findings of the study will not only reveal whether the use of social influencers is effective in brand campaigns promoted on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook, but the results will also provide insights to marketers on how consumers feel about the use of social media influencers. This will assist marketers in their marketing strategies, to not only focus on the selection process of who the social influencer is, but also take into consideration, how their target market will process the messaging once delivered by the selected influencer.

4 CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the process of collecting data and the reasons for the choice of the data collection method chosen, with the objective of answering the research questions and test the hypotheses presented.

This chapter provides analysis of data from 217 respondents, using STATA software version 14. The presentation of the results begins with the demographic characteristics of the respondents, followed by a detailed analysis of the results of each of the 3three sub-problems and their hypotheses.

4.2 Descriptive Data Analysis

4.2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

a. *Demographic Analysis*

Question 13: Please state your gender?

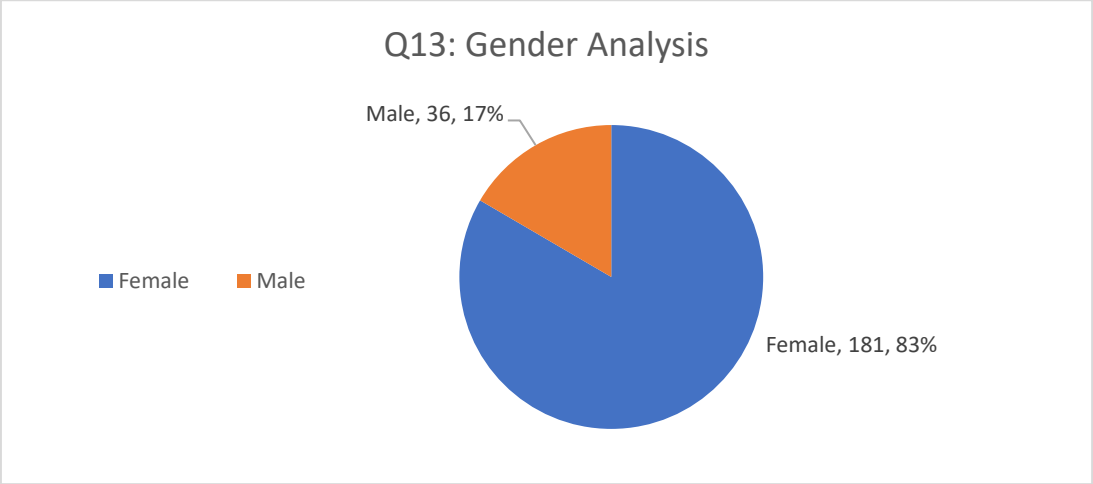

Figure 4.1: Gender Analysis

A total of 217 people responded to the survey. 17% were male and 83% were female.

Question 14: What is your age group?

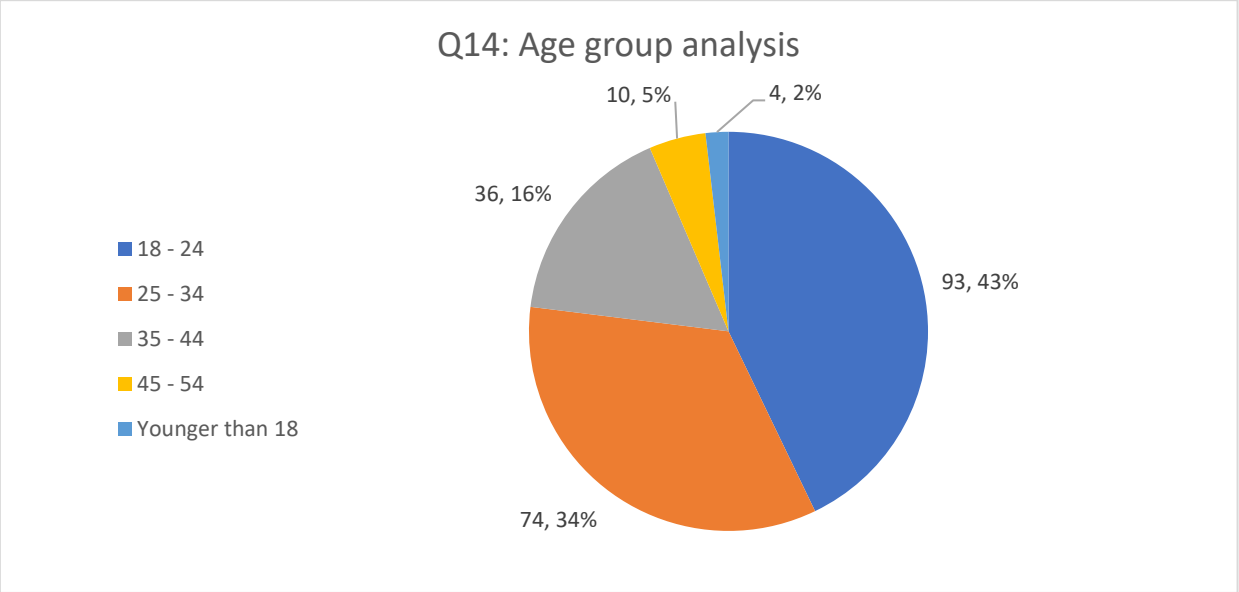

Figure 4.2: Age group analysis

A total of 217 people responded to the survey. 93 (43%) fell in the age group of between 18 and 24 followed by 74 respondents (34%) in the age group 25-34.

Question 15: Which province do you reside in?

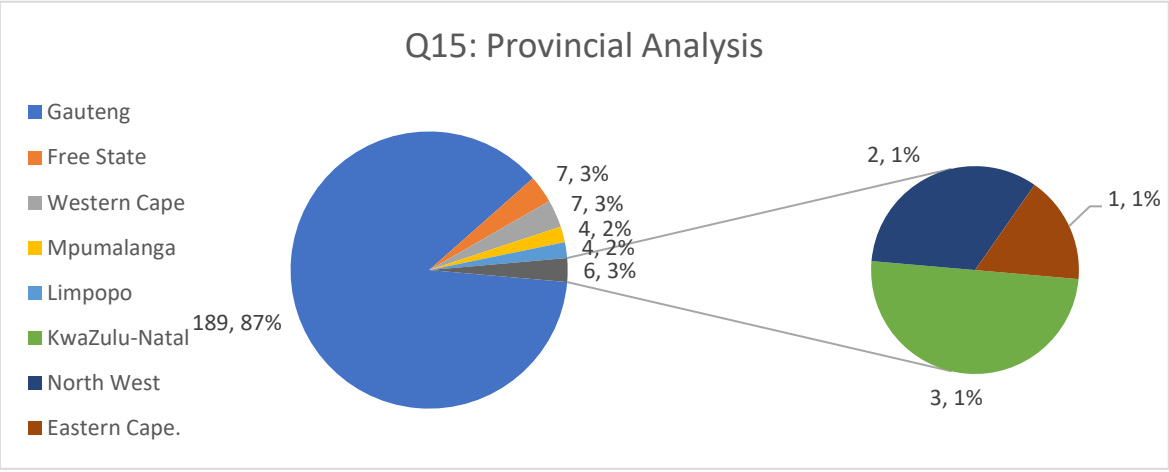

Figure 4.3: Provincial Analysis

As shown in Figure 4.3, the majority of the participants are from Gauteng Province. The rest of the participants are almost evenly spread out across the remaining provinces. 189 (87%) of the participants are from Gauteng.

Question 16: Please indicate your ethnic group?

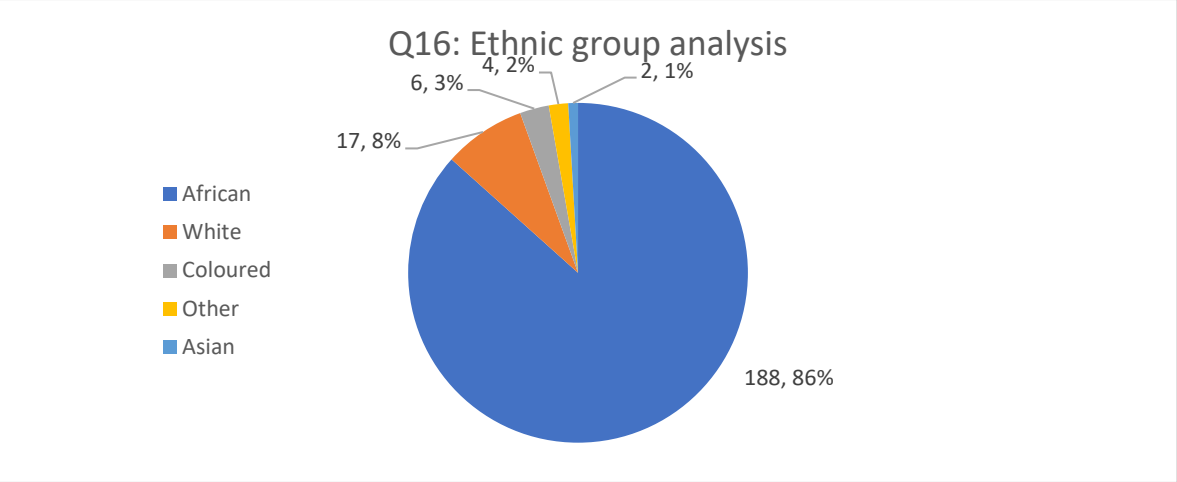

Figure 4.4: Ethnic group analysis

Figure 4.4 shows that 189 (86%) of participants were African followed by 17(8%) white participants and 6 (3%) coloured participants.

Question 17: What is your highest level of education? - Selected Choice

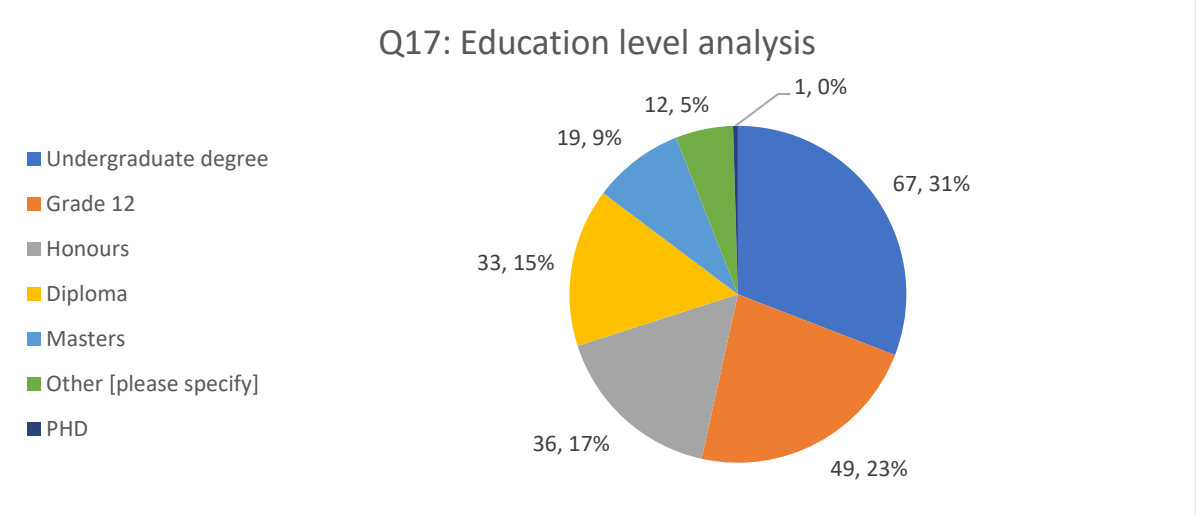

Figure 4.5: Education level analysis

Sixty-seven (31%) of participants have an undergraduate degree while 49 (23%).

b. ***Social Media usages***

Question 1: Please tick which social media platform you use very often

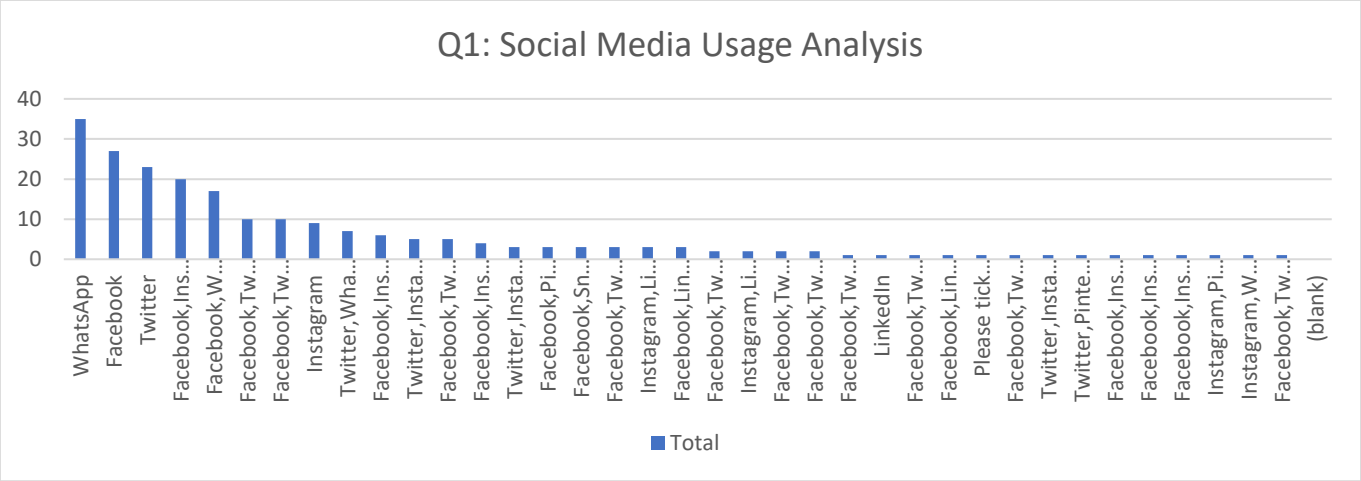

Figure 4.6: Social Media Usage Analysis

Although the respondents use multiple social media applications as shown in Figure 4.6, the dominant social media apps are WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. LinkedIn was ranked low as the social media platform respondents use.

Question 2: On average, how much time do you spend on social media in a day?

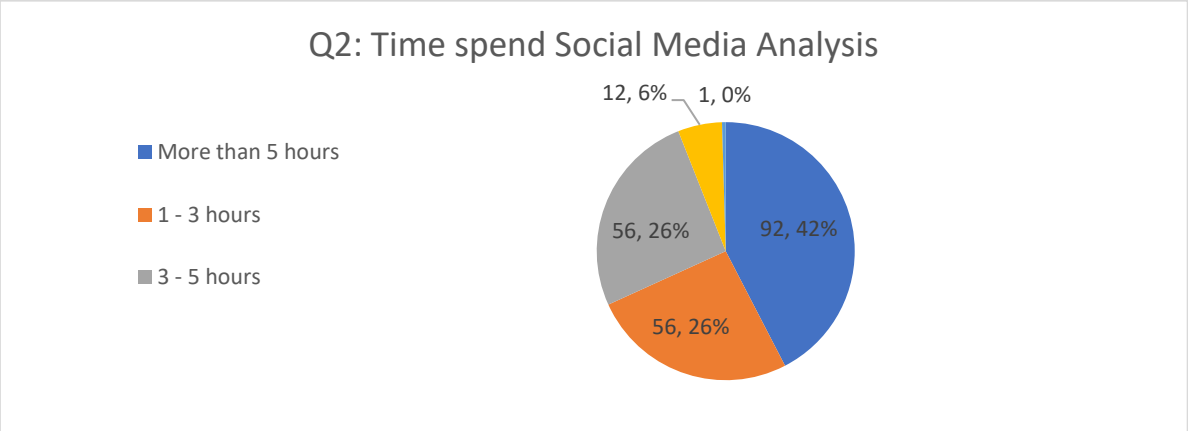

Figure 4.7: Time spent on Social Media

Ninety-two (42%) of participants spends more than 5 hours on social media per day. The next position is shared in terms of 56 (26%) respondents between 1-3 hours and 3-5 hours. The remainder spends less than an hour on social media per day.

Question 3: Which best describes your social media personality type

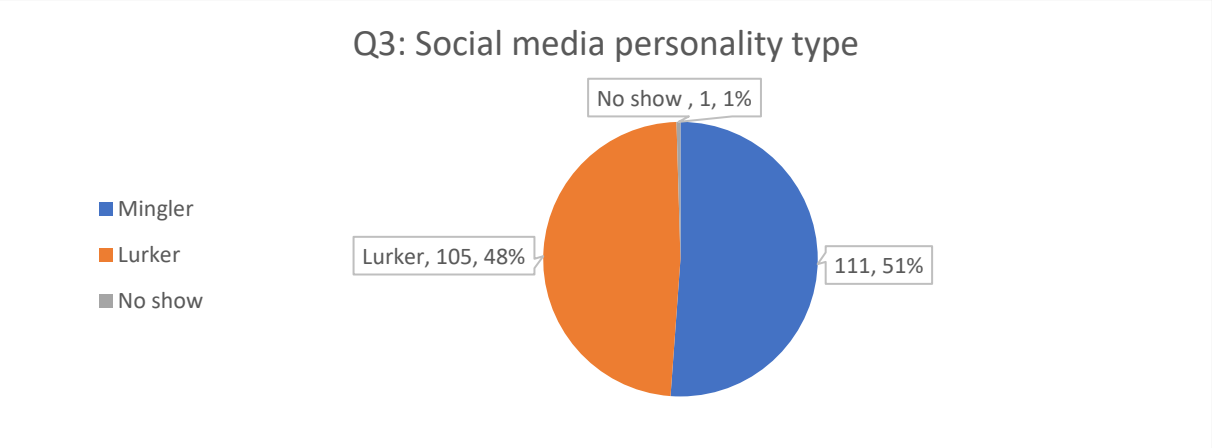

Figure 4.8: Social media personality type

Hundred and eleven (51%) of the participants are mingles meaning that they participate actively on multiple social media platforms and they follow brands in order to keep up with the latest news and trends. An almost equal number of lurkers exists, 105 (48%), who does access social media to know what is happening in your network but never post anything about themselves.

Question 4: Have you been living in South Africa for 5 years or more?

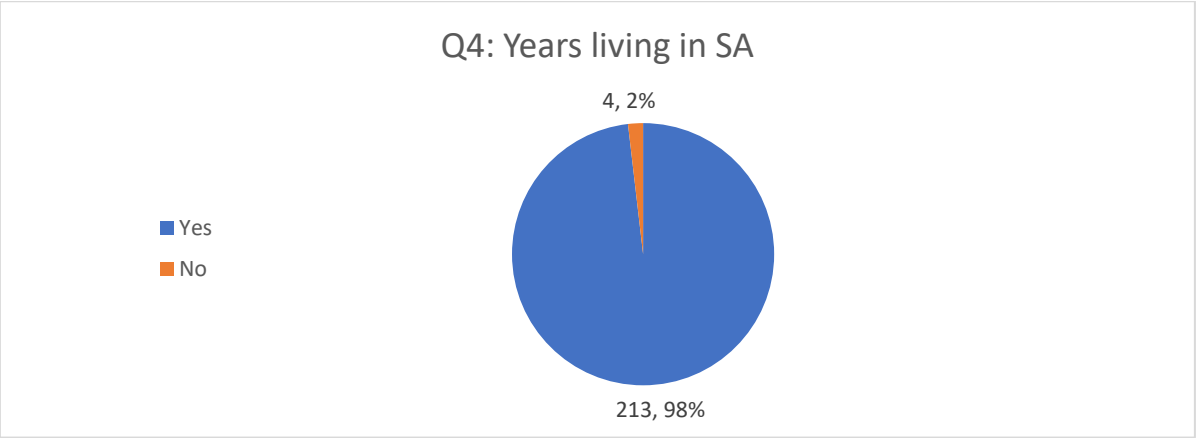

Figure 4.9: Years living in SA

213 (98%) of the participants have lived in South Africa for more than five years.

Question 5: Please mention at least two of your favourite South African social media influencers that you follow?



Figure 4.10: Social Media influencers

Bonang, Mihlali, Ndamase seems to most amongst the most common influencers based on the survey Reponses. This question was included to assess whether the respondents were familiar with who South African social media influencers are.

4.2.2 SUB-PROBLEM 1 RESULTS: INFLUENCER ATTRIBUTES

The first sub-problem investigated which influencer attributes impacted brand awareness and strength of brand associations. This section has a specific focus on the various

personality traits of the influencers the respondents rated based on specific constructs: attractive, entertaining, expertise, familiarity, inspirational, likability, similarity and trustworthy and which traits were effective in brand awareness and strength of brand associations.

For hypothesis 1, the paper endeavoured to understand the relationship individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and brand awareness.

Hypothesis 2 sought to establish whether there was a relationship between individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and the strength of brand associations. The results are as follows:

a. *Influence Attributes - Attractive*

Table 4.1: Influence Attributes - Attractive

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Attractive	Q6_4	Social media influencers are physically attractive.	19%	48%	17%	12%	3%
Attractive Brand awareness	Q6_17	An attractive social media influencer makes me aware of the brand they are endorsing.	38%	47%	11%	3%	1%
Attractive Strength of brand association	Q6_6	I will easily recall a social media influencer that is good looking.	34%	43%	15%	6%	2%

Table 4.1 indicates that over 70% of respondents believe that attractiveness is an important attribute for influencers and that their influencers are attractive in terms of dressing well and good looks. Based on these results, attractiveness is an important attribute that drives brand awareness (85%). Per question6_6, 77% believe that an attractive social media influencer will help with memory retrieval, while less than 12% believe that attractiveness is not an important attribute of their influencers.

Table 4.2: Attractive - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Attractive	Q6_4	217	4	4	1.02	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Attractive – Strength of brand association	Q6_6	217	4	4	0.96	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Attractive – brand awareness	Q6_17	217	4	4	0.84	Agree

The results of the table indicate that the respondents agree that attractiveness is a key and important attribute of social media influencers and is effective in enhancing brand awareness and strengthening brand-related associations.

b. *Influence Attributes - Expertise*

Table 4.3: Influence Attributes - Expertise

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Expertise Strength of brand association	Q6_1	Social media influencers who are field experts are good at helping me remember what they said.	10%	32%	25%	24%	8%
Expertise	Q6_2	Social media influencers serve as credible sources of information about the products or companies they endorse.	14%	51%	14%	17%	5%
Expertise	Q6_11	The lifestyle of social media influencers fits my lifestyle very well.	3%	14%	19%	47%	17%
Expertise Brand awareness	Q6_12	When I want to know about latest brand-related trends, I can rely on the expertise of social media influencers I follow.	18%	40%	12%	21%	11%
Expertise	Q6_13	Social media influencers are knowledgeable.	5%	37%	32%	19%	6%

As per Table 4.3, 51% of respondents felt that influencers are a credible source of information about products while feelings seem fairly distributed in terms of the expertise of influencers in helping with brand awareness and related trends. 64% of respondents

disagree that there is a direct relationship between the lifestyle of influencers and their own lifestyles. Feelings seem mixed in terms of influencers being knowledgeable, while 42% agrees that influencers who are knowledgeable in their respective fields help with strengthening brand associations, 32% remains undecided in terms of the expertise of influencers around products they endorse.

Table 4.4: Expertise - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Expertise Strength of brand associations	Q6_1	217	3	4	1.14	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Expertise	Q6_2	217	4	4	1.06	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Expertise	Q6_11	217	2	2	1.02	Disagree
Influencer Attributes	Expertise – brand awareness	Q6_12	217	4	4	1.27	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Expertise	Q6_13	217	3	4	1.00	Agree

The results indicate that the lifestyle of the respondents does not fit that of the lifestyle social media influencer. The expertise of social media influencers is highly regarded with respect to be a source of information and helping strengthen brand association, and their expertise about products and the latest trends enhances their awareness of brands.

c. *Influence Attributes - Familiarity*

Table 4.5: Influence Attributes - Familiarity

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Familiarity Brand awareness	Q6_8	I am very familiar with social media influencers who help brands with awareness	12%	38%	23%	19%	7%
Familiarity	Q6_9	I have seen many adverts that use social media influencers	28%	48%	9%	13%	1%

As per Table 4.5, 78% of respondents have seen adverts with influencers, yet only 50% of the respondents are familiar with social media influencers who work with brands to increase awareness. 23% of respondents are undecided in terms of influencer familiarity.

Table 4.6: Familiarity - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes Brand awareness	Familiarity	Q6_8	217	4	4	1.13	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Familiarity	Q6_9	217	4	4	1.01	Agree

General agreement exists with respect to the familiarity of the influencers, respondents are familiar with them and have seen influencers promoting brands (brand awareness).

d. *Influence Attributes - Inspirational*

Table 4.7: Influence Attributes - Inspirational

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inspirational Brand awareness	Q6_3	Social media influencers are trendsetters for brand they are promoting.	26%	53%	12%	5%	3%
Inspirational	Q6_20	Social media influencers are a source of inspiration.	14%	55%	18%	9%	4%
Inspirational	Q6_21	I aspire to be like my favourite social media influencer.	13%	27%	15%	34%	11%
Inspirational Strength of Brand association	Q6_22	Social media influencers promote products and ideas that are useful to me.	12%	52%	24%	11%	2%

As per Table 4.7, 79 % of respondents believe that influencers are trendsetters for the brand they are representing, meaning that influencers help enhance brand awareness, 12% are undecided. 69% of respondents believe that influencers are a source of inspiration, while 18% are undecided on the inspiration issue. 45% of respondents do not aspire to be like their influencers while a smaller percentage of 40% do aspire to be like

their influencers.64% of respondents believe that influencers promote products that are useful and relevant to them while 13% agrees with the statement.

Table 4.8: Inspirational - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Inspirational – Brand Awareness	Q6_3	217	4	4	0.93	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Inspirational	Q6_20	217	4	4	0.97	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Inspirational	Q6_21	217	3	2	1.26	Disagree
Influencer Attributes	Inspirational – Strength of brand association	Q6_22	217	4	4	0.91	Agree

General disagreement exists in terms of the inspiration to be like social media influencers. Social media influencers are seen as trendsetters for brands, a source of inspiration and it is believed that they promote products that are relevant to consumers.

e. *Influence Attributes - Likability*

Table 4.9: Influence Attributes - Likability

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Likability	Q6_5	Social media influencers have a likeable personality.	18%	52%	18%	8%	4%
Likability Brand awareness	Q6_14	I take note of brands advertised by social media influencers I like.	35%	56%	5%	2%	2%
Likability	Q6_15	I have high regard for the social media influencers I follow.	17%	41%	27%	11%	4%

Table 4.9 reflects that 70% of respondents agree that influencers have a likable personality, while 12 % disagrees with the statement. 91% of the respondents believe that they easily notice the brands promoted by influencers they like while only 58% of respondents have a

high regard for the influencers they follow. 42% are undecided or disagree in terms of having a high regard for the influencers they follow.

Table 4.10: Likability - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Likability	Q6_5	217	4	4	0.99	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Likability – Brand awareness	Q6_14	217	4	4	0.77	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Likability	Q6_15	217	4	4	1.01	Agree

General agreement exists with social media influencers have great personalities and high levels of admiration by their followers. A majority of respondents (91%) will notice the brand if it is promoted by an influencer they like.

f. *Influence Attributes - Similarity*

Table 4.11: Influence Attributes - Similarity

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Similarity	Q6_7	My interests are very similar to the interests of my favourite social media influencers.	14%	38%	20%	20%	7%
Similarity Strength of Brand Association	Q6_10	I can relate very well to the lifestyle of my favourite social media influencers.	8%	23%	24%	31%	14%

As per table 4.11, 52 of respondents believe they have similar interest as their influencers while 20% remains undecided and 27% disagree that they have similar interests. Correlation is terms of lifestyle seems exceptionally low at 31% of respondents agreeing to this statement. 45% of the respondents disagree that they can relate to the lifestyle of their influencers while 245 remains undecided.

Table 4.12: Similarity - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Similarity	Q6_7	217	4	4	1.16	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Similarity – Strength of Brand association	Q6_10	217	3	2	1.18	Disagree

The interests of social media influencers are very similar to that of the respondents while there are fundamental differences between, he lifestyle of social media influencers and the respondents.

g. *Influence Attributes - Trustworthy*

Table 4.13: Influence Attributes - Trustworthy

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Trustworthy	Q6_16	I find social media influencers to be trustworthy.	4%	18%	41%	27%	11%
Trustworthy Strength of brand association	Q6_18	A trusted social media influencer can make me take time to process what they are saying.	8%	37%	31%	18%	5%
Trustworthy	Q6_19	I find social media influencers to have integrity.	6%	34%	39%	16%	5%

As per table 4.137, 41% of the respondents are undecided in terms of trustworthiness while 38% of the respondents believe that influencers are not trustworthy. Only 45% believe that influencers who are trustworthy can help them effectively think about the information they are relaying. 39% of the respondents are undecided in terms of the integrity of influencers while 40% trusts the integrity of the influencers.

Table 4.14: Trustworthy - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Trustworthy	Q6_16	217	3	3	0.98	Undecided
Influencer Attributes	Trustworthy – Strength of brand association	Q6_18	217	3	4	1.01	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Trustworthy	Q6_19	217	3	3	0.95	Undecided

Indecisiveness exists within the trustworthiness attribute, this questions the trustworthiness of the social media influencers, although most agree that if a social media influencer is believable, it helps in processing brand-related information they are conveying to consumers.

h. *Influence Attributes - Entertaining*

Table 4.15: Influence Attributes - Entertaining

Construct	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Entertaining Strength of brand associations	Q6_23	Social media influencers who are entertaining help me easily remember products they are endorsing.	8%	29%	27%	29%	7%
Entertaining Brand awareness	Q6_24	Social media influencers who are entertaining are effective in creating awareness for brands.	25%	60%	9%	4%	2%
Entertaining	Q6_25	I enjoy the conversational interaction that social media influencers often have with followers	11%	34%	10%	33%	12%
Entertaining Strength of brand association	Q6_26	I follow the pages of influencers to see what other people are saying about the brands being endorsed.	18%	47%	15%	16%	4%

As per table 4.15, 85% of the respondents agree that social media influencers who are entertaining help enhance brand awareness. Only 37% of participants agree that influencers who are entertaining, help them easily store brand-related information in their memory while

27% are undecided and 36% disagree with the statement. 65% of participants follow the pages of influencers to see the comments from other followers regarding the promoted brand. Balanced views exist in terms the conversational interaction between influencers and their followers.

Table 4.16: Entertaining - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Influencer Attributes	Entertaining – Strength of Brand associations	Q6_23	217	3	2	1.08	Disagree
Influencer Attributes	Entertaining – Brand awareness	Q6_24	217	4	4	0.83	Agree
Influencer Attributes	Entertaining	Q6_25	217	3	4	1.26	Disagree
Influencer Attributes	Entertaining – Strength of Brand associations	Q6_26	217	4	4	1.08	Agree

Disagreement exists in terms of entertaining influencers making participants store and easily remember information about the brands they are endorsing. Further disagreement in term of the conversational interactions between influencers and their followers. Agreement exists in terms of finding influencers entertaining and helping with brand-related information.

i. *Observations from Social Media Influencers*

Table 4.17: Summary of Influencer Attributes that impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations

ATTRIBUTE	SURVEY RESULTS
Attractiveness	The attractiveness of social media influencers is absolutely key to their followers and makes followers become aware of brands they promote. It is rated high in the survey conducted. 77% of respondents believe that an attractive influencer helps strengthen their brand-related associations.

Familiarity	The rating in terms of familiarity is found to be lower than the attractiveness of social media influencers.
Inspirational	Social media influencers are seen as trendsetters, inspirational and promote products that are relevant to their followers.
Entertaining	This is the highest rated attribute in terms of finding influencers entertaining for followers following their pages on social media. This attribute increases brand strength association as followers will recall the brand if the influencer is entertaining.
Expertise	The expertise of social media influencers is highly regarded with respect to be a source of information, their expertise about products and the latest trends
Likability	High rating exists for social media influencers in terms of having great personalities and are admired by their followers.
Similarity	Interests of social media influencers coupled with the lifestyle comparison received lower ratings. This attribute positively impacts brand awareness, but does increase brand association strength.
Trustworthy	Social media influencers are seen as being believable, but their trustworthiness is questioned. 45% of respondents believe that even if an influencer is trustworthy, this will not help strengthen their brand association.

4.2.3 SUB-PROBLEM 2 RESULTS: Consumer effects and influencer attributes

The second sub-problem investigated the effects of social media influencer attributes on consumer effects, using the AIDA model framework. The section is split into 4 components, an analysis of action, interest, attention and desire based on influencer attributes.

In hypothesis 3, the study intended to establish the relationship between individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and consumer attention.

Hypothesis 4 assessed the relationship between individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and consumer interest.

Hypothesis 5 assessed the relationship between individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and consumer desire.

For hypothesis 6 evaluated the relationship between individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer and consumer action.

a. *Consumer Effects - Action*

Table 4.18: Consumer Effects - Action

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Action	Q10_2	I am likely to purchase Lays Potato Chips because of the influencer post.	8%	15%	10%	41%	23%
Action	Q10_3	I sometimes like to gossip	11%	46%	13%	18%	9%
Action Similarity	Q10_4	I will choose a brand recommended by an influencer that is similar to me.	7%	24%	20%	34%	12%

As per table 4.25, 64% of respondents will not buy Lays chips as a result of influencer post. Only 36% of respondents will buy the product recommended by an influencer they resonate with while 20% remains undecided and 31% will buy based on influencer recommendation.

57% of respondents admit that they do like to gossip from time to time. This question was included to test the authenticity of the respondents' answers to the rest of the questionnaire.

Table 4.19: Consumer Action - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Consumer Effects	Action	Q10_2	217	2	2	1.23	Disagree
Consumer Effects	Action	Q10_3	217	4	4	1.17	Agree
Consumer Effects	Action	Q10_4	217	3	2	1.16	Disagree

	Similarity						

The general consent is that the respondents will not purchase or choose the Lays brand based on social media influencer recommendations even if they resonate with the influencer.

b. *Consumer Effects - Attention*

Table 4.20: Consumer Effects - Attention

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Attention Attractive	Q10_1	I easily notice brands that are endorsed by an attractive influencer.	12%	24%	13%	35%	14%
Attention	Q10_9	I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	17%	36%	14%	20%	8%
Attention Entertaining	Q10_10	My immediate attention is towards brands that entertaining social media influencers are associated with.	5%	18%	24%	35%	13%

As per table 4.27, 49% of respondents do not notice brands that are promoted by attractive influencers, while 36% do notice brands that are promoted by attractive influencers. 48% of respondents disagree that their attention is drawn towards brands associated with influencers that are deemed as entertaining.

Table 4.21: Consumer Attention - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Consumer Effects	Attention Attractive	Q10_1	217	2.5	2	1.28	Disagree
Consumer Effects	Attention	Q10_9	217	4	4	1.23	Agree
Consumer Effects	Attention Entertaining	Q10_10	217	2	2	1.10	Disagree

The majority of respondents do not notice brands endorsed by social media influencers that are attractive. Respondents disagreed that their attention is drawn to products endorsed by social media influencers considered as entertaining.

c. *Consumer Effects - Desire*

Table 4.22: Consumer Effects - Desire

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Desire Inspirational	Q10_8	I long to own brands endorsed by influencers I find inspirational.	5%	10%	12%	48%	21%
Desire	Q10_7	I always try to practice what I preach.	23%	65%	9%	0%	0%

As per table 4.29, 88% of the respondents claim that they practise what they preach (fact-testing question), while 69% do not long for brands recommended by their influencers. Only 15% of respondents long for brands which are promoted by influencers they find inspirational.

Table 4.23: Consumer Desire - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Consumer Effects	Desire	Q10_7	217	4	4	0.61	Agree
Consumer Effects	Desire	Q10_8	217	2	2	1.07	Disagree

Respondents generally do not practice what they preach while many do not long for products that are recommended by inspiring social media influencers.

d. *Consumer Effects - Interest*

Table 4.24: Consumer Effects - Interest

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Interest Similarity	Q10_5	It is very likely that I will be interested in Lays brand if they are endorsed by a social media influencer who has a lifestyle similar to mine.	8%	27%	15%	32%	16%
Interest Likeable	Q10_6	I am willing to try new products of any brand promoted by an influencer that is likeable.	11%	37%	16%	25%	8%

As per table 4.31, it is likely that only 35% of respondents will be interested in in the Lays brand because it is endorsed by an influencer similar to them. 48% of respondents will not be interested in the Lays Brand even if is endorsed by influencers similar to them. 48% of respondents are willing to try new products endorsed by likeable influencers. 33% of respondents are not willing to try out products even if the influencer is likeable.

Table 4.25: Consumer Interest - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Consumer Effects	Interest	Q10_5	214	3	2	1.24	Disagree
Consumer Effects	Interest	Q10_6	213	4	4	1.18	Agree

Respondents feel that it is very unlikely that they would be interested in a product endorsed by a social media influencer they resonate with, but they are willing to try products endorsed by a likeable social media influencer.

e. *Summary of Consumer Effects*

ATTRIBUTE	SURVEY RESULTS
Action	Respondents will not necessarily purchase a product based on influencer recommendation, irrespective of the influencer being entertaining or attractive.
Attention	The products endorsed by attractive or entertaining influencers do not necessarily draw the attention of the respondents.
Desire	There is little or no desire for products endorsed by influencers, but a small number of respondents do long to own brands owned by influencers they find inspirational.

Interest	It is unlikely that respondents would be interested in products endorsed by influencers but are willing to try products endorsed by influencers who are similar to them.

4.2.4 SUB-PROBLEM 3 RESULTS: Consumer effects, Brand awareness and strength of brand associations

The third sub-problem is to evaluate if consumer effects – using the AIDA model - impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations.

In hypothesis 7, the study intended to establish the relationship between consumer action and the strength of brand associations.

Hypothesis 8 assessed the relationship between consumer interest and the strength of brand associations.

Hypothesis 9 assessed the relationship between consumer attention and the strength of brand associations.

For hypothesis 10 evaluated the relationship between consumer desire and the strength of brand associations.

In hypothesis 11, the study intended to establish the relationship between consumer action and brand awareness.

Hypothesis 12 assessed the relationship between consumer interest and brand awareness.

Hypothesis 13 assessed the relationship between consumer attention and brand awareness.

For hypothesis 14 evaluated the relationship between consumer desire and brand awareness.

The following section is split into 3 components, an analysis of brand awareness, strength of brand associations and an analysis of the case study that used the Lays Potato Chips brand.

.

a. *Brand Awareness*

Table 4.26: Brand Awareness

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Brand Awareness Attention	Q9_1	It is easy for me to recognise the product being endorsed in the post.	40%	47%	4%	6%	3%
Brand Awareness	Q9_3	I am aware of Lay Potato Chips.	50%	40%	3%	5%	2%
Brand Awareness	Q9_6	I can easily recall the symbol or logo of Lays potato chips.	21%	33%	15%	25%	6%
Brand Awareness Action	Q9_8	I will purchase Lays Potato Chips because of this influencer post.	14%	27%	12%	35%	12%

According to the responses in Table 4.18, 90% of respondents are aware of the Lays brand while 87% agreed that it is easy for them to recognise the brand that is promoted by an influencer.47% of respondents will not purchase Lays potato chips because of the influencer post while 41% say they will. A large majority 54% is able to identify the lays logo easily, while 31% cannot identify the logo easily.

Table 4.27: Brand Awareness - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Brand Knowledge	Brand Awareness Consumer attention	Q9_1	217	4	4	0.88	Agree
Brand Knowledge	Brand Awareness	Q9_3	217	5	5	0.84	Strongly agree
Brand Knowledge	Brand Awareness	Q9_6	217	4	4	1.13	Agree

Brand Knowledge	Brand Awareness	Q9_8	217	3	2	1.14	Disagree

Respondents are very aware of the Lays brand. The product is easily recognisable, and it is easy to recognise the Lays logo. It does seem that the post does not increase the likelihood of respondents purchasing the product.

b. *Strength of brand associations*

Table 4.28: Strength of brand associations

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Strength of brand associations	Q9_2	The use of this influencer means the quality of Lays Potato chips is extremely high.	53%	44%	1%	1%	1%
Strength of brand associations	Q9_4	I do not have difficulty imagining Lay Potato Chips in my mind.	55%	40%	2%	2%	1%
Strength of brand associations Desire	Q9_5	I desire having Lay potato chips because they are a brand leader.	30%	52%	12%	4%	2%
Strength of brand associations Interest	Q9_7	I am only interested in Lays potato chips when I am having fun.	16%	33%	21%	24%	6%
Strength of brand associations	Q9_9	Lays potato chips has a good reputation.	16%	31%	13%	29%	11%
Strength of brand associations	Q9_10	I have a good feeling about Lays potato chips.	27%	52%	9%	8%	4%

As per table 4.20, 97% of the respondents agree that the use of Kefilwe means that Lays produces a high-quality product, and 95% has no difficulty in imagining or recalling Lays potato chips. At the same time, 82% of respondents believe that because Lays are a brand leader, their desire to have them increases.49% of respondents believe that they are only interested in Lays when they are having fun while 47% believe that lays has a good reputation. 79% of the respondents generally have a good feeling about Lays.

Table 4.29: Strength of brand associations - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description

Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations	Q9_2	217	5	5	0.62	Strongly agree
Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations	Q9_4	217	5	5	0.71	Strongly agree
Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations Consumer Desire	Q9_5	217	4	4	0.81	Agree
Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations Consumer interest	Q9_7	217	3	4	1.07	Agree
Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations	Q9_9	217	3	4	1.13	Agree
Brand Knowledge	Strength of brand associations	Q9_10	217	4	4	0.92	Agree

There is general agreement in terms of the strength of brand associations for Lays Potato Chips. Majority of respondents do not have difficulty in encoding the Lays brand and there are strong associations about the brands as respondents have positive sentiments in terms of the brand having a good reputation, a good quality product and that it is seen as a brand leader that is also associated with having fun or being consumed when fun memories are being made.

c. *The Lays Brand*

Table 4.30: The Lays Brand

Measurement	Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Lays Brand	Q9_11	I am interested in Lays potato chips is a brand leader	17%	38%	25%	14%	6%
Lays Brand	Q9_12	Lays potato chips' good reputation grabs my attention over competing brands.	27%	59%	10%	3%	2%

Lays Brand	Q9_13	The good feeling I have towards Lays potato chips makes me want to buy them.	22%	56%	14%	6%	1%

55% of respondents are interested in Lays because it is a brand leader, while 65% believe that Lays good reputation' grabs their attention. 78% of respondents will buy Lays potato chips because they have a good feeling about the brand.

Table 4.31: Lays Brand - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Brand Equity	Lays Brand	Q9_11	217	4	4	0.99	Agree
Brand Equity	Lays Brand	Q9_12	217	4	4	0.74	Agree
Brand Equity	Lays Brand	Q9_13	217	4	4	0.82	Agree

General agreement in terms of Lays as a brand leader, having a good reputation and that people generally have a good feeling about lays as a brand.

d. *Summary of Brand awareness and strength of brand associations*

Table 4.32: Brand Summary

ATTRIBUTE	SURVEY RESULTS
Brand Awareness	Respondents are aware of the brand with an easy recognisable logo and can easily recall them. Even though the post draws their attention to the Las brand, it does not necessarily prompt craving or action.
Strength of brand associations	The general sentiment is that the brand has a good reputation, is associated with fun, delivers good quality products and it is perceived as a brand leader. The respondents agree that even if the strength of association for Lays potato

	is high, it will not necessarily lead to a purchase, but they desire consuming them and are interested in the chips only when they are having fun
Lays Brand	Lays is perceived as a brand leader with a good reputation.

4.2.5 SECTION E: CONSUMER ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOCIAL MEDIA

This section summarises the general perception of consumers towards social media influencers. The rationale in measuring influencer sentiments is to determine respondents' attitude towards influencers as influencer attributes will be immaterial if the brand's target market has a negative discernment on social media influencers.

4.2.6 INFLUENCERS

a. *Consumer Attitudes towards Influencers*

Table 4.33: Consumer Attitudes towards Influencers

Question	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q11_1	I have strong interest in social media	12%	27%	21%	29%	10%
Q11_2	Social media influencers are an important part	6%	8%	13%	38%	33%
Q11_3	I select social media influencers very carefully.	27%	38%	13%	13%	8%
Q11_4	Which social media influencer to follow matters	23%	35%	13%	16%	12%
Q11_5	Choosing social media influencers is an	16%	25%	17%	24%	18%
Q11_6	I think a lot before I make a decision about	18%	32%	14%	20%	15%

As per table 4.33, 39% of respondents have an interest in influencers while an equal number of respondents have no interest in social media influencers. The majority of respondents, 72% feel that influencers are not an important part of their lives. 65% of respondents choose

their influencer very carefully while 13% remains undecided on this issue. In the same breath, 58% of respondents believe that having the right influencer is important to them. 42% of the respondents feel that it is not an important decision to choose a social media influencer while 41% feels that it is an important decision for them. 50% of respondents thinks a lot about choosing the right influencer while 35% don't really spend a lot of time thinking about it.

Table 4.34: Consumer Attitude - Summary

CLASSIFICATION	MEASURE	QUESTION	OBS	MEAN	MODE	SD	MODE Description
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_1	214	3	2	1.20	Disagree
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_2	215	2	2	1.15	Disagree
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_3	215	4	4	1.24	Agree
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_4	216	4	4	1.33	Agree
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_5	216	3	4	1.37	Agree
Consumer Attitudes	Consumer Attitudes	Q11_6	216	4	4	1.35	Agree

Positive attitudes prevail over social media influencers. General agreement exists in terms of the positive impact they have on the decision-making process and choosing the right influencer is also very important. Respondents generally do not have a strong interest in social media influencers, and they are not really an important part of the lives of respondents.

4.3 Reliability

Reliability is determined by the repetition of results (Kaboub, 2008). Testing for reliability is important as it refers to the consistency across the parts of a measuring instrument (Huck, 2007). A scale is said to have high internal consistency reliability if the items of a scale "hang together" and measure the same construct (Huck, 2007, Robinson, 2009).

The researcher seeks to discover, describe, explain facts, and replicate the results given the same set of parameters within the unchanged environment (Yeasmin & Rahman, 2012).

Reliability tests conducted during this research includes Cronbach's Alpha, the normal distribution and spearman's correlation.

4.3.1 The Cronbach Test

The Cronbach Alpha test was used for ensuring reliability and internal consistency in measurement tools. The questionnaires used as measuring instruments contained simple, unambiguous questions with a structured response format. This aims to make the instrument very reliable. To guarantee reliability in this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient test was used to investigate the internal consistency of the results. A Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher is deemed acceptable for research purposes of this kind.

Table 4.35: Case Processing Summary

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	19	73,1
	Excluded[a]	7	26,9
	Total	26	100,0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Table 4.36: Cronbach Alpha Co-efficient

Cronbach's Alpha	**N of Items**
0,915	67

The alpha coefficient for the 26 items is .915, suggesting that the 26 items have relatively high internal consistency. Please refer to figure 4.36 for the Cronbach Co-efficient for this test.

4.4 Conclusion

The main problem of the study was to explore if social media influencer attributes positively impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations and what the effects are on consumers in order to help guide brand managers when appointing social media influencers to represent their brands. Fourteen hypotheses were established to test relationships between these variables by conducting a correlations analysis and regression analysis from data extracted from 217 respondents.

The chapter provided a detailed analysis of the results against the 14 hypotheses and the data concluded the following correlations between the constructs:

Hypothesis Statement	Significant (P<0.05)	P-Value	Impact [B Value (+) or (-)	B (Coefficient)
$H1_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness.	Yes	0.24	Positive	0.140
$H2_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects the strength of brand association.	No	****	****	****
$H3_0$: Consumer attention is positively affected by Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer	Yes	0.040	Negative	-0.114
$H4_0$: Consumer interest is positively affected by Individual or multiple	Yes	0.050	Positive	0.124

attributes of a social media influencer				
$H5_0$: Consumer desire is positively affected by Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer	Yes	0.006	Positive	0.189
$H6_0$: Consumer action is positively affected by Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer	Yes	0.000	Positive	0.0264
$H7_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on the strength of brand associations	No	****	****	****
$H8_0$: Consumer interest have a positive impact on the strength of brand associations	No	0.052	Negative	-0.124
$H9_0$: Consumer attention have a positive impact on the strength of brand associations.	Yes	0.003	Positive	0.163
$H10_0$: Consumer desire have a positive impact on the strength of brand associations	Yes	0.007	Positive	0.062
$H11_0$: Consumer action have a positive impact on brand awareness	No	0.128	Negative	-0.080
$H12_0$: Consumer interest have a positive impact on brand awareness	No	0.051	Positive	0.125
$H13_0$: Consumer attention have a positive impact on brand awareness	No	0.377	Positive	0.054
$H14_0$: Consumer desire have a positive impact on brand awareness	No	0.206	Negative	-0.080

The following chapter will discuss the results in detail.

5 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research on the impact of social media influencer attributes on consumer effects and how it affects brand awareness and strength of brand associations. Data was collected using an online questionnaire to test 14 hypotheses, which would assess the following relationships: Social media influencer attributes – Brand awareness; Social media influencer attributes – Strength of brand associations; Social media influencer attributes – AIDA; Strength of brand associations – AIDA and Strength of brand associations – AIDA. The study looked at each component of the AIDA model, which entails attention, interest, desire, and action.

The results are based on the results of valid data collected from respondents (n=217) and will evaluate the descriptive analysis or demographic breakdown of the respondents, as well as evaluate the results of each hypothesis.

5.2 Demographic Results

Data was collected from 217 respondents, with a majority (83%) of respondents being female and 17% being male. The number of males and females who are active social media users in South Africa, is almost equal, with 51% being active users (Digital 2020 South Africa, 2020). The gender dynamics of respondents means that female social media users are more inclined to follow social media influencers or may show interest in influencers than men.

A majority of respondents (43%) were between the ages of 18 – 24 and 25 – 34 (34%), which translates to Gen Y and Gen Z being more interested in influencers, which could be useful information for brand marketers promoting products targeting these age groups, that using social media influencers for their campaigns could be commercially viable.

According to the latest statistics from StatsSA (2019), South Africa's population has 80.7 Africans, followed by Coloureds 8.8%, then Whites (7.9%). This trend is also evident in the racial classification of respondents, with Africans being the majority of respondents (86%). The same report by StatsSA (2019) shows that Gauteng is the most populated province in South Africa, again this is evident in the study with 87% of respondents residing in Gauteng and the rest of the respondents are evenly spread amongst the other 8 provinces. 31% of the respondents have an undergraduate degree, meaning that the respondents are intellectually and socially prepared for their chosen careers. This also illustrates that people who know about social media influencers, are educated and well-informed and can therefore influential in adding value to brands.

To ensure that respondents met the minimum requirement of being social media users, a question on which platforms they were active on was asked and to also understand what kind of social media behaviour they reflected, the questionnaire outlined three kind of social media users: minglers, lurkers and no-shows and time spent on online. A majority of respondents (51%) were minglers, meaning that they posted often and respondent to other people's posts and 42% of respondents spent more than 5 hours on social media. Social media behaviour can help brand managers understand their target market better and for influencers to publish exciting and captivating content that will grab the attention of minglers, who can help promote brands online.

5.1 Sub-problem 1 discussion

The first sub-problem investigated the effects of social media influencer attributes on brand equity brand awareness and strength of brand associations. The first hypothesis tested this sub-problem projected a null relationship between individual or multiple influencer attributes and brand awareness ($H1_0$) and the other hypothesis tested the relationship between individual or multiple influencer attributes and strength of brand associations ($H2_0$).

The following sub-sections will discuss hypotheses relating to each sub-problem by examining the correlation and regression analyses results.

5.1.1 Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness.

This hypothesis showed that there is a significant relationship between influencer attributes and brand awareness with a P-value of 0.24. The relationship between these two variables is positive and has a coefficient of 0.140, which translates to the strength of the relationship between social media attributes and brand awareness; that if the value of attributes of a social media influencer are positive, then brand awareness will increase. The relationship between the attractiveness of an influencer and brand awareness is the strongest. This indicates that the hypothesis is significant and supported. The findings are consistent with findings by Freberg et al. (2011) and Booth (2011), who confirmed that the use of social influencers brings personality to brands; give brands a face and derive value such as brand awareness, brand loyalty and positive brand image.

A study by Forbes (2016) looked at five characteristics (relatable, knowledgeable, helpful, confident, and articulate) that were inherit in influencers representing the cosmetics company, Maybelline. The study assessed the characteristics according to the social learning theory and the attribution theory and found that consumers related more to influencers who depicted the five characteristics as they learned about the brand through learning experiences through You Tube. Consumers perceived the brand in a positive light if the influencer provides a positive review for Maybelline products. The results of the study by Forbes (2011), further support the hypothesis, that there is a positive relationship between one or more influencer attributes and brand awareness. Gretzel's (2018) study conducted a similar study within the travel and tourism industry on the effectiveness of travel social media influencers and how their traits enhances brand awareness for tourist destinations. The study by Gretzel (2018) also found that travel influencers was more professionalised than influencers from other industries, which made measuring their effectiveness due to the development of technological tools that supported their various engagements.

5.1.2 Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations

$H2_o$ found that a significant relationship between social media attributes and strength of brand associations does not exist. Strength of brand associations is one of the drivers of brand knowledge and refers to a consumer's general perception and feeling about a brand, which influences their behaviour (Zhang, 2015). This relationship states that a social media influencer's attributes will positively impact the image of a brand, and Zhang (2015) argues that the strength of brand associations is the dominant factor that determines the consumer's action to purchase or not. This argument can be interpreted that should the attributes of an influencer be negative, then this will adversely impact the brand associations and consequently lead to a decrease in sales.

The study by Hermanda et al. (2019) does not support the findings of the hypothesis that there is no relationship between influencer attributes and brand associations. Their study analysed the relationship between influencer attributes and brand image, brand associations and purchase intention, using Structural Equation Modelling -Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS).

Although the research results state that there is no relationship between influencer attributes and strength of brand associations, Park et al (1986) and Lassar et al (1995) highlight that brands need to first understand their target market and have deeper insights into consumer behaviour before implementing marketing campaigns as it is not easy for strength of brand associations to change once it is entrenched in the memory of the consumer. Abratt & Kleyn (2012) argues that the results of the hypothesis would have need to consider other factors which impact the strength of brand associations, such as the influencers representing the brand, as well as how the mass communication is relayed to the target market. Social media influencers form of agents representing the brand and should therefore constantly enhance their personalities or attributes to ultimately strengthen the image of the brands they stand for.

5.2 Sub-problem 2 discussion

The second sub-problem examined the effects of social media influencer attributes on consumer effects, using the AIDA model ($H3_0$, $H4_0$, $H5_0$, and $H6_0$). Several studies have focused on personality traits of social media influencers, with each study focusing on different traits since there is no explicit influencer attribute scale. This study compiled a list of influencer attributes based on the most popular traits referenced by various studies.

Regarding the consumer effects, studies that have focused on the different hierarchy of effects models had diverse approaches as some looked at each effect separately and took the holistic approach (Wijaya, 2012; Ghirvu, 2013; Yoo et al, 2004). Consumers process brand communication in three steps: cognitively, affectively and conatively (Egan, 2007). Cognitive is about consumers' mental state when they engage with the message, affective is their feelings or attitudes towards the brand communication and conation is the action or behaviour consumer will take as a result of the message (Keller & Kotler, 2016). This study examined each stage of the AIDA hierarchy of effects model. To address the second sub-problem, investigation of the data through correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted and the results are as follows:

5.2.1 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer attention

The p-value of 0.040 suggests that there is a significant effect between the two variables even though the coefficient estimate of this hypothesis is -0.114 and validates that there is a negative relationship between consumer attention and social media influencer attributes. This means that changes to the attributes of a social media influencer will not have an effect on the attention of the consumer with regards to their awareness of the brand and its products. As part of consumer effects, attention is about raising the awareness of a brand and how the consumer will comprehend the brand message, and if the comprehension is positive, then the consumer will move to other stages of the AIDA model (Wijaya, 2012). The findings state that the attributes of a

social media influencer will not impact the awareness of the brand or its product, although study by Kumar (2011) refutes these findings by concluding that social media endorsers increase product awareness based on source attractiveness, product-influencer match up and messaging. A study by Yun Yoo et al., (2013), also disapproves of the findings of this hypothesis by stating that attention as part of the AIDA model, increases through marketing campaigns. The reasons the findings disagree with the literature, may be due to the inability of the research being reproduced using a different data collection method or that the underlying framework used in this study focuses on specific attributes of social media influencers, rather than on influencer marketing as a complete concept.

Egan (2007) also disagrees with the findings by asserting that the two variables have a positive relationship and brand managers can use influencer marketing campaigns to try persuade consumers to turn their attention on certain brands even though there is no empirical evidence that suggests that a consumer is at a certain stage of the model. Attention is about being aware that certain brands exist and if attributes of a social media influencer can help heighten consumer attention, then the two variables should impact each other, though the results state otherwise.

5.2.2 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer interest

The p-value indicates a 0.050 significant relationship between the two variables. The path coefficient estimate for this hypothesis is 0.124 and supports a positive relationship between consumer interest and influencer attributes. The results of this study can be understood as showing that that social influencers and their attributes can encourage consumers to show an interest in promoted brands only if they like the influencer or the influencer has traits that the consumer likes.

Hutter et al (2013) supports a positive relationship between influencers and consumer interest through their study which found that social media has allowed for influencers to convey messages through eWord of Mouth, which is more effective in influencing consumers' decision-making process than any other form of marketing communication.

As stated previously in this study, that social media influencers are means of spreading information and directing consumer attention and interest. eWord of mouth plays an effective role in the AIDA Hierarchy of Effects model. By using social media influencers who have carefully thought-out attributes, the input and output component becomes evident once consumers become interested in the brand and start to consider making a purchase based on what an influential person said (Hutter et al (2013).

Wajiya (2012) supports the findings by stating that consumers show interest in a brand after being influenced by the brand message; which in this study, is conveyed by a social media influencer and the effectiveness of the message relies on the attributes that the influencer has, which should appeal to the target market. To further support the findings, Ohanian (1990) found that credibility or trustworthiness increases an influencer's likeability, which results in the target market being more interested in what the influencer has to say.

5.2.3 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer desire

Results of $H5_0$ indicate that there is a significant relationship between one or more influencer attributes and consumer desire a P-value of 0.06. The relationship between these two variables is positive and has a coefficient of 0.189, which translates to the strength of the relationship between social media attributes and the aspiration for consumers to own the product. In marketing, desire is defined as a state of mind of a consumer who in inclined to act in a certain way (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006).). A study by Ghirvu (2013) supported the relationship between desire and influencer attributes by looking at adverts displayed in videogames. The study found that to create or desire for advertised products, the adverts had to incorporate personalities that are the most relevant for the product and adapt them to the characters of the video game. A study on the impact of social media for small businesses using the AIDA model, found that desire of products by consumers, is elevated in various ways, but mostly through entertainment (Hassan et al., 2015). The study also explains why entertaining received the highest ranking (85%) in this study. Desire is part of the affective stage

where feelings such as cravings and longing are prompted by the brand communication (Keller & Kotler, 2016).

In this study the brand communication is relayed by the social media influencer, therefore the feelings of desire for the advertised product are influenced by the personality of the influencer. The results of the desire regression indicated that a relationship exists between consumer desire and these influencer attributes: trendsetter and attractive. Each one of these independent variables have a positive relationship with consumer desire.

5.2.4 Individual or multiple social media influencer attributes positively affect consumer action

The P-value of 0.000 shows that there is a significant relationship between the two variables and a coefficient path of 0.264 demonstrates a positive relationship; if there is an intensification of influencer attributes, then consumer action will increase, which could mean more sales. This hypothesis translates to how social media influencer attributes can encourage action, which can vary from making an enquiry about a product, product referral or actual purchase. Action forms part of the conation stage, which is the final step in the consumer effects model resulting from the message and this is the step which most marketers are interested in and it quantifies the marketing spend (Keller & Kotler, 2016). Selecting the correct influencer to represent a brand becomes evident in this step as consumers can be interested or desire the product but if the influencer attributes do not appeal to the consumer, then acquisition may not occur. The results of this study show that resonance, how similar the influencer is to the consumer, is the strongest attribute that determines action.

To support this result, a study by Hassan et al (2015), looked at how social media was effective in promoting the consumer effect of action. Instead of testing the relationship between social media influencer attributes and the AIDA consumer effect, their study focused on how small businesses can use social media to promote their brands. Their results are aligned with the results of this hypothesis as they revealed that consumer action is higher on social media due to the platform’s convenience in terms of making

an enquiry or purchase. Similarly, studies by Evans (2013) and Lim et al., (2017) found that there is a positive relationship between influencer attributes and purchase or purchase intention. The influencer attribute that does not support the findings is that of expertise as consumers found that brands selected influencers that were not experts in the respective fields, and therefore this negatively affected purchase intention. Accordingly, if the objectives of a brand campaign is to increase sales, then marketers should appoint social influencers who are experts in their fields and who can relate to the target market and vis-a-vis.

5.3 Sub-problem 3 discussion

The third sub-problem is to evaluate if consumer effects – using the AIDA model - are affected by influencer-based brand awareness and strength of brand associations. These variables have been discussed separately as part of Sub-problem 1 and sub-problem 2, with this section seeking to test if a correlation exists. As mentioned earlier that brand awareness and strength of brand associations form part of brand knowledge which is created though marketing campaigns and communicates facts or ideas (Bell, 1973). The AIDA Hierarchy of Effects model will be assessed on whether it impacts brand awareness and image, whether attention, interest, desire and action promote brand knowledge. The basis for testing these relationships, it is to assess if a social influencer's added role could be to strengthen relationships that show a positive and significant correlation, which could provide a better understanding of what consumer effects reinforce strength of brand associations and brand awareness.

5.3.1 Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

The regression and correlation results state that a relationship does not exist between these two variables. Although this study indicates that there is relationship between consumer action and strength of brand associations, a study by Wang & Tsai (2014) states otherwise and the reason may be because of the sample size in this study. Wang and Tsai (2014) had a sample size of 691 respondents, compared to 217.

Their study assessed whether mutual funds that are recognised and receive awards, have an improved strength of brand associations, which increase purchase intention. Since strength of brand associations is about feelings and attitudes held by consumers towards a brand, marketers have to use brand or product features to intrinsically create a positive image that will reside in the memory of the target market. The resulting positive strength of brand associations is what promotes a purchase (Richardson et al, 1994). The mutual funds study tested whether strength of brand associations leads to purchase or purchase intention and strength of brand associations's influence on perceived quality, perceived risk and perceived value. Data analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) found a significant relationship between strength of brand associations and purchase intention but the impact of strength of brand associations on perceived risk and strength of brand associations on perceived value were not significant.

Another study by Aghekyan-Simonian et al (2012) similarly found that strength of brand associations does impact purchase intention (action). The study evaluated the role of product online image on perceived risks and purchase intention. To limit generalisations, four versions of the questionnaire were created, each reflecting different brand names. Again, SEM was used to analyse each brand name then a coefficient estimates and statistical significance was examined using regression analyses for the latent variables (Aghekyan-Simonian, 2012). The results found that there was an impact on online store image on purchase intention though the impact was smaller than that of a physical store as online purchases are associated with security risks.

5.3.2 Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations

With a P-value of 0.052, there is an insignificant relationship between consumer interest and strength of brand associations and the relationship is antithetical, with a coefficient path of -0124. Detailed results of the regression analysis (refer to Table 40) illustrates that there are no significant relationships between the two variables; that an increase in consumer interest will not necessarily make the brand association stronger

when the consumer processes or retrieves memory relating to a specific brand. As a research area, there is little or no studies on consumer interest from the AIDA model perspective. Although indirectly related, the study by Chaharsoughi & Hamdard (2011) partly supported the results of this hypothesis by concluding that there is no correlation between sales promotion and strength of brand associations in a study that assessed the impact of sales promotion on consumer interest to purchase products from IKCO Automotive. The T-Test result of 0.38 and a level of significance of 0.7, which is above 0.05 and means there is no significant correlation between the variables (Chaharsoughi & Hamdard, 2011).

5.3.3 Consumer attention have a positive impact on strength of brand associations

The results of the hypothesis suggest that the more attention consumers give to a specific brand, the stronger the strength of brand associations will be. There is a positive correlation between consumer attention and strength of brand associations (0.163) and a significant correlation exists between these variables (0.003). Strength of brand associations is about the understanding and knowledge that a consumer has about a brand (Keller, 1993). Marketers use strength of brand associations as a tool that promotes positive buying behaviours, but strength of brand associations can be negative and still receive consumer attention through the negativity (Malik et al, 2013). Sjödin & Törn (2006) use a phrase called strength of brand associations incongruity to explain the inconsistency between brand communication and the strength of brand associations that resides in consumers' minds. According to Sjödin & Törn (2006), the effects of image incongruity is customer attention, which was more long term as incongruent brand information is more memorable in the mind of the consumer. Although the correlation between consumer attention and strength of brand associations for this study is based on a positive strength of brand associations, Sjödin & Törn's (2006) study proves that negative strength of brand associations can also result in consumer attention, albeit damage the brand.

5.3.4 Consumer desire have a positive impact on strength of brand associations

If more consumers have the desire for the brand, then this will increase the image of the brand, with a coefficient value of 0.007. The relationship between these two variables is positive and has a coefficient of 0.062, which translates to the strength of the relationship between consumer desire and strength of brand associations.Strength of brand associations affords consumers the opportunity to learn about the brand so they can make an informed decision on what behaviour they would like to take once they are knowledgeable about the brand. This means that each aspect of the AIDA process is vital as it leads to the purchase decision, which is based on the symbolic image of the brand rather than on the actual product and the attributes (Triplett, 1994). Desire precedes action and is therefore an important step that marketers should focus on as it is the top predicting factor that can guarantee behavioural changes between attention and interest, in preparation for the action (Bahram et al, 2011). Few studies focus on just one element of the AIDA model but a doctoral study by Hassan et al (2012), examined the factors that influenced desire for consumers to buy environmentally friendly products. Using SEM, the study revealed four main external factors that will influence desire for these products, and these are: tradition media advertising, policy, change agent promoter and social interactions. From these four factors, change agent promoting is most important factor to influence desire. The coefficient is 0.48. In the context of this study, social media influencers can be referred as change agents as they attempt to influence consumers' purchase decisions in a direction that is deemed desirable by a change agency (Rogers, 2003). Therefore the study by Hassal et al. (2012) supports this hypothesis that consumer desire will strengthen brand associations.

AIDA Consumer effects has a positive impact on brand awareness

5.3.5 Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness

The path coefficient of this hypothesis shows a -0.80 correlation and that the correlation is extremely negative. A stronger insignificant correlation suggests that changes in the predictor are not supplementary to the changes in the response. A study by Hutter et al. (2013) refutes the findings as their study concluded that brand awareness increases when consumers engage with the MINI brand on social media, which results in an increase in word-of-mouth and purchase intention for the brand.

The findings may be positive and significant if the sample size was increased as the more people talk about a brand or purchase its products, the more exposure to the brand. Another reason the findings disagree with the literature that there is a relationship between purchase and brand awareness is that there is no evidence that consumers go through each step of the AIDA model (Weilbacher, 2001; Egan, 2007). An influencer may help elevate the awareness of a brand but there is no direct evidence that it will lead to an action such as sales. Wijaya (2012) notes that social media platforms have made it challenging for marketers to accurately measure the effectiveness of their campaigns as the opinions of other consumers also play a role in creating brand awareness.

5.3.6 Consumer interest have a positive impact on brand awareness

The p-value of 0.051 suggests that relationship between the variables fell short of statistical significance, however the coefficient estimate of this correlation is 0.125 which suggests that if consumer interest increases, then awareness of the brand will also increase. For this sub-problem, which assesses the relationship between AIDA and brand awareness, $H12_0$ is the only hypothesis that is supported by the findings.

The results of this hypothesis are supported by the notion from Lagrosen (2005), which states that attention in the AIDA model is weak when it comes to social media marketing, compared to traditional promotions campaign. This is because there is a lot of clutter online which can negatively affect the attention of consumers to a campaign, but creating interest is more successful online as information can be packaged in various ways that ensures that the user's interest is ignited.

A study by Wood and Burkhalter (2014) refutes the results of the hypothesis, which looked at how influencers on Twitter can help increase brand awareness and better engage with their target market. The findings of their study found that although influencers and endorsers can drive brand awareness, there was little empirical data to suggest that consumers will be interested with the brand by engaging with the influencer on Twitter. While attention and action are considered the key steps that marketers are interested in for increasing sales and driving brand awareness, interest is thought to be important in highly competitive markets. A study by Baca, Holguin & Stratemeyer (2005) found that in the AIDA steps, pharmaceutical companies were keen on the interest stage as they did not struggle with product awareness.

5.3.7 Consumer attention have a positive impact on brand awareness

The p-value of 0.377 advocates that the correlation between consumer attention and brand awareness is not significant. There is little or no correlation between the variables, but the coefficient path is positive with a value of 0.054 but this is inconsequential. Attention and awareness are similar terms and should have a correlation; that when consumer attention is fixated on a specific brand, then awareness of that brand should also increase. Studies by Rawal (2013); Ghirvu (2013) and Yun Yoo et al. (2013) disagree with the findings by claiming that through the use of influencer marketing, consumer attention should increase the brand's awareness levels, making way to the other steps of the AIDA model.

A study by Cappo (2003) supports the hypothesis by assessing which AIDA step was able to accommodate online technology to drive awareness. Cappo (2003) concluded that social media has changed how consumers engage with brands, how they socialise and changed the general consumer behaviour process, thereby making it challenging for brands to grab the attention of consumers, long enough to guarantee that they can move to the next step in the purchase process.

5.3.8 Consumer desire have a positive impact on brand awareness

The impact of consumer desire on brand awareness has a P-value of 0.206 and reveals that, a significant correlation does not exist between the variables and with a negative coefficient value of -0.080. Strong (1925) conceded that if desire for a product decreases or is non-existent, then there is no desire for action to take place. This standpoint supports the findings of this hypothesis, as brand awareness also has no correlation to action as per $H11_0$.

Another reason there is no significant correlation between the two variables is that desire is stems from consumers' feelings, which are challenging to predict or confirm as numerous factors are responsible for driving people's sentiments, especially on social media (Ghirvu (2013).

A study by Rehman, Nawaz, Ilyas & Hyder (2014) used the AIDA model to assess whether brand awareness was more effective through email marketing or mobile marketing. The results found that consumers preferred mobile marketing as they could access the information conveniently, anytime on their mobile devices. Therefore the immediate marketing-channel specific effects of AIDA were more evident through mobile marketing. In terms of consumer effects, there was insignificant correlations between desire and awareness through mobile marketing while attention, interest and action showed positive correlations.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed discussion of the descriptive analysis and results of the hypotheses based on the regression and correlation analyses. The results show that not all the hypotheses are significant and positive, with hypotheses 11 – 14 concluding that a relationship between consumer effects and brand awareness does not exist.

6 CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

This section will discuss conclude the study by discussing the recommendations for future studies, with reference to the sub-problems and results of the hypotheses. Theoretical and managerial implications, as well as study limitations will also be discussed.

6.2 Conclusions of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore how AIDA's Hierarchy of Effects (HoE) model can be used to explain the impact of social media influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations. Conclusions from the results analysed in Chapter 5 support that multiple influencer attributes do impact brand awareness and strength of brand associations, with an influencer being attractive, likeable and entertaining being the best traits that an influencer should possess. The results also conclude that influencer attributes also influence how consumers respond to the brand message based on each aspect of the AIDA model. Conversely, the multiple regression analysis on whether consumer effects has an impact on brand awareness and shows that there is no relationship between these constructs. This means that a multi linear relationship between the variables does not exist. Marketers can choose influencers based on specific attributes, to achieve desirable consumer effects or to elevate the strength of brand associations to warrant brand loyalists but they cannot use consumer effects to measure how strong their brand's awareness is in the marketplace.

The results support the argument by Vance, Howe & Dellavalle (2009), that consumers are more empowered and can take their own independent stance when it comes to how brands communicate to them. However, it is worth noting that brand managers should assess consumer effects individually according to campaign objectives so independent relationships can be concluded between the variables.

Section E of the questionnaire assessed consumer attitudes towards social media influencers and a majority of the respondents responded that based on the AIDA model, only social media influencers with desirable traits will help draw their attention, towards the brands the influencers are promoting but that they will not necessarily purchase a product based on influencer recommendation. Respondents' attitude slightly contradicts results of the regression analysis and the reason for this could be the size of the sample used for the study; that it should be increased so a generalization can be made.

Although consumer attitudes towards social media influencers was not part of the study framework, knowing how the target market generally feels about social media influencers is an important aspect that brand managers should be aware of before starting the process of choosing influencers based on attributes they possess. Section E also asked respondents about their general perceptions on social media influencers and if influencers affect their purchase behavior. 39% of respondents have an interest in influencers and another 39% have no interest in social media influencers. 58% of respondents believe that following the right influencers are important to them while 42% of the respondents feel that it is not an important decision to choose a social media influencer. There was consensus amongst respondents that social media influencers make a positive impact to their decision-making process and choosing the right influencer, who has certain traits was also very important. Therefore, the results from Section E suggest that consumers who have a favorable attitude towards social media influencers, will generally be more inclined to show interest in the products being promoted by the influencer.

6.2.1 Sub-problem 1

The first sub-problem investigated which influencer attributes impacted brand awareness and strength of brand associations as per the following hypotheses:

> $H1_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness.

$H2_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations.

To answer the research question for sub-problem1:

- Do influencer attributes have an effect on brand awareness?
  The findings state that social media influencer attributes do have an impact on brand awareness.
- Do influencer attributes have an effect on the strength of brand associations?
  Social media influencer attributes have a positive effect on the strength of brand associations.

The results of the study support the hypotheses that there is a relational impact between influencer attributes, strength of brand associations and brand awareness. The results are similar to the findings of a study by Launchmetrics (2018), which showed that influencer marketing helped increase brand awareness by 90% although the study did not focus on influencer attributes. A study by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) found that influencers amplify the brand's potential by prompting a positive response from consumers. Their findings are supported by the findings of the study, however, some influencer attributes can have a negative effective on a brand such as similarity and expertise, which were rated low by respondents. The findings demonstrate that influencer marketing can be an effective tool to enhance brand awareness and improve the image of the brand if the correct influencers are selected to represent the brand in such a way that it resonates with the target market.

6.2.2 Sub-problem 2

The second sub-problem investigated the effects of social media influencer attributes on consumer effects, using the AIDA model.

$H3_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer attention.

$H4_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer are positively affected by consumer interest.

$H5_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer desire.

$H6_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer action.

To answer the research questions for sub-problem 2:

- Do influencer attributes affect consumer attention?
  The findings of the study conclude that influencer attributes do not have an impact on consumer attention.
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer interest?
  Social media influencer attributes do have an effect on consumer interest.
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer desire?
  The study found that influencer attributes do affect the desire for consumers towards the brand.
- Do influencer attributes affect consumer action?
  Influencer attributes do have a positive impact on the action the consumer.

The results show that influencer attributes have an effect on consumers. The findings provide brand managers with a better understanding of the importance and appreciation for adapting personality or attribute scales to select influencers to represent their brands. Current knowledge has been focused on selecting influencers based on the number of followers they have, which is not a reliable source for favorable consumer effects for brands. While the study used the AIDA consumer effects model, there are other consumer effects models that can be used as determining factors of consumer behaviour. Setting a goal of how consumers should react or behave towards influencer marketing efforts is an important strategy for brands as it also determines the type of influencer selected for campaigns.

6.2.3 Sub-problem 3

The third sub-problem evaluated if consumer effects – using the AIDA model - are affected by influencer-based brand awareness and strength of brand associations.

$H7_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations
$H8_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations
$H9_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on strength of brand associations
$H10_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on strength of brand associations
$H11_0$: Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness
$H12_0$: Consumer interest has a positive impact on brand awareness
$H13_0$: Consumer attention has a positive impact on brand awareness
$H14_0$: Consumer desire has a positive impact on brand awareness

To answer the research questions for sub-problem 3:

- Is there a relationship between consumer attention and brand awareness?
  The study's findings state that there is no correlation between consumer attention and brand awareness.
- Is there a relationship between consumer interest and brand awareness?
  The study concluded that no significant correlation exists between consumer interest and brand awareness exists.
- Is there a relationship between consumer desire and brand awareness?
  There is no causal relationship between desire and the awareness of consumers regarding the promoted brand.
- Is there a relationship between consumer action and brand awareness?
  The findings concluded that consumers do not have the intention to buy even if an influencer is used to elevate the awareness of the brand.
- Is there a relationship between consumer attention and the strength of brand associations?
  There is a causal relationship between consumer attention and the strength of brand associations.

- Is there a relationship between consumer interest and the strength of brand associations?
  There is no causal relationship between interest and the strength of the brand association in the memory of consumers.
- Is there a relationship between consumer desire and the strength of brand associations?
  The study found that desire will strengthen the brand associations for consumers.
- Is there a relationship between consumer action and the strength of brand associations?
  No. When consumers have a purchase intent or actually do an actual purchase, this will not necessarily strengthen the brand association.

The results investigating sub-problem 3 are inconclusive due to each variable being investigated separately, testing the relationship between action and brand awareness, rather than investigating AIDA consumer effects as a complete variable. Therefore, the findings show that in the AIDA model, only attention has an impact on strength of brand associations, while desire, action and interest have no impact. There is an opportunity to improve on the research by changing the hypothesis to test consumer effects holistically. Findings between the impact of AIDA effects and brand awareness found that interest was the only construct that showed a positive impact on brand awareness, while attention, interest and desire found that there was no significant correlation.

6.3 Implications of the study

The below section will outline the theoretical and practical implications of the study.

6.3.1 Academic or theoretical implications

With regards to the theoretical implications on influencer marketing, the study combined various personality scales to propose an influencer attributes scale relevant

to the research. The study provided researchers with consideration to construct an influencer attributes scale that is measurable and can be applied across various marketing fields. There is compelling evidence that positive correlations exist between influencer attributes and brand awareness and strength of brand associations and the study outcome validated the effects of influencer attributes on brands and revealed the need for scholarly articles on how consumer effects impact brands. The main theoretical outcome is that the findings of the research will provide academics with an opportunity to investigate multi-dimensional relationships of brand equity, consumer effects and behaviour, as well as the chosen marketing mix.

6.3.2 Management implications

The study offers practical implications that marketers can execute to improve and better understand the effects that their campaigns on their target market. The study provides brand managers with an appreciation for social influencers; that appointing a brand-relevant influencer is a process that needs to consider the reaction from consumers, the marketing objective that the influencer needs to achieve, as well as being cognisant of the personal attributes of the influencer and whether these attributes will appeal to consumers. The AIDA model explains the process that leads to consumer purchase and highlights the need for marketers to not only focus on the purchase stage, but also on stimulating desirable consumer attitudes that will enhance the image of the brand.

Another study implication is that marketers should use both quantitative and qualitative data to appoint social media influencers to represent their brands as the current challenge is that marketers look at the number of followers an influencer has before deciding on whether to appoint them and the numbers can be superficial and meaningless to brands if the followers are not the correct target.

Lastly, understanding and knowing how the target market feels about social media influencers and whether their attitude towards influencers is positive, should be the first step in the process for brand managers.

6.4 Limitations of the study

Firstly, the study should consider increasing the sample size so the results can be conclusive and generalised. A bigger sample also means that results can be applied across different sectors and brands.

A convenience sample means that there is more risk of getting a non-representative sample which leads to results that cannot be generalised. Using probability sampling for a social media-based research study is a challenge as there is no sampling frame or readily available list of respondents who meet a set criterion.

Publishing the questionnaire on social media platforms also limits the sample to active users of social networking sites, while those who do not have internet access, or a social media profile are excluded from participating in the study. Although the research topic was focused on social media influencers who are found on social networking sites, therefore the study was limited to social media platforms although.

A key limitation central to the study was that there is little or no evidence of the existence of a social media influencer attributes model or scale that can be used to measure the effectiveness or impact of the influencer's personality traits for brands.

6.5 Opportunities for future research

To explain the propensity to buy, product involvement is even more meaningful than the type of advertising. Overall, this shows that the effect of situational and personal factors on dependent variables of consumer behaviour cannot be generalised,

A snowball sampling may be ideal for future studies as it allows the research to start with a small sample that meets the study criteria, then through referrals, respondents will be able to share questionnaire with other suitable respondents.

To have a paper-pen version of the questionnaire for those who are not active social media users or have no internet access as another version of the questionnaire will also help increase the sample size.

There is little evidence about the influencer attributes model, therefore the study combined the source credibility model and the six principles of persuasion model to determine a suitable attributes scale for the research. There is opportunity for future research to focus on developing a measurable social media influencer model or scale that can be practically used by marketers.

There is opportunity for future research to use other forms of consumer effects models or models that measure consumer behaviour. Although the study was based on the AIDA consumer effects model, there are other alternatives that can measure specific consumer behaviour such as loyalty, attitude, or purchase.

Future research should include gender roles in measuring consumer attitudes towards social influencers to explore if a particular gender is more inclined to influencers over the other. The findings will provide marketers with knowledge about what will appeal to their target market.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*. New York: The Free Press.

Aaker, D.A. & Biel, L. (1993). *Brand Equity & Advertising: Advertising's Role in Building Strong Brands.* New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Inc.

Aaker, D.A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets, *California Management Review*, 38, 102–20.

Aaker, J.L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347 – 356.

Abratt, R., & Kleyn, N. (2012). Corporate identity, corporate branding and corporate reputations: Reconciliation and integration. *European Journal of Marketing*, 46(7/8), 1048-1063.

Aghaei, M., Vahedi, E., Kahreh, M.S., & Pirooz, M. (2014). An examination of the relationship between Services Marketing Mix and Brand Equity Dimensions, *Procedia Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 109, 865-869.

Aghekyan-Simonian, M., Forsythe, S., Kwon, W. S., & Chattaraman, V. (2012). The role of product brand image and online store image on perceived risks and online purchase intentions for apparel. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 19(3), 325-331.

Alhabash, S., Juan M., & Syed A.H. (2017). Social media advertising: Unraveling the mystery box, in *Digital Advertising: Theory and Research*, Rodgers, S. & Thorson, E. eds., New York: Routledge, 285–99.

Ambler, T., Bhattacharya, C. B., Edell, J., Keller, K. L., Lemon, K. N., & Mittal, V. (2002). Relating Brand and Customer Perspectives on Marketing Management. *Journal of Service Research*, 5(1), 13–25.

Baalbaki, S. & Guzman, F. (2016) A consumer-perceived consumer-based brand equity scale. *Journal of Brand Management*, 23(3), 229–251.

Babbie, E. (2010). *The practice of social research* (12th ed.). California: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Baca. E.E., Holguin. J. J. & Stratemeyer, A.W. (2005). Direct-to-consumer advertising and young consumers: building brand value. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 22(7), 379–387.

Bahram, R., Shaemi, A., & Jolodar, SYE. (2011). Assessing the Effectiveness of Electric Conservation Advertisements in Isfahan Channel Television. *International Business Research*, 4(3), 194-200.

Bain Global Automotive Consumer Survey. (2017). The Future of Car Sales is Omnichannel. Available from: https://www.bain.com/insights/the-future-of-car-sales-is-omnichannel/. Accessed on 20 August 2019.

Barry, T. E. (2002). In Defense of the Hierarchy of Effects: A Rejoinder to Weilbacher. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42 (3), 44- 47.

Batra, R., Lehmann, D. R., Burke, J., & Pae, J. (1995). When does advertising have an impact—A study of tracking data? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 35(5), 19–32.

Belch, G. E., & Belch, M. A. (2004). *Advertising and Promotion: An Integrated Marketing Communications Perspective* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Belch, G. E., & Belch, M. A. (2017). *Advertising and promotion: An integrated marketing communications perspective* (10th ed.). New York: NY: McGraw-Hill.

Bell, D. (1973). *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting.* New York: Basic Books.

Bendixen, M., Bukasa, B. & Abratt, R. (2004). Brand equity in the business-to-business market. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 33, 371-380.

Ben-Shlomo Y, Brookes S, Hickman M. (2013). *Lecture Notes: Epidemiology, Evidence-based Medicine and Public Health (6th ed.)*, Wiley-Blackwell: Oxford.

Bognar, Z. B., Puljic, N. P., & Kadezabek, D. (2019). Impact of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour. In *Economic and Social Development* (Book of Proceedings), 42nd International Scientific Conference on Economic and Social Development, 301-309.

Boon, S. D., & Lomore, C. D. (2001). Admirer-celebrity relationships among young adults: Explaining perceptions of celebrity influence on identity. *Human Communication Research*, 27(3), 432-465.

Booth, N., & Matic, J. A., (2011). Mapping and leveraging influencers in social media to shape corporate brand perceptions. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal,* 16*,* 184–191.

Bovee, C., Thill, J., Dovel,G. & Wood, M. (1995*). Advertising Excellence*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Brown, R. (2009). *Public relations and the social web: how to use social media and web 2.0 in communications*. London: Kogan Page.

Brown, D., & Fiorella, S. (2013). *Influence marketing: How to create, manage, and measure brand influencers in social media marketing*. Indianapolis: Que Publishing.

Buil, I., & Martinez, E. (2013). The influence of brand equity on consumer responses. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 30(1), 62 – 74.

Bullmore, J. (1984). The Brand and its image revisited. *International Journal of Advertising*, 3, 235-238.

Cappo, J. (2003). *The future of advertising: new media, new clients, new consumers in the post-television age*. USA: McGraw-Hill.

Caprara, G. V., Barbaranelli, C. & Zimbardo, P. G. (2002). When parsimony subdues distinctiveness: Simplified public perceptions of politicians' personality. *Political Psychology*, 23 (1), 77 – 95.

Chatterjee, P. (2011). Drivers of new product recommending and referral behaviour on social network sites. *International Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), 77-101.

Chatterjee, S. & Haidi, A. S. (2012). *Regression analysis by example*. (5th ed.). New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Chaharsoughi, S. A., & Hamdard, J. (2011). The effect of sales promotion on consumer interest to purchase in IKCO automotive company. *Journal of knowledge management, economics and information technology*, 4(1), 1-17.

Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M.B. (2001). The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 65, 81-93

Cobb-Walgren, C., Beal, C., & Donthu, N. (1995). Brand equity, brand preferences, and purchase intent. *Journal of Advertising* 24 (3), 25-40.

Coviello, N. (2005). Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Techniques in Network Analysis', *Qualitative Market Research*, 8(1), 39-60.

Davidson, D. (2000). A coherence theory of truth and knowledge. *Epistemology: an anthology*, 154-163.

Deuze, M. (2006). Ethnic media, community media and participatory culture. Journalism, 7(3), 262-280

De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: the impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798 – 828.

Dholakia, R. & Stemthal, B. (1977), Highly Credible Source: Persuasive Facilitator or Persuasive Liabilities? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 3(4), 223-232.

Digital 2020 South Africa. (2020). Digital statistics and usage in South Africa 2020. Available from https://www.helloyes.co.za/digital-statistics-and-usage-in-south-africa-in-2020/. Accessed on 19 May 2020.

Dillon, W.R., Madden, T.J., & Firtle, N. (1987). *Marketing research in a Marketing Environment*. Missouri: Times Mirror/Mosby College Publishing.

Dudley, E. (1993). *The Critical Villager: Beyond Community Participation*. London: Routledge.

du Plooy, G.M. (2009) *Communication Research: Techniques, Methods and Applications*. 2nd edition. Cape Town: Just & Co.

Egan, J. (2007). *Marketing Communications*. London: Thomson.

Evans, N.J., Phua, J., Lim, J. & Jun, H. (2017) Disclosing Instagram influencer advertising: The effects of disclosure language on advertising recognition, attitudes, and behavioral intent. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 17(2), 138-149.

Farquhar, P.H. (1989). Managing brand equity. *Marketing Research*, 1, 24 – 33.

Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations*, 7, 117–140.

Forbes, K. (2016). Examining the beauty industry's use of social influencers. *Elon Journal of Undergraduate Research in Communications*, 7(2), 78-87.

Fowles, J., (1996). *Advertising and Popular Culture*, London: Sage Publication Ltd.

Fox, J.H. (1958). Criteria of Good Research, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 39(1), 285–86.

Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, *37*(1), 90-92.

Friedkin, N.E. & Johnsen, E.C. (2011). *Social influence networking theory: A sociological examination of small group dynamics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gageler, L., & Van der Schee, J. (2016). Product Placement on Social Media: a study on how Generation Y's brand perception and purchase intention are influenced. Master's Thesis. Jönköping University, Jönköping.

Gani, A., & Größler, A. (2014). Linking brand equity and customer equity: A system dynamics perspective. *In Proceedings of the 32nd International Conference of the System Dynamics Society*, Delft, Netherlands (pp. 1-7).

Ghirvu, A.I. (2013). The AIDA model for Advergames. *USV Annals of Economics and Public Administration. 13(1). 1-17.*

Gladwell, M. (2000). *The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference*. New York, NY: Little Brown.

Global Web Index Report. (2018). Global Web Index's flagship report on the latest trends in social media. Available from: https://www.globalwebindex.com/hubfs/Downloads/Social-H2-2018-report.pdf. Accessed on 19 June 2019.

Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2006). Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 38, 69-119.

Gretzel, U. (2018). Influencer marketing in travel and tourism. *Advances in social media for travel, tourism and hospitality: New perspectives, practice and cases*, 147-156.

Guzmán, F. & Sierra, V. J. (2009). A political candidate's brand image scale: Are political candidates brands? *Journal of Brand Management*, 17(3), 207 – 217.

Hadiyati, E. (2016). Study of marketing mix and AIDA model to purchasing on line product in Indonesia. British Journal of Marketing Studies, 4(7), 49-62.

Hague, P. & Jackson, P. (1994). *The Power of Industrial Brands*. London: McGraw-Hill.

Hakala, U., Svensson, J. & Vincze, Z. (2012). Consumer-based brand equity and top-of-mind awareness: a cross-country analysis. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 21(6), 439-451.

Hart, K. (2019). Instagram Marketing for Car Dealerships: Tips, Ideas, and Examples to Thrive in the Insta-Car Community. Available from https://jumpermedia.co/instagram-marketing-for-car-dealerships/ accessed on 18 June 2019.

Hasan, J., Sumarwan, U., & Suharjo, B. (2012). Factors analysis in desire to buy environmental friendly products: Case study for air condition products. *International Business Research*, 5(8), 181.

Hassan, S., Nadzim, S. Z. A., & Shiratuddin, N. (2015). Strategic use of social media for small business based on the AIDA model. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 172, 262–269.

Hermanda, A., Sumarwan, U., & Tinaprillia, N. (2019). The effect of social media influencer on brand image, self-concept, and purchase intention. *Journal of Consumer Sciences*, 4(2), 76-89.

Ho-Dac, N. N., Carson, S. J. & Moore, W. L. (2013). The effects of positive and negative online customer reviews: Do brand strength and category maturity matter? *Journal of Marketing*, 77(6), 37–53.

Hoek, J. & Gendall, P. (2003). How Does Sponsorship Work? In the proceeding of the *ANZMAC 2003*, Adelaide, 9-16.

Hoffman, Donna L. and Thomas P. Novak (2011), Social Media Strategy, in *Handbook on Marketing Strategy*, Venkatesh Shankar and Gregory S. Carpenter (eds.), Edward Elgar Publishing, Ltd.

Howard, D.J. (1990). A Review and Critique of the Hierarchy of Effects in Advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 9 (2), 121-135.

Hoyer, W.D. & Brown, S.P. (1990). Effects of brand awareness on choice for a common, repeat purchase product. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17, 141-148.

Huck, S. W. 2007. *Reading Statistics and Research*, United States of America, Allyn & Bacon.

Hutter, K., Hautz, J., Dennhardt, S. & Fuller, J. (2013). The impact of user interactions in social media on brand awareness and purchase intention: the case of MINI on Facebook. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 22(5/6), 342 – 351.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture. Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Jiménez-Castillo, D. & Sánchez-Fernández, R. The role of digital influencers in brand recommendation: Examining their impact on engagement, expected value and purchase intention*. International Journal of Information Management*, 49, 366-376.

Kaboub, F. (2008). Positivist paradigm. *Encyclopaedia of counselling*, 2(2), 343.

Kapferer, J.N. (1994). *Strategic Brand Management: New Approaches to Creating and Evaluating Brand Equity*. New York: Free Press.

Karakaya, F. & Barnes, N. G. (2010). Impact of online reviews of customer care experience on brand or company selection. *Journal of Consumer Marketing,* 27(5), 447–457.

Keller, K.L. (1993). Conceptualising, measuring and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57(1), 1-22.

Keller, K. L., & Sood, S. (2003). Brand equity dilution. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 45(1), 12.

Keller, K. L. (2009). Building strong brands in a modern marketing communications environment. *Journal of marketing communications*, 15(2-3), 139-155.

Keller, K.L. & Kotler, P. (2016). *Marketing Management*. 15 ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Keiningham, T. L., Aksoy, L., Perkins-Munn, T. & Vavra, T.G. (2005), The Brand-Customer Connection. *Marketing Management*, 14 (4), 33-37.

Khan, J.A. (2018). *Research Methodology*. New Delhi: A.P.H. Publishing Corporation.

Kojima, T., Kimura, T., Yamaji, M., & Amasaka, K., (2010). Proposals and development of the direct mail method "PMCI-DM" for effectively attracting customers. *International Journal of Management & Information Systems*, 14(5), 15-21.

Kumar, V., Aaker, D.A., & Day, G. (2002). *Essentials of Marketing Research*. New Jersey: Jhn Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Lagrosen, S. (2005). Effects of the internet on the marketing communication of service to companies. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 19(2), 63-69.

Lampeitl, A., & Åberg, P. (2017). The Role of Influencers in Generating Customer-Based Brand Equity & Brand-Promoting User-Generated Content.

Lassar, W., Mittal, B. & Sharma, A. (1995). Measuring customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 12(4), 11-19.

Launchmetrics. (2018). The State of Influencer Engagement: 2018 | Launchmetrics. [online] Available at: https://www.launchmetrics.com/resources/blog/state-of-influencer-marketing-2018. Accessed on 9 June 2020.

Lehmann, D.R., Keller, K.L. & Farley, J.U. (2008). The structure of survey-based brand metrics. *Journal of International Marketing,* 16(4), 29–56.

Lim, X.J., Radzol, M., Cheah, J.H., Wong, M.W. (2017). The impact of social media influencers on purchase intention and the mediation effect of customer attitude. *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 7(2), 9-36.

Lin, K.Y. & Lu, H.P. (2011). Why people use social networking sites: An empirical study integrating network externalities and motivation theory. *Computers in Human Behaviour*, 27(3), 1152 – 1161.

Liu, B. F., Jin, Y., Briones, R., and Kuch, B., (2012), Managing turbulence in the blogosphere: Evaluating the blog-mediated crisis communication model with the American red-cross, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(4), 353–370.

Long, J. S., & Freese, J. (2006). *Regression models for categorical dependent variables using Stata*. Stata press.

Low, G. & Lamb, C. (2000). The measurement and dimensionality of brand associations. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 9(6), 350-370.

Lunt, M., & Unit, A. R. C. E. (2001). Stereotype ordinal regression. *Stata Technical Bulletin*, 61(10), 1-28.

Lynch, J.G. Jr. & Srull, T.K. (1982). Memory and attentional factors in consumer choice: concepts and research methods. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9, 18-37.

Mackey, A. (2005). *The Practice of Advertising* (5th Ed.). Sydney: Elsevier Butterworth.

Malhotra, N. K. & Peterson, M. (2006). *Basic Marketing Research: A decision-making approach*, 2nd Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Malik, M. E., Ghafoor, M. M., Iqbal, H. K., Ali, Q., Hunbal, H., Noman, M., & Ahmad, B. (2013). Impact of brand image and advertisement on consumer buying behavior. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 23(1), 117-122.

Meltzer, J. & Zech, B. (2018). How social media influencers enabled a B2B company to drive awareness and engagement with their target consumers. *Journal of Brand Strategy*, 7(2), 110-116.

Miller, S. & Lisette, B. (1998). Brand Salience versus Brand Image: Two Theories of Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 38(5), 77-82.

Morrissey, R., Stricker, K., Tsang, R., & Zayer, E. (2017). *The future of car sales in Omni channel*. Chicago: Bain & Company, Inc.

Murad-Patel, L. (2018). How Influencer Marketing Helps Boost Brand and Dealership Growth. Available from http://www.dealermarketing.com/how-influencer-marketing-helps-boost-brand-and-dealership-growth/ accessed on 18 June 2019.

Ohanian, R. (1991), The Impact of Celebrity Spokesperson's Perceived Image on Consumers' Intention to Purchase. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31(1), 46-52.

Panda, T. K. (2004) Consumer response to brand placements in films: Role of brand congruity and modality of presentation in bringing attitudinal change among consumers with special reference to brand placements in Hindi Films. *South Asian Journal of Management*, 11(4), 7-19.Park, C.W., Jaworski, B.J. & MacInnis, D.J. (1986) Strategic Brand Concept-Image Management. *Journal of Marketing*, 50(1), 135-145.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Peter, J. P., & Olson, J. (2004). *Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategy*, McGrawhill/Irwin in Marketing.

Power, D. & Hague, A. (2008). No man's brand – brands, institutions and fashion. *Growth & Change*, 39(1), 123-143.

Rangaswamy, A., Burke, R., & Oliva, T.A. (1993). Brand equity and the extendibility of brand names. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 10: 61-75.

Rawal, P. (2013). AIDA Marketing Communication Model: Stimulating a purchase decision in the minds of the consumers through a linear progression of steps. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary research in social & management sciences*, 1(1), 37-44.

Research Africa ICT. (2018). South Africa: Dominant operators' data prices remain static while SA struggles to get and stay online. Available from: https://researchictafrica.net/2018/06/14/dominant-operators-data-prices-remain-static-while-sa-struggles-to-get-and-stay-online/. Accessed on 19 June 2019.

Richardson, P.S., Dick, A.S. & Jain, A.K. (1994) Extrinsic and Extrinsic Cue Effect on Perceptions of Store Brand Quality, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 58(4), 28-36.

Robinson, J. 2009. Triandis theory of interpersonal behaviour in understanding software private behaviour in the South African context. *Masters degree*, University of the Witwatersrand.

Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). New York: The Free Press.

Rossiter, J.R. & Larry, P. (1987). *Advertising and Promotion Management*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Rowley, J. (2002). Information Marketing in a digital world. *Library Hi Tech*, 20(3), 52-58.

Sadek, H., Elwy, S., & Eldallal, M. (2018). The impact of social media brand communication on consumer-based brand equity dimensions through Facebook in fast moving consumer goods: The case of Egypt. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, 12(2).

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Combining qualitative and quantitative sampling, data collection, and analysis techniques in mixed-method studies. *Research in nursing & health*, 23(3), 246-255.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2007). *Research Methods for Business Students* (3rd ed.). Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Savin-Badin, M. & Howell M.C. (2013). *Qualitative Research: The Essential Guide to Theory and Practice*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Schivinski, B. & Dąbrowski, D. (2013). The impact of brand communication on brand equity dimensions and brand purchase intention through Facebook. *GUT Faculty of Management and Economics: Working Paper Series*, 4(4).

Severi, E., & Ling, K. C. (2012). The mediating effects of brand association, brand loyalty, brand image and perceived quality on brand equity. *Asian Social Science*, 9(3), 125-137.

Sevier, R.A. (2001). Brand as Relevance. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 10(3), 77-97.

Sharma, A. (1990). The persuasive effect of salesperson credibility: conceptual and empirical examination. Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 10(4), 71-80.

Singh, K. (2007). Research process. *Quantitative social research methods. Sage Publication India Pvt Ltd*, 75-76.

Sledgianowski, D. & Kulviwat, S. (2015). Using social network sites: The effects of playfulness, critical mass and trust in a Hedonic context. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 49(4), 74-83.

Smith, R. H. (2004). Envy and its transmutations. In L. Z. Tiedens & C. W. Leach (Eds.), *The social life of emotions* (pp. 43–63). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, D. J., Gradojevic, N., & Irwin, W. S. (2007). An analysis of brand equity determinants: Gross profit, advertising, research, and development. *Journal of Business & Economics Research* (JBER), 5(11).

Smith, R.E., Chen, J. & Yang, X. (2008). The Impact of Advertising Creativity on the Hierarchy of Effects. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(4), 47-61.

Solis, B. & Breakenridge, D. (2009). *Putting the public back in public relations how social media s reinventing the aging business of PR*. New Jersey: FT Press.

South African Social Media Landscape. (2017) available on www.worldwideworx.com. Accessed on 01 June 2018.

Strong, E. (1925). *The psychology of selling and advertising*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sudha, M., & Sheena, K. (2017). Impact of influencers in consumer decision process: the fashion industry. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 14(3), 14-30.

Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in Science Education*, 48(6), 1273-1296.

Tolba, A.H. & Hassan, S.S. (2009). Linking customer-based brand equity with brand market performance: a managerial approach. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 18(5): 356-366.

Transunion Vehicle Price Index (2019). Available from https://www.transunion.co.za/lp/VPI. Accessed on 3 September 2019.

Triplett, T. (1994), Brand personality must be managed or it will assume a life of its own. *Marketing News*, 28(10), 9-9.

Vance K., Howe W. & Dellavalle R.P. (2009). Social internet sites as a source of public health information. *Dermatol Clin*, 27(2), 133–136.

van Dijck, J. (2013). You have one identity: performing the self on Facebook and LinkedIn. *Media culture society,* 35(2), 199-215.

Verywell Mind. (2020). How to form a hypothesis statement for psychology research. [online] Available at: https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-hypothesis-2795239. Accessed 16 May 2020.

Wang, Y. H., & Tsai, C. F. (2014). The relationship between brand image and purchase intention: Evidence from award winning mutual funds. *The international journal of business and finance research*, 8(2), 27-40.

Weilbacher, W.M. (2001). Point of view. Does advertising cause a Hierarchy of Effects? *Journal of Advertising Research*, 41(6), 19-26.

Weimann, G. (1994). *The influentials: People who influence people*. Albany, NY: State of New York Press.

Wijaya, B. S. (2012). The Development of Hierarchy of Effects Model in Advertising. *International Research Journal of Business Studies*, 1, 73 – 85.

Wimmer, R. & Dominick, J. (2006). *Sampling in mass media research*. Boston: Wadsworth.

Wood, N. T., & Burkhalter, J. N. (2014). Tweet this, not that: A comparison between brand promotions in microblogging environments using celebrity and company-generated tweets. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 20(1-2), 129-146.

Woodward, T. (2000). Using brand awareness and brand image in tourism channels of distribution. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 6(2), 119–130.

Yasin, N. M., & Zahari, A. R. (2011). Does family and viral marketing have any effect on brand equity*? Journal of Contemporary Marketing Review, 1*(9), 19-31.

Yeasmin, S., & Rahman, K. F. (2012). Triangulation research method as the tool of social science research. *BUP journal*, 1(1), 154-163.

Yoo, B. & Donthu, N. (2001). Developing and validating a multidimensional consumer-based brand equity scale. *Journal of Business Research,* 52, 1 – 14.

Yoo, C.Y., Kim, K. & Stout, P.A. (2004) Assessing the Effects of Animation in Online Banner Advertising. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 4(2), 49-60

Zhang, Y. (2015). The Impact of strength of brand associations on consumer behavior: A literature Review. *Journal of Business and Management*, 3, 58-62.

Zimmer, M. (2008). The externalities of search 2.0: The emerging privacy threats when the drive for the perfect search engine meets Web 2.0. *First Monday,* 13(13), accessed from http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2136/1944 on 19 February 2019.

APPENDIX A: MEASURING TOOL

MMSM 2020 study

Start of Block: Default Question Block

I am a student at the Wits Business School, completing my master's degree in Management in the field of Strategic Marketing. As part of my requirements to fulfil my degree, I am required to complete a research project. For my project I am investigating the impact of social media influencer attributes on brand awareness and strength of brand associations, and the effect this has on you as the consumer and social media user. Social media influencers are well-known individuals who are active on social media and are paid by brands to deliver carefully structured messages to consumers, with the objective of increasing brand awareness, sales and brand loyalty. I would like your assistance in completing the online questionnaire by clicking on the below link. Your participation will be greatly appreciated. This research project is purely for academic purposes and results will be held in confidence. Participation in this research study is completely anonymous and voluntary. By completing the survey, this indicates your agreement to participate in this study. This survey will take approximately 6 - 8 minutes to complete.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me, Lebogang Kholoane, on 0113208R@students.wits.ac.za or my research supervisor Dr Yvonne Saini at yvonne.saini@wits.ac.za

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Section A: Qualifying Questions

Please tick which social media platform you use

- [ ] Facebook
- [ ] Twitter
- [ ] Instagram
- [ ] LinkedIn
- [ ] SnapChat
- [ ] Pinterest
- [ ] WhatsApp

On average, how much time do you spend on social media in a day?

- ○ Less than 30 minutes
- ○ 30 mins - 1 hour
- ○ 1 - 3 hours
- ○ 3 - 5 hours
- ○ More than 5 hours

Which best describes your social media personality type:

- ○ No show (30 days can go by without logging on to your social media account)
- ○ Lurker (access social media to know what is happening in your network but never post anything about yourself)
- ○ Mingler (you participate actively on multiple social media platforms, you follow brands in order to keep up with the latest news and trends)

Have you been living in South Africa for 5 years or more?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Please mention at least two of your favourite <u>South African</u> social media influencers that you follow?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

End of Block: Section A: Qualifying Questions

Start of Block: Section B; Influencer attributes

Below is a series of statements on influencer attributes that will be used to determine the personality traits of social media influencers you like. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement by clicking the appropriate response:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Social media influencers who are field experts, are good at helping me remember that they said.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers serve as credible sources of information about the products or companies they endorse.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers are trendsetters for brands they are promoting.	○	○	○	○	○

Social media influencers are physically attractive.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers have a likeable personality.	○	○	○	○	○
I will easily recall a social media influencer that is good looking.	○	○	○	○	○
My interests are very similar to the interests of my favourite social media influencers.	○	○	○	○	○

I am very familiar with social media influencers who help brands with awareness.	○	○	○	○	○
I have seen many adverts that use social media influencers.	○	○	○	○	○
I can relate very well to the lifestyle of my favourite social media influencers.	○	○	○	○	○
The lifestyle of social media influencers fits my lifestyle very well.	○	○	○	○	○

When I want to know about latest trends, I can rely on the expertise of social media influencers I like.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers are knowledgeable.	○	○	○	○	○
I take note of brands advertised by social media influencers are admired by a lot of people.	○	○	○	○	○
I have high regard for the social media influencers I follow.	○	○	○	○	○

I find social media influencers to be trustworthy.	○	○	○	○	○
An attractive social media influencer makes me aware of the brand they are endorsing.	○	○	○	○	○
A trusted social media influencer can make me take time to process what they are saying.	○	○	○	○	○
I find social media influencers to have integrity.	○	○	○	○	○

Social media influencers are a source of inspiration.	○	○	○	○	○
I aspire to be like my favourite social media influencer.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers promote products and ideas that are useful to me.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers who are entertaining, help me easily remember products they are endorsing.	○	○	○	○	○

Social media influencers who are entertaining, are effective in creating awareness for new brands.	○	○	○	○	○
I follow the pages of influencers to see what other people are saying about the brands being endorsed.	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy the conversational interaction that social media influencers often have with followers	○	○	○	○	○

I consider my favourite social media influencer to be …

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
… an expert	○	○	○	○	○
… attractive	○	○	○	○	○
… similar to me	○	○	○	○	○
… likeable	○	○	○	○	○
… trustworthy	○	○	○	○	○
… inspirational	○	○	○	○	○
… entertaining	○	○	○	○	○
…familiar	○	○	○	○	○

I would like you to imagine that you are going through your Facebook, Twitter or Instagram feed and you come across the below post that shows a South African social media influencer promoting Lays Potato Chips. Please carefully look at the image to answer the questions that follow regarding social media influencer involvement in brand awareness and strength of brand associations:

This is Kefilwe Mabote; a South African social media influencer with 802 000 Instagram followers and 118 000 Facebook likes. She is an award-winning influencer for luxury

brands in fashion, beauty and travel. In the below image, Kefilwe is eating Lays potato chips



Below is a series of statements based on the above image, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement by clicking the appropriate response:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
It is easy for me to recognise the product being endorsed in the post.	○	○	○	○	○
I am aware of Lay Potato Chips.	○	○	○	○	○
I can easily recall the symbol or logo of Lays potato chips.	○	○	○	○	○

I can recognise Lays Potato Chips among other competing brands.	○	○	○	○	○
The strength of Lays Potato Chips is in the associated taste over competing brands.	○	○	○	○	○
Generally, I have a stronger association to Lays Potato Chips over other competing brands.	○	○	○	○	○

I am only interested in Lays when I am having fun.	○	○	○	○	○
I put a lot of thought on Lays potato chips before buying them.	○	○	○	○	○
I buy Lays Potato Chips because of the strong association I have to the brand.	○	○	○	○	○
I do not have difficulty imagining Lay Potato Chips in my mind.	○	○	○	○	○

I desire having Lays potato chips because they are a brand leader.	○	○	○	○	○
Lays potato chips has a good reputation.	○	○	○	○	○
I have a good feeling about Lays potato chips.	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Section C: Brand awareness and Strength of brand associations

Start of Block: Section D: Consumer Effects

Below is a series of statements on the effects brand awareness and strength of brand associations have on your purchase behaviour. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement by clicking the appropriate response

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe brands that my favourite influencers endorse will be my first choice when buying that product.	○	○	○	○	○
I will purchase Lays Potato Chips because of the influencer post.	○	○	○	○	○
I sometimes like to gossip.	○	○	○	○	○

I will choose the brand recommended by an influencer that is similar to me.	○	○	○	○	○
It is very likely that I will be interested in Lays if they are endorsed by a social media influencer who has a lifestyle similar to mine.	○	○	○	○	○
I am willing to try new products of any brand my favourite influencers recommend.	○	○	○	○	○

I always try to practice what I preach.	○	○	○	○	○
I am willing to pay a higher price for brands that my favourite influencers recommend than others.	○	○	○	○	○
I have never been annoyed when people expressed ideas very different from my own.	○	○	○	○	○
I intend to buy brands that my favourite social media influencers are associated with.	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Section D: Consumer Effects

Start of Block: Section E: Consumer perception

Below is a series of statements to gauge your general perception towards social media influencers. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement clicking the appropriate response:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
I have strong interest in social media influencers.	○	○	○	○	○
Social media influencers are an important part of my life.	○	○	○	○	○
I select social media influencers very carefully.	○	○	○	○	○

Which social media influencer to follow matters a lot to me.	○	○	○	○	○
Choosing social media influencers is an important decision for me.	○	○	○	○	○
I think a lot before I make a decision about which social media influencer to follow.	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Section E: Consumer perception

Start of Block: Section F: General information

Please indicate your answer by clicking the appropriate box.

Please state your gender?

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Other

What is your age group?

- ○ Younger than 18
- ○ 18 - 24
- ○ 25 - 34
- ○ 35 - 44
- ○ 45 - 54
- ○ Older than 55

Which province do you reside in?

- ○ Eastern Cape.
- ○ Free State
- ○ Gauteng
- ○ KwaZulu-Natal
- ○ Limpopo
- ○ Mpumalanga
- ○ Northern Cape
- ○ North West
- ○ Western Cape

Please indicate your ethnic group?

- ○ African
- ○ Coloured
- ○ White
- ○ Asian
- ○ Other

What is your highest level of education?

- ○ Grade 12
- ○ Diploma
- ○ Undergraduate degree
- ○ Honours
- ○ Masters
- ○ PHD
- ○ Other [please specify] _____

End of Block: Section F: General information

End

APPENDIX B: CONSISTENCY MATRIX

Sub-problems	Literature Review	Hypotheses	Data Source	Data Analysis
Sub-problem 1 The first sub-problem will investigate the effects of influencer attributes on brand equity (brand awareness & strength of brand associations). **Sub-problem 2** The second sub-problem is to evaluate if consumer effects – using the AIDA model - are affected by influencer-based brand awareness and strength of brand associations. **Sub-problem 3** The third sub-problem will investigate the effects of social media influencer attributes on consumer effects, using the AIDA model.	**Aaker (1991)** **Aaker (1996)** **Abratt & Kleyn (2012)** **Belch & Belch (2004)** **Booth & Matic (2011)** **De Veirman et al. (2017)** **Freberg et al. (2011)** **Hassan et al. (2015)** **Hadiyati (2016)** **Keller (1993)** **Keller & Kotler (2016)** **Lim, Radzol, Cheah & Wong, (2017).** **Wijaya, (2012).** **Zhang, (2015)** **Yoo & Donthu, (2001)**	$H1_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects brand awareness. $H2_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affects strength of brand associations. $H3_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer attention. $H4_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer are positively affected by consumer interest. $H5_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer desire. $H6_0$: Individual or multiple attributes of a social media influencer positively affect consumer desire. H70: Consumer action has a positive impact on strength of brand associations H80: Consumer interest has a positive impact on strength of brand associations H90: Consumer attention has a positive impact on strength of brand associations H100: Consumer desire has a positive impact on strength of brand associations	Online survey: Sections B to Section E	Correlational Analysis Regression Analysis

		H110: Consumer action has a positive impact on brand awareness H120: Consumer interest has a positive impact on brand awareness H130: Consumer attention has a positive impact on brand awareness H140: Consumer desire has a positive impact on brand awareness		

APPENDIX C: CRONBACH RESULTS FOR PILOT STUDY

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	19	73,1
	Excluded[a]	7	26,9
	Total	26	100,0

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

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0,915	0,898	67

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4,636	1,263	6,737	5,474	5,333	1,367	67

ANOVA with Friedman's Test and Tukey's Test for Nonadditivity

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Friedman's Chi-Square	Sig
Between People			432,633	18	24,035		
Within People	Between Items		1714,288	66	25,974	12,711	0,000
	Residual	Nonadditivity	17.574[a]	1	17,574	8,656	0,003
		Balance	2410,108	1187	2,030		
		Total	2427,683	1188	2,044		
	Total		4141,970	1254	3,303		
Total			4574,603	1272	3,596		

Grand Mean = 4.64

a. Tukey's estimate of power to which observations must be raised to achieve additivity = 1.805.

APPENDIX D: PILOT TO DETERMINE SOCIAL MEDIA ATTRIBUTES SCALE

Attributes of social media influencers

Expertise

1. Social media influencers have great expertise in many areas.
2. Social media influencers are experienced at what they do.
3. Social media influencers are knowledgeable.
4. Social media influencers are important sources of information on many issues.
5. Social media influencers serve as credible sources of information about the products or companies they endorse.
6. Social media influencers are trendsetters.
7. When I want to know about the latest trends in fashion and beauty, I follow social media influencers.
8. When I need information about a subject that I am not too familiar with, I often follow social media influencers to get ideas.
9. I often follow social media influencers to get more information on breaking stories.
10. I often follow social media influencers to get more information about trends.
11. Most social media influencers provide consumers with relevant information.

Attractiveness

1. Social media influencers are physically attractive.
2. My favourite social media influencer is good looking.
3. Social media influencers have a likeable personality.
4. Social media influencers have unique abilities that make them attractive.
5. Social media influencers are elegant.
6. Social media influencers are sexy.
7. Social media influencers are classy.
8. Social media influencers are admired by many.
9. Social media influencers dress very well.
10. Social media influencers represent very cool brands that appeal to me.

Similarity

1. My interests are very similar to the interests of my favourite social media influencers.
2. My personal values are very similar to the values of my favourite social media influencer.
3. Social media influencers are good looking yet they are ordinary people just like me.
4. The things I like most are very similar to the things that my favourite social media influencer like.
5. I can relate very well to the lifestyle of my favourite social media influencers.
6. I can identify with my favourite social media influencers.
7. The lifestyle of social media influencers fit my lifestyle very well.
8. My self-image overlaps with the self-image of my favourite social media influencer.
9. My self-identity is consistent with the identity of my favourite social media influencer.
10. Following influencers on social media is compatible with my social media activities.

Familiarity

1. Social influencers seem popular on social media.
2. I have been exposed to social media influencers on various media platforms.
3. Social media influencers remind me of many things in my life.
4. I am often exposed to social media influencers many times in a day.
5. I am very familiar with social media influencers.
6. I have seen many adverts that use social media influencers.
7. Social media influencers often capture my attention.

Likeability

1. I like social media influencers.

2. Social media influencers are fun to follow.
3. It is very pleasing to follow social media influencers.
4. Social media influencers are supportive.
5. I find social media influencers to be very friendly.
6. I have high regard for the social media influencers I follow.
7. I hold social media influencers in high esteem.
8. I have a lot of respect for social media influencers.
9. Social media influencers are sometimes personal and directly engage with followers.
10. Social media influencers are admired by a lot of people.

Trustworthiness

1. I find social media influencers to be trustworthy.
2. I have confidence in the ability of social media influencers.
3. I find social media influencers to be reliable.
4. I find social media influencers to have integrity.
5. I find Social media influencers to be dependable.
6. I find social media influencers to be sincere.
7. I find social media influencers to be honest.
8. I find social media influencers to be believable.

Inspiration

1. Social media influencers are a source of inspiration.
2. Social media influencers are a source of encouragement.
3. I am sometimes encouraged by advice and support that social media influencers provide.
4. I like the fact that social media influencers serve as important role models.
5. Social media influencers make me feel good about myself.
6. I aspire to be like my favourite social media influencer.
7. I find social media influencers to be meaningful to me.
8. I often learn something from social media influencers I didn't know before.

9. Social media influencers promote products and ideas that are useful to me.

Entertainment

1. It is a lot of fun to follow social media influencers.
2. Social media influencers make me feel positive about myself.
3. Social media influencers are lively.
4. Social media influencers are playful.
5. Social media influencers are entertaining.
6. I enjoy the conversational interaction that social media influencers often have with followers.
7. I follow the pages of influencers to see what other people are saying about their posts, especially when I am bored because some of the comments are funny.

Social media influencer involvement

1. I have strong interest in social media influencers.
2. Social media influencers are very important to me.
3. I choose social media influencers very carefully.
4. Choosing social media influencers is an important decision for me.
5. Which social media influencer to follow matters a lot to me.
6. Social media influencers are an important part of my life.
7. The decision about which social media influencer to follow takes a lot of thought.

Social media influencer evaluations

1. The overall impression I have about social media influencers is bad – good.
2. The overall impression I have about social media influencers is not favourable - favourable.
3. The overall impression I have about social media influencers is not satisfactory – satisfactory.
4. The overall impression I have about social media influencers is negative – positive.

Purchase intentions

1. I believe brands that my favourite influencers endorse will be my first choice when buying that product.
2. I will choose the brand that my favourite influencer recommends when I buy the product category.
3. It is very likely that I will buy products endorsed by my favourite social media influencers.
4. I am willing to try new products of any brand my favourite influencers recommend.
5. I am willing to pay a higher price for brands that my favourite influencers recommend than others.
6. I intend to buy brands that my favourite social media influencers are associated with.
7. It is very likely that I will also recommend brands that my favourite influencers endorse to others who ask for my suggestions.
8. I will speak positive things about brands endorsed by my favourite influencers to others.

Here respondents will be presented with a brand with social media influencer in the ad. Based on this, they will answer the following questions from Yoo and Donthu (2001):

Brand awareness/associations

1. I can recognize X among other competing brands.
2. I am aware of X.
3. Some characteristics of X come to my mind quickly.
4. I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of X.
5. I do not have difficulty in imagining X in my mind.
6. The likely quality of X is extremely high.
7. The likelihood that X would work well is very high.

Overall Brand Equity

1. It makes sense to buy X instead of any other brand, even if they are the same.
2. Even if another brand has the same features as X, I would prefer to buy X.
3. If there is another brand as good as X, I prefer to buy X.
4. If another brand is not different from X in any way, it seems smarter to purchase X.