

**TOPIC: THE ROLE OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT ON CONSUMER
BUYING BEHAVIOUR: THE CASE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS**

BY:

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I

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my original research, and that no part of it has been presented for another (diploma, degree or masters) in this institute or elsewhere. I thereby would be held accountable for any plagiarism.

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Name

Date

.....

Signature

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation of this dissertation is a result of my own work in accordance with the guidelines of supervision of dissertation laid down by Ghana Institute of Journalism.

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Date

Supervisor

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Signature

II

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, who continues to be gracious and merciful to me.

I also want to dedicate this to my mum Juliana Nkansah and dad Kwabena Amaning for the continuous support towards my education, God bless you.

To my best friend, Randolph Selassi Locco thanks you for always urging me whenever I felt tired to work on this dissertation. You are amazing.

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III

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour: the case of social media influencers. The research also seeks to find out how influencers celebrity status and which social media platforms these influencers tend to advertise their products the most.

The research seeks to find out online purchasing. The population of the study was people between the ages of . Quantitative survey approach was used in the research to determine whether influencers influence online buying behaviour. The data gathered showed that the majority of the respondents were male who follow influencers and are influenced by what these influencers recommend. The data also showed that Facebook and Instagram are the most popular and/or used social media platforms.

INTRODUCTION

Influencer Marketing is far from a new concept (Brown & Hayes, 2008). The concept could be considered similar to the already known concept called word-of-mouth (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). Word of mouth, is talking about products and services between people apart from companies advertisement for products or services. These talks can be mutual conversations or unilateral advices and suggestions. (Souiny et al., 2007).

Many authors in previous research have shown that social media influences (SMIs) do have an important role in shaping the purchase decisions of consumers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012; Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014). It is through social media that SMIs engage with and influence the purchase decisions of consumers on a deeper level. Social Media Influencers have throughout the years been acknowledged by companies as a marketing strategy in order to reach consumers (Jaakonmaki et al, 2017).

Influencer fit is very important to make a brand's marketing message credible. Therefore, brands who do not understand their audience and thus collaborate with influencers who also are inconsistent with that brand fail using influencer marketing which in turn can cause harm to the brand being perceived as ingenuine (Sudha & Sheena, 2017).

If companies are going to continue choosing potentially harmful influencer marketing ahead of paid social media marketing, then these companies must make sure influencers know everything and are consistent with their brand. Dahlen, Lange and Rosengren (2017) argue that even brief exposure to advertisements in social media or blogs often have a very high impact, as consumers in an active and voluntary manner interact with influencers. This therefore indicates that different levels of active consumer involvement

in social media are required to achieve an impact. Although the importance of choosing the right influencer has been emphasized, no attempts have been made to determine how involvement affects the consumer's perception of a brand depending on marketing efforts.

Previous research has found that marketing through influencers is often perceived as more credible and trustworthy compared to marketing activities that are communicated by the brand itself (De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Kapferer and Laurent (1985a) believe that the level of consumers' involvement in a specific product category will affect their reactions to marketing and advertising within that category.

Depending on these different levels of involvement, consumers are either passive or active when receiving advertising communication and in addition, their ability to process information either becomes limited or extended (Kapferer & Laurent, 1985a). Since consumers' reactions to marketing stimuli seem to depend on their level of involvement in the product category, this implies that consumers also will react differently towards influencer marketing.

According to Daniel Nations (2010), social media is hard to define and is a two-way street that gives you the ability to communicate.

Social Media is a phenomenon that has transformed the interaction and communication of individuals throughout the world. However, social media is not a new concept. It has been evolving since the dawn of human interaction. In recent times, social media has

impacted many aspects of human communication, thereby impacting business. Social media networking has become a daily practice in some users' lives. (Carton, 2009)

In an article titled, "The History of Social Media and Its Impact on Business" by Simeon Edosomwan, Doriane Kouame, Janelle Watson, Sitalaskshmi Kalangot Prakasan and Tom Seymour (Minot State University), the authors described the features and evolution of social media, including major social media networking sites that came into existence during the 21st century. Some of the sites discussed included Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Myspace, etc.

"Throughout much of human history, we've developed technologies that make it easier for us to communicate with each other" (Carton, 2009).

Emile Durkheim, a French Sociologist known by many as the father of sociology and Ferdinand Tonnies, a German sociologist are considered pioneers of social networks during the late 1800s. Tonnies believed that social groups could exist because members shared values and beliefs or because of shared conflict. His theory dealt with social contract conceptions of society. Durkheim combined empirical research with sociological theory. Also, the late 1800s, the radio and telephone were used for social interaction, albeit one-way with radio. (Rimskii, 2011, Wren, 2004)

During the 1960s, the public saw the advent of email. However, the internet was not available to the public until 1991. Email was originally a method to exchange messages from one computer to another but both computers were required to be online (Borders, 2010).

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1.1

BACKGROUND

During the last five years, the spread of social media has further changed buying techniques. With platforms like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, consumers are able to comment on their experiences with products with companies and to share them with friends. This has led to the growing need for companies to generate positive customers' experiences in order to minimize negative word-of-mouth messages, which could easily be spread within the social media platforms to other, potential customers. (Dinesh, 2017).

Social Media encourages interaction and sharing of information between families and friends, business and clients, etc. Social Media has made it possible especially for companies to reach consumers. It has also had a dramatic effect on the buying behavior model that describes the traditional way of purchasing products. Using social media, consumers are able to conduct even deeper analysis of companies and to portray their own experiences and opinions to other users, creating a certain type of viral marketing effecting where the message can be spread to thousands of users. (Dinesh, 2007). It is therefore no hidden fact that social media influencers make an impact on the purchase decisions of consumers and also influence on all stages of the purchase decision process. Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to explore how celebrities influence buying behaviour. Celebrity in this context will specifically look at social media celebrities also

known as Social Media Influencers and how their celebrity status on social media is used in influencing their followers.

In our everyday life, some people can affect us more than others while there are a number of persons that can possibly impact numerous other people easily through their opinions, these are the influencers. Example, in February 2018, Social Media Influencer, Kylie Jenner declared messaging application Snapchat, “dead” on her Twitter page after registering her displeasure about Snapchat’s new design. The app closed down after the reality TV star and social media influencer said she is no longer using the app. The plunge wiped about \$1.3billion off the company’s market value, according to a CNN report. Kylie Jenner is an influential person on social media with 24.5million followers on Twitter alone.

Being an influencer has now become a trending term that is used extensively when it comes to social media or digital marketing. The marketing sector puts great effort in studying how the personality of people affects their influential role.

(McGuire, 2005) Social Media Influencers’ ability and capability to provide content, expertise attractiveness, social identity and trust shows evidence of how the influence of social media influencers play an important role in each and every stage of the purchase decision process of consumers.

According to Forbes, Influencer Marketing can be identified as a form of marketing in which focus is placed on specific key individuals rather than the target market as a whole. Traditionally, when people think of influencer marketing, they think of a celebrity appearance in a TV commercial or a famous person posted on a billboard.

Influencer marketing concentrates on working with the key leaders in the market, leaders who can decode and forward the marketing message of the brand to their followers (Tapinfluence, 2017). These key leaders, also called opinion leaders, have long been recognized as traditional celebrities (Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2015; Davey, 2016). Although traditional celebrities have long been used in influencer marketing by companies, they have through time been said to be less influential with the reason that they often create unachievable ideals (Burgess, 2017). Instead, other key leaders with a high social status and strong social influence (Lu, Li, & Liao, 2010; Li, Lee, & Lien, 2014), have been recognized to better be able to communicate brands and products of companies (Hörnfeldt, 2015). These key leaders have grown essentially on social media throughout the years, now referred to as Social Media Influencers (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2010)

1.2

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Marketers and Brands continuously search for innovative methods to reach target segments in the most effective way. Social Media is one of the fastest evolving communication tools nowadays exercising a considerable impact on social marketing. Influencer Marketing is one of the latest tools combining these elements.

Consumers make purchase decisions everyday (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). How a purchase decision is made, has been explained as long ongoing process often referred to

as the Purchased Decision Process (Comegys, Hannula & Vaisanen, 2006; Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

With more than 3 billion users online (Internet Society, 2015), there is no concern that social media will be gone any time soon (Rosen, 2016). The rise of Facebook, Instagram, Blogs and many other social media platforms have changed the way communication landscape works today as it is now consumers, instead of companies, who hold the power of information sharing (Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014). Consumers can now, besides interacting with friends and family (Szmigin & Piacentini, 2015), share experiences, opinions and information about several companies, brands and products with other users on social media (Song & Yoo, 2016). This shift of information sharing has created a certain difficulty for companies to reach consumers, which in turn, has forced companies to change their marketing strategies in order to be able to influence the purchase decisions of consumers.

Despite the fact that the Influencer Marketing is now becoming one of the strategic marketing being used by companies, there is no denying that Celebrity Endorsement on a brand is also very important.

A Celebrity is defined as someone who is famous or widely known. The word celebrity states a person known by the people (actor, sports figure, entertainer, etc.) due to their accomplishments in the fields besides the product they have endorsed (Friedman and Friedman, 1979)

Celebrity Endorsement in Ghana is nothing new as many companies engage the services of celebrities to be the brand ambassadors of their company. Companies use these celebrities in their commercials because of the recognition the product will attract through their celebrity status.

Celebrities such as Shatta Wale who is the brand ambassador of Storm Energy Drink encourages his fans to purchase the product. Nana Ama McBrown also does the same for HiSense Home Appliances, etc.

The world has now become a Global Village with technology playing a major role. With a critical look, it is without a doubt that aside these celebrities being popular and making names for themselves both in and outside Ghana, they also command a huge following on social media platforms especially on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn and Snapchat. They also tend to relate to the Ghanaian Youth and so it is more reasonable for these companies to go in for people of such calibre.

Social media influencers are known as third parties that through their recommendations, images and other content on social media, can shape opinions, attitudes and actions of consumers and thereby influence their purchase decisions (Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014; Szmigin & Piacentini, 2015). The fact that social media influencers have started to gain more attention is because they are considered more influential, authentic and experts at creating good and useful content (Burgess, 2017). It is this that later have been proven to have a great impact on purchase decisions of consumers as they, due to curiosity, easily embrace information other content that come from reliable sources (Boateng & Okoe, 2015). This information from social media influencers, recognized, as the electronic

word-of-mouth (e-WoM), is the powerful tool that can persuade consumers to buy certain products (Jaakonmäki et al., 2017). With the ongoing growth of users on social media and emergence of several new platforms, more social media influencers have started to gain ground (Carlson, 2017). This in turn arises the need for understanding the influence that these individuals have on consumers' purchase behaviors.

Through the years, another category of celebrities known as the Social Media Influencers (SMIs) have established their presence on social media (Abidin, 2016). Traditional celebrities have through time also come to be considered SMIs, as they have been asked by companies to appear with products on their social media to create brand and product awareness and thereby drive purchases (Li et al., 2014; Hearn & Schoenhoff, 2015). Li et al. (2014) argue that celebrities enjoy to be publicly recognized by large amounts of people all over the world and has, due to their high reach in number of potential consumers, long been used to market products and brands to these masses of people. However, this kind of marketing have recently started to decrease since studies show that celebrities are not very influential anymore among consumers (Sammis et al., 2016). Though traditional celebrities are still used by companies to create awareness and drive purchases, many studies have recognized other types of SMIs to be more influential instead (Almutairi & Bennett, 2016).

Two gaps identified concerning influencer marketing is;

- How companies in the Ghanaian settings are banking their hopes on Traditional Celebrities when it comes to pushing of their brand. Based on the examples given above

i.e. Shatta Wale (Storm Energy Drink), Nana Ama McBrown (HiSense), Kwesi Arthur (Fan Milk), companies prefer to use the traditional celebrities who are a fraction of a large portion of being a celebrity as compared to SMIs who tend to have larger following than the traditional celebrities do.

- Another gap identified is how traditional celebrity endorsement reach a specific group of people as compared to SMIs who reach a larger reach group of audience or consumers because the world has now become a global village and most people have access to the internet and are of course active social media users.

This shows that Influencer Marketing in Ghana is not common, and the lack of research on this area is worrisome especially in Ghana. Companies in Ghana prefer to use Traditional Celebrities to attract consumers to purchase their products and to influence their buying behaviour. These Traditional Celebrities also double as Influencers as they command large following both Traditionally (TV, Radio, Billboard, etc.) and the Internet. Example, artiste Sarkodie commands 2.7 million followers on Instagram, Actress and Entrepreneur, Fella Makafui has 1.9 Million, Dancehall Artiste Shatta Wale also has 1.8M followers, etc. There are SMIs in Ghana such as Naa Oyoo Kumodzi who is into blogging and digital marketing, she has 14.3K followers on Twitter and is very active on social media, Jemila Abdulai is also into Travel and Digital Marketing also has 17K followers on Twitter, list goes on.

Although they are known on social media and have the following, brands in Ghana prefer to use Traditional Celebrities who also doubles as SMIs as their ambassadors as they

believe these celebrities can influence consumer buying behaviour. This shows that although there is Influencer Marketing in Ghana, not a lot of research has been conducted in that area unlike other countries that have conducted extensive research in that regard.

1.4

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Celebrity endorsements have been an effective method used by companies to attract public interest towards their products or services. But since the arrival of social media marketing, it has also become a viable way for companies to build a brand's reputation and to also get a lot of eyeballs on its brand.

It is possible to build a massive following on social media with the right content which must be delivered at the right time and to the right audience. An individual can easily and quickly become a celebrity with an engaged follower and a significant number of followers around the globe. This is therefore changing the definition of who a celebrity is.

Influencer marketing and celebrity endorsements are two different options for companies looking to push their brands.

The objective of this thesis will therefore seek to explore and investigate the following:

- To analyze the impact Social Media Influencers have on consumer buying behaviour
- To investigate the current state of consumer's perception about both celebrity endorsement and social media influencers.
- To establish whether Influencer Marketing is guaranteed the credibility and authenticity when it comes to consumer buying behaviour.

1.5

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is geared towards exploring the impact of celebrity endorsement while focusing mainly on social media influencers in Ghana. The research questions therefore are;

- **Does the credibility of a celebrity and influencer have an impact on consumer buying behavior?**

Celebrities are often perceived as idols by many and people want to follow their lead and try out those products which have the touch of celebrities to them as celebrities make those products more alluring and desirable. Celebrities not only serve the purpose to create some kind of attention and also to attain the objective of high recall and recognition. And for that to happen, marketers should keep in mind the image of their

product or be and which has the maximum fit with their own personalities/image and the celebrity endorser fit in between these two connections and binds the image of the product close to the consumers by transferring meaning to the product.

Also, marketers believe that when employing celebrities, they succeed in creating an aspiration in consumers' mind to purchase what their favourite celebrities are endorsing because in this glamorous celebrity's world.

Celebrity Endorsement is a success factor because when a “normal” person selling a product tells you to try that product as it has helped them, there is a possible chance that consumers ma/may not believe them but when the same is said by a celebrity that the product has helped them then, the consumers tend to listen to the celebrity and believe it and it does impact on consumers buying behaviour favorably.

- **Which Marketing Strategy are companies likely to use based on expertise, credibility and trust?**

The marketing environment today is quickly evolving, as there are constantly new ways, ideas or even strategies that companies are willing to adopt in order to get the eyeballs they need towards their brand. Celebrity Endorsement has always been the go-to of most companies as they engage the services of traditional celebrities such as actors, musicians, sports figures, media personality, etc. to attract their audience. Companies use the fame of celebrities to get people excited about a brand or a product.

However, thanks to the technological era, one does not need to appear on radio or TV in order to be considered as a celebrity. The internet especially Social Media has made it possible for anyone to be a celebrity as long as they have large followers (1000k and above) these people known as Social Media Influencers are a category of Celebrity.

Although these are celebrities, they are entirely different marketing options that companies use in expanding their marketing campaigns.

A celebrity sharing their experiences or opinions on a brand is a way most brands use to establish trust between them and their consumers. Brands believe that celebrities associating themselves with a brand will bring about that trust.

On the other hand, there is a whole new category of celebrities who have the power to sell products and draw attention to brands through their social media pages. There are Instagram influencers/models, Facebook Influencers, Snapchat experts, etc. who are able to use these platform to create that awareness for a brand.

There is no denying that celebrities have also become influencers as most of them have succeeded into transported their fans onto social media.

But when it comes to influencer marketing, consumers want to be able to trust who is selling their product and whether or not they are credible. Messages proclaimed by social media influencers are often perceived as more reliable and compelling to consumers, and

have been substantiated by 82% of followers' polls, in which consumers are reported to be more likely to follow their favorite influences' recommendations (Talaverna 2015).

This is where this research will be able to ascertain which of these marketing strategies are likely to be used by companies when it comes to likeability, credibility and trust.

- **What is the impact of Social Media Influencers on Consumer Buying Behaviour?**

In marketing, endorsement plays a significant role in achieving a company's good reputation and business goals. In recent years, social media influencers have established themselves as potential endorsers by generating a range of buzzwords as compared to other marketing strategies (i.e., celebrity endorsement), and are deemed to be the most cost-efficient and -effective marketing trends (Harrison 2017; Patel 2016; Talaverna 2015). Based on the tenets of influencer marketing, companies generally invite social media influencers with thousands of followers in their social media accounts as their brand ambassador (Tapinfluence 2017).

Leveraging on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, social media influencers are aptly used to publicize product information and latest promotions to online followers (Markethub, 2016). Social Media Influencers typically engage with their followers by regularly updating them on the latest information (Liu et al, 2012).

Laroche et al. (1996) highlighted that endorsers can alter consumer preferences and inevitably create a sense of willingness-to-purchase. Source credibility is credited with improving consumer attitudes (Brinol et al. 2004), leading to an increase in product purchase intentions (Harmon and Coney 1982).

There are followers who command large followers but are unable to impact their followers, this could be based on their interaction level, their credibility, likeability or their level of trust. This research question will therefore seek to find out whether the number of followers that influencers have equals or transcend the impact they have on their followers when it comes to their buying behaviour

1.5

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In this modern era, the world has become more competitive and consumers are opened to thousands of expressions and pictures in magazines, newspapers and on billboards, websites, radio and television. Marketers use every means necessary in order to capture a fraction of their consumer's' attention in order to let them know of the unique characteristics of their product or services.

Some marketers use influencer marketing to establish credibility in the market, others to create social conversations around their brand, others yet to drive online or in-store sales of their products.

Companies have succeeded in bombarding commercials through all media channels making it difficult for their target audience to react towards any advertisement. In order to capture their consumers' attention, companies are now using celebrities they believed are loved and admired by people to be their spokesperson in order to catch their attention. Celebrities are the knobs that can grasp the customer's attention easily.

While looking through the magazines and newspapers or even watching television, people most likely to neglect all the commercials and advertisements.

With the conviction that celebrities are influential spokesperson for their brands, advertisers devote the huge volume of money on celebrity endorsement agreements every year. These days' different companies are using celebrities in their advertisements with the expectation that by using celebrities they can achieve a distinctive place in consumer's mind.

This study will help companies discover which marketing tool is more effective when promoting their brand and which marketing options they can opt for when deciding on their marketing strategy.

This study will assist in determining which marketing strategy to use when deciding based on likeability, credibility and trust and which marketing option will influence consumer buying behaviour.

1.6

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is limited to Influencer Marketing and its impact on consumer buying behaviour. Social Media is quickly becoming the avenue for companies to advertise and promote their brand thus they resulting to the services of influencers to promote their products and services. Companies tend to strategically select influencers with huge social media followings, pay them and have them promote what they are selling.

According to a research report published by Pew Research Center, April 2019, 73% of Snapchat users are between 18-24years old, 75% Instagram users between 18-24years, 44% Twitter users 25-29years, YouTube users fell between 18-24years and 30-49years representing 38% and 90% respectively. Facebook users fell between 25-29years and 18-24years also representing 46% and 76% respectively.

Therefore, the research will be focusing on participants who are between 18years-45years who are also active on any of the social media platforms especially Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.

1.7

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This section of the study deals with how the work is organized. The study is divided into 5 chapters.

Chapter 1 is the introduction and gives an overview of the study. It gives a background of the concept of social media influencers and how this new trend of marketing influences or impacts consumers buying behaviour. It also gives a fair idea of the questions that would be answered through the research, its objectives, purpose and significance.

Chapter 2 consists of the literature review which will look extensively at social media marketing and influencers. The review will identify gaps within several literatures that will be reviewed and other related studies and also seek to fill those gaps. This chapter will examine and analyze text and literature relating to endorsements by celebrity and influencers and theories and models surrounding the study.

Chapter 3 and 4 will look at the methodological approach used in the research and the process involved in gathering data. It also shows the analytical framework used in interpreting the impact of influencers and celebrity endorsements on consumer buying behaviour. It will also focus on analyzing of the data that has been gathered and presented on this research.

Chapter 5, which is the final chapter, will cover an extensive discussion of the findings in relation to the theoretical framework of this research; it will then give its conclusions drawn from the findings and give its recommendations.

Chapter One therefore serves as a guide for this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0

This chapter will shed more light on theories and previous studies that has been used in researching Influencer Marketing. These theories will help in defining what Influencer Marketing is and how it is being used in influencing consumer buying behaviour.

2.1

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT AS MARKETING TOOL

Through the 1760s, royal endorsements were used as a type of celebrity branding to promote products. The first product that used celebrity endorsement was in the 1760s where Josiah Wedgwood and Sons producers of pottery and chinaware, used royal endorsements as a marketing device to show value in the company and promote others their product (Celebrity Endorsement- Throughout the Ages, 2004)

Cigarette brands became hugely involved in celebrity branding, 'Kodas' cigarettes introduced baseball player cards into the packets of cigarettes as part of a customer loyalty scheme. This created a demand for consumers to buy more cigarettes so they could gain all cards of all baseball players due to celebrity endorsement of the cards. (Celebrity Endorsement- Throughout the Ages, 2004).

In the early 1930s, the major trending celebrity endorsers were athletes, then by 1945, the trend changed and movies stars were the next big celebrity endorsers. Example, in 1984, when the company Nike noticed a talented and young basketball player called Michael Jordan; he became Nike's celebrity brand ambassador for their sports industry. Nike extremely relied on Michael Jordan's social status to make the brand internationally well known.

In 1965, colour television was introduced and there was a popular rising demand, which was occurring, this then made television personalities and entertainers celebrity endorsers for communicating services and products.

Celebrity endorsers are extremely popular in Japan and Korea (Kilburn, 1998). Celebrity Endorsers have gained popularity because they are traditionally viewed as being dynamic and having attractive and likeable qualities and their fame is perceived to attract attention (Atkin and Block, 1983).

Celebrity endorsers are also popular in USA, UK, India, Malaysia, Turkey and New Zealand (Millward Brown, 2007; Money, Shimp, and Sakano, 2006). In USA, celebrities appear in almost 25 percent of the advertisements (Shimp, 2008). In India, according to a report by FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), 60 percent of Indian brands used celebrities in 2008 whereas it was only 25 percent in 2001 (Shashidhar, 2008). FICCI also estimated that roughly six billion Rupees are spent each year as endorsement fees of celebrities. This means many brands still use celebrity endorsement as marketing tool in order to attract their consumers. Companies spend a lot of money in order to associate celebrities with their brands.

2.1.1 WHO IS A CELEBRITY?

Celebrities are influential and are what most people aspire to be. They command a large number of fan base. A fan base that will do anything for their idol. They are respected and trusted and because of that, companies put in a lot of money just to have them promote their brand. A celebrity can either make or unmake a brand.

An example of a celebrity making a brand, According to TMZ, Rapper Card-B reported that the rapper's collaboration with beauty line Fashion Nova hit \$1million in sales within the first 24hours of its debut.

A typical example of a celebrity unmaking a brand. Business mogul and TV reality star Kylie Jenner causing Snapchat to lose millions within 24hour.

The Millennial generation encompasses, according to Sweeney (2006), those born from 1979 to 1994. A core trait of this generation is that they are more demanding than other generations, and expect a wider variety of products. They want goods and services to be personalized and customizable and instant gratification is the desired norm (Sweeney, 2006). Surveys suggest this generation searches for input from others before making a purchase decision, whether big or small ("Talking to Strangers," 2012). The findings from research on individuals belonging to the Millennial generation showed that those individuals had strong ties to social networking sites, and were more likely to buy products either recommended by their friends or endorsed by celebrities (Pate & Adams, 2013).

SIMs also known as Social Media Celebrities are highly visible media figures whose fame is native to social media platforms. They are referred to as "micro-celebrities" (Turner, 2014). SIMs are third-party endorsers who shape attitudes through blogs, tweets, and other uses of social media (Freberg et al. 2011). Moreover, SIMs approach very

specific needs of their followers and thus become a source of credibility for that specific issue (Liu et al. 2012).

Canning & West (2006) describe a celebrity as an individual who is frequently in the public eye and typically has a high profile in, amongst others, the 7 sports and entertainment industries. Such individuals are used to endorse consumer services, products, ideas or organization (Canning & West, 2006). However, in this fast moving and highly versatile era of marketing, a celebrity may well be a popular caricature or even an animated character like Fred Flinstone (Kumar, 2010).

2.1.2

INFLUENCERS AS CELEBRITIES

The use of social media platforms has grown exponentially in the last decade. From 2008 to 2018, the percentage of the U.S. population with a social media profile has grown from 10% to a whopping 77% (Statista, Percent of U.S. population, 2018). Social media sites such as Facebook and YouTube hold the highest number of registered accounts, with Facebook recording 1.86 billion accounts, followed by WhatsApp and YouTube, with 1.2 billion and 1 billion users, respectively (Statista, Percent of U.S. population, 2018).

Instagram and Youtube are two of the leading social media platforms where users have reported that they have discovered new brands and products via influencer channels through celebrity endorsements, expert bloggers, and vlogs. Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking service that allows users to upload content that can be

edited and organized with tags and location information. As of June 2018, Instagram reported more than 1 billion monthly active users worldwide, reporting daily active users at 500 million (Statista, Number of Monthly Active, 2018). With Instagram's user base of 1 billion people comes the possibility of achieving Instafame, the condition of having a relatively large number of followers on the app. Similarly, YouTube, founded in 2005, is arguably the biggest online video platform worldwide featuring a wide variety of user-generated and corporate media content that includes vlog (video documentation of a person's life), beauty and lifestyle channels, as well as educational content. Creators on YouTube are also capable of gaining a large following of subscribers on their personal channels.

Since the 2000s companies have slowly started to switch big megastars for influencers. Influencers are people who are not as popular as a megastar but influence the people around them more than a megastar. Most companies find that having both in a campaign works the best. A megastar like Justin Timberlake can bring you views and raise brand awareness but having a local Instagram celebrity with maybe a million followers or even only half a million followers might be more efficient in selling your product to more people. (Huffington Post).

Wiedmann, Hennigs & Langner (2010) identified eight types of influencers and the three representative ones are top influentials, narrative expert and super spreaders. They differ from each other primarily in individual capital and social capital. According to Wiedmann et al. (2010), Individual capital concerns involvement, expertise &

knowledge, innovativeness, Machiavellianism, satisfaction, risk aversion and demographics. While social capital takes into account integration, gregariousness, personality strength and empathy.

Top influentials refer to those who rank high in both individual and social capital dimensions (Wiedmann et al., 2010). They have a lot of followers and knowledge in the given field. Usually, they will interact with the followers and update referrals or tutorials based on their knowledge and involvement quite frequently.

Narrative experts refer to those who excel in individual capital dimension but does not stand out in social capital dimension (Wiedmann et al., 2010). They do not have as many followers as the other two types do, but they are the most skilled and knowledgeable ones in comparison to the other two. Taking beauty industry as an example, narrative experts will most probably be makeup artist and skin care specialist who have a certain number of followers.

Super spreaders refer to those who have fair social capital, but lack individual capital compared to the other two types (Wiedmann et al., 2010). In general, influencers of this type excel in one or few specific field(s) and thus enjoy a solid and large-scale follower base, but they are not as professional as the other two in the given subject. Therefore, when it comes to fields that they are not specialized in, their referrals may still work well but mainly owing to reputation and/or trust from their followers (Wiedmann et al., 2010).

With the growing user base on these platforms, we can notice the tremendous influence such websites and apps have in our day-to-day life. With constant content creation, we have evolved into a world where knowledge is at our fingertips. Anything from gaming, cooking, and DIY (do-it-yourself) crafts are available for anyone who is looking for it. The high volume of social media users and content creators has brought about the emergence of certain “micro-celebrities”.

Since the appearance of mass media, the notion of a celebrity and admiration of media personas has been apparent. With the emergence of social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, this tendency is emulated to even greater extents. Since we are no longer limited to traditional celebrities, categorized as actors, musicians, and models, to influence our opinions about what we desire, consumers are exposed to and impacted by masses of influential “micro-celebrities”, or non-traditional celebrities who become famous through online media usage. These “micro-celebrities” are seen as normal everyday people who have attained thousands or even millions of followers on these social media platforms. These individuals are known to the public, and their identification is based upon elements such as admiration, association, aspiration or recognition (Kutthakaphan & Chokesamritpol, 2013). The ability of any celebrity to influence a consumer’s needs and desires is seen as very valuable within the marketing realm.

An Influencer can be a celebrity, especially on Instagram and YouTube we also see a lot of “Microcelebrities”. Senft (2008) interprets it as “a new style of online performance that involves people “amping up” their popularity over the Web using technologies like video, blogs and social networking sites” (Abidin, 2016, p. 3). While some of these profiles reflect popularity “native” to Instagram, for many others Instagram is a platform for increasing notoriety achieved in another medium (Marwick, 2015). In other words, Microcelebrities are not necessarily known outside the world of Instagram.

Microcelebrity is considered as “more authentic” and more interactive than a traditional celebrity because Microcelebrity involves direct and authentic interaction with fans using social media (Senft, 2008, in Marwick, 2010).

While Instagram makes it possible for “regular people” to attract the mass audiences historically limited to broadcast media, the Instafamous tend to be conventionally good-looking, work in “cool” industries such as modeling or tattoo artistry, and emulate the tropes and symbols of traditional celebrity culture, such as glamorous self-portraits, designer goods, or luxury cars (Marwick, 2015)

YouTube, on the other hand, boasts a heightened ability to serve as a technology of intimacy, affording the formation of affective bonds through both the visual and communicative elements of its interface (Berryman & Kavka, 2017). The active processes of celebrification at play within YouTube’s beauty community necessarily combine the social side of sharing personal information, footage of daily activities and

building affective connections, with commercial aspects: namely self-branding, achieving high status and maintaining good reputations as professional, responsible and influential personalities (García-Rapp 2017).

Particularly on YouTube, as a highly commercial platform based on ‘delivering attention to ads’ (Burgess 2011, 326), values such as authenticity and honesty are appreciated and even demanded on the platform. As we can see here, since we are able to see more of a person’s personality through video rather than pictures, the YouTube platform celebrities often gain popularity because of their tasteful sense of humor or relatability.

Becoming a microcelebrity entails “thinking of oneself as a celebrity, and treating others accordingly,” (Marwick, 2013a, p. 115). Microcelebrity produces the self as brand and commodity; online processes of celebrification today merge commodification and branding smoothly with intimacy and authenticity (Jerslev & Mortensen, 2015).

Example, YouTube star James Charles who is best known for his YouTube channel which focuses mainly on makeup became the first male ambassador for one of the biggest make up magazines, CoverGirl. His channel currently has 15.9 million. It also has over 1.6 billion views on YouTube. His influential status has given him the opportunity to walk on red carpet events such as the Met Gala. He also won an award at the 8th Streamy Award for the best channel in the Beauty category.

People like to follow “luxury profiles”, profiles that make posts about (their) expensive possessions and lifestyle. Followers look at “What many young people dream of having

and the lifestyle they dream of living” (Marwick, 2015, p. 19). Users often follow and like what they find “aspirational”: this is Marketing jargon for something people desire to possess themselves, but usually cannot. What the young users of Instagram find aspirational often resembles “the lifestyles of the rich and famous.” (Marwick, 2015, p. 5). Influencers are inspired by other influencers, as 83% of these influencers say they purchased a product they saw on social media within the last month (Soltysinska, 2017).

Both Instagram and YouTube enable the everyday person to become someone who is idolized among the masses. In the era of the Internet, processes of “celebrification”, which according to Couldry (2004) is the transition from a non-media to popular media person, are no longer solely attached to large media corporations; by contrast, “we see the process of celebrification trickling down” (Marwick & Boyd, 2011, p. 141). According to Marshall (2016), online celebrity practices unfold in accordance with a particular temporal and spatial logic characterized by what is referred to as “narrowing of the gap” between celebrities and their fans or followers.

An essential part of building an audience is creating this type of relationship with your viewers. Instagram and YouTube both provide the interface necessary to enable parasocial interaction. “Parasocial interaction” is the illusion of real, face-to-face friendships with performers that is created through watching television shows or listening to music (Horton and Wohl, 1956), or in this case watching a video or viewing their pictures. In parasocial relationships, a fan responds to a media figure as if he or she were a personal acquaintance (Giles 2002). These interactions are classified by watching

vlogs, commenting on videos and photos, or even direct messages to the influencer.

YouTube boasts a heightened ability to serve as a technology of intimacy, affording the formation of affective bonds through both the visual and communicative elements of its interface (Berryman & Kavka, 2017).

With the rise of the ‘digital’ celebrity groups such as bloggers, vloggers and ‘Instafamous’ personalities (Chahal, 2016), online celebrities appeal to a common reference group. ‘Reference group’ is defined as a person/group of people who serve as a reference to an individual in forming values and attitudes, and in so doing provide consumers with a reference in their purchasing decisions (L.G. Schiffman, Hansen, & Kanuk, 2012). Several researchers argue that information is more credible when delivered by a product reviewer/blogger than an established celebrity (Camahort, 2016, Wiley, 2014). According to Wiley (2014), traditional celebrities do not enjoy the power they once did; online bloggers' product reviews are now much more influential as they are perceived to be more authentic and accessible.

2.2

ENDORSEMENTS

Endorsement are an easy way for a brand to attach itself to the positive feelings associated with a celebrity or industry professional (Apryl Duncan, 2019)

There are four types of celebrity endorsements: Using the Product or Service - where celebrities are paid to associate themselves with certain brands. Eg Michael Jordan is/was paid millions of dollars to be seen wearing Nike shoes. (Apryl Duncan, 2019)

There is also Speaking on behalf of a brand – this is where celebrities appears in ads for a product or service. Celebrities are paid to appear in these commercials.

Unpaid Testimonials on the other hand is when a celebrity likes a product and recommends or gives an opinion about it (Apryl Duncan, 2019). Example in 2012, founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg made a comment on his Facebook page about iGrill. iGrill is a product that synchronizes with a meat thermometer and sends data to an app to indicate the internal temperature of meat on a grill. Within 2 hours the iGrill site attracted so much traffic, it crashed due to its overwhelming response (Article: Unpaid Celebrity Endorsement, 2016)

The last type of endorsement is the “Fake” endorsement. This refers to the kind of endorsements that come from actors who are paid spokespersons for everything from a rental-cleaning product. They are identified as actors in these commercials even if they are speaking the words of a real family or a doctor. (Apryl Duncan, 2019)

Celebrity endorsements affect many factors that directly or indirectly influence sales of the product (Erdogan, 1999). According to Atkin and Block (1983) the fame of the celebrity endorsers helps in drawing attention to the product. Belch and Belch (2001) termed it as stopping power, which means that celebrity endorsers are able to break

through the cluttered media environment and draw attention towards the advertising message. Kamen, 1 Corresponding Author Azhari and Kragh (1975) reported that use of celebrity endorser leads to greater awareness of advertisements and positive change in the company image. Louie and Obermiller (2002) found that selection/rejection and retain/dismissing decisions regarding celebrity endorsers has significant impact on the company's image. Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann (1983) manipulated endorser type and found that celebrity endorsers lead to greater recall of brand name as compared to typical citizens, and produced more favourable attitude towards the product than typical citizens. Friedman, Termini and Washington (1976) manipulated endorser type and found that celebrity endorser enhanced the believability of the advertisement, purchase intentions and perceived quality of the product

Due to constant innovations in marketing during previous years, celebrity endorsers became a great marketing tool. There are various definitions of celebrities and celebrity endorsement. Different researchers mentioned and provided various explanations. C. Wright Mills (1956, pp. 71–72) defined celebrities as following: “The celebrities are The Names that need no further identification. Those who know them so far exceed those of whom they know as to require no exact computation. Wherever they go, they are recognized, and moreover, recognized with some excitement and awe. Whatever they do has publicity value. More or less continuously, over a period of time, they are the material for the media of communication and entertainment. And, when that time ends –

as it must – and the celebrity still lives – as he may – from time to time it may be asked ‘Remember him?’ That is what celebrity means.”

On the other hand, according to McCracken (1989), celebrity may be any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement. Mentioned definitions from sixties and eighties did not change a lot nowadays. According to Christina Schlecht, celebrities are people who enjoy public recognition by a large share of certain Group of people whereas attributes like attractiveness, extraordinary lifestyle are just examples and specific common characteristics cannot be observed. Though it can be said that within a corresponding social group celebrities generally differ from the social norm and enjoy a high degree of public awareness (Schlecht, 2003). One of the latest definitions says that celebrity is an individual “whose name has attention-getting, interest-riveting and profit generating value that stems from the high level of public attention and interest” (Gupta, 2009).

Celebrity endorsement is phenomenon that was developing over years. Good definition of this term is provided by Khatri (2006) who stated that „endorsement celebrities usually lend their names to advertisements for product or services for which they may or may not be the experts”. However, celebrity endorsement could be defined as one of the most popular forms of marketing used to promote a range of consumer products and services (Halonen-Knight & Hurmerinta 2010). According to Byrne et al. (2003), celebrity endorsement has become one of the communication strategies employed by marketers trying to build a congruent image between the brand and the consumer. It is common that

a product or brand is associated with one celebrity endorser over long period of time, but still marketers may rely on multiple celebrity endorsements which mean that they can use two or more celebrities in advertising campaign (Hsu & McDonald, 2002). According to Friedman and Friedman (1979) a “celebrity endorser is an individual who is known by the public for his or her achievements in areas other than that of the product class endorsed”. Organizations are spending a lot on celebrity endorsement on their brands with the hope that celebrities’ image and their endorsement will form part in capturing their followers who turn out to be their (Organizations) customers and ultimately such brands market share would get increase. Companies believe that celebrities’ presence in the ad plays a noteworthy role to convince the audience (CHOI and Rifon, 2007). People termed famous are those who got appreciation from the general public and possess some unique and appealing characteristics like credibility or attractiveness (McCracken, 1889; Silveria; Austad, 2004). Well-chosen celebrity can at very least gain attention to a product or brand. Once company decides to use celebrity endorsement strategy, there is only one, but very critical question to answer: Which celebrity to select? In fact, high positive effect of celebrity is not enough, since it must have also high appropriateness for the brand. Accordingly, Sylvester Stallone has high recognition and reputation, but he still would not be good choice for advertising World Peace Conference. Athletes are quite effective endorsing group; especially for sport related products such are beverages. Marketers are worried only for one thing, will additional sales stimulated by celebrity endorser cover all the costs and make profits. Additionally, it is not good if celebrity endorser promotes too many products at the same time. Even though if company hire

celebrity endorser that is perfect with respect to previous criteria, still it should pray that he/she does not make some kind of scandal such as getting sick, involved in immoral actions, injured or die (Kotler, 1991). Bill Cosby failed as an endorser for E.F. Hutton despite his evident success for Kodak and Coca Cola. John Houseman failed as an endorser for McDonald's despite his effective work for Smith Barney (Marshall 1987). George C. Scott proved, mysteriously, to be the wrong choice for Renault, as did Ringo Starr for Sun Country Classic wine coolers (Motavalli 1988). The effectiveness of the endorser depends, in part, upon the meanings he or she brings to the endorsement process. Once a celebrity endorsement grabs their attention, consumers are assumed to become more interested in the advertised object as compared with a non-endorsed or other-endorsed object. This due to the fact that celebrities possess inherent news value caused by their celebrity status (Corbett and Mori 1999). Since celebrities are generally liked, consumers also tend to be more motivated to assess what kind of object a celebrity is endorsing. As a result, object recall and recognition is assumed to be enhanced due to greater message elaboration (Petty et al. 1983). In terms of knowledge, celebrity endorsements are assumed to influence the meaning of the endorsed object (Miller and Allen 2012) as well as perceptions about its price, its taste level, the risk of buying it, or the perceived information value of the endorsement (Biswas et al. 2006; Dean and Biswas 2001; Freiden 1982; Friedman et al. 1976; Young and Miller 2015). Based on the mechanism behind these effects, consumers are assumed to conclude that an object has a specific attribute when they perceive this object as paired with a celebrity known for this attribute (e.g., premium price with a high-class celebrity; Miller and Allen 2012).

2.3

MODELS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

There are four models on selecting the right celebrity, in order to transfer positive meaning to a brand. According to Erdogan (1999: 297-305) those models are, the source credibility model, the source attractiveness model, the match-up model and the meaning transfer model.

The Source Credibility Model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951: 647) (Hovland, et al, 1953:13) states that endorser's expertise and trustworthiness effects the change in opinion

According to The Source Attractiveness Model, the message will be more effective if the respondent finds the source as familiar, likable, similar and attractive, (Simmers et al., 2009, s.53).

In the Match-up Model, it was stated that if there is a fit between endorser and the product, the endorsement process will be more effective (Till and Busler, 2000: 1). In the fourth and the last model, The Meaning Transfer Model, the meaning is transferred from product to consumer by the use of celebrity (McCracken, 1989: 314).

The all mentioned studies examined the role of celebrity endorsement through attitude toward ad, attitude toward brand and purchase intention.

2.4

TYPES OF MODELS

2.4.1

SOURCE CREDIBILITY MODEL

Source Credibility: Source credibility implies the spokesperson's positive characteristics, which affects the receiver's acceptance of the message (Khan and Khan, 2002). The idea behind the model is that if the source of the message is considered credible then the message will be evaluated positively and it will have greater persuasiveness. Credible sources influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviour through "internalization".

Internalization occurs when individuals conform to the attitude and behaviour advocated by a credible source because they believe in the substance of new attitude or behaviour (Freidman and Friedman, 1979). Once these attitudes or behaviour gets internalized, they remain in the minds of the consumers even after the message or the source is forgotten.

The source credibility model proposed by Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) states that Expertise and Trustworthiness are two important factors from which credibility originates. "Expertise" is the extent to which the source is perceived to have the ability of making correct assertions by virtue of having the relevant skills (Hovland et al., 1953). This dimension is also sometimes referred as competence, authoritativeness, expertness and qualification (Khan and Khan, 2002).

"Trustworthiness" is the degree to which the audience considers the communicator and the assertions to be valid. Consumers are skeptical regarding untrustworthy celebrities

(Smith, 1973). McGinnies and Ward (1980) studied trustworthiness and expertise and found that trust worthy source was persuasive, regardless of expertise. Contrarily, study by Sternthal, Dholakia and Leavitt (1978) found that a high credible source is not always more effective than a low credible source. They found that if the initial opinion of the audience is positive towards the issue, then a less credible source is more effective.

2.4.2

SOURCE ATTRACTIVENESS MODEL

Source Attractiveness: Joseph (1982) states that more favorable evaluations of the product and the advertisement are made when attractive models are used. Attractive sources persuade consumers through a process called “identification”. Identification occurs when consumers adopt attitudes and behaviour advocated by the source because they get satisfaction in the idea of being similar to the source (Friedman and Friedman, 1979). Identification is not like internalization where information from an attractive source is integrated into the belief system of the consumers; the consumers may conform only till the source remains relevant or attractive to them (Kelman, 1961). Petty and Cacioppo (1980) found that the source attractiveness affects persuasion in both low and high consumer involvement conditions. The product, when endorsed by the attractive celebrity, resulted in greater brand recall, positive attitude towards product and greater purchase intention than the unattractive celebrity (Kahle and Homer, 1985). Till and Busler (1998) found that purchase intentions and brand attitude were significantly higher

in attractive endorser condition than unattractive endorser condition. Majority of studies have supported the positive relation between source attractiveness and attitudes, but results regarding the relation between purchase intention and source attractiveness are ambiguous (Erdogan, 1999). Further, except the study by Till and Busler (1998), literature suggests that attractive endorsers are effective only for attractiveness related products (Kahle and Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990; Baker and Churchill, 1977; Petty and Cacioppo, 1980). Source models fail to clearly explain the endorsement effectiveness process as they consider it as a unidimensional process. They concentrate only on the celebrity aspect, ignoring the product and consumer aspects.

2.4.3

MATCH-UP MODEL

This theory was born out of the observation that using an attractive model is not universally effective for all products. They tend to work better for products that are beauty related (Baker and Churchill 1977; Joseph 1982; Kahle and Homer 1985). In other words, the characteristic of the product must “fit” the image of the celebrity. For instance, Kamins (1990) found that using Tom Selleck (An American Actor) as an attractive celebrity endorser is more effective (in terms of spokesperson credibility and ad attitude) for a luxury car which is attractiveness-related, than a computer which is not attractiveness-related. The match-up effect is also found for products that are not beauty

related. Using jeans (called Unitough) and a board game (called Funnybone), among others, Misra and Beatty (1990) found that if the products were matched with Clint Eastwood and Carol Burnett respectively, they would result in a higher brand attitude than the converse. Similarly, Kamins and Gupta (1994) found the match-up effect for computers (i.e., resulting in higher spokesperson believability, attractiveness, and brand attitude) but not running shoes, provided the computer was matched with “scientific” celebrity Leonard Nimoy.

The match-up hypothesis represents an improvement over the other theories because it clearly acknowledges the importance of contingency, and that a “one size fits all” theory is too simplistic (Chris Dubelaar, 2006)

2.4.4

MEANING TRANSFER MODEL

According to Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken, 1989), the cultural meanings associated with the celebrity make an endorsements work. Each celebrity holds distinct cultural meanings which he or she has inherited through their careers. Rugged, intelligent, confident, sophisticated and masculine can be a few examples of the wide range of cultural meanings that celebrities carry. These meanings get transferred to the products through the celebrity endorsement process and finally to the consumers who try to take on those meanings by consuming those products. Success of a celebrity endorsement

depends upon the cultural meanings which the celebrity holds and on how well these meanings are transferred to the product through advertisement.

There are three stages of meaning transfer. In stage one, the celebrities earn cultural meanings through their respective careers, for example, movie performances, sports achievements, social activism. Stage two is the endorsement process in which the cultural meanings which the celebrity holds get transferred to the product he or she is endorsing through advertisements. The cultural meanings inherited by the product then influence attitudes and purchase intentions regarding the product. In stage three, the consumers consume the product in order to take on the meanings the product holds. They try to consume the image associated with celebrities and to accomplish it they consume the products associated with the celebrity (Fowles, 1996). However, McCracken (1989) argues that there is no automatic transfer of meaning because just consuming the product is not sufficient to take possession of its meaning. Consumers must claim the meaning and then work with it in order to build and project the cultural meaning they want.

Langmeyer and Walker (1991) conducted an experiment on students and found that when the products were not endorsed by celebrities, they retained only product category images but in celebrity endorsement treatment, they inherited the images of the celebrity endorser.

2.4.5

SOURCE CREDIBILITY MODEL FOR THIS STUDY

Like every case being tried in court, both lawyers are expected to present credible evidence to back their allegations or prove their clients' innocence. People are trusted not solely by their words but with credible evidence or facts to back it up or to justify, a belief or an assertion makes it more authentic. A source must always be credible and trustworthy in order to create trust between influencers and their followers.

Aristotle developed the concept of source credibility in a text of his works, called *The Rhetoric*. From the book, it became evident that Aristotle divided the means of persuasion into three categories: ethos, logos and pathos (Bonachristus Umeogu, 2012). According to Aristotle, the rhetorician ethos plays the most important role in influencing the audiences thought and beliefs. It is what makes the speaker in the first place. Such an ethos implies the communicators' knowledge and understanding of the message coupled with moral authority and expressed goodwill of the message sender. This is where understanding and perceived expertise comes into play (Bonachristus Umeogu, 2012). It is the known contributing factor for the credibility and trust vested in the communicator. Baudhin and Davis (1972), and McCroskey (1958) concurred also affirms that the communicator's ethos plays an essential role in effectively persuading message receivers. The source credibility theory as propounded by Hovland, Janis and Kelly (1963) stated that people or receivers are more likely to be persuaded when the source presents itself as

credible. Furthermore, Hovland (1963) and Weiss (1974) later studied the influence of sources in persuasion. The study was done by comparing credible and non-credible sources using same persuasive message to test if the sources seen as credible could influence opinions change in the message receivers more than the non-credible source. The study confirmed the assumption that credible sources tend to create the desired impact on the audience.

Credibility is a multi-dimensional concept that serves as a means for the receiver of the information to rate the source or transmitter of the communication in relation to the information. This rating correlates with the willingness of the receiver to attribute truth and substance to the information (Hovland et al., 1953 in Eisend, 2006). Credibility is all about the tendency to believe or trust someone with little or no doubt of being deceived or manipulated. Faith, trust, love and objectivity are all rolled up in one word—credibility (Hovland et al., 1953 in Eisend, 2006).

The issue of whether or not trustworthiness influences persuasion is of theoretical importance. Sternthal, Phillips and Dholakia (1978) proposed that a framework that integrates cognitive response ideas with attribution theory could understand source effects. An attribution theory that predicts that a claim made by a biased source will be discounted (Kelly 1973).

Anderson and Clevenger (1961), McGuire (1968) and Sternthal et al (1978) focused on the relationship between source credibility and attitudinal change. Based on their reviews focused on whether or not a source's key characteristics affect the persuasiveness of a

message. The review showed that a source that was more of an expert and/or more attractive was more persuasive.

According to Sternthal et al. (1978) trustworthiness is one of the components of credibility.

The source credible Model will be the focus of this study because it helps to achieve the research objective which is; to establish whether Influencer Marketing is guaranteed the credibility and authenticity when it comes to consumer buying behaviour and to also answer the research question or whether or not the credibility of SMIs persuade or influence consumer buying behaviour.

2.5

FACTORS THAT DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

2.5.1

Demographics

Khan and Khan (2002) found that female students found celebrities more convincing than male students. Kahle and Homer (1985) found in their experiment that likable celebrity endorser enhanced recall and recognition ability of female respondents. Findings regarding the endorser's gender are mixed (Erdogan, 1999). Debevec and Kernan (1994) found that attractive female endorsers generated more positive attitudes than attractive

male endorsers, across both the genders. In another study, male endorsers produced more purchase intentions for male consumers and female endorsers produced more purchase intentions for female consumers (Caballero, Lumpkin and Madden, 1970). They also found that under high involvement condition, women recalled more arguments contained in the advertisement when a likable celebrity was used and men recalled more arguments when an unlikable celebrity was used. Atkin and Block (1983), in their study on two sets of audience, found that the younger audience's evaluation of the celebrity endorsements (in terms of believability, attitudes toward the ad and product, and purchase intentions) were significantly higher than the older audience. Freiden (1984) also found in his experiment that attitudes of younger consumers differed substantially from older consumers.

2.5.2

Consumer Involvement

Involvement determines the ability and motivation of consumers to process information (Andrew, Durvasula and Akhter, 1990; Petty et al., 1983). The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty et al., 1983) states that consumers get persuaded differently under high and low involvement conditions. High level of involvement will motivate the consumers to elaborate more i.e., engage in careful thinking and evaluation of information and arguments in the advertisement. Low elaboration means that the consumer is not

sufficiently motivated and therefore he will not engage in active information processing, and will only make inferences on the basis of simple positive and negative cues. Under high Involvement conditions the strength and quality of the persuasive argument (Central route) contained in the ad is what matters more for the consumers (Petty et al., 1983).

Previous studies have shown that consumers become more motivated to elaborate on the content of an advertisement when they are highly involved (Muehling, Laczniak and Andrews, 1993).

2.5.3

Number of Endorsements

An exclusive celebrity is believed to be more effective for the brand than a celebrity who has been endorsing multiple brands. Mowen and Brown (1981) found that multiple endorsements by a celebrity resulted in less favorable evaluation of the advertisement, the product and low intentions to buy. Also, Tripp, Jensen and Carlson (1994) found that multiple endorsements negatively affect the perception about the endorser and attitude towards the advertisement. Rice et al. (2011) studied the interaction between involvement, number of endorsements and congruency (fit) between product and the celebrity. Their study revealed that under low involvement condition, brand attitudes became more negative with increase in the number of endorsements by the celebrity. Under high involvement, brand attitudes depend on the congruency between the brands endorsed and the celebrity. When the brands endorsed were congruent to the celebrity, multiple endorsements produced favorable brand attitude; when the congruence was low,

multiple endorsements produced less favorable brand attitude. The reason is that, under high involvement condition, the congruence between celebrity and the brand is processed as persuasive argument (central cue) by the consumers, but in low involvement conditions, peripheral cues (such as, source characteristics, likability of the endorser), not the argument strength, affects brand attitude (Kirmani and Shiv 1998, Kang and Herr 2006).

2.6

INFLUENCER MARKETING

Traditional Marketing through radio and television commercials and newspaper ads are gradually being taken over by digital marketing. It is safe to say that in the last decade there has been a huge shift from traditional to the digital world.

As early as in 1998 The Economist has put forward the concept of word of mouse, which is well known as Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM). Gelb and Sundaram (2002) called for adapting to word of mouse since they spotted the transformation that potential buyers tend to seek out information from electronic consumer forums. It is essentially the same as word of mouth (WOM) marketing, an informal way of exchanging information among consumers about the characteristics, usage, and ownership of particular products or services (Li & Du, 2011). However, instead of one's own circle of acquaintances, potential buyers now are able to consult a larger number of independent evaluators (Gelb & Sundaram, 2002). They get connected owing to some common interests and do not

necessarily know each other personally (Dellarocas, 2006). Among them, a group of the opinionated and the passionate have gradually gained more popularity than others and thus became opinion leaders, also known as the influential. Therefore, they are normally blessed with higher social standing and stronger online social networks, making them more influential when delivering product information, providing recommendations, giving personal comments and supplementing professional knowledge that help firms to promote their products (Li & Du, 2011).

Influencer marketing in essence, as described in the definition, is to make use of the influential in eWOM communication to communicate brand messages

Influencer marketing originated because of the inability to advertise on social media platforms such as Instagram (Woods, 2016). Even though it is now possible to advertise on social media, influencers are still being used because of their trustworthy reputation. The SMI endorsements are seen as earned instead of paid media because influencers are considered trusted and authentic sources to consumers (Karp, 2016). Influencer marketing creates 11 times more return on investment than traditional advertising yearly (Tapinfluence, 2016b). Consumers are purchasing, engaging, and sharing content posted by SMIs on social media (Swant, 2016). SMIs are third party endorsers who influence a large audience through blogs, tweets, and other social media platforms (Freberg et al., 2011). Defining characteristics of SMIs include good credibility, high social media activity, distinct brands, large followings, and great exposure (Ioanid, Militaru, & Petruta, 2015).

Consumers are now becoming aware of brands more than ever before. Social Media platforms have given companies the opportunity to engage their audience. Consumers are now bombarded with a lot of information each and every day. Brands need to produce the right content that captures their followers' attention and gives them directions on what to do. (Ryan 2015, 63-64) Until 2006 communication was enough to keep customers engaged but the shift to content is real. Without proper, meaningful and valuable content you will lose your followers and your brand might suffer and get a bad reputation. (Evans 2008, 19-20)

It has therefore become necessary for companies to find new and innovative ways to attract their consumers and keep their attention by engaging and find ways to create content that will help push their brands, thus Influencer Marketing.

Influencer Marketing is a form of “stealth” Marketing. Pehlivan et al. (2015) define this as “operating on a market in a deceptive, covert, furtive, imperceptible and disguised manner to purposefully influence audiences without the audiences being aware of these activities” (in (Charry, 2017, p. 7). In 2016, Instagram was the most proliferate and viable social medium for influencer advertorials (Abidin, 2015). An interesting concept here is an “advertorial”, which is a combination of “advertisement” and “editorial”. These are personalized promotions of products (or services), posted by an opinion leader, which is “a person who offers informal advice or information about a specific product or product category, such as which of several brands is best or how a particular product may be used” (Keller and Kotler, 2016). These posts appear to be spontaneously experienced by

these influencers, but in fact, they are remunerated (Abidin, 2016). Moreover, these advertorials have been found more effective than classic advertisements, since they take the form of a personal narrative and incorporate Influencers' perspectives of having experienced the product or service themselves (Abidin, 2016).

Influencer Marketing is top-of-mind for today's marketers. According to eMarketer, nearly half of marketers have upped their investment in Influencer Marketing in 2017. Brands and marketers understand that the voices of authentic, trusted profiles are much more likely to break through the ad blockers (Gilbreath, 2017). As influencers can have a real impact on followers and can be effective in developing the digital presence of a brand, B2C brands should certainly consider SI Marketing (Gelb, 2017)

Influencer Marketing is most effective for brands wanting to reach a "younger" audience, as mentioned above. This is because millennial consumers are turning away from the traditional media. They are moving online and grouping around some selected and trusted influencers who share their interests (Soltysinska, 2017).

2.6.1

INFLUENCER MARKETING IMPLICATION ON A CONSUMER

Social media started as an entertainment tool and evolved to a powerful marketing tool. While it serves its primary purpose of connecting people, at the same time it plays a major role in connecting marketers with current and potential customers (Statista, Social Media Marketing Usage, 2018).

Companies now are not focusing on merely a one-time purchase, but are hoping to create relationships with their customers. From the article entitled “Move Over Kardashians: Why Average Joes Are More Influential Than Celebrities on Social Media,” the author thoughtfully argues that a well-executed influencer program can yield higher conversions at a much lower cost for brands than spending enormous money on traditional celebrity endorsements. As an example, consider that to get Kim Kardashian or Kendall Jenner to post ONCE on a social platform, the cost can be in excess of \$200,000, which not only is cost prohibitive to many brands, but is hard to justify given the changing consumer sentiment towards authenticity and transparency (Connolly).

Influencers have been able to create good impressions on their followers more than that of traditional celebrities thanks to their online (Instagram and YouTube) relationship they have with them. Due to the qualities of relatability and authenticity a consumer puts more trust into the opinion of a social media influencer. These implications thus reveal how social media stars are able to have a greater impact on consumers’ views and opinions on pop culture trends regarding beauty and fashion.

Consumer buying behavior is influenced by social, personal, and psychological factors

that have to be considered in order to effectively market to consumers (Brosekhan, Velayutham, & Phil, 2014; Dahl, 2013). By applying consumers' social and psychological influences to the internet and social media, brand managers can better understand how these factors influence online consumer product perception. Rashotte (2011) defines social influence as a "change in an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviors that results from interaction with another individual or a group" (p. 562). This results from consumers' motives to either be in line or in conflict with social norms (Asch, 1952). This causes individuals to change their attitudes and behaviors because of the opinions of the majority or from an interaction with someone that they see as similar, desirable, or an expert (Rashotte, 2011). Consumers tend to trust experts for specific topics. For example, an individual could seek out a SMI in fashion to see an "expert" opinion and receive advice on clothing brands, products, and style.

Although traditional celebrities have had great influence on our society's pop culture trends in the past, in recent years, new social media stars have been able to gain more audience and influence pop culture to greater extents than the traditional celebrity. This is revealed by their ability to create communities where users feel more connected to the influencer through higher levels of engagement, authenticity, and relatability.

2.7

CONCLUSION

The internet has paved way for many companies to advertise their products or promote their brand in every part of the world. Thanks to the technological era of the internet, late flow of information are now outdated.

Consumers who use certain brands or products now have the power to change the narrative when it comes to products or services. Thanks to the internet consumers now have the platform to share their satisfaction, dissatisfaction, excitement, etc about a certain product or brand, a move that has the potential to harm that said brand or product.

Not only has the internet been a game changer but it has brought about social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) which has even brought people more closer. Friends, Families, Colleagues and the likes are able to communicate on just about anything. Fortunately or unfortunately for these brands, world is now a global village

Social Media in a way has created opportunities for people to earn money online, these are the Social Media Influencers who based on their large followers are contracted by big companies to sell their products or promote their brand.

There are Instagram Influencers, Facebook influencers, influencers on Twitter, Snapchat who in their own right have quickly attained the celebrity status. Being a celebrity now does not necessarily means someone who appears on TV, Movies, who is a sports personality etc.

Being influencer with a large following, gives them the bragging right as a celebrity as their followers believe and trust whatever brand they associate themselves with.

Influencers are now a category of celebrity thanks to the internet and social media.

There is no denying that consumers make decision every day and their relationship, interaction and trust level between them and influencers influence their busying behaviour.

Influencer Marketing boils down to two things as stated by the Source Credibility Model; Credibility and Trustworthiness. A consumer wants to be able to trust an influencer and the only way to do that is if the influencer is able to prove beyond doubt that the product they are recommended does what they say it does.

Although Influencer Marketing is now one of the marketing strategies being used by companies, companies also prefer to use Traditional Celebrities to promote their brand, a marketing tool that is heavily used especially here in Ghana.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the research methodology that has been selected for this study. It outlines the research approach and strategy, design, data collection methods, sampling methods, research criteria, data analysis and the limitations associated with the chosen methodology.

3.1

RESEARCH DESIGN

The focus of this study is on Social Media Influencers being the new celebrities and how well they influence consumer buying behaviour. Therefore, this chapter presents the research philosophy, approach, design and strategy that has been used throughout the construction of this dissertation in order to gather knowledge about the studied topic of this dissertation.

For the sake of the research questions formulated mentioned above, a quantitative research was employed through the distribution questionnaire online.

3.2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Quantitative Research Approach was used in finding out the role influencers play in consumer buying behaviour. The quantitative research method was used in this research

because it involves a more formal and objective quantification. It is use to describe test relationship and to examine its cause and effect on relationships. Data that will be collected in numeric form will be easy to interpret and analyse for easier understanding

3.2.1

Approach and Justification

In conducting the research, questionnaires were used to elicit response from the respondents. Questionnaires were used in this research in order to analyse the response from a layman perspective instead of interviewing experts or professionals on the issue under study. This kind of approach helped enrich the research because the research focused on people who uses the internet, are mostly active on social media and love to engage in online shopping.

The intention was to reach the respondents in a setting relative to the nature of the current research, so the questionnaire was created using the google form and the link was posted on the researcher's Facebook page.

The main section included questions about influencers and their marketing technique. This was to ascertain participants' impression of influencers and whether or not influencers influence consumer purchasing behaviour.

It also sought to find out which marketing tool they (respondents) prefer, that is, Influencer Marketing or Celebrity Endorsement.

Using the source credibility model, some questions examined the trust an influencer inspires and how that led consumers to purchase the products they endorsed or promoted. The same model was used to help to understand whether they will be willing to purchase products that influencers recommend even if the previous recommendation didn't live up to expectation.

All of the included questions had multiple choice values while some of them also had an open-ended option "other", which gave respondents the opportunity to give answers that were not captured in the multiple choice answers.

3.3 RESEARCH SUBJECTS

3.3.1 POPULATION

According to a research conducted by Hootsuite in January 2019, data gathered on the demographics that are mostly active on social media indicated that people between 18-24years (35%), 25-34years (36%), 35-44years (12%) and 45-54years (4%). Respondents used for this study were between the ages of 18-45 because of the diversity in the cultural, economic and social background and because most people between these ages are more prone to the use of both the internet and especially found on two or more social media platforms giving a fair representation of the larger Ghanaian population.

3.3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POPULATION

- The respondent must be between the ages of 18-45 as they represent the highest age demographics when it comes to the use of the internet
- The respondent must have interest in both the internet and active on at least one social media platform as the study focused on respondents who are active on social media.

3.4

SAMPLE SIZE

Hundred (100) respondents were used as the sample sizes for this study. Fifty-Five (55) represented males where Forty-Five (45) represented Females. This is because the respondents were not randomly selected as the research needed a true representation when it comes to Influencer Marketing.

3.4

SAMPLING TECHNIQUES/PROCUEURES

Questionnaire was created using Google Form and the link was posted on the researcher's Facebook page with a caption that attracted respondents to participate in the study. Convenience Sampling was used in this regard.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSES

4.0

INTRODUCTION

The aim of data analyses is to ascertain whether Social Media Influencers or impact consumer buying behaviour. Additionally, the analyses identified the level of influence they have on their followers as well as their credibility when it comes to online purchasing. Based on the answers that were given by the respondents on whether or not they purchase items online based on the recommendation by an influencer and whether or not they will make another purchase based on the same influencers word of mouth. The results were analyzed using graphics (pie chart) and tables which was used in analyzing the results.

The findings were supported by some literature in order to validate and generalize the results.

The data was gathered through online survey. The questionnaire was created using the goggle form with which the link was posted on the researcher's Facebook wall in order to attract the right audience (people who use social media platforms). The questionnaire was confidential as participants were asked to add their email address. Three demographics questions were asked; Age, Gender and Employment Status.

The questions were all closed ended because the questions bring better analyzing especially when the researcher used a quantitative research approach.

4.1

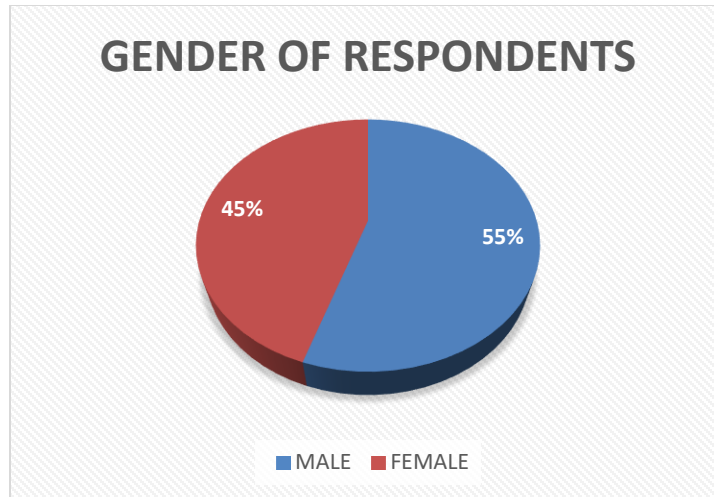
DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

The survey was responded by 100 people. In the pie chart below, it shows the population of the respondents which is divided by gender. The pie chart clearly shows that the majority of respondents are Male (blue colour) which represents 55.1% while the red colour represents the female of 44.9%. The data was collected in a channel that were most likely to attract this audience. Based on the responses, it showed surprisedly that majority of the respondents were male who represented 55.1% while 44.9% represented women. In Hootsuite's research in January 2019, their findings also showed that majority of social media users are males in Ghana. Facebook has 5.50million; Male users represented 64% and Male 36%. Instagram has 1.40million; Male users represented 63% and Female 37%.

GENDER

MALE	PERCENTAGE	FEMALE	PERCENTAGE
55	55.1%	45	44.9%
RESPONSE (TOTAL) =100			



4.3.2

AGE OF RESPONDENTS

The data shows the age distribution of active social media users. The findings indicate that those between age 25-29 were majority social media users with 44.4%. The second age rank is 30-34 with a percentage of 39.3%. Social Media users between age 18-24years and 35-39years were close to each other in terms of percentages with 8.2 and 8.1 respectively.

The data also clearly showed that none of the respondents who took part in this study were 40 years and above. Stating clearly based on this data that people between 18-39 are social media users.

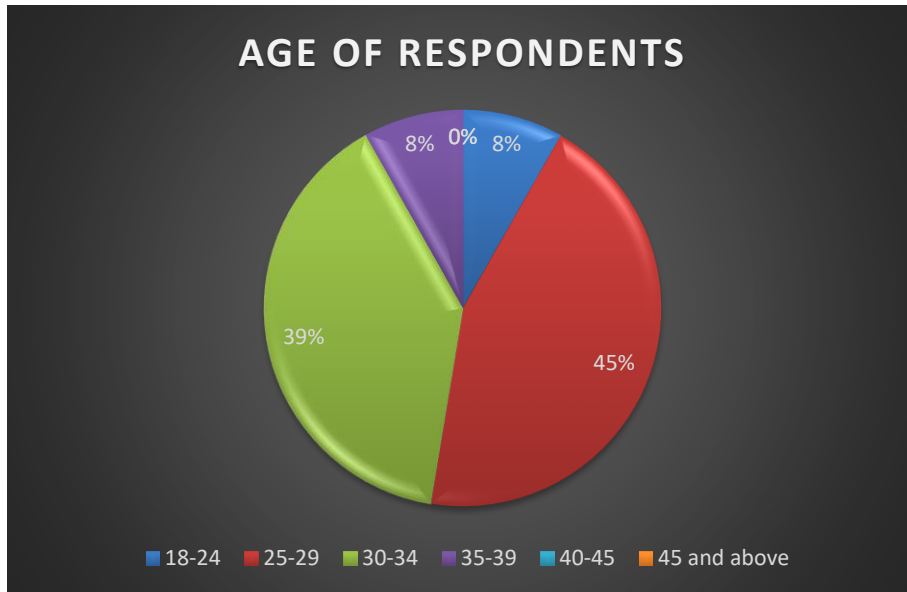
This proves the findings by Hootsuite that people between 18-24years (35%), 25-34years (36%) and 35-44years (12%) represent higher percentage of social media users.

The diagram below illustrates the data collected.

AGE	PERCENTAGE (%)
18-24	6.1
25-29	44.4
30-34	35.4

35-39	8.1
40-45	-
45 and above	-

AGE OF RESPONDENTS



4.2

4.3

RQ5: ACTIVENESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

According to the research conducted by Brandwatch (Social Media monitoring company) in May 2019, the total worldwide population is 7.7 billion, with internet users of 4.4 billion and 3.5 billion active social media users who spend an average of 142 minutes on social media per day. A recent Pew Research Center study found that 68% of

American adults are Facebook users. Among 18 to 24-year-olds, 78% use Instagram and 45% are on Twitter. Even among Americans 65 and older, 37% are social media users.

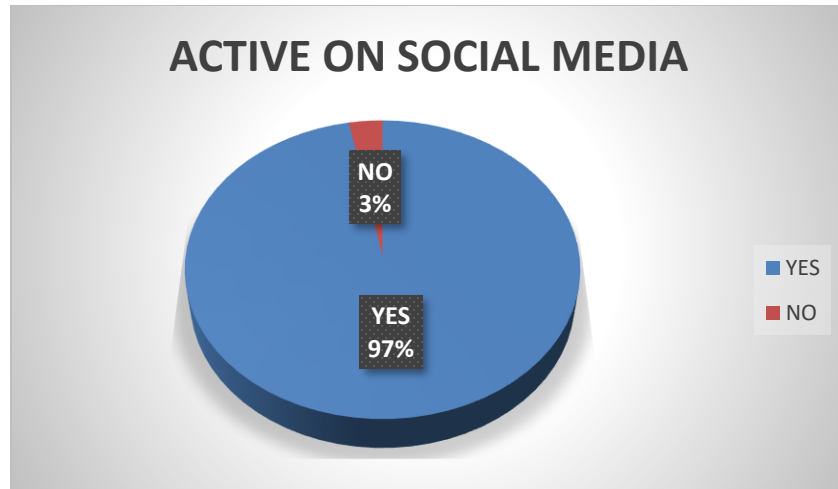
Influencers will be able to present content if they are able to create close relationships with their followers. This brings about the feeling of loyalty and genuine authenticity among their followers as it is an effective strategy to create relationships with a consumer base and to also drive high sales.

Staying active on social media helps users in keeping informed with things happening around them. This is why it was essential to use respondents who are active on social media. Fortunately, 97 respondents out of the 100 stated they were active while the other 3 stated otherwise.

The diagram illustrates the data.

ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

YES	NO	
97	3	
		TOTAL =100



RQ6: MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

There are a lot of social media platforms but the most popular social media platform includes YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Pinterest. This is evident as none of the respondents indicate another social media platform aside what was stated.

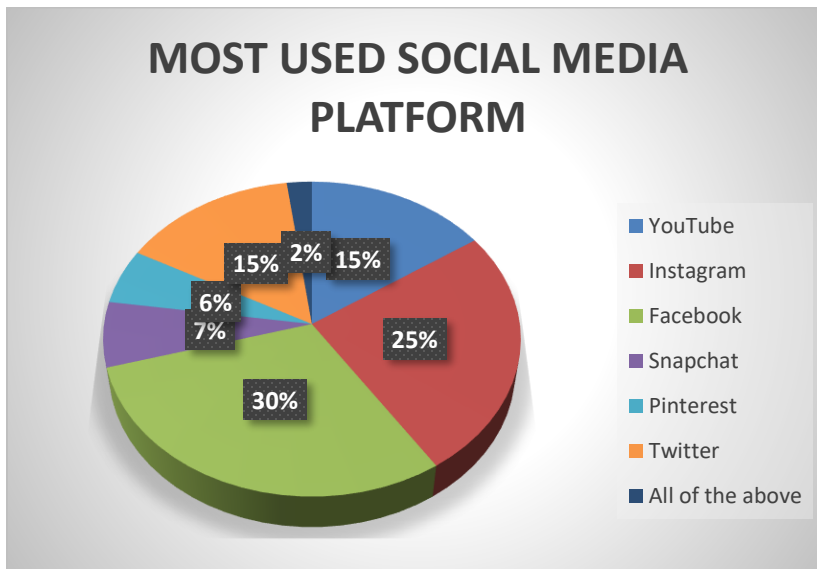
In today's social networking era, Facebook continues to dominate other social media networks as it boasts of an account of 85% of the internet users' worldwide (excluding China). This is evident based on the survey. The most used social media platform is Facebook leading with 85.9%. A report by GlobalWebIndex in 2015 indicates that Facebook and YouTube leads in the number of members as they are regularly used platform for networking, entertainment and messaging. This is no surprise as Facebook has over 1 billion users. Facebook offers users the opportunity to use the platform for business and for fun.

Instagram came second with 72.7% with YouTube coming third with 44.4%. Majority of Instagram users prefer a photo and video-sharing application of social news and some

entertainment news without having to engage in a conversation or discussion. 6 of the respondents indicated that they use all the social media platforms stated in the questionnaire indicating how active they are on social media as well.

Social Media has given people the platform to share their opinions, experiences and thoughts on products they use. Being active on social media means respondents are well informed when it comes to the most talked about product or brand, which influencer to follow when it comes to a particular brand. This data helps in knowing that people depend on social media in order to be informed, entertained and educated.

The diagram shows the representation of the percentage of the most used social media platform.

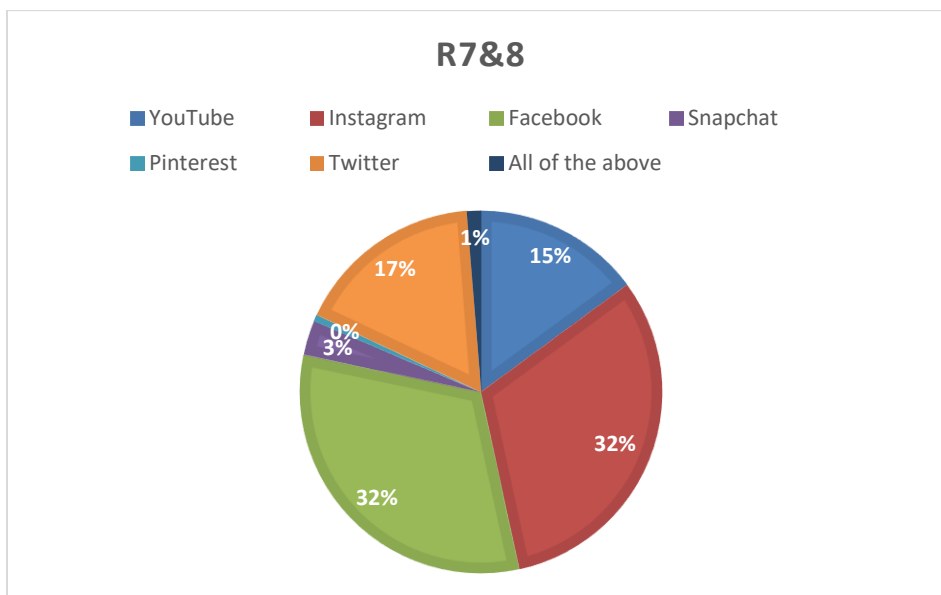


RQ7 and 8:

Research Question 7 sake to find out the number of people who following Social Media Influencers. 78% of the respondents indicated they do while 22% stated they don't. This shows how evolved Ghanaians are when it comes to technology and online purchasing.

Having to following a social media influencer knowing they have the capability to persuade their followers into purchasing a product or patronizing a service clearly shows people trust these influencers.

The survey also showed that Instagram and Facebook influencers are followed the most as compared to other social media platforms. It is therefore surprising that aside those two social media platforms, respondents prefer Twitter influencers as compared to YouTubers as YouTube gives users the opportunity to access products and get reviews on products that are posted in a form of video.



RQs 9,10 & 11 ONLINE PURCHASE

Research done by Twitter in 2018, determined 40 percent of Twitter users have made purchasing decisions as a direct result of an influencer’s tweet. According to the Digital Marketing Institute, almost half of consumers “depend on influencer recommendations”

to determine which products to purchase. 81% of consumers turn to blogs for advice. Many influencers are bloggers. 74% of consumers decide what to buy based on social media posts. Also, 60% of people actively look to blogs, vlogs, and social media posts for opinions on products before they consider purchasing a product. 61% of 18- to 34-year-old consumers “have at some point been swayed in their decision-making by digital influencers.”

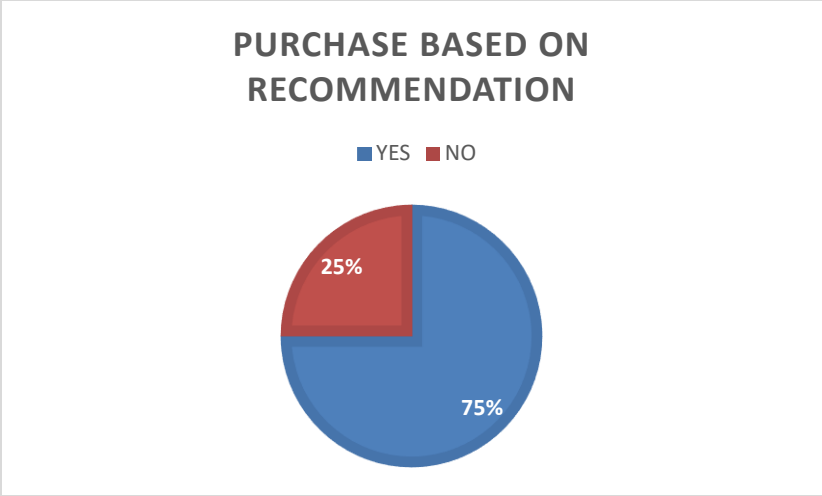
Potential customers are 71% more likely to “make a purchase based on social media referrals.” 60% of consumers would consider purchasing an influencer-promoted product if they see it in a store. 40% have actually purchased a product after seeing an influencer use it on social media.

Research Questions 9 and 10 sake to ascertain the number of these 100 respondents make purchase online and whether or not the purchase was made based on a recommendation by the influencer. 80.8% of the respondents stated they do make purchase online while 19.2% of the sample stated otherwise.

However, the percentage of people who make purchase based on a recommendation by an influencer decreased as 75% of the respondents stated that. 25% of the respondents indicated that they make their own purchase without the recommendation coming from an influencer.

Even though the number decreased by 3%, the results shows that people do follow these “celebrities” because they trust their WOD (Word-of-Mouth). This is obvious as in the earlier data, it showed that 78% of the respondents follow Social Media Influencers, 81% of them do make purchase online but 75% of the followers’ purchase item based on what is recommended by the Influencer.

However, the fact that Influencers are able to influence more than 50% of their followers to purchase a product or patronize a service clearly indicates that Social Media Influencers indeed influence the buying behaviour of their followers.



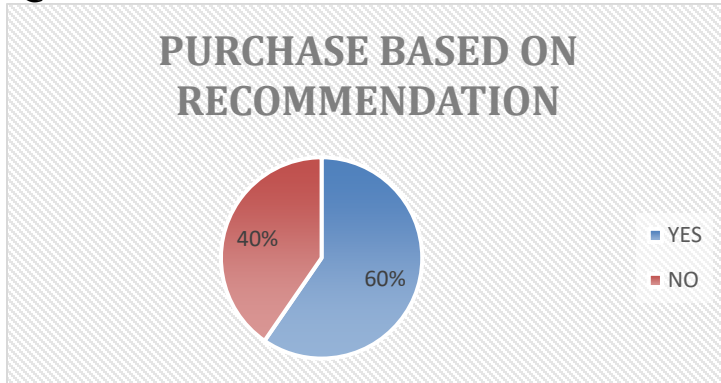
Out of the 75% of the followers who made the purchase based on recommendation, 54% of them admitted to the product living up to their expectation while 46% of them regretted making the purchase.

RQs 12 & 13

The Source Credibility Model looks at expertise and trustworthiness. Based on the data gathered, respondents admitted to trusting an influencer based on the recommendation that they make. The data collected for both Research questions 12 and 13 seeking to find out whether respondents will be willing to make another purchase based on what an Influencer recommended, 60% of the respondents stated affirmative while 40% stated they wouldn't. The same percentage that is 60% again stated that they do trust the recommendations of an influencer showing their reason to purchase what they

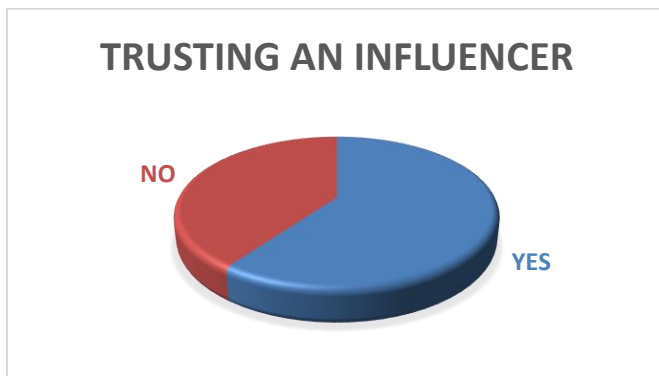
recommend again. 40% also stated they would not trust the recommendation of an influencer.

Q12. PURCHASE BASED ON RECOMMENDATION



Q13. TRUSTING AN INFLUENCER

YES	NO	TOTAL
60	40	100%



CONCLUSION

In a research conducted by Pew Research Centre in February, 2019 on who is more active on Social Media between men and women, they found out that 78% of the users are women and 65%, men indicating that women use social media more.

Also based on a data compiled by FinanceOnline.com it stated that the men use social media more but mostly for business reasons whereas females use it for personal reasons or share personal information.

Thanks to the internet, online shoppers are now able to purchase an item anytime, anywhere. In a recent study by Affilient report, it showed that internet buyers are predominantly men aged between 25-49years representing 84.3% as compared with 77% of women. It is no surprise that most of the respondents who participated in this study were male who also represented 55%. It is therefore safe to state the males took part in the survey because of their interest in the area of the study.

Showing anything that has to do with online shopping and/or influencer marketing, men are predominantly more than women are.

In a newly released report from internet giant, Rakutan surveyed 3,600 global consumers between December 2018 and January 2019. Rakutan found that 65% of men say they engage with an influencer at least once a day compared to 60% of women.

Rakutan also found out that 87% of consumers have been inspired to purchase an item based on an influencer's recommendation.

In relating it to my findings, it showed that 75% of consumers have made a purchase based on an influencer's recommendation, it goes to show that influencers do influence a consumer's buying behaviour. This is because, consumers trust in the expertise of the influencer and are willing to take their word for it as 60% of the respondents admitted to making another purchase that an influencer recommends even though their previous recommendation didn't live up to their expectations.

This proves that consumers are not waiting to be swayed by Traditional Celebrities in order to purchase an item. They are willing to take a risk on someone who is an expertise and what they are recommending, has used it and thus know exactly what they are talking about. It proves that expertise and trustiness are the main elements when it comes to Influencer Marketing.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study that was conducted.

Included in this summary are a review of the purpose of the study, a restatement of the research questions, the research methodology used, and a summary of the study results, conclusions and discussions. Recommendations for further research and possible studies conclude this chapter.

The purpose of this research was to determine how Social Media Influencers influence consumer-buying behavior.

The researcher used quantitative method, related literature, articles, journals, and collection of data using a survey. Google Form was used in creating the questionnaire of which the link was posted on the researcher's Facebook wall in order to attract the right respondents (i.e. respondents with social media platforms).

The research sought to find out answers to the following questions;

-Does the credibility of a celebrity and influencer have an impact on consumer buying behavior?

- What Marketing Strategy are companies likely to use based on Trust, Expertise and Credibility?

- What is the impact of Social Media Influencer Marketing or Celebrity Endorsement?.

5.1 DISCUSSION

There was a time when people had to go to shops in order to purchase an item from grocery to clothe to skincare products. There was no way a consumer could solicit ideas, opinions or even read recommendations on a product they intended to buy.

But thanks to the internet, online shopping, purchasing and influencer marketing has come to stay. The thought of having to depend on someone you don't know, haven't met personally or even encountered, a complete stranger recommendations in order to purchase an item online seemed far-fetched. Therefore, companies preferred to use celebrities because consumers knew them, seen them, admired them and that made them comfortable enough to trust their word.

Celebrities are associated with certain brands; there is Nana Ama McBrown (HiSense), Victoria Michael (Melcolm), Michael Jordan (Nike), Kanye West (Adidas/Yeezy) etc. These are celebrities companies like to spend huge sums of money on, because it is guaranteed a huge return.

Consumers can now, besides interacting with friends and family (Szmigin & Piacentini, 2015), share experiences, opinions and information about several companies, brands and products with other users on social media (Song & Yoo, 2016). Now thanks to the

internet and social media, consumers now hold the power. Consumers are now able to put out their thoughts, opinions about a certain product or brand. Companies are unable to withhold such power from consumers as the narrative has changed and this has brought about Influencer Marketing.

Having to trust someone whose recommendations about something that may or may not be helpful to you can be very risky. However, consumers have come to trust influencers and follow them as well.

Suddenly, the thought of getting recommendations, opinions, ideas from an online person who boast of hundreds of thousands or even million followers and whom a consumer can relate to doesn't seem like a worse of ideas and because of that companies are buying into it.

Based on the research (December 2018-January 2019) done by internet giant, Rakutan, companies are likely to spend about \$10billion on influencers by 2020. Influencer marketing has become more about being able to relate to the influencer, their expertise in the brand they are promoting and how much they can be trusted. An influencer is most likely to lose their followers if their followers' feel they cannot be trusted which can cause them to lose their deals with the said companies. No company, celebrity or an influencer even would like to be associated with any scandal. At the start of 2018, there was a scandal regarding an ad of the game "would you rather" where they asked people what they rather do, slap Rihanna or punch Chris Brown. This made Rihanna angry since she accused Chris Brown of domestic violence a few years prior. She went and left a

message on Instagram stories targeted directly to Snapchat. This made Snapchat lose \$800M in the process, which stripped them of the billion-dollar company mark and had millions of users leave after the incident.

Some influencers have been able to turn their fortune around and headed straight to Hollywood. YouTube star, Lilly Singh with her 14million YouTube subscribers turned her lemons into lemonades when her book **“How to Be a Bawse: A Guide to Conquering Life”** became New York’s best-selling author. She also attracted top talents such as Priyanka Chopra Jonas, Selena Gomez and Dwayne Johnson who all appeared on her channel. She also kicked it off with a new phase in her career by launching her own talk show, **“A Little Late With Lilly Singh”** on NBC last September.

Another YouTuber with 15million followers became the first male spokesmodel for beauty magazine, Cover Girl. In 2018, he collaborated with Morphe Cosmetics to release his own eyeshadow palette.

Some influencers also turned their followers into a big business venture. Felix Kjellberg known as PewDiePie, a Swedish SMI is the most followed YouTuber of all time with 80.6million subscribers according to Forbes. He is able to reach over 120million followers with all four of his social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter). He leveraged on his online fame and released everything from his own custom video game Poopdie to a special Razer gaming headset. Now he’s teamed up with girlfriend for a limited edition range of unisex apparel.

In Ghana, Social Media Influencer, Ameyaw Debrah has become a household name when it comes to everything and anything entertainment. He is most likely one of the very few Ghanaian Journalist who gets the opportunity to cover international events like the BET and get to cover exclusive events or occasions.

When searching for Social Media Influencers, companies or public relation agencies take into account the followers of the Influencer, their credibility and trustworthiness as companies and brands as stated earlier on wouldn't like to be associated with scandals.

Beauty blogger James Charles reportedly went from 16.5 million subscribers on his Youtube channel to 13.5 million in just four days amid a feud with fellow beauty blogger Tati Westbrook.

Celebrities such as Kylie Jenner, Kim Kardashian, Ariana Grande, Miley Cyrus, Shawn Mendes, Iggy Azalea and Katy Perry are among the celebrities who have unfollowed Charles due to allegations of shady business deals and unsavory sexual comments about other men

5.2

RECOMMENDATIONS

The world is now a global village thanks to technology and the internet. A person's proximity does not come into play when he or she wants to engage in an online purchasing.

Based on the research study, these are the following recommendations that when taken into consideration will help brands grow and attract large following

- Brands must bear in mind that popularity does not mean influence. There are celebrities whether traditional celebrities or influencers with small or large followings make them influential. Brands must monitor influencers who get results for something they believe in or market. An influencer can have a large following and yet may not be able to influence their followers to purchase what they market. Influencers should be able to match their voice with the vision and mission of the brand they are promoting. Celebrity endorsement will influence the consumer behavior and attitude (Belch & Belch, 2001) and advertisers believe that a celebrity can influence the consumer's vision of the company's image.
- Having a trustworthy influencer is very essential. Based on the research study, 41 respondents out of the 100 stated that they would not trust an influencer if what they recommended does not meet their expectations. In as much as the credibility of an influencer is an important factor, brands must also be careful the kind of product they build as it can go a long way to affect their brand. The credibility of brands, influencers promote. Influencers must also be taken into consideration when a brand is choosing an influencer and vice versa.
- Choosing the most effective and most used social network to market product is very important. The data revealed that not a lot of people follow influencers on Pinterest and Snapchat as they had the lowest number in this research study as

they had 16% and 19% respectively. This is because Pinterest is not like other social media networks; it serves more as a platform for people to receive “inspiration” on arts, fashion, photography etc. According to Business Insider, Shona Ghosh, many factors contributed to the decline in popularity of Snapchat. Its redesigning, making it difficult for people to understand and use the app, Facebook “copying” a lot of Snapchat’s features for Instagram, Celebrities such as Kylie Jenner and Rihanna calling Snapchat out and among others. People use social media and the number will continue to increase. However, using an influencer who has a large following and is influential on a social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter is guaranteed to get the job done.

- It is understandable when companies prefer to engage the services of influencers with large following. However, taking a risk and engaging influencers with small influencers (1000-5000k) can also produce good results as micro influencers are viewed as more relatable and tend to be passionate about the products or brands they associate themselves with.

5.3

CONCLUSION

Influencer marketing has given Celebrity Endorsement a completely different meaning. Brands are willing to pump huge sums of money into this type of marketing strategy in order to promote their brand.

Influencers have a way of promoting a brand's message to the targeted audience in the most effective and authentic way as influencers are seen as more genuine. It is being accepted to be a "ubiquitous feature of modern day marketing" (McCracken, 1989).

Advertisements are always a means to attract the attention of a consumer. In order to attract the attention of consumers especially on social media, Influencer Marketing is the most effective marketing tool.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Geraldine Amaning, a student pursuing Masters in Media Management at the Ghana Institute of Journalism. I am conducting a research on, **'The Role Of Celebrity Endorsement On Consumer Buying Behaviour: The Case Of Social Media Influencers**

This research is purely for academic purposes and thus answers provided will be treated as confidential. I will therefore appreciate if you could spare me a few minutes of your time and answer the following questions for me.

1. How Old Are You?

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-45
- 45 and above

2. Gender

- Male
- Female

3. Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- Employed Full-Time
- Employed Part-Time
- Unemployed
- Self-Employed
- Student
- Other (Please specify)

4. Do you have a social media page? **(If NO, please skip to question 9)**

- Yes
- No

5. Are you active on social media?

- Yes
- No

6. Which of the following social media platforms are you active on? (Tick all that apply)

- YouTube
- Instagram
- Facebook

- Snapchat
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- All of the above
- Other (Please state)

7. Do you follow any social media influencer? **(If NO, kindly skip to question 9)**

- Yes
- No

8. Which of the following Social Media sites do you follow them on?

- YouTube (YouTubers)
- Instagram
- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- All of The Above
- Other **(Please state)**

9. Have you ever made a purchase online?

- Yes
- No

10. Did you make the purchase based on an influencer's recommendation?

- Yes
- No

11. If you did, did it live up to your expectations?

- Yes
- No
- It was okay

12. Will you make a purchase online based on an influencer's recommendation?

- Yes
- No

13. If you bought something that an influencer recommended and you disliked it would you trust their opinions again

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

14. Which category of celebrities do you find credible and trustworthy enough to purchase what they recommend?

- Social Media Influencers
- Traditional Celebrities
- Both
- None