

**UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING**



**THE IMPACT OF INFLUENCERS' VISUAL CONTENT IN
SOCIAL MEDIA ON CONSUMERS' PURCHASE
INTENTIONS.**

THE CASE OF SMEs RESTAURANTS IN SAUDI ARABIA

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

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Abstract

The impact of information on consumers' purchase intentions has been known for quite some time. Ever since the idea of consulting family members and friends regarding their purchase, and with the evolution of the Tv and the Internet, consumers have reached a new level of access to products' related content. So they can be informed and evaluate purchases and share their experiences not only with people close to them but also with an endless number of current and potential consumers. Moreover, such a way of content sharing between people had primarily been formed in the verbal and textual form, more precisely verbally in face-to-face interaction and textually through the Internet, all to serve the purpose of informing other consumers about brands. Researchers have long acknowledged and investigated such a way of content exchanging under the well-known topics of word of mouth (WOM) and electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and their influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

With the constant evolution of the Internet, a new communication channel has emerged known as social media platforms. A way of connecting with people worldwide so that they can reach each other all the time, regardless of any barriers. An area of interest that academics have found fascinating in investigating eWOM and its impact on consumers' choices. Such an exchange of words over social media applications can reshape consumers' intentions regarding their potential purchases. However, as we live in a world where technology evolution never stops, these social media applications have reached different and more exciting features, as users not only can interact verbally but now have the ability to interact visually via different online platforms. So the entire idea of eWOM has changed to a more advanced level, known as visual eWOM. Moreover, users of such applications can share brand-related content visually in the form of pictures and videos. A feature that makes platforms developers race against time to develop the best way to introduce new applications that make the best use of such a modern technological feature.

So nowadays, we can see an endless number of social media applications that enable people to communicate visually. Nevertheless, there are few applications which have been tremendously popular. Instagram and Snapchat are two relatively recent platforms that can be mainly viewed to serve the visual exchange of content. Their popularity has reached almost most social media users worldwide. From such a perspective, the idea of exploring and investigating such visual content and how it influences consumers have become highly crucial. Not only due to how such content impacts consumers but also to how this content on social media applications can be spread among millions of people, as well as how brands can take advantage of such an excellent way of communication with current and potential consumers. An area of interest that this thesis aims to investigate. To do so, this research is built into two main phases; the first phase aims to explore the usage of social media among Saudi consumers and gather as much information as possible on their usage behaviour and the impact of social media influencers on their purchase behaviour. Through a survey of 512 Saudi consumers. The results show that Saudi consumers use social media at a very high rate, more precisely Instagram and Snapchat, and they follow and view social media influencers' content at a tremendously high percentage. However, when it comes to the impact of such content on consumers, the results indicate a low influence on consumers' purchase intentions regarding their restaurants' choices. The second phase of this thesis is to analyse content on social media applications. In detail, it examines the content, the source of the content (social media influencers), and consumers' behaviour toward the content. In order to reach such, a theoretical model was developed based on the integration of the Information Acceptance Model (IACM). The results highlighted that visual content quality, source credibility, source experience, content quantity, adoption of content, attitude toward content and subjective norms are the primary factors for visual eWOM in social media (Instagram and Snapchat) that influence consumers' purchase intentions. This thesis contributes to theoretical implications through its validated model and introduced vital findings.

Moreover, the research model highlights a new approach to information adoption by expanding the IACM and introducing new insights to researchers. Future studies can consider the research model to investigate the visual content in social media and its influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

Moreover, this study's results can help researchers consider other factors in studying the impact of such technology, such as employing the results to examine other social media applications that serve the visual feature, such as TikTok. Also, since this research was only conducted through a quantitative method, employing qualitative or mixed methods can be beneficial in providing a complete picture of visual eWOM influence. A further benefit of this study is how it considers the cultural character of Saudi consumers. Yet, other studies might find it worth considering other cultural factors or employing such findings in different countries. The same goes with considering different categories besides SMEs restaurants.

Keywords: Visual electronic word of mouth, social media, purchase intention, influencers, Instagram, Snapchat.

Dedication

To my wife Bayan and my family for their enduring love, support and motivation during my journey to conduct this thesis.

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I am thankful to Allah (God) for providing me with the courage, patience and strength to finish my PhD thesis.

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Last but not least, my appreciations go to the country of Saudi Arabia for funding my PhD studies.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is exclusively based on my own work and has never been submitted for a degree at this or any other university.

I also declare that all information in this research has been acquired and presented following academic rules and ethical conduct.

Singed: Mohammed Alomair

Date: 28/04/2022

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1. Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Overview of the study

In a world of continuous technology developments (Vodanovich et al., 2010), social media can be recognised, without a doubt, as one of the most effective forms of modern technology. Such a phenomenon has an impact on almost every aspect of our daily lives (Harris, Rae and Misner, 2012; Kiron et al., 2012). Social media can be defined as Web 2.0 technology which allows an infinite number of users to communicate and interact in different ways (Orlikowski and Scott, 2014). This modern technology is found on various platforms, each with its own unique features and usage, such as social networking sites which include Facebook and LinkedIn, microblogs (Twitter), video sharing applications (YouTube, Vimeo), and relatively modern platforms like Instagram and Snapchat which are predominantly for media sharing.

This technology has infiltrated and influenced many aspects of people's lives. Social media has influenced individuals as well as firms. Many people consider social media an essential aspect of their daily activities and are now spending more time on virtual applications (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter, and others). Researchers such as Alalwan et al. (2016), Dwivedi et al. (2015), Rathore et al. (2016), Taylor et al. (2011), and Zhu and Chen (2015) emphasise the high usage of social media between people as an indication of their positive behaviour and orientations to all kinds of social media platforms. Therefore, social media applications have been acknowledged as an influential tool that has an extended impact on nearly every phase of our lives (i.e., social life, commercial life, business life, educational sector, political life) (Alalwan et al., 2017; Abed et al., 2015; Hawkins and Vel, 2013; Hinz et al., 2011; Rathore et al., 2016; Usher et al., 2014; Zeng and Gerritsen, 2014; Zhu and Chen, 2015).

Individuals appreciate social media on a personal level, while companies recognise the benefit of this modern communication method. Companies have been notably relying on social media as an essential method to meet their marketing objectives and strategies (Filo et al., 2015; Saxena and Khanna, 2013).

This area of study has received a rightful amount of interest, as prior research has confirmed the benefits of social media usage for firms, especially SMEs.

Moreover, the usage of modern technology like this can play a significant role in making the communication between companies and consumers easier (Aral, et al., 2013; Aswani et al., 2018; Sawhney and Prandelli, 2000). For example, with social media enhanced tools, companies can communicate with current and potential customers in visual, verbal, and textual forms, or a combination of all three (Okazaki and Taylor, 2013). Consequently, firms have evolved different mechanisms and methods to improve their marketing activities and brand identity via social media platforms (Leeflang et al., 2014; Filo et al., 2015; Schultz and Peltier, 2013).

Although the concept of social media and its related issues for both individuals and companies have been considered by researchers for quite some time (Aral et al., 2013), this modern technology is evolving (Treem and Leonardi, 2013; Raeth et al., 2009) and it has been growing with consistent and rapid improvements (Kane et al., 2014). Researchers, therefore, acknowledge social media as a 'moving target' (Aral et al., 2013; Hogan and Quan-Haase, 2010). Attention toward social media has been primarily aimed at determining the most useful method of using and implementing such technology (Billings, 2014; Hardin, 2014; Hutchins, 2014; Sanderson, 2014). Moreover, work has been done to gain a deeper understanding of the best methods and resources to employ this technology in the most effective ways (Hutchins, 2014). Therefore, Hutchins (2014) stresses the need for further investigations of social media within various contexts. Pedersen (2014), Knoll (2016), Pegoraro (2014), and Rowe (2014) all state that the innovative nature of social media requires further consideration of all issues related to its usage, as this is still in the early stages, which indicates that further investigation of this phenomenon is needed.

1.2 Research Problem

As mentioned, social media influence has reached both individuals and corporations. In the commerce sector, in line with Kaplan and Haenlein's (2010) view that social media must enable 'user-generated content', consumers have been exposed to a vast amount of brand-related information in the mass media; however, this online content that was supposed to help and inform consumers making purchasing decisions was in fact, making it more and more difficult. This issue encouraged consumers to interact with each other and exchange views and experiences – a concept known as word of mouth (WOM) communication (Arndt, 1967). 'Word of mouth' is a term which has been acknowledged as worthy of further research since it is useful for aiding consumers' product choices (Bone, 1995; Engel et al., 1969; Feldman and Lynch, 1988) and purchase intentions (Brown and Reingen, 1987; Herr et al., 1991), and has more influence on consumers than traditional forms of advertisement (Engel et al., 1969; Trusov et al., 2009).

Consumers today are able to use social media features to share their product/service-related information and experiences. Consequently, a new sort of WOM has evolved, known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM), which has been identified as relatively more influential than traditional word of mouth communication, because it has a wide range of features and can reach thousands or even millions of consumers via social media platforms (Hudson et al., 2015). This method of consumer communication has encouraged a number of researchers to examine eWOM and its related issues (i.e., Chatterjee, 2011; Chu and Kim, 2011; Coulter and Roggeveen, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2013; Hudson et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2014; Munar and Jacobsen, 2013; Priyanka, 2013; Teng et al., 2017; Tham et al., 2013; Viglia et al., 2016).

Furthermore, eWOM has been identified as a valuable marketing tool (Bickart and Schindler, 2001; Kumar and Benbasat, 2006; Zhang et al., 2010). The Internet has evolved to provide various applications appropriate for eWOM, including blogs, discussion forums, consumer review websites, shopping websites and lately social media sites (Cheung and Thadani, 2012).

The influence of this technology and all its associated platforms have been an area of consideration for academics, including topics such as the impact of eWOM on blogs (Chu and Kamal, 2008; Lin et al., 2012), consumer review websites (Cheung et al., 2008; Gauri et al., 2008), discussion forums (Chiou and Cheng, 2003; Huang and Chen, 2006), shopping websites (Li and Zhan, 2011; Park et al., 2007), and the influence on consumers' purchase intentions (Lee and Youn, 2009). Nevertheless, with the tremendous evolution of social media applications and the continuous introduction of new features and updates, less concentration has been given to the visual character of eWOM on social media (Rofianto et al., 2017).

As in offline media, WOM can be delivered through speech or text form on printed media; ewom can be textual, auditory or visual forms, including picture or video. Presently, due to the vast prevalence of eWOM communication, it has become more accessible for consumers to search for product/service-related information (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), as it is found in a range of forms and applications, including the visual, known as visual eWOM (King et al., 2014).

The channel of online communication (social media) and the type of social media content (visual eWOM) are tremendously crucial; the creators (source) of this social media content are therefore significant. From the early form of eWOM, which focused on the content creator in the form of bloggers, a new kind of content creator known as the social media influencer has emerged. The concept of influencer marketing is not viewed as a contemporary issue, as the concept has been around for quite some time, with TV and radio celebrities promoting products and services on TV, in printed ads and on the radio. However, with the introduction of social media applications, this relatively old method became viral and well-known worldwide. Despite the continuous evolution of social media applications, the term 'influencer' and its definition have not received academic attention until recent years.

Therefore, in the effort to define influencers, De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017, p. 801) view social media influencers as 'content creators who accumulated a solid base of followers. Through blogging, vlogging or creating short-form content (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat), they provide their followers an insight into their personal, everyday lives, their experiences and opinions.'

1.3 Motivations and Research Gap

As addressed above, consumers in this technological era are exposed to a vast amount of social media content, which points toward the impact of such content on consumers' behaviour. From this perspective, the visual forms of eWOM appear to be an interesting area of study. According to King et al. (2014), the visual character of eWOM information is an emerging field of study that has not received attention from researchers. In contrast, Ratchford (2015) declared that there is a lot of potential for studying how consumers interact on social media applications, and this field deserves further investigation. However, the literature on social media and, more precisely, eWOM has been primarily focused on the textual character of eWOM information. Meanwhile, despite the increasing use of visual forms of eWOM, these have received limited research attention (King et al., 2014) and are therefore worthy of investigation.

In order to better understand consumers' behaviour on social media, a respectable number of studies in this area have explored the impact of online content on different consumer-related elements, including customer attitude, purchase behaviour, and perception (i.e., Hamilton et al., 2016; Girona and Korgaonkar, 2014; Zhu et al., 2016; Erkan and Evans, 2014). Drews and Schemer (2010) and Powers et al. (2012) have examined social media as an information source and looked at how consumers apply this content during their purchase decisions. Consumers and social media as a topic have received a respectable amount of consideration from researchers (Alarcón-del-Amo et al., 2016; Poba-Nzaou et al., 2016; Putzke et al., 2014; Siamagka et al., 2015; Lacka and Chong, 2016; Shokery et al., 2016).

However, social media marketing and all its associated issues still require further investigation, as Jung et al. (2016) and Harrigan et al. (2017) report that most studies in a social media context are built on data collected from developed countries. Consequently, it is worth considering other regions (i.e., developed, emerging, developing) and cultures, as well as different categories (i.e., tourism, legal).

It is important to explore the visual character of eWOM communication on social media as well as the impact this content has on consumers' behaviour. Nowadays, there are different kinds of social media applications that serve the purpose of exchanging content between online users in visual forms, such as Instagram and Snapchat. These two relatively new applications can be considered as two of the most popular and widely-used applications worldwide. Therefore, by virtue of being somewhat modern and popular, these applications have received a fair amount of interest in their relationship with consumers. Nevertheless, recent work by Caplan (2020) confirms that the study of the impact of Instagram on consumers is yet in its early stages and requires further attention to provide a complete picture of the application and its influence on consumers. Research on Snapchat, on the other hand, has confirmed that it plays a crucial role in influencing consumers' behaviour (Alqadi et al., 2020).

However, more detailed research into these applications and their impact on consumers seems needed. As Alalwan et al. (2017) have confirmed, knowledge is still limited on the influence the specific type of social media applications (i.e. Facebook, YouTube, Instagram) have on the promotion of objectives and customer communication. This study attempts to investigate this area; due to the vast amount of information that consumers are exposed to, it is unreasonable to imagine that all information discussed via social media is influential. In particular, visual forms of eWOM information on Instagram and Snapchat and their influence on consumers' purchase intentions have not yet been examined, even though there have been some previous efforts to establish the effect of the textual form of eWOM on consumers' purchase intentions (See-To and Ho, 2014; Wang et al., 2012; Erkan and Evans, 2015). Townsend and Kahn (2014), for example, acknowledge that consumers understand that a visual display format is more accessible, faster, and more fun than other forms of communication.

For this research, the technology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) was integrated with related components of the information adoption model (IAM) (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), the theory of reasoned action (TRA), and the information acceptance model (IACM) (Erkan and Evans, 2015).

On this basis, the following aim, objectives and research questions are presented for this study.

1.4 Aim, Objectives and Research Questions

This thesis aims to explore the impact of social media on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions.

Following the research aim, the objectives and research questions of this study are outlined as follows:

- **Objective 1:** To provide a greater understanding of Saudi consumers and their social media usage.
 - **Objective 2:** To explore the concept of social media influencers and Saudi consumers.
 - **Objective 3:** To determine the influence of cultural factors on Saudi consumers.
 - **Objective 4:** To develop a theoretical model that helps gather more understanding regarding social media content and consumer purchase intentions.
 - **Objective 5:** To draw theoretical contributions for academics regarding the impact of influencers' visual eWOM in social media on consumers' purchase intentions.
-
- **RQ1** What is the level of impact social media influencers have on consumers' purchase intentions regarding restaurants?
 - **RQ2:** To determine the impact of visual content characteristics, influencer characteristics, and consumer attitudes on consumers' purchase intentions.

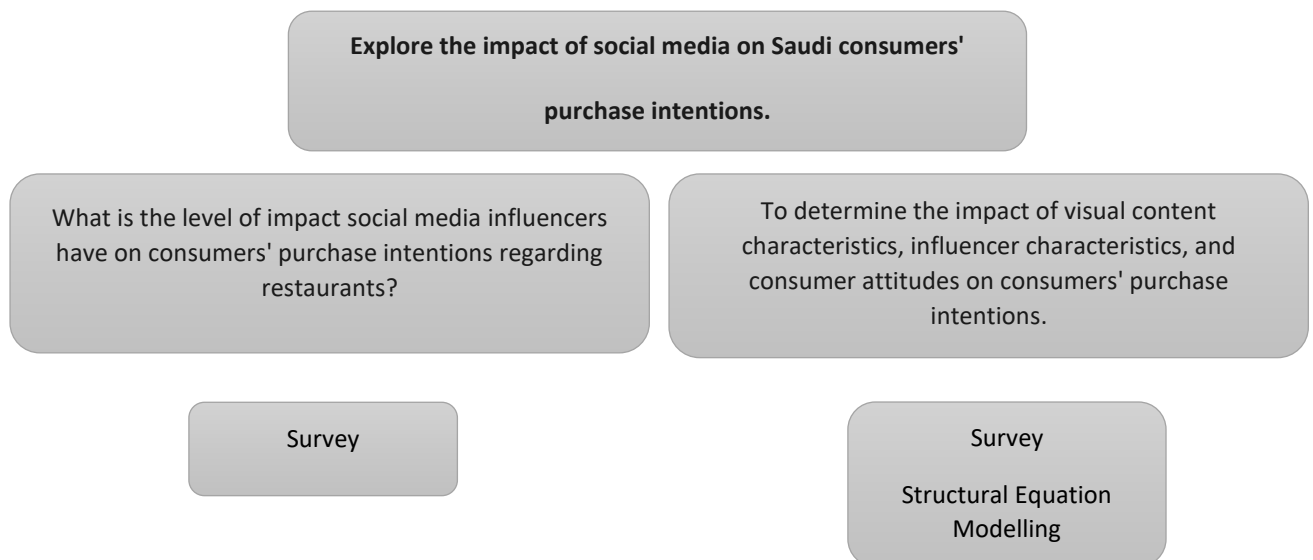
1.5 Research Methodology

In order to achieve the research aim, objectives and research questions, this study is built on two primary foundations. The data was collected via quantitative methods to explore the impact of influencers' visual social media content on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions (the first question of this research). The survey method was employed because it aids the collection of numerical data; as such, this method is considered a cost-effective, fast and easy way of gathering data from a large number of people (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Collis and Hussey, 2003).

In the second phase of this study, a theoretical model was developed based on nine measurable hypotheses and previous literature in order to determine the impact of visual content characteristics, influencer characteristics, and consumer attitudes on consumers' purchase intentions (the second research question). The collected data were analysed through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in AMOS 20 software to test the validity of the hypotheses and the theoretical model (Hair et al., 2010).

Figure 1.1 illustrates the methods and analysis that were employed in this research.

Figure 1.1: Research Methodology Direction



1.6 Research Contribution

This study provides significant contributions to knowledge by investigating the impact of social media visual content on consumers' purchase intentions. The primary contribution in the first phase is to deepen knowledge about Saudi consumers' social media usage, restaurant behaviour, social media influencers and, most significantly, the level of impact visual content created by social media influencers has on consumers' restaurant purchase intentions.

The main contribution in the second phase is to develop a comprehensive theoretical model which explores the impact of visual eWOM characteristics, source characteristics, and consumer attitudes towards visual content. The model was employed using the related components of IAM (Sussman and Siegal, 2003), TRA, and IACM (Erkan and Evans, 2015). The IAM explains the characteristics of visual eWOM information in social media, while the TRA highlights the behavioural response to visual eWOM, and the IACM offers a more comprehensive approach as it considers the behavioural aspect and the characteristics of the visual information in one model.

Ultimately, both phases of this research play a significant role in contributing to the current literature. There is currently limited research into social media use in developing countries, particularly for Instagram and Snapchat. The extant literature on visual eWOM shows a gap in the research on the modern features of many social media applications, and this study aims to fill that gap.

This study also hopes to contribute to the research on the restaurants sector in Saudi Arabia, particularly on those restaurants that can be considered SMEs; this is a sector that is showing tremendous marketing growth as they have begun to employ a range of social media marketing techniques. Finally, this research hopes to contribute to knowledge on social media influencers. This new and increasingly popular element of social media seems to have a significant influence on consumers' purchasing habits and is therefore worthy of further study.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This chapter introduces a brief background of the topic, along with the research problem and motivations, gaps in the research, aims and objectives, research methodology and research contributions. The following chapters are as follows:

Chapter 2: A general discussion of the existing literature on Web 2.0 and social media. More precisely, this chapter highlights the central topic of this study, social media, by presenting definitions, terminology, and types of applications and by highlighting the gaps in the research.

Chapter 3: After the general discussion of social media in Chapter 2, this chapter goes into greater detail by highlighting two main aspects of social media: the content and the content creators (influencers). The first part of this chapter provides general information on social media content by discussing different types of content, as well as their influence on consumers' behaviour. Part two presents the concept of social media influencers by highlighting the definition of this concept, the benefits and their impact on consumers' intentions.

Chapter 4: This chapter introduces the theoretical background and hypotheses development of the research. The chapter is in two parts, firstly discussing the development of the research model. This part introduces different theories and models related to social media and the theories used in this study. Secondly, the focus shifts to the attributes used in social media studies. Finally, the research model and hypothesis of this research are presented.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the wider research context of Saudi Arabia by providing an overview of various elements such as the economy, culture, SMEs restaurant, and social media usage.

Chapter 6: This chapter outlines the design of this research by discussing the research methodology employed here. Moreover, a range of research philosophies, approaches, strategies, and methods for data collection are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 7: Introduces the analysis, results, and findings of this research, starting with an overall analysis of the demographic characters of the sample respondents and descriptive statistics. This is followed by SEM analysis, hypothesis tests, and regression analysis. Finally, the findings of the research are introduced.

Chapter 8: This chapter presents a discussion of this research in both phases. The results of the survey questionnaires, theoretical model, and hypothesis are tested in the context of previous literature.

Chapter 9: This chapter concludes the study and demonstrates how the research aim and objectives have been achieved, as well as outlining the research questions. Limitations and future research directions are also presented.

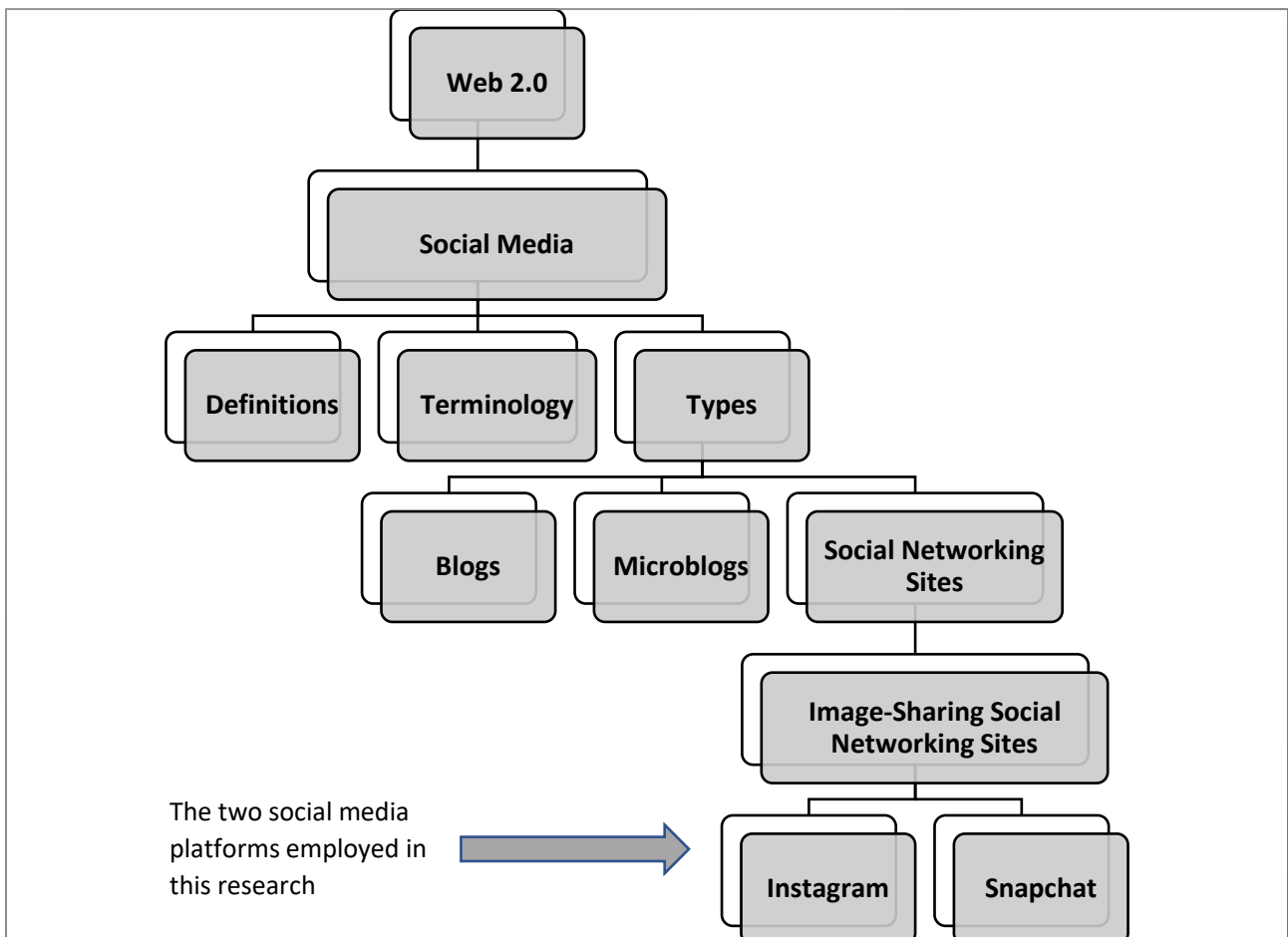
CHAPTER TWO
SOCIAL MEDIA CONCEPTS, ISSUES, AND IMPLICATIONS

2. Chapter Two: Social Media Concepts, Issues, and Implications

2.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to investigate the impact of social media on consumers' purchase behaviours. This chapter starts by providing an overall understanding of social media as it begins with an introduction of Web 2.0 and its associated implications as a path by which to address social media and then attempts to define social media. Existing research is reviewed; the topic of social media can be seen as relatively new, and it has many facets, which can be hard to distinguish and define. Therefore, it becomes vital to understand social media in general, including definitions, terminology and types. Finally, this provides a detailed analysis of each kind of social media platform, as well as in-depth information about the two applications that are the focus of this study, Instagram and Snapchat. Figure 2.1 provides an overall map of this chapter.

Figure 2.1: Flow of the chapter



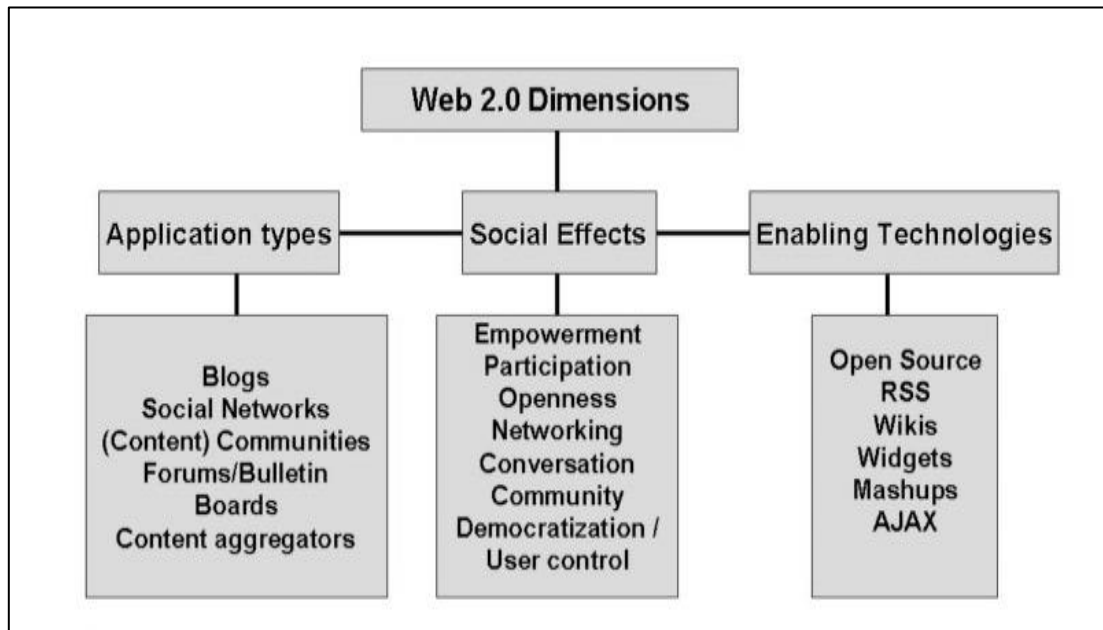
2.2 Web 2.0

To understand social media and its related applications, it is only logical to understand the foundation that led to social media innovation. Web 2.0 technology can be considered a cornerstone that led to the phenomenon known as social media. In 1999, DiNucci invented the phrase Web 2.0 and used it to change the perception of the Web from 'screenfuls of text and graphics' to a 'transport mechanism [...] through which interactivity happens' (DiNucci, 1999, p. 32). DiNucci was the leading scientist who envisioned the Internet as it is now. He created the term the 'Internet of Things': the web beyond the boundaries of the personal computer. O'Reilly and Dougherty (2007) disseminated the term to introduce the newly transformed appearance of the web, while Musser and O'Reilly (2006, p. 4) define Web 2.0 as 'a set of economic, social, and technology trends that collectively form the basis for the next generation of the Internet — a more mature, distinctive medium characterised by user participation, openness, and network effects'.

Intending to adapt and attach Web 2.0's technology to social factors, Constantinides and Fountain (2008, p. 232) define it as 'a collection of open-source, interactive and user-controlled online applications expanding the experiences, knowledge and market power of the users as participants in business and social processes. Web 2.0 applications support the creation of informal users' networks facilitating the flow of ideas and knowledge by allowing the efficient generation, dissemination, sharing and editing/refining of content.' Nonetheless, they clearly state that they apply 'Web 2.0' and 'social media' as interchangeable, adding blogs, social networks, content communities, content aggregators and forums/bulletin boards as 'categories of Web 2.0' (Figure 2.2) (Constantinides and Fountain 2008).

The term 'Web 2.0' is developing as well as controversial; consequently, there is no widespread agreement on what the term truly means (Madden and Fox, 2006; Constantinides and Fountain, 2008). Nonetheless, this study applies Constantinides and Fountain's (2008) view, identifying social media as a subset of Web 2.0 applications.

Figure 2.2: Web 2.0 Dimensions



Source: Constantinides and Fountain (2008).

2.2.1 Implications of Web 2.0

As stated, there is no universal agreement on the Web 2.0 definition, and the same goes for the influence of Web 2.0. Yet, the implication of the web can be perceived as, it empowers people to have a say (Gillmor 2004; Glaser 2006), helps to build online communities (Xin, 2009), forms virtual consumer societies (De Valck et al., 2009), and finally changes the idea of word of mouth into an online word of mouth (Ho and Chang, 2010).

Another implication of Web 2.0 is online communities, as technology enables people worldwide to be connected, allowing people to make connections on a new virtual dimension (Xin, 2009). Even though the online community existed before Web 2.0, it was only in text-based forms such as chat rooms (Kozinets, 1999).

Virtual communities are known as 'social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace' (Rheingold, 1993, p. 5).

Kozinets (1999) describes the role of virtual communities of consumption, saying that 'affiliative groups whose online interactions are based upon a shared enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, a specific consumption activity or related group of activities' (p. 254). Consequently, it should be noted that it was not Web 2.0 that created the structure of communities, but it was Web 2.0 and its user-friendly applications that made online communities global.

Similarly, Jepsen (2006) highlights that virtual communities help to improve people's access to non-commercial information. Nowadays, Web 2.0 produces a great deal of content that is available on many devices and platforms. These are easy to use so that people can generate and share information (Buhalis and O'Connor, 2005; Gretzel et al., 2006; Constantinides and Fountain, 2008; Rodriguez-Ardura et al., 2010). As Urban (2003, p. 2) states, customers 'have now the tools that inform them of the true state of affairs'. Constantinides and Fountain (2008, p. 239) see Web 2.0 as a new element in the marketplace that 'further complicates the time-honoured textbook buying behaviour process described in the Inputs-Processing-Response model'.

2.3 Towards Defining Social Media

The evolution of a subset of Web 2.0 applications commonly known as 'social media' has been identified as a factor behind many of the consumer behaviours in Web 2.0, such as consumer empowerment, the increase of WOM, and consumer mistrust of traditional mass marketing (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). To better understand social media and, consequently, its influence on consumer purchase behaviour, it is considered necessary to define the concept, which is the aim of the following sections.

2.3.1 Terms Used to Describe Social Media

A review of the literature confirms that there is not yet a comprehensive agreement about the terms used to define social media. At least fifteen various terms (as in Table 2.1) are being used interchangeably to describe this modern technology.

Studies including those by Constantinides (2008, 2009) and Constantinides and Fountain (2008), state that the term social media is a synonym of Web 2.0, which they clarify by approaching social media and Web 2.0 as two terms that can mean the same thing. In contrast, Cox et al. (2008) put forwards the term 'Web 2.0 websites' with the same meaning as 'user-generated content sites' to describe blogs, wikis, podcasts, and social networks.

On the contrary, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that the terms 'social media' and 'Web 2.0' are different, acknowledging that Web 2.0 is a technological basis that led to the evolution of social media. Coates (2005) and Richter and Koch (2007) refer to 'social software' as a broad term that covers social media. In his definition, Coates (2005) adds message-boards, musical taste sharing, photo sharing, instant messaging, mailing lists, and social networking. On the other hand, Richter and Koch (2007) use the same term, but they include only weblogs, wikis, social tagging applications and social networking applications. Regarding their theory, Fuchs et al. (2010) give sufficient proof, from a techno-social view, that the term social software is, in fact, a much more comprehensive term than social media. Kim et al. (2010, p. 216) use 'social websites' to denote websites that permit users to 'form online communities and share user-created content'.

Other scholars introduce a more general view, seeing social websites as the 'union of social networking sites and social media sites' (Kim et al., 2010, p. 216), while Akehurst (2009) applies the term in a very similar manner to define YouTube, Facebook, MySpace and Flickr. Jansen et al. (2009) use the term 'social communication platforms' and 'social communication services' as a general definition encompassing social networks, online communities, and virtual reality like Wikipedia, YouTube, and Flickr.

Meanwhile, De Valck et al. (2009) define Myspace, YouTube, Facebook and Wikipedia under the term ‘social networking sites’. Cox et al. (2009), however, include Myspace, Facebook, and YouTube under this same term.

Table 2.1: Examples of terms used to describe social media.

Term	Examples of authors who use the term
Consumer-generated media	Blackshaw and Nazzaro (2004); Gretzel et al. (2008); Jeong and Jeon (2008); Yoo et al. (2009); Onishi and Manchanda (2012); Yoo and Gretzel (2011); Litvin et al. (2018); Loureiro et al. (2020)
New social media	Fischer and Reuber (2011); Nagi (2018)
Social communication platforms	Jansen et al. (2009); Alghizzawi (2019)
Social communication services	Jansen et al. (2009); Angarita et al. (2017)
Social networks	Miguens et al. (2008); Kim and Hastak (2018); Elmer et al. (2020)
Social networking	Cox et al. (2008)
Social networking sites	De Valck et al (2009); Cox et al. (2009); Oberst et al. (2017)
Social media	Thevenot (2007); Smith (2009); Mangold and Faulds (2009); Jin et al. (2010); Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), (2011); Safko (2010); Cha et al. (2010); Asur and Huberman (2010); Xiang and Gretzel (2010); Parra-Lopez et al. (2011); Hanna et al. (2011), Leung et al. (2013), Liu et al. (2013); Appel et al. (2020)
Social software	Coates (2005); Richter and Koch (2007); Verheyden and Cardon (2018)
Social web sites	Kim et al. (2010); Akehurst (2009); Wu et al. (2018)
User-generated content	Dhar and Chang (2009); Timoshenko and Hauser (2019)

User-generated content websites	Burgess et al. (2009); Dotan and Zaphiris (2010); O'Connor (2010)
User-generated media	McConnel and Huba (2007); Shao (2009)
Web 2.0 websites	Cox et al. (2008); Juza (2021)
Web 2.0	Constantinides (2008, 2009), Constantinides and Fountain (2008); Teo (2018)

Source: Applied from Fotis (2015) and the author

Cox et al. (2008, p. 2) employ 'social networking' to distinguish 'pages that contain user-generated content in various formats'. Notwithstanding its appearance in sociology, the term 'social networks' (see Table 2.1) is employed in Information Communication Technologies (ICT) to describe social media.

Alternatively, Miguens et al. (2008, p. 1) describe social networks as 'online communities of people who share common interests and activities'. The term 'social media' is more general than 'social networking sites' and the two should not be confused; the latter describes a subset of the former, particularly describing online systems that allow users to be members, create a profile, make a personal network, and connect with others as a way of sharing knowledge and preferences (Boyd and Ellison 2007; McKinsey 2009; Lenhart and Madden 2007). In an interview with Christakis (2010), he emphasised his disagreement with the use of 'social networking' to explain any social media: 'Just like we use the word "friend" to describe the people you interact with on Facebook, which is probably not right, we also say "social network" when we talk about Twitter'.

Another group of scientists have applied the term 'user/consumer-generated content/media' differently to determine social media. Dhar and Chang (2009, p. 300) employ 'user-generated content' to define 'the conjunction of blogs and social networking sites', and in a similar vein, Burgess et al. (2009), Dotan and Zaphiris (2010), and O'Connor (2010) employ 'user-generated content websites'.

The Organization for Economic and Cooperative Development (OECD) confirms that 'user-generated content' symbolises the information exchanged on social media, not the social media itself. OECD shows that for content to be recognised as user-generated content (UGC), or user-created content (UCC), it should have three main characteristics: (a) the content should be available to the public; (b) it should indicate creative work; and (c) it should not emerge from a professional origin (Wunsch-Vincent and Vickery, 2007).

However, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that the OECD classification dismisses several kinds of content that could be viewed as UGC: (a) e-mails and instant messages cannot be termed UGC as they are not available to the public; (b) copying a post on a blog or content from other online sources without any modification cannot be called UGC, because this does not demonstrate any creative work; and lastly (c) content originated for commercial aims is discounted.

Finally, in their attempts to define social media, other scientists term it 'consumer/user-generated media'. Blackshaw and Nazzaro (2004), Jeong and Jeon (2008), Gretzel et al. (2008), Yoo et al. (2009), Onishi and Manchanda (2012), and Yoo and Gretzel (2011) use the term 'consumer-generated media'. This term has a limiting scale, as a consumer is 'a person who uses up a commodity; a purchaser of goods or services, a customer' (Oxford English Dictionary 2011). By using the term 'consumer', the nature and scale of social media are limited. To counteract this, some employ the term 'user-generated media' (McConnel and Huba, 2007; Shao, 2009), although, as Table 2.1 shows, this is not such a popular term. Fischer and Reuber (2011) use the expression 'new social media' to refer to Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

An increasing rising number of academics use the term 'social media' (Thevenot, 2007; Smith, 2009; Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Jin et al., 2010; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, 2011; Safko, 2010; Cha et al., 2010; Asur and Huberman, 2010; Xiang and Gretzel, 2010; Para-Lopez et al., 2011; Hanna et al., 2011; Leung et al., 2013; Appel et al., 2020). Many respected industry practitioners also use this term (Intel, 2008; Solis, 2010; Cavazza, 2010; eMarketer, 2010; Universal McCann, 2010). Table 2.1 provides further evidence that the term 'social media' is the most common academic term for this phenomenon.

2.4 Defining Social Media

Social media is a term that should be precisely defined in order to gain the best insight into its influence on consumer purchase behaviour. In light of the diverse range of the terms used to describe social media, it is fair to assume that there is a similar lack of an accepted definition of social media (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). In their effort to define social media, Mangold and Faulds (2009) applied Blackshaw and Nazzaro's (2004) definition of consumer-generated media: 'a variety of new sources of online information that are created, initiated, circulated and used by consumers intent on educating each other about products, brands, services, personalities and issues' (p. 2). This definition can be perceived as limited in two ways: it assumes social media is only a source of information when, in fact, it has many different functions; it also limits the term to market-related purposes.

Safko and Brake (2009) adopt an even more generalised interpretation, suggesting that social media are 'activities, practices and behaviours among communities of people who gather online to share information, knowledge, and opinions using conversational media. Conversational media are Web-based applications that make it possible to create and easily transmit content in the form of words, pictures, videos, and audios' (p. 6).

Xiang and Gretzel (2010) made an effort to include Blackshaw's (2006) definition: '[Social media] can be generally understood as Internet-based applications that carry consumer-generated content which encompasses [as per Blackshaw (2006)] media impressions created by consumers, typically informed by relevant experience, and archived or shared online for easy access by other impressionable consumers' (p., 180). Xiang and Gretzel's definition has similar limitations to Mangold and Faulds' (2009) since it adopts Blackshaw and Nazzaro's (2004) definition and only includes social media from a marketing perspective.

Relatedly, Universal McCann (2008) introduces a definition which is also adopted by Caputo (2009) and Microsoft (2010), which sees social media as 'online applications, platforms and media which aim to facilitate interaction, collaboration and the sharing of content' (p. 10).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), however, concentrate on the platform as well as the content, defining social media as ‘a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content’ (p. 61).

A more recent view of social media definition presented by Miller et al. (2016) ‘Social media is the colonization of the space between traditional broadcast and private dyadic communication, providing people with a scale of group size and degrees of privacy that we have termed “scalable sociality” (p. 222) As it can be easily noticed, their view of social media was taken from a privacy aspect, yet it did not pay much consideration to the exchange of content between social media users as well as the marketing aspect of using social media by brands.

Furthermore, Kapoor et al. (2018) presented a more comprehensive notion of social media by addressing the topic as ‘Social media is made up of various user-driven platforms that facilitate diffusion of compelling content, dialogue creation, and communication to a broader audience. It is essentially a digital space created by the people and for the people, and it provides an environment that is conducive for interactions and networking to occur at different levels (for instance, personal, professional, business, marketing, political, and societal) ’ (p. 536). In detail, this view of social media provides a complete picture of the foundation of social media, as it encourages the idea of user-generated content and the perspective of exchanging different sorts of online content all over social media applications.

Considering all of the above, it is certain that the definitions of social media vary. However, from a theoretical viewpoint and for the purposes of this study, this paper will adopt Kapoor et al. (2018) definition. Due to the fact that this research focuses on the creation of social media content and the exchange of social media content between online users, particularly via influencers, and the resultant behavioural impact.

2.5 Types of Social Media

This section will demonstrate the most common types of social media platforms, with a particular focus on image-sharing social networking sites (Instagram and Snapchat), which are the focus of this study.

2.5.1 Blogs

The term 'blog' is a short form of 'weblog', which was invented in 1997 by John Barger (Blood, 2000). In 1999, Peter Merholz decided to separate the phrase into 'we blog', and since then, the term has evolved simply to 'blog' (Wikipedia, 2011). At a similar time, Pyra Labs developed the concept of the 'blogger' as 'the push-button publishing tool for the people' (Pyra Labs, 2011); this platform can be considered the reason for the tremendous increase in the number of blogs worldwide, reaching almost 181 million (Nielsen, 2012). Other researchers have defined blogs as a platform that usually includes text, images, videos, or links to another blog's content (Nardi et al., 2004; Walker, 2005; Akehurst, 2009).

Universal McCann's study (2009) on the type of information written on blogs showed that, at that time, 70% of blog material was photos, 43% was suggestions for websites, 34% was music preference, 32% was videos, 32% was discussion related to products/brands, 29% was stories from other bloggers, 26% was uploaded songs, 18% was essential widgets, 17% was widgets and applications, and 16% was widgets recommended for other users. The blogger is the foundation for the concept of the social media influencer, which is a term that will be addressed below.

2.5.2 Microblogs

Microblogs are another well-known type of social media platform; they can be described as 'internet-based applications which allow users to exchange small elements of content such as short sentences, individual images, or video links' (Kaplan and Haenlein 2011, p. 106).

The most prominent microblogging applications are Twitter, Jaiku, Web and Plurk, of which Twitter is the most widely used. Twitter is also responsible for the major expansion of the microblogging format (Jansen et al., 2009; Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011), and it has 206 million daily active users worldwide (Statista, 2021).

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2011), microblogs are perceived as a 'high degree of self-presentation/self-disclosure and a medium to a low degree of social presence/media richness' (Kaplan and Haenlein 2011, p. 106). When it comes to comparing microblogging platforms (e.g., Twitter) to other social networking sites (e.g., Facebook), three main variations can be identified: (a) the relationship with other users, such as user A can follow user B, yet there is no obligation for user B to follow user A; (b) public access, which means user A can search for user B tweets without following, except if the account is private (Yardi and Boyd, 2010; Kwak et al., 2010); (c) microblogging seems to be a much faster means of connection and is updated more regularly than different kinds of social media (Java et al., 2007). However, thanks to the endless improvements of these applications, these differences can be overcome with new updates and features.

2.5.3 Social Networking Sites

Social networking sites (SNSs) are considered the most popular social media platforms (Richter and Koch, 2008; Belanche et al., 2010; Universal McCann, 2010). These platforms include Facebook, Google+, Wayn, RenRen, LinkedIn, and Xing, as seen in Table 2.2. When defining social networking sites, Boyd and Ellison (2007, p. 211) used the term 'network' rather than the 'networking': 'web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site.' Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 63) give a more limited definition: 'applications that enable users to connect by creating personal information profiles, inviting friends and colleagues to have access to those profiles, and sending e-mails and instant messages between each other.'

The usage of social networking sites is growing remarkably worldwide, as shown in Table 2.3. In 2021, Facebook was the leading social media application, reaching more than 2.9 billion monthly active users globally (Statista, 2021). Even though Facebook is the most well-known SNS, other platforms have their own specialist areas, such as LinkedIn and Xing, which are both business-related SNSs, and academia.edu, which focuses on the university sector (Digit.ru, 2013).

Since the launch of SNSs, their growth and usage increase have been remarkable, which raises the question of why people use these applications. A significant number of studies have considered this question (Lenhart and Madden, 2007; Boyd and Ellison, 2007) and concluded that people use SNSs for many reasons, such as creating, keeping, and growing current offline relationships. Boyd (2008) states that the younger generation uses SNSs to socialise with their friends, whereas Universal McCann (2010) provides a more comprehensive view: surveying 54 countries, they show that 65% of users use SNSs to search for old friends, 53% to find new friends and 72% to exchange messages with friends.

Table 2.2: Examples of popular social media apps by category.

Category	Examples
General-purpose*	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram* , Snapchat* , MySpace, Google+, Tik Tok
Professional	LinkedIn, Xing, Intro, Weave, Yammer, Angellist
Dating	Tinder, Grindr, Hinge, Happn, Badoo, OkCupid
Anonymous	YikYak, Secret, Whisper, AfterSchool, Ello
Groups	Frankly, GroupMe, Everyme, MightyBell, Islands
Photo-based	Pinterest, DeviantArt, Kong, Tiiny, Cloth, Imgur, Flickr
Video-based	YouTube, Vimeo, Vine, HouseParty, Periscope, Instagram* , Snapchat* , Tik Tok
Music-based	MySpace, Last.fm, Spotify, LoudUp, Crowdmix

Blog-based	Tumblr, WordPress, Medium, LiveJournal
Interest-based	Reddit, Imzy, Voat, Quora, Jelly, Fancred, Flipora, 6Tribes
Location-based	Foursquare, Swarm, Plague, NextDoor, Aki-Aki, Buzzd
Crowdfunding	Kickstarter, IndieGogo, Tilt, Crowdrise, GoFundMe, RocketHub
For pets	Catster, Dogster, MyDogSpace, UnitedDogs, UnitedCats
For children	LEGO life, Club Penguin, PlayKids Talk, Kimingo, Kuddle
Mobile messaging	WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber, Skype, Kik, Line, WeChat
Encrypted messaging	ToxChat, Wickr, Signal, Gliph, CyberDust
Strong regional focus	Vkontakte, Mixi, Sina/Tencent Weibo, RenRen, Tudou

Source: Polonski (2017) and the author.

Notes: *Emboldened platforms indicate the focus of this research.

Some applications such as Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok fall under more than one category. Although they are general-purpose, their main features are the exchanging and sharing of visual content.






2.5.4 Image-Sharing Social Networking Sites

Social media applications are continuously developing. Over the years, a certain pattern has emerged in people's everyday lifestyle, in which it is part of the daily routine for people to surf through different social media applications to share and exchange content in a variety of forms. Visual has therefore become extremely valuable, as social media users now predominantly exchange online content visually. Moreover, applications that focus on the visual exchange of content have become very popular.

In recent years, social media has undergone an evolution. Image-sharing SNSs have displayed a lot of growth, which has garnered some interest from academics and marketers. Due to the recentness of their creation, image-sharing SNSs do not have an agreed definition.

However, Mull and Lee (2014) make a distinction between these sites' features and those of other SNSs: 'Image-sharing SNSs share the same basic meaning, but instead of sharing textual information within their social network, users share images or pictorial information; (p. 192). Agreeing that image-sharing SNSs are of great significance, Duggan (2013) and Kim et al. (2016) address users' interactions as one of the most common online activities which has begun to form a crucial part of people's everyday usage (Hall and Pennington, 2012; Lee, Lee, Moon, and Sung, 2015). The increasing usage of photo-sharing social media applications is perhaps no surprise; after all, 'pictures speak louder than words' (Lee et al., 2015, p. 552). Table 2.3 illustrates a comparison between various social media applications from different categories.

Table 2.3: Comparison between various social media applications.

Social Media Application	Launch year	Type	Use	No. Of Users in (2021)
LinkedIn 	2003	Business-oriented social network service	LinkedIn usage includes adding business contacts into the contact list, adding CVs and finding relevant jobs, screening applicants, searching business profiles and statistics, and engaging with LinkedIn Answers and Groups.	800 million users ¹
Facebook 	2004	Social networking sites	Users use Facebook for various reasons. People mostly use it to keep in touch with or reconnect with people they know offline. As well as maintaining an individual profile and posting messages, users can upload photos and videos, share links, write notes, send private messages, text and video chat, and play games.	2.9 billion monthly active users
Twitter 	2006	Microblogs	Twitter enables people to post 140-character messages or tweets and follow other people's messages on their Twitter feed. It is primarily used to communicate with other people with similar interests, regardless of whether users know each other off Twitter, and to follow celebrities' updates. Users can upload photos, share links, and send private messages to people they follow.	206 million daily active users
Instagram 	2010	Image-(photo) sharing site	Instagram features include sharing pictures, videos, liking/commenting on photos, sharing photos privately, and following other accounts.	815 million monthly active users
Snapchat 	2011	Image-(photo) sharing site	Snapchat users can take photos, record videos, write text and draw, and then send them to an established user list.	530 million active users

Sources: linkedin.com (2021) and statista.com (2021).

⁽¹⁾ Unlike other social media applications, LinkedIn does not specify monthly or daily 'active' users, only users in general.

Lately, two social media applications have become prevalent, Instagram and Snapchat. Both applications have the primary purpose of photo sharing communication between users as well as brands.

A- Overview of Instagram

In 2010, Instagram was founded. The application has grown immensely and is one of the leading sources of visual communication on social media in the market. Kerwood (2015) states that 'it experiences such extraordinarily high engagement because people crave to share visually. We want to share stories and life experiences. Instagram offers the perfect solution, with social discovery built-in' (p. 50). Instagram has become popular among not only individuals but also businesses, and Instagram is recognised as the best platform to help businesses increase brand knowledge. According to Kerwood (2015), 'at 2.261%, the level of brand engagement is higher on Instagram than on any other major social network. Facebook's brand engagement ranks at 0.216%, LinkedIn is 0.055%, and Twitter is 0.035%. Instagram, therefore, delivers 65 times more engagement than Twitter and 10 times more than Facebook.'

The visual aspect of social media is essential, particularly for restaurants and the hospitality industry. According to Hollander (2015), 'There are people who decide on where they want to go out to eat by their Instagram feed, and that is the fact that we in the hospitality industry just cannot ignore'. Bowling (2015) interviewed restaurant owners regarding what they love about Instagram and discovered that 'It is a great way to get a message or information to potential guests, locals or regulars. It also gives people a chance to do the same. They can tag us, leave comments, leave feedback, ask questions, or all of the above' (p. 15). Instagram offers more visually advancing photos, which are quicker to comprehend than text, and Buscall (2015) declared that visual content receives 94% more views and 40% more chances of being shared on social media.

Regarding the influence of Instagram on consumers, Wang (2011) stated that Instagram accounts are a significant factor for consumers in the 25- to 34-year-old range. In agreement, Kerwood (2015) adds that Instagram presents the highest brand engagement compared to other social media applications. According to Brandau (2013), 'Cultivating Instagram engagement is worthwhile because it encourages restaurant traffic, and the shared nature of those photos creates thousands of social media impressions.'

With such growth in both the personal and business areas, the rise of Instagram has drawn research attention. Jurgenson (2011) emphasises that social media interaction has shifted towards visual features. However, even though Instagram is becoming popular with people and companies, studies on the use of Instagram and its impact constitute less than 1% of all studies on SNSs (Stoycheff et al., 2017). Moreover, a small number of studies about social media have provided some insight into issues such as investigating Instagram content and user profiles (Hu et al., 2014), what motivates users to use Instagram (Eunji et al., 2015; McCune 2011; Sheldon and Bryant 2016), social network construction on Instagram (Ferrara et al., 2014), the cultural significance of Instagram's photo filters (Hochman and Manovich 2013; Silva et al., 2013), and the emotional side of Instagram selfies (Lup et al., 2015; Retallack et al., 2016; Ridgway and Clayton 2016). Other academics have also considered how the theories of people's society on Instagram might apply to a larger social media environment (Trayor et al., 2016; Wilkes et al., 2014). Besides that, the research on Instagram is considered to be in its early stages (Polonski, 2017).

B- Overview of Snapchat

Like Instagram, Snapchat is another relatively modern social media application with a prime focus on facilitating visual communication. This application is somewhat different because the visual content appears only for a short time. It goes from a couple of seconds to twenty-four hours, depending on the type of content shared. There are various ways to save the snaps, but this was not the original intention of the application (Anderson, 2015).

However, with some recent updates, Snapchat has provided users with verified accounts, usually known as influencers (users who have a superior number of followers), allowing them to have their own pages where they can add saved snaps that can stay as long as they want.

The application is considered an example of the one-to-one communication theory within social media, as users are able to interact with other friends via visual content in the form of the Snapchat story, which is available to all, or by sending snaps to individuals or groups (Roberts, 2017). Snapchat, which was created by Evan Spiegel and Bobby Murphy (Colao, 2014), is now experiencing very rapid growth worldwide (Table 2.3). According to Piwek and Joinson (2016, p. 358), 'the rise in Snapchat use has been one of the most rapid and unprecedented in the history of instant messaging services and social networking sites'.

Much like Instagram, Snapchat has received limited consideration from researchers. Moreover, in the literature from 2005 to 2014, Snapchat was absent (Stoycheff et al., 2017). In 2016, Bayer et al. concluded that Snapchat was seen as more enjoyable and linked with a positive attitude. Moreover, Snapchat was perceived as a 'lightweight channel for sharing spontaneous experiences with trusted ties' (Bayer et al., 2016, p. 1).

2.6 Justifications for Choosing Instagram and Snapchat

As previously addressed, Instagram and Snapchat both fall into the category of photo-sharing social networking sites, as their primary method of communication is sharing and exchanging visual content between social media users. As such, both applications are vital to this study. Further reasons for choosing these applications are listed in Table 2.4 below.

Table 2.4: Summary of justifications for choosing Instagram and Snapchat

Instagram
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The growth of Instagram and its related features has encouraged marketers to employ strategies that take advantage of the social media application (Djarfonova and Rushworth, 2019). - According to a study by the National Restaurant Association (2015), Instagram is the most successful application for businesses sharing their content with consumers in terms of convincing them to purchase (Mhlanga and Tichaawa, 2017). Moreover, restaurants can take advantage of the application's visual-based features. Employing Instagram is key because 'the best content strategy [...] is the creation of visually appealing content' (Benedek 2018, p. 51). - Due to the increasing number of celebrities and influencers on Instagram, it has become a hunting ground for social media marketing (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). As academics predicted, increased engagement with micro-influencers will be a growing field as their followers become more comfortable interacting with them (Djarfonova and Rushworth, 2019). Moreover, social media marketers have been considering the trust factor between influencers and their audience, as their content can be seen as trustworthy and authentic (Audonsson, 2018). - The study of Instagram and the relationship between social media content and influencers is still in its early stages. More in-depth research needs to be conducted to provide a better understanding of such an interesting research area (Caplan, 2020).

Snapchat

- Snapchat, on the other hand, is also a visual-based application that has experienced a lot of growth over recent years. As a study conducted in 2016 reported that most Snapchat users use the application at home (Piwek and Joinson, 2016). However, a relatively recent study by AdWeek in 2018 confirmed that '80% of users open the app at restaurants, 60% use it at the movies, and 50% snap pictures and videos while at the gym' (Johnson, 2018), which indicates the importance to consider Snapchat content featuring restaurants in this research.
- In terms of Snapchat influencers and their impact on consumers' behaviour, a recent study by Alqadi et al. (2020) confirmed the positive impact Snapchat influencers have as a source of restaurant-related information for restaurants in Riyadh city. Moreover, this study shows a significant correlation between restaurant influencers' content and how consumers choose where to dine.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the concept of social media, starting from a comprehensive overview of the Internet, introducing Web 2.0 technology, and finally looking at social media. Based on the discussion in this chapter, it is clear the evolution of Web 2.0 technology and its latest subsection, social media, is in constant development. Therefore, its influence will continue to reach various aspects of people's personal and business lives. Although some say that Web 2.0 is just another technology that will eventually fade, its widespread success and usage beg to differ (Constantinides and Fountain, 2008). It is surprising how social media has touched almost every aspect of our lives. According to Boyd (2009), social media is here to stay.

To shed more light on the concept of social media and its related features, the next chapter will focus more on social media and its influence on consumers' purchase intentions in the form of social media content and content creators.

CHAPTER THREE
SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT AND CONTENT CREATORS

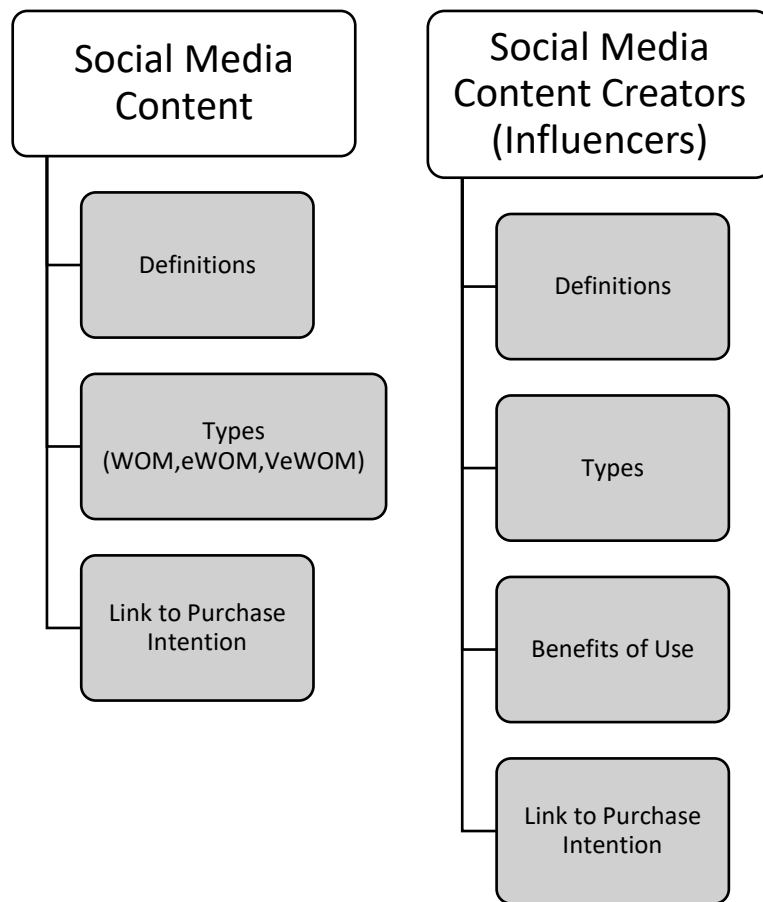
3. Chapter Three: Social Media Content and Content Creators (Influencers)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced an overview of social media, matters of definitions, terminology, different types of social media, and finally, the two main applications for this study, Instagram and Snapchat. Therefore, this chapter follows this up by providing a much deeper understanding of the topic of study of social media visual content and its impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Thus, in order to establish a link between social media and purchase intention, it is logical to start by investigating the content itself on social media and more precisely, the type of content on social media as well as the creators of such content.

This chapter is divided into two main aspects: social media content, including definitions and types, and their impact on purchase intention. The second aspect focuses on content creators, in this case, social media influencers, which includes various definitions and types, as well as the advantages of using this marketing strategy and its link to purchase intention. Figure 3.1 provides a visual illustration of this chapter.

Figure 3.1: Illustration of chapter 3



3.2 From WOM to Visual eWOM

The previous chapter introduced social media in a more general way in order to establish the most appropriate applications. This section will follow by investigating the content on social media. This section will look closely at WOM communication and how this communication method has evolved from verbal to textual to visual forms of interaction between consumers. This is intended to establish what kind of social media content can influence consumers' purchase intentions.

WOM has been seen as a valuable marketing tool for quite some time (Bone, 1995; Engel et al., 1969; Feldman and Lynch, 1988). It is no wonder, therefore, that it has attracted a lot of research (Arndt, 1967; Brown and Reingen, 1987; Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Herr et al., 1991; Knoll and Proksch, 2015).

One of the most widely accepted definitions of WOM is 'oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as noncommercial, regarding a brand, a product, a service or a provider' (Arndt, 1967, p. 5). Stokes et al. (2002), on the other hand, presented a more specific definition of WOM, which covered several forms of interpersonal communication around products or services, providing the receiver viewed the communicator as impartial.

The above definitions indicate that the information is received verbally and without any marketing intentions. No electronic tools are used to deliver this content, as it must be passed directly between two or more people. This takes us to the second type of WOM, electronic word of mouth.

The evolution of technology and the Internet has added further characteristics to WOM communication. The improvements have led to a new ground-breaking variety of WOM known as 'electronic word of mouth' (eWOM). eWOM has been described as 'any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet' (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 39).

Additionally, the term 'electronic word of mouth' is recognised as essentially equal to 'online word of mouth', 'word of mouse', 'Internet WOM' (Goldenberg et al., 2001, p. 212), 'buzz marketing' (Thomas, 2004, p. 64), and 'electronic word of mouth communication' (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, p. 38), among others (Vilpponen et al., 2006).

With the endless improvements being made to the internet, nowadays, a new approach that is relevant to this research has evolved in the form of visual types of eWOM. This type of online content is linked to Web 2.0 and social media due to their large user numbers and highly advanced features.

The use of visual characteristics for word-of-mouth communication has been a significant factor in garnering people's attention. Messaris (1997, p. 17) gives an early view on the importance of visual content, which is relevant here, saying that 'Scientists and marketers have developed various ways of altering images, to draw out even more engagement and emotion from the audience.'

It has been common in advertising to use vision-related tactics such as violating reality to generate a more eye-catching appearance and a deeper meaning. Within this approach, marketers regularly use figurative or surreal images’.

A more recent understanding of the crucial of visual aspect of information indicated that visual content possess a unique ability to evoke mental visualisation of an event, exceeding text in its ability to enhance memory and recall (Kong et al., 2019). In comparison to text, visual content provides with the capacity to transfer more information and multiple layers of meaning (Balomenou and Garrod, 2019; Pittman and Reich, 2016). Additionally, the visual aspect of ewom can impart subjective well-being and happiness through the combination of various characteristics, including colour, composition, and subject matter (Rathnayake and Ntalla, 2020; Zappavigna, 2016; Zieba, 2020). The meanings expressed through images are not universal and can vary depending on the visual construction of the photo (Zieba, 2020).

Additionally, sharing visual information is crucial in the hospitality industry, as it provides valuable insights and influences customers' perceptions during decision-making. This highlights the significance of a digitalised society, as supported by various studies, including Lee and Tussyadiah (2016) and Roy et al. (2021). Shin et al. (2019) also found that both visual and textual content play a significant role in influencing individuals, with social media posts, including images receiving more likes and shares.

3.2.1 Benefits of Using eWOM

After addressing different types of WOM communication, from the traditional WOM to the more recent visual eWOM, this section will shift more towards the benefits of employing these as marketing techniques. The idea of eWOM seems to be a ground-breaking progression from traditional WOM communication. With the evolution and increasing prevalence of the Internet and mobile phones, eWOM has become a more convenient communication channel, as people are now able to access the Internet anytime and anywhere. This form of communication has both advantages and disadvantages for customers and marketers.

The first advantage is that the Internet has improved the volume of WOM (Chatterjee, 2001); now, people can access more information regarding the products/services they intend to purchase. Another advantage is that online users can search for both marketer-generated and consumer-generated content. Moreover, eWOM has two other significant characteristics, which can be considered as both advantages and disadvantages for marketers. Firstly, eWOM can reach a broad audience, as a message can be sent to hundreds, thousands, or even millions of online users (Cakim, 2009; Filieri and McLeay, 2014; Liu, 2006; Sohn, 2014). Secondly, eWOM information can spread very quickly (Huang et al., 2011; Hung and Li, 2007; King et al., 2014). These two characteristics offer marketers an excellent opportunity to access an endless number of current and potential consumers.

This excellent method of interaction between people/consumers has evolved alongside the major improvements to the Internet, which is unsurprising because social media has changed the way people communicate from textual to visual. Highfield and Leaver (2016) confirm that visual components are crucial and significant elements of people's daily lifestyles. This element can be easily recognised in social media communication. Hence, researchers should pay more attention to visual content in social media.

Highfield and Leaver (2016) suggest the significance of this element by pointing out that textual content only offers one way to display information and thoughts. This is no comparison to images and videos. Combining both features would significantly influence the content presented. However, this research only considers the visual element since Snapchat and Instagram are primarily visual.

3.2.2 eWOM Content on Social Media and Purchase Intention

Now that it has been established that visual eWOM is the most suitable form of social media content to be studied here, this section will address the level of influence this online communication has on consumer purchase intentions, with a focus on visual content. However, before addressing their levels of impact, it seems more logical to look at purchase intentions themselves. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) decided to define the purchase intention separately, as the consumer's purchase behaviour is simply a way of describing their behaviour.

More recently, Cong and Zheng (2017) explained that whenever a consumer shows an intention to purchase, he/she is completely willing to make a purchase action. Consequently, by acknowledging and defining consumers' purchase intentions, we can identify their actual purchase decisions. Moreover, it proves that consumer purchase intention is formed by their attitudes toward products/brands and other external factors. Consequently, purchase intention applies as a dependent variable of this study. Therefore, this section will review social media content and purchase intention.

With regard to social media content and purchase intention, eWOM is seen to be quite influential on consumers' purchase intentions (Bickart and Schindler, 2001; Chan and Ngai, 2011; Huang, 2010; Kumar and Benbasat, 2006; Park et al., 2007; See-To and Ho, 2014; Zhang et al., 2010). Barton (2006) proposes that eWOM regularly occurs on web platforms, during which a consumer has already made his/her purchase decision. If that consumer believes the eWOM information, it can directly lead to an actual purchase.

On the other hand, the visual appeal of content has been garnering researchers' attention for the past two decades, primarily in the advertising field (Kisielius and Sternthal, 1984; Mitchell, 1986).

This focus was primarily because this component can appear in many forms, such as pictures or videos, and can present information in many sizes, angles, and perspectives using movement and animation. In marketing, visual appeals are considered an essential tool for attracting customers' attention and influencing their decision-making (Lee and Shin, 2014; Teng et al., 2014). Former studies have revealed that online atmosphere (such as website design, colour, and product visualisations) might significantly influence consumer choice (Griffith, 2005; Mandel and Johnson, 2002; Malthouse and Shankar, 2009). This implies that the visual aspects of eWOM information could likewise play an influential role in consumer perception and purchase decisions.

A more recent study by Colliander and Marder (2018) confirms the significance of visual content on Instagram in the form of snapshot aesthetics in clothing industry and how such visual content plays a role in positively influencing consumers' attitudes, sources credibility and intentions toward eWOM.

Pan et al. (2013) state that hotel pictures are critical in helping consumers make decisions, increasing trust, and evaluating products. A further study by Yoo and Kim (2014) indicates that online product pictures could be helpful in creating a virtual product experience, producing and enhancing brand images, which eventually leads to purchase intentions. This seems a vital tool and highly relevant to this study.

Across many review websites and applications, a large part of the review content for hotels is presented in both textual and visual formats. Surprisingly, Balomenou and Garrod (2019) confirm that prior studies on tourism, in fact, favoured textual review content and ignored the crucial visual content. The fact that this content has been overlooked in the hospitality and tourism sectors demonstrates the importance of considering these characteristics in future research. Serrano et al. (2017) confirm that even though there is a lack of knowledge about visual eWOM, most of the current data focuses on comparing visual to textual content and is not aimed entirely towards visual content. This seems unusual, given the rapid growth in recent years of visual content-based social media applications, Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube; it is, therefore, vital to investigate such visual content empirically (Farace et al., 2017).

Hussain et al. (2020), on the other hand, emphasise how important it is for future research to address how visual eWOM might impact consumers' actions. Thus, to fill in the gap in the existing literature on visual eWOM, this research aims to bring the visual character of eWOM to the fore.

3.3 Influencer Marketing

Following on from the start of this chapter, which has explored various forms of content on social media, as well as the definitions, benefits of use and the link to purchase intention, this section will discuss another element of content on social media. It will focus on the creator aspect of social media content, which in this research comes in the form of social media influencers.

The rise of social media applications greatly contributes to the growth of different aspects related to such modern online applications. The notion of influencer marketing involves utilising influencers to convey a brand's message to its intended audience (Smart Insights, 2017). Social media influencers have become famous endorsers in recent years, using various buzzwords compared to other marketing strategies like celebrity endorsement. Consequently, they are believed to be the most cost-efficient and effective marketing trend. (Harrison, 2017; Patel, 2016; Talaverna, 2015). Companies often invite social media influencers, such as bloggers with thousands of followers on their social media accounts, to become their brand ambassadors based on the principles of influencer marketing (Tapinfluence, 2017). Moreover, over the last few years, social media users have gained popularity by creating attractive profiles and gathering a large following. They started by sharing their interests and opinions on personal blogs, then moved on to social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok. These popular users, known as influencers, social media stars, or micro-celebrities, significantly impact their followers' decisions (Gaenssle and Budzinski, 2020). As a result, advertisers frequently approach them to promote products, brands, organisations, or ideas on their social media profiles. This marketing strategy is called influencer marketing (De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders, 2017).

In regards to the terms and definition of influencers, terms such as “influencers”, “micro-influencers”, and “micro-celebrities” (Marwick, 2015; Senft, 2008, 2013) have been rising rapidly in recent years. In the effort to define influencer marketing, Sigala (2017) terms it ‘the practice of identifying individuals who influence a target audience’ (p. 94). This definition seems narrow, as it only identifies influencers that suit the aim of the marketing strategy. Sudha and Sheena (2017) have produced a more detailed definition, declaring influencer marketing as ‘a process of identifying and activating individuals who have an influence over a specific target audience or medium, in order to be part of a brand's campaign towards increased reach, sales, or engagement’ (p. 16). Even though their definition of influencer marketing provides more details, they still have the same limitations as Sigala.

Finally, De Veirman et al. (2017) define influencer marketing from an endorsement perspective, saying ‘brands aim to stimulate influencers to endorse their products, and this way build up their image among influencers’ often huge base of followers, a practice that is called influencer marketing’ (p. 801). Their approach is similar, but the definition by De Veirman et al. (2017) addresses more details about the features of perfect influencers, as well as highlights the endorsement aspect, which is vital for this research and is thus utilised in this study.

The concept of influencer marketing is still in its early stages due to the growing improvements to social media applications and their features; therefore, there have been various efforts to define people who create social media content. Each effort brings with it a variety of phrases to identify the terms. The literature on social media influencers includes different theoretical classifications of the term, such as influencer, social influencer, micro-celebrity, opinion leader, digital influencer, and recently celebrity endorser. Some of the definitions and classifications of social media influencers found in the literature are shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Different classifications and definitions of social media influencers.

AUTHOR	TERMINOLOGY	DEFINITION
De Veirman et al. (2017, p. 801)	Influencer	‘Influencers are content creators who accumulated a solid base of followers. Through blogging, vlogging or creating short-form content (e.g. Instagram, Snapchat), they provide their followers an insight into their personal, everyday lives, their experiences and opinions.’
Uzunoglu and Misci Kip (2014, p. 592)	Digital Influencer	‘Companies considering the Internet as a strategic communication tool have also recognised the power of influential members of this platform, i.e. bloggers [...] These digital influencers have an effect on the members of particular communities gathered around similar interests.’
Sudha and Sheena (2017, pp. 16-17)	Influencer	‘Influence can come from a wide range of places. Any person, group, brand, or place could potentially be an influencer.’

	Traditional influencer	'These are the individuals that conventional PR agencies and celebrity figures in a specific area of subject expertise.'
	Emerging (Digital) Influencer	'These poster-tech bloggers and emerging digital influencers have recognised a large audience following and drive thought leadership in a specific space.'
	Influencers by Connection	'People who have hundreds of Facebook friends and Twitter followers.'
	Influencers by Topic/Opinion Leader	'People who are opinion leaders for the certain topics.'
	Social Influencer	'Social influencers, like journalists, celebrities, bloggers, magazines and brand advocates, are regarded as the most powerful force in the fashion marketplace.'
Langner, Hennigs and Wiedmann (2013, pp. 31-35)	Social Influencer	'Social influencers that act as role models – and even as leaders – inside social groups and that affect group (and buying) behaviour [...] Not everyone who claims to be a leader and source of advice in a social group can be a convincing social influencer.'
Chae (2018, p. 246)	Micro-celebrity/ Social Media Influencer/ Influencer	'Referred to as micro-celebrity, this new type of celebrity involves the practice of self-presentation on social media [...] People with micro-celebrity on social media are often called social media influencers (influencers). Influencers can range from would-be or unknown actresses and models, fitness trainers, friends of celebrities, and wealthy people who love luxury brands to pretty high school girls.'
Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart (2017, p. 498)	Influencer/ Opinion Leader	'Influencers or opinion leaders have generally been described in diffusion literature as people who are able to influence others because of their central position in communication networks.'
Carr and Hayes (2014, p. 40)	Opinion Leader	'These influential others, regarded as credible and informed individuals regarding specific topics, are referred to as opinion leaders and pass along opinions and information to influence members to their social groups.'

Djafarova and Rushworth (2017, p. 2)	Celebrity Endorser, Digital Celebrity	'Celebrity endorsement is currently prevalent in online platforms [...] In recent years there has been a rise in new types of digital celebrity groups such as bloggers, vloggers and "Instafamous" personalities.'
Jain and Roy (2016, p. 267); Jin and Phua (2014, p. 187)	Celebrity Endorser	McCracken (1989, pp. 310) defined a celebrity endorser as 'any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.'
Xu, Li, Peng, Hsia, Huang and Wu (2017, p. 248)	Endorsers/ Celebrity Endorsers	'Endorsers such as notable successful people reputable early adopters and fashion leaders [...] Celebrity endorsement enhances the perceived quality of the item [...] Therefore, people would like to imitate the endorsers' behaviors, since they are believed to have better information and make correct decisions than the general public.'
Ge and Gretzel (2018)	Social Media Influencer	'individuals who are in a consumer's social graph and have a direct impact on the behaviour of that consumer' (p. 1273)
Kirwan (2018)	Social Media Influencer	'Social media influencers are people who have large audiences of followers on their social media accounts, and they leverage this to influence or persuade this following to buy certain products or services'
Influencer Marketing Hub (2019)	Influencer	'An influencer is an individual who has the power to affect purchase decisions of others because of his/her authority, knowledge, position or relationship with his/ her audience'

Looking through these definitions and terminologies in Table 3.1, it is easy to recognise that the first term used to describe the notion is an 'influencer', and eventually, other authors have followed the same terminology to distinguish the concept (De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders, 2017; Sudha and Sheena, 2017; Chae, 2018; Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart, 2017; Influencer Marketing Hub 2019). De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017) state that influencers use blogs or content creation platforms such as Instagram to share their everyday lives with their followers. Chae (2018), on the other hand, highlights those influencers or micro-celebrities use social media as a method to present themselves to the world.

Chae (2018) also states that an influencer could be anybody, a well-known celebrity, a model, a wealthy person or even a high school girl. This perspective is in agreement with Sudha and Sheena (2017) and explains how any person can become an influencer as long as he/she can influence other people. On the other hand, Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart (2017) attempt to define influencers by using the term 'opinion leader' in a similar vein to an influencer and state that they have the potential to impact others because of their status and well-known character within the platforms.

The other four definitions introduced by De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017), Sudha and Sheena (2017), Chae (2018), and Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart (2017) do not seem to have a significant differentiation between them. However, that put forward by De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders (2017) have a more specific perspective, while the other three can be considered more general despite their differences. They do not disagree with one another, but Chae (2018) introduces a different element, categorising an influencer as a micro-celebrity; Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart (2017) consider an influencer as an opinion leader.

The second term that is used to describe influencers is 'digital influencers', which is used by Uzunoglu and Misci Kip (2014); Sudha and Sheena (2017). Furthermore, Uzunoglu and Misci Kip (2014) state that digital influencers are online users who influence other users within a specific online community. This definition is in line with Sudha and Sheena (2017), who describe digital influencers as users who affect others in a particular area.

The third definition describes the concept, viewing it as a social influencer, a term used by Sudha and Sheena (2017) and Langner et al. (2013). However, looking through the definitions of social influencers, it is clear that some are quite different. For example, Sudha and Sheena (2017) identify social influencers as people who have a powerful impact on fashion and may be in the category of journalist, celebrity, or blogger.

On the other hand, Langner et al. (2013) indicate that a social influencer is considered a leader or a role model and affects people's behaviour in a particular social group. Consequently, the third definition of an influencer as a social influencer does not seem to agree with the primary aim of this research; therefore, this will not be applied here.

Many influential users who have been addressed in the literature are called opinion leaders and are mentioned by various scholars (Sudha and Sheena, 2017; Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart, 2017; Carr and Hayes, 2014). These scholars largely agree that they see opinion leaders as people with knowledge on a particular topic. According to Araujo, Neijens and Vliegenhart (2017), an opinion leader or influencer is a user who has the experience to impact other people in their networks. This view is in line with Carr and Hayes' (2014) definition of an opinion leader as someone who has the knowledge and distributes it to others in their social groups. Moreover, Carr and Hayes (2014) also indicate that an opinion leader is viewed as a credible source of information.

Another group of definitions for an influencer use the term 'celebrity endorsers' (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Jain and Roy, 2016; Jin and Phua, 2014; Xu et al., 2017). Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) describe celebrity endorsers as users who exist in an online network and have become well established over the years; these may be bloggers, vloggers, or more recently, individuals on a social media platform like Instagram – such people are known as 'Instafamous'. In contrast, Jain and Roy (2016) and Jin and Phua (2014) have utilised McCracken's (1989) early definition of a celebrity endorser in their research. A celebrity endorser is an individual who appreciates being known and has marketing intentions. Another recent definition of celebrity endorsers introduced by Xu et al. (2017) describes them as people with more knowledge than others and who use this knowledge to influence their behaviours. However, when comparing the three definitions, we can clearly see different perspectives regarding the idea of celebrity endorsers; therefore, for the purposes of this study, the term 'celebrity endorsers' will not be utilised.

The last group of academics, including Ge and Gretzel (2018); Kirwan (2018), use the term 'social media influencer' in their effort to describe social media users with a large number of followers and who have the power and unique characteristics to impact the behaviour of such followers. However, their view of social media influencers was mainly from a business perspective, showing such users as people who only present social media content to sell or promote products or services, not taking into account the fact that most social media influencers share their everyday lifestyle without any indication of promoting or selling items.

To sum up, after looking through different definitions and terms regarding social media influencers, it is clear that there are some similarities as well as variations between them, and some terms might be more confusing, such as 'social influencer'. Therefore, in light of this study's aim and objectives, the De Veirman et al. (2017) definition will be employed, which uses the term 'influencer' to describe people on Instagram and Snapchat who share visual eWOM; in this study, there will be a particular focus on those who post about restaurant SMEs in Saudi Arabia.

3.4 Benefits of Influencer Marketing

The previous sections have established an understanding and a general view of influencers' marketing to give some context to social media influencers. This section will provide the reasons for and benefits of employing social media influencers as a marketing strategy. As has been shown, there are a variety of definitions of influencers on online networks, with several different terms used to describe them. Despite this, it is agreeable that they are growing in importance and having an increasing impact on people's behaviour.

The question arises of what the benefits of an influencer are. The marketing agency TapInfluence cooperated with Nielsen in 2016 to determine the return on investing in marketing influencers compared to traditional digital marketing methods. The findings reveal that using an influencer gives a firm a return on investment (ROI) 11 times higher than other online methods (TapInfluence and Nielsen, 2016).

The study also shows that a consumer who has been exposed to influencer marketing has a very high purchase rate each time compared to the other control sample exposed to traditional online methods. It also confirms that consumers who have been influenced shift away from competitors' products. Their study proposes two factors that may make influencers so effective. First, influencer marketing creates what is known as consumer engagement. It shows that consumers themselves are actually seeking social media content and regularly keeping up with their preferred influencers, compared to other online methods where consumers usually may or may not even notice the advertised content.

Second, influencer marketing uses a marketing technique known as a halo effect, which means an influencer attaches themselves to the brand, carries it over and creates content for it (TapInfluence and Nielsen, 2016). This study reveals exciting factors regarding the benefits of influencer marketing methods, both for ROI and for building a substantial competitive advantage.

Another benefit of influencer marketing presented by Nielsen and TapInfluence (2016) is the secondary impact of the influencer's content. The content can be reused and shared by consumers, which helps make the brand ever-present on social media platforms. This benefit seems crucial for exposing the brand to the influencer's followers and is much more cost-effective than using a team to design online content and distribute it to the target audience. Additionally, consumers can still access influencers' content even after the marketing campaign, creating an endless brand effect.

Another study regarding influencer marketing was conducted by The Keller Fay Group and Berger (2016), which confirms that in terms of 'buying conversations', influencers have a high number of 22.2 times, which means product suggestions per week compared to an average consumer.

So, when translating that number and comparing influencers to ordinary people, the study shows that 82% of consumers are very likely to trust an influencer's suggestions, compared to 73% of ordinary people. Furthermore, when it comes to encouraging a consumer to try a product, the study indicates that influencers have a high rate (74%) of encouraging consumers to purchase or try a product, compared to 66% for the average person.

Such high numbers seem logical considering that consumers perceive influencers to be credible, believable experts on the suggested products and trust them to inform consumers how to use them (Berger and The Keller Fay Group, 2016). Furthermore, recent studies regarding the benefits of employing influencers as a marketing strategy have revealed further advantages, including the efforts by Isyanto (2020) and Lea Müller et al. (2018). Their studies confirm a significant link between the use of influencers and the positive impact on consumers' purchase interests.

There are many advantages to employing influencer marketing, and those benefits have an impact on various aspects of brands. Nevertheless, there are still some criticisms regarding influencer marketing, which have been noted by academics such as Colliander and Erlandsson (2015), Karouw et al. (2019), Rossiter and Smidts (2012), Bergkvist and Zhou (2016). Their studies primarily concentrate on consumers' reactions when they become aware that bloggers are being paid to recommend a brand. The finding reveals that whenever blog readers know the content is paid for, it creates many negative feelings toward the bloggers.

Furthermore, most of the blame fell on the bloggers themselves, while the brand was somehow relatively unaffected. This issue emphasises the importance of the fact that regardless of whether the influencer is a social media user or a celebrity, it is vital to choose an influencer who is actually interested in the brand and is happy to stand for it, so that they do not appear fake and create adverse effects. De Veirman et al. (2017) suggest that in order to avoid these negative connotations, it is essential for brands to develop a strong relationship with influencers for two primary reasons. First, the influencers, and by extension, their followers, must be suitable for the brand. Second, there better be an agreement between the brands' features and the influencer's personality (De Veirman et al., 2017).

Other academics have varying perspectives on the use of influencers, such as Lim et al. (2017), whose study found a negative link between influencers' attractiveness and consumers' purchase intention. Speaking of the negative impact of influencers on consumers, Lindh and Lisichkova (2017) cite a report by Markerly which confirms that having a large number of influencers does not necessarily mean real engagement or more purchases, as the more followers the influencer acquires, the

less the engagement outreach and brand exposure as the target segment becomes too broad.

Table 3.2: Summary of key benefits of using influencers as a marketing strategy

N	Key Benefits	References
1	Higher return on investment. Higher purchase rate. Higher consumer engagement. Creates a halo effect. The ability to reuse and share content. Cost-effective.	TapInfluence and Nielsen (2016)
2	Higher level of trust between influencers and followers. High level of encouragement to try products.	The Keller Fay Group and Berger (2016)
3	A positive and significant correlation between micro-influencer marketing and buying interests. Lea Müller et al. (2018) also examine the variable influencer marketing in relation to the buying interest with the result that influencers are shown to have a strong causal relationship with buying interest.	Lea Müller et al. (2018)
4	Based on the test results of the first hypothesis, a positive and significant influence was shown from micro-influencer marketing on the buying interest.	Isyanto (2020)

Table 3.3: Summary of key criticisms of using influencers as a marketing strategy

N	Key Criticisms	References
1	Consumers having a negative attitude towards the brands whenever they become aware of the paid recommendations (advertisements).	Colliander and Erlandsson, 2015; Karouw et al. (2019); Rossiter and Smidts (2012); Bergkvist and Qiang Zhou (2016)
2	The difficulty of ensuring both the influencers and their followers are suitable for the brand.	De Veirman et al. (2017)
3	The difficulty of establishing a compatible connection between the brand's features and the influencer's personality.	
4	Influencers' attractiveness negatively influences consumers' purchases.	Lim et al. (2017)
5	The negative link between the high number of followers and consumer engagements.	Lindh and Lisichkova (2017) cite a report by Markerly

As has been addressed, the use of influencer marketing and more precisely, social media influencers have been found to be vital marketing tools that have various benefits, but some negativities may appear when using this strategy. Therefore, just relying on employing an influencer may not be as beneficial as some may think. Making an effort to choose the right influencers for the right products may be more impactful than only choosing the influencers with a high number of followers. This number may be misleading about the actual benefits a firm will see in return, whereas hiring an influencer who has a decent number of followers within who are potential target consumers may be more beneficial and cost-efficient.

3.5 Influencers and purchase intention

The previous sections have established the idea of influencer marketing, introduced social media influencers and briefly discussed their benefits and criticisms. Therefore, this section will provide a link between the usage of social media influencers and purchase intention, which is relevant to the aim of this study. The field of study on advertisements and their impact on consumer purchase intention has experienced a tremendous evolution, mostly due to the improvements in the methods and features for delivering a message to the target audience. Hence, social media, and more precisely, social media influencers are considered key players in this progression. As a result, this section addresses the influence of different aspects of social media influencers on consumer purchase intention.

Several example studies will be highlighted in relation to social media influencers and how they impact consumer purchase intention. The table below provides a basis for this discussion.

Table 3.4: Example of studies on the general behavioural aspects of influencers and the link to purchase intention.

Author	Key Determinants	Finding
Kim et al. (2007)	Compatibility, source credibility, source attractiveness, attitude toward the product and congruence.	The findings indicate a strong link between the athletic endorser and the endorsed products if there is a matchup between them. It also shows a high level of responsiveness towards the product when there is a high level of credibility. Finally, the study concludes that attractiveness and credibility positively impact attitudes towards the endorsed product.
Cho (2010)	Perceived effectiveness, endorser's persuasiveness, health consciousness, perceived price of the product, social influence, and consumer knowledge	The study explains an endorser's persuasiveness by measuring two vital moderators, social influence and consumers' knowledge of the product, and how this connection has a significant influence on consumers' purchase intention.

Chi et al. (2011)	Perceived value	This study reveals that perceived value positively influences advertising endorsers, advertising endorsers influence purchase intention, and finally, perceived value influences purchase intention.
Chan et al. (2013)	Celebrity (attractiveness, funny, and performance skills) and advertisements (memorable, funny, and innovative)	The people in this study were able to remember celebrity endorsers whom they thought were attractive, funny, and expressive. The study also confirmed the vital nature of endorser popularity and reputation and the congruence between them and the brand. The response of those samples highlights the importance of employing celebrity endorsers. They provide more brand awareness, attract their celebrity fan base, and encourage them to try the product/service, leading to purchase intention.
Mansour and Diab (2016)	Credibility (likeability, attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, respect), consumer attitudes and religiosity	The study found that celebrities' likeability and attractiveness significantly impacts both consumers' attitude and purchase behaviour. The study also confirms that religiosity somewhat mediates both the relationships between celebrities' credibility and the attitude towards the advertisement and purchase behaviour.
Attia (2017)	Attitude toward celebrity with moderating effect of religiosity	The findings suggest a positive link between attitudes towards celebrity endorsement and purchase intention. However, the study also shows no confirmation of the moderating effect of religiosity in the previous relationship.
Djafarova and Rushworth (2017)	Influencers' credibility and reliability	Based on interviews with Instagram users, this study confirms that influencers are seen as more credible and relatable than traditional celebrities, which eventually has a positive influence on their followers' purchase intentions.

Djafarova and Rushworth (2017)	Online celebrities on Instagram vs traditional celebrities	In their study on Instagram celebrities and their impact on purchase intention, the findings reveal that celebrities have a strong influence on young female consumers. The study also shows that non-traditional celebrities such as bloggers, Instafamous individuals, and YouTube personalities impact consumers more than traditional celebrities, as they are determined to be more credible, persuasive, and consumers find such celebrities to be like them.
Lim et al. (2017)	Source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up, meaning transfer, and consumer attitude	The findings reveal the significant influence of source attractiveness, product match up and meaning transfer on consumer attitude. The study also finds a significant link between consumer attitude and purchase intention. However, the study reveals no significant influence of source credibility on purchase intention, source credibility on consumer attitude and source attractiveness on purchase intention.
Gayathri and Anwar (2019)	Credibility (trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise)	In their attempt to establish the impact of influencers using factors including credibility, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and expertise, they reached the conclusion that these factors had a significant impact on consumers' purchase intention.
Chin (2019)	Social media influencers' credibility, expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness	Their findings confirm a significant relationship between purchase intention and credibility, expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness.
Lou and Yuan (2019)	Social media source characteristics (trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity)	Their study revealed the importance of social media content features, including source characteristics (trustworthiness, attractiveness, and similarity), by introducing their impact on brand

		awareness and consumers' purchase intentions.
Woodcock and Johnson (2019)	Influencers and brand congruity	The aim of their study was to determine the impact of social media influencers and brand congruity. The results indicated that the more fit between the influencers and the brands, the more effective it will become.
Ki and Kim (2019)	Attractive, prestigious, informative and expertise	Research has found that social media content that possesses attractive, prestigious, and informative messages demonstrating an influencer's expertise in a given field, positively influences electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and purchase intentions.
Bashari and Fazl-Ersi (2020)	Expertise, engagement and composition of the follower base	Their study emphasises the importance of including further factors such as social media influencers' expertise, engagement, gender, age and interests. In order to present a complete understanding of the impact of social media influencers.

It is becoming increasingly evident that understanding the impact of social media influencers on marketing activities is crucial for professionals in various fields. This recognition is reflected in the many online articles available today, such as those by Hill (2019) and Petrofes (2018). However, despite the literature overload on the subject, there remains a lack of research combining the two streams of "social media influencers" and "influencer marketing." Rosario et al. (2020) further point out that much of eWOM research has primarily focused on textual formats. Given the rapid growth of visual platforms like Instagram, Youtube, and Snapchat, as well as the global phenomenon of visual content sharing, it is increasingly crucial to focus on analysing visual data in-depth (Farace et al., 2017).

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter was built on the foundation of two main aspects of social media content: electronic word-of-mouth communication and social media influencers as content creators. As discussed, content on social media has gone through a lot of evolution, from the idea of person-to-person communication to electronic word of mouth to a more recent feature known as visual electronic word of mouth communication. This chapter discussed these improvements, highlighting the different types of communication, their benefits, and their link to consumers' purchase intentions.

On the other hand, this chapter has provided an insight into the content creators known as social media influencers by looking at the classification of the term, terminology, benefits, criticism and finally the link between influencers and consumers' purchase intentions. The idea behind combining social media content and content creators was primarily to support the research objective of trying to increase the understanding of the influence of social media visual content on consumers' purchase intentions, based not only on the content itself but also on the creators of this content. The intention was to gain a fuller understanding of the case at hand, namely the impact of influencers' visual social media content on the purchase intentions of consumers.

CHAPTER FOUR
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH MODEL

4. Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework and Research Model

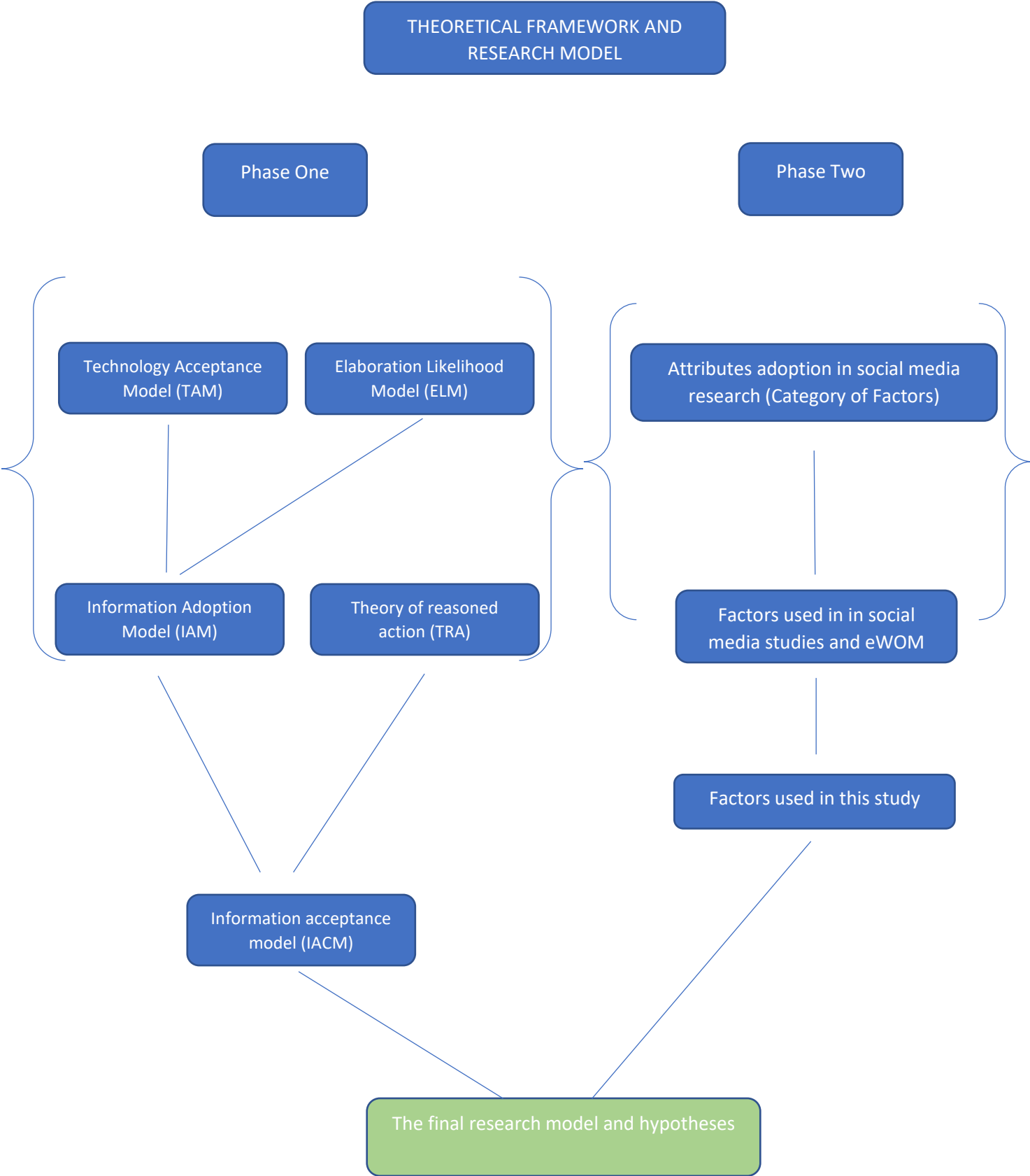
4.1 Introduction

This chapter is split into two parts. The first concentrates on theories and models used in research on social media studies and provides an overview of five theories and models; it starts with a well-known and widely-used model known as the technology acceptance model (TAM), then briefly highlights the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) as a way of introducing the information adoption model (IAM); then, it focuses on another popular theory known as the theory of reasoned action (TRA), which highlights the consumer behaviour aspect of this research; finally, a recent and more suitable model for this study is discussed, which is the information acceptance model (IACM).

The reason for introducing these theories and models is that it is in line with the aim of this research, which focuses on the impact of social media visual content on consumer behaviour. Therefore, it seems only logical to consider not only the theories and models related to the informational context but also the theories related to consumer behaviour. IACM seems to combine these two elements, hence its suitability.

After discussing this range of theories and models, the second phase of this chapter goes a little bit deeper by addressing the factors used in research related to social media studies. It firstly provides an overall understanding of the categories of factors used to study this modern technology, then the actual factors used in this study. To sum up, this chapter concludes by providing the research hypothesis and final research model. Figure 4.1 visually illustrates this chapter.

Figure 4.1 Visual illustration of Chapter 4.



4.2 Theories and Models Related to Social Media Research

The study of social media and its related aspects has received a lot of attention, and many theories have been introduced to examine this modern phenomenon. The next section presents each theory and model related to this study.

4.2.1 Technology acceptance model (TAM)

TAM is a model which Davis introduced in 1989 to serve the purpose of understanding and describing any behavioural matters related to people's acceptance of new technology, calling it the technology acceptance model (TAM) (Lee et al., 2011; Venkatesh and Davis, 2000; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Yiu et al., 2007). TAM was established based on the work of Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), known as TRA. However, TAM is considered more appropriate for information systems, while TRA focuses more on behavioural theories (Özkan et al., 2010).

Davis's model has been widely applied by researchers in different fields, including the fields of Internet usage (Porter and Donthu, 2006; Scherer, Siddiq and Tondeur, 2019) and social media usage (Rauniar et al., 2014; Hsu and Lin, 2008; Hossain and de Silva, 2009; Steyn et al., 2010; Casaló et al., 2010; Kwon and Wen, 2010). The model was also applied to investigate information adoption in the form of eWOM (Ayeh, 2015; Elwalda et al., 2016; Yang, 2017). The model is formulated to examine factors including perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of new technology, linking this to users' attitudes towards adopting such technology. Table 4.2 provides some examples of different approaches taken by researchers when employing TAM.

Table 4.1: Examples of selected research that used TAM.

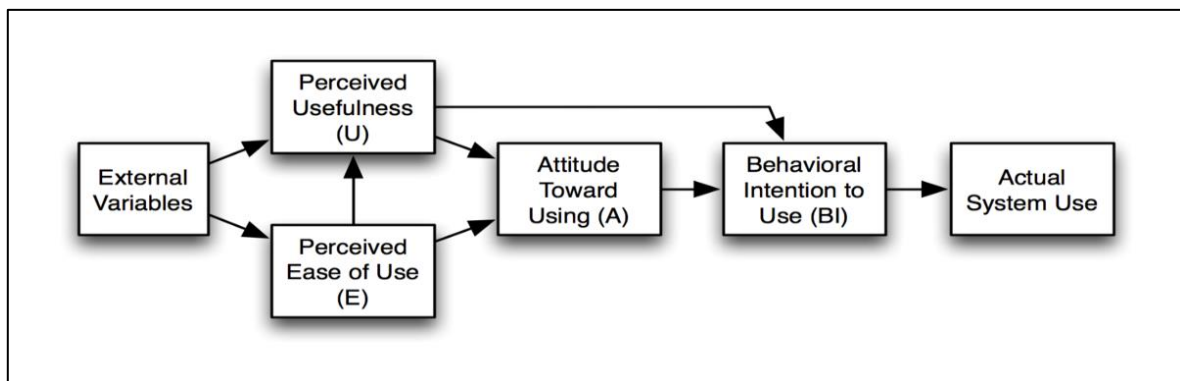
Study	Summary of the findings
Hsu and Lin (2008)	Studied the role of TAM in users' intention to blog and attitude towards blogging.
Hossain and de Silva (2009)	Studied TAM with a focus on the actual usage of virtual communities under the moderation of social ties.
Steyn et al. (2010)	Studied TAM in relation to social media releases within the public relations community to understand bloggers' intention to use the elements of these releases.
Casaló et al. (2010)	Adopted TAM to investigate users' intention to use an online travel community and make recommendations in it.
Kwon and Wen (2010)	Adopted TAM to study its mediating effect on actual social media use.
Casaló et al. (2011)	Used TAM to examine users' intention to follow advice.
Al-Emran, et al. (2018)	Their study investigated 87 research papers and found that most of these papers aimed to use TAM and extend the model with external factors. Furthermore, it showed that external factors are needed for further investigation, and the model is still an open door for academics to look through.
Scherer et al. (2019)	Their study concluded that TAM is a significant model when examining technology usage. However, the importance of internal and external factors appears crucial to TAM.

Salloum et al. (2019)	In their research, it was concluded that factors such as system quality, content quality, information quality*, computer self-efficacy, subjective norms*, enjoyment, accessibility, and computer playfulness were determined to be the most effective.
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Even though this model has been employed in various contexts, it has a few critics. Prior studies like those of Bagozzi (2007), Bhattacharjee and Premkumar (2004), Riffai et al. (2012) and Tarhini et al. (2015) have criticised the model because of its limited ability to provide more defining aspects of factors, while others in studies within the eWOM domain, such as Ayeh (2015), have criticised the model because of its limited capacity to explain users' attitudes and intentions. It was further criticised for focusing more on usage and ignoring the link between intention and actual behaviour (Bagozzi, 2007).

Recent studies by Scherer et al. (2019) and Al-Emran, et al. (2018) emphasise the importance of considering external factors when employing TAM. As seen in Figure 4.2, the model is formulated on two main constructions' perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989).

Figure 4.2: Technology acceptance model (TAM).



Source: (Davis, 1989)

4.2.2 Elaboration likelihood model (ELM)

Even though the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) will not be used in this study, it seems logical to at least provide a general overview of the model, especially if we consider that the information adoption model (IAM) introduced below is a combination of TAM and ELM. Therefore, it is important to address this model to get the full picture. The ELM, created by Petty and Cacioppo in 1981, was intended to fill a gap in the research regarding persuasion and its influence on consumer attitudes. Before this, there were some efforts to serve the same purpose, notably by Fishbein and Ajzen (1972), Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) and later Fishbein and Ajzen (2010).

The idea of ELM introduces a framework of persuasion which is assumed to be used in different sources, including messages, message recipients and context variables (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). The foundation of the ELM was two opposite routes to persuasion, the central and peripheral routes, as these indicate the likelihood level of processing a message (Schumann et al., 2011). Moreover, based on the receiver's motive and ability, their likelihood will be either high or low, which indicates potential routes of persuasion (Petty and Cacioppo, 1983; 1986).

Regarding the actual usage of the model, Kitchen (2013) confirms that the model was introduced during the 1980s, which was a time of increased mass-media marketing communication. Therefore, how consumers receive and process the received advertising may have changed and evolved. To confirm this, relevantly recent studies have come up with a modern online component to understand consumer persuasion (Hershberger, 2003; Karson and Korgaonkar, 2001; Liu and Shrum, 2009; San José-Cabezudo et al., 2009; Sinclaire et al., 2010; Tam and Ho, 2005).

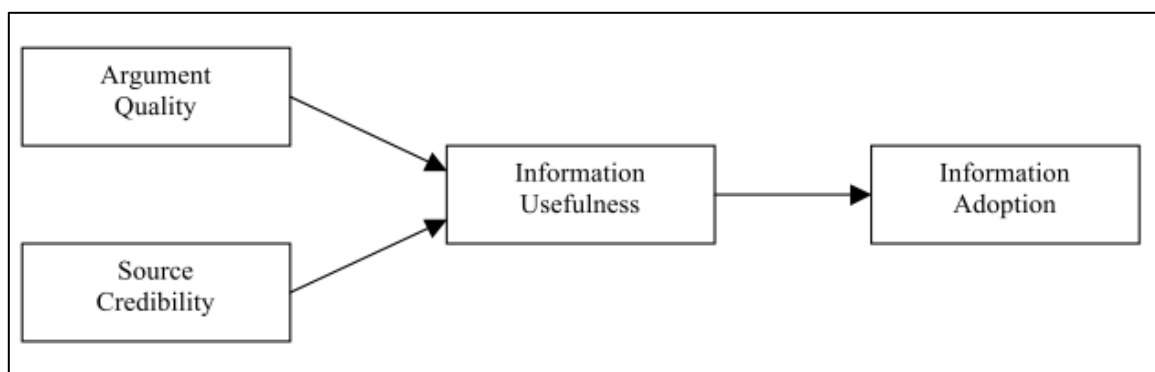
Hershberger (2003) expanded the ELM to include an electronic version in order to examine how received advertising information can be employed to enhance the brand and how it is linked to customer attitudes. However, in their process of employing the traditional factors of ELM into an online environment, the results indicated no moderating role of attitude in an online context. The same goes with other studies by Te'eni-Harari et al. (2007), as they used a similar approach but with a different age group; the result confirmed that the model does not apply. This limitation appears to be the primary criticism of the ELM model.

4.2.3 Information adoption model (IAM)

As addressed in the previous chapter, contemporary consumers are influenced by online WOM content; consequently, the content itself can have a different level of impact on receivers (Chaiken and Eagly, 1976; Cheung et al., 2008). From this perspective, prior studies have concentrated on the information adoption process. As seen in Table 4.4, prior studies have employed this model to increase understanding of how people access and process the received information. Other researchers have applied TAM/TRA in the context of information systems to understand how people are affected by thoughts or information (Ajzen, 1985; Davis, 1989; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975); the impact of information on users has led to the creation of the information adoption model (IAM), which was built on the combination of the TAM (Davis, 1989) and ELM (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; Petty et al., 1981).

As shown in Figure 4.3, IAM has been developed with four factors: argument quality, source credibility, information usefulness and information adoption. Furthermore, the model was introduced to better understand the change in users' behaviour due to their communication on computer-mediated platforms.

Figure 4.3: IAM



Source: Sussman and Siegal (2003)

The primary focus of IAM is to determine the influence of information on computer-mediated communication platforms. It has also been applied in eWOM research, including the efforts of Cheung et al. (2008, 2009) and Shu and Scott (2014). More precisely, Cheung et al. (2008) employ IAM in their study on online discussion forums. Likewise, Shu and Scott (2014) apply the model to the topic of social media. Finally, a recent study by Hsu (2022) used IAM to determine consumers' attitudes within the beauty industry. Table 4.2 provides more examples of various approaches to using IAM.

Table 4.2: Examples of selected research that used IAM.

Study	Summary of the findings
Shen et al. (2014)	Using IAM, their study confirmed the link between quality and source credibility with information adoption. Their study also proved the significant impact of copying others on information adoption.
Arumugam and Omar (2016)	The study used IAM to develop a conceptual framework to improve understanding of consumer information adoption of eWOM. Furthermore, their study suggested future research should examine the level of influence eWOM has on consumers' purchasing decisions.
Erkan and Evans (2016)	The study found that quality, credibility, usefulness, adoption of information, need for information and attitude towards information are significant factors for eWOM communication in social media that impact consumers' purchase intentions.*
Srimulyo and Halim (2021)	This study on employing IAM concluded that information quality appeared to have a more substantial impact on usefulness than credibility.
Hsu (2022)	The study intended to examine the impact of eWOM in the beauty industry. Using IAM, the research found that

	consumers' attitudes towards the product and the brand were more receptive than their attitudes toward eWOM adoption
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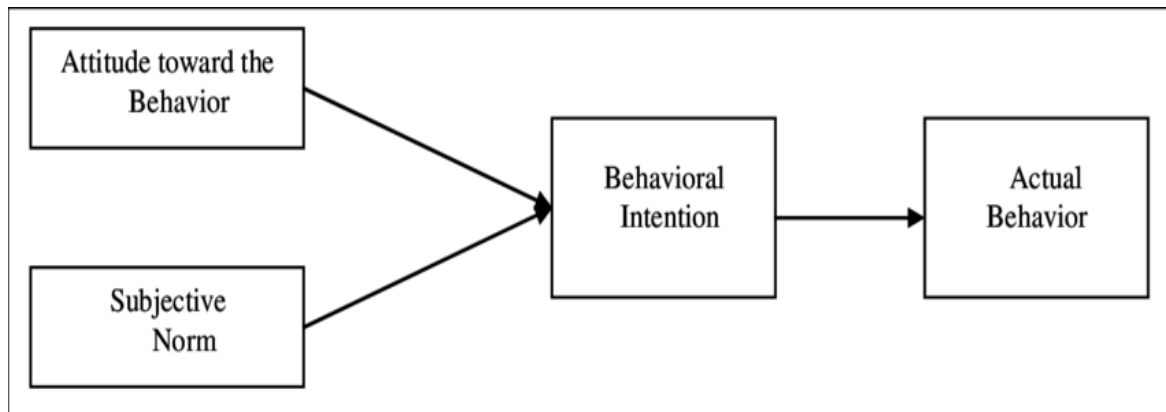
Even though IAM has been widely accepted, the model has faced some criticism, including that it focuses on the characteristics of information (quality, credibility, and usefulness). However, consumers' changing behaviours as a result of information should be further investigated (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Arumugam and Omar, 2016). As this study illustrates the influence of visual eWOM content on social media, it is based not only on the characteristics of visual eWOM information but also on consumers' behaviour towards the content.

4.2.4 Theory of reasoned action (TRA)

The theory of reasoned action proposes to confirm the link between behavioural intentions, attitudes and subjective norms (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Madden et al., 1992; Zhang et al., 2014), which was a focal point of TAM criticism. Specifically, in relation to eWOM, the theory has been applied in prior studies to determine the relationship between eWOM and purchase intention (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Prendergast et al., 2010; Reichelt et al., 2014; Otieno et al., 2016; Nguyen et al., 2018; Buabeng-Andoh, 2018; Arevalo and Brown, 2019; Ellis and Helaire, 2021), as can be seen in Table 4.3.

Moreover, this research examines only attitude, subjective norms, and behavioural intention; the behavioural intention was preferred over actual behaviour. The target of this study is to determine the influence of visual eWOM on consumer purchase intentions. A number of independent theories, including TRA, the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), and TAM, have all agreed on behavioural intention being the antecedent of actual behaviour (Ajzen, 1985; Davis, 1989; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Arevalo and Brown 2019). Therefore, attitude, subjective norms and behavioural intention will be used in this research.

Figure 4.4: Theory of reasoned action (TRA).



Source: Developed by Fishbein, 1967.

Table 4.3: Examples of selected approaches using TRA.

Study	Summary of the findings
Otieno et al. (2016)	Their study compared TRA to other theories and found that TRA is a vital theory in the field of technology innovation, with some further external factors, including facilitating conditions, social pressure, user awareness of innovation, and user readiness.
Nguyen et al. (2018)	After employing the TRA model, they concluded that the theory was to be crucial to predicting behavioural intention change. Moreover, the attitude was found to impact intention significantly compared to norms which did not have the same level of impact.
Buabeng-Andoh (2018)	This study integrated TRA and TAM and found that the combined model was able to predict behavioural intention. Also, it found that attitude and norms are essential factors when examining the effect on student behavioural intention.

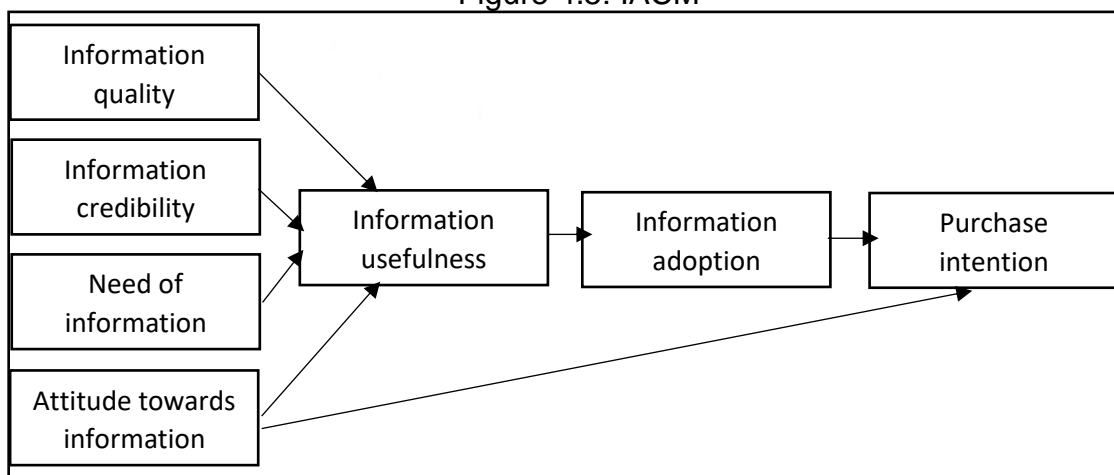
Arevalo and Brown (2019)	Their findings confirmed the importance of intention for predicting behaviour and the link between attitude and perceived behavioural control with intention.
Ellis and Helaire (2020)	Using TRA, their study confirmed the link between attitude, norms, and students' intentions.

Like TAM, ELM and IAM, TRA has faced some criticism. One of the primary critiques this model has faced is about its reference to buying behaviours, as these are potentially affected by external factors like an unexpected change in income or promotions (De Cannière et al., 2009; Foxall, 2005; Infosino, 1986; Morrison, 1979; Sun and Morwitz, 2010). More precisely, a consumer may not make a purchase despite having a purchase intention. Therefore, this research will discuss purchase intention rather than actual purchasing behaviour.

4.2.5 Information acceptance model (IACM)

IACM is a recent model that extends IAM (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). It was introduced by Erkan and Evans (2016) and was formulated to understand how consumers' purchase intentions are being influenced by eWOM content in social media.

Figure 4.5: IACM



Source: Erkan and Evans (2016)

IACM considers both the characteristics of eWOM information and consumers' behaviour. It uses the principles of IAM to explain the characteristics of eWOM information while integrating the concept of consumer behaviour towards eWOM information from TRA. IACM combines these different factors from IAM and TRA to consider eWOM characteristics alongside consumer behaviour, and the model presents the following variables: information quality, information credibility, need for information, attitude towards information, information usefulness, information adoption and purchase intention (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Although the model is relatively new, it has already been employed by many scholars, including Sánchez et al. (2018), Santosa and Wandebori (2019), Tjongirin et al. (2020), Park (2020), and Rizal et al. (2020). Table 4.4 provides more details on selected approaches that have employed IACM.

Table 4.4: Examples of selective approaches in employing IACM.

Study	Summary of the findings
Sánchez et al. (2018)	Using IACM, their study supports the significance of eWOM characteristics* for purchase intention on social media. However, the impact of social media content quality on usefulness does not appear to be as affected.
Santosa and Wandebori (2019)	Using IACM to explore factors affecting consumers' purchase intentions in an online community. They examined the impact of eWOM characteristics on consumers' purchase intentions and look at social capital, which appears to have the same level of impact.
Tjongirin et al. (2020)	Research intending to explore the changes in consumers' intentions on social media based on IACM factors. Their study employs content quality, credibility, usefulness, credibility, adoption, and attitude. They concluded that all these factors are significant.

	However, the usefulness of content does not impact purchase intention, and the same goes for attitude toward social media content and usefulness.
Park (2020)	This study investigated the impact of eWOM in social media on consumers' loyalty. Found that content credibility, quality, usefulness, adoption, the need for information, and attitude towards social media content are the main factors driving this impact.
Rizal et al. (2020)	This study was designed to determine the influence of eWOM on Instagram. The study supported the significant impact of content quality, credibility, usefulness, adoption, and attitude. However, the link between content quality and usefulness did not appear to be significant.

Even though, regardless of the IACM being relatively a recent model, it has been employed in a decent number of studies. However, it faced a few primary criticisms, including the fact that the model did not include the quantity of information as well as the depth of information (experience), two significant limitations of the model which were later confirmed by Erkan (2016) in the finding. Therefore, in order to employ the IACM properly, these two elements will be employed in this research with an aim to provide a complete understanding of the impact of social media content on consumers' purchase intentions. Consequently, since this thesis aims to examine the impact of influencers' visual eWOM on social media on consumers' purchase intentions, the IACM seems appropriate for serving this aim. Furthermore, this thesis focuses on examining not only the characteristics of visual eWOM but also consumer behaviour towards it, as well as the source of the visual eWOM, which in this thesis is social media influencers.

4.3 Conclusion for the First Phase of This Chapter

The first phase of this chapter has aimed to highlight different theories and models employed in the study of social media. As addressed earlier, there are so many theories and models related to studying this modern technology. However, TAM, ELM, TRA, IAM and IACM are the only theories which were discussed in-depth, as these theories are the most used and related to the aim of this research.

Also, the study of TAM, ELM, TRA and IAM were addressed in order to provide a broader understanding of theories and models before introducing IACM as a research model.

After discussing these various theories and models, IACM emerged as the most appropriate model for this research. However, in light of the aim of this research and to provide a clearer and fuller picture of different factors affecting the impact of visual social media content on consumer purchase intention, as well as to consider the evolving features of social media applications, it seems vital to address some other factors. With this aim, the second phase of this research presents more information on different attributes employed in studies related to social media as a flow to introduce factors employed from IACM and other factors suggested by this study in order to create the final expanded research model.

4.4 Introduction to the second phase of this chapter

After discussing different theories and models in studies related to social media and the model used in this research, IACM, this section will draw more attention to the type of factors used in social media studies as well as the actual factors employed in this field; this is a route to address the factors which will be used in this particular research. This section also sheds some light on factors from IACM as well as external factors, which will eventually create the final research model.

This section starts by providing general frameworks and groups of different factors, such as antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes. After that, the section introduces different variables and their associates, such as factors associated with the response, factors associated with the stimulus, factors associated with communication, and finally the receiver's factors. Therefore, after discussing different categories of factors and their links, as well as different factors used in social media studies, the section highlights factors used in the study, clarifies each factor, hypothesises developments, and finally, introduces the proposed research model.

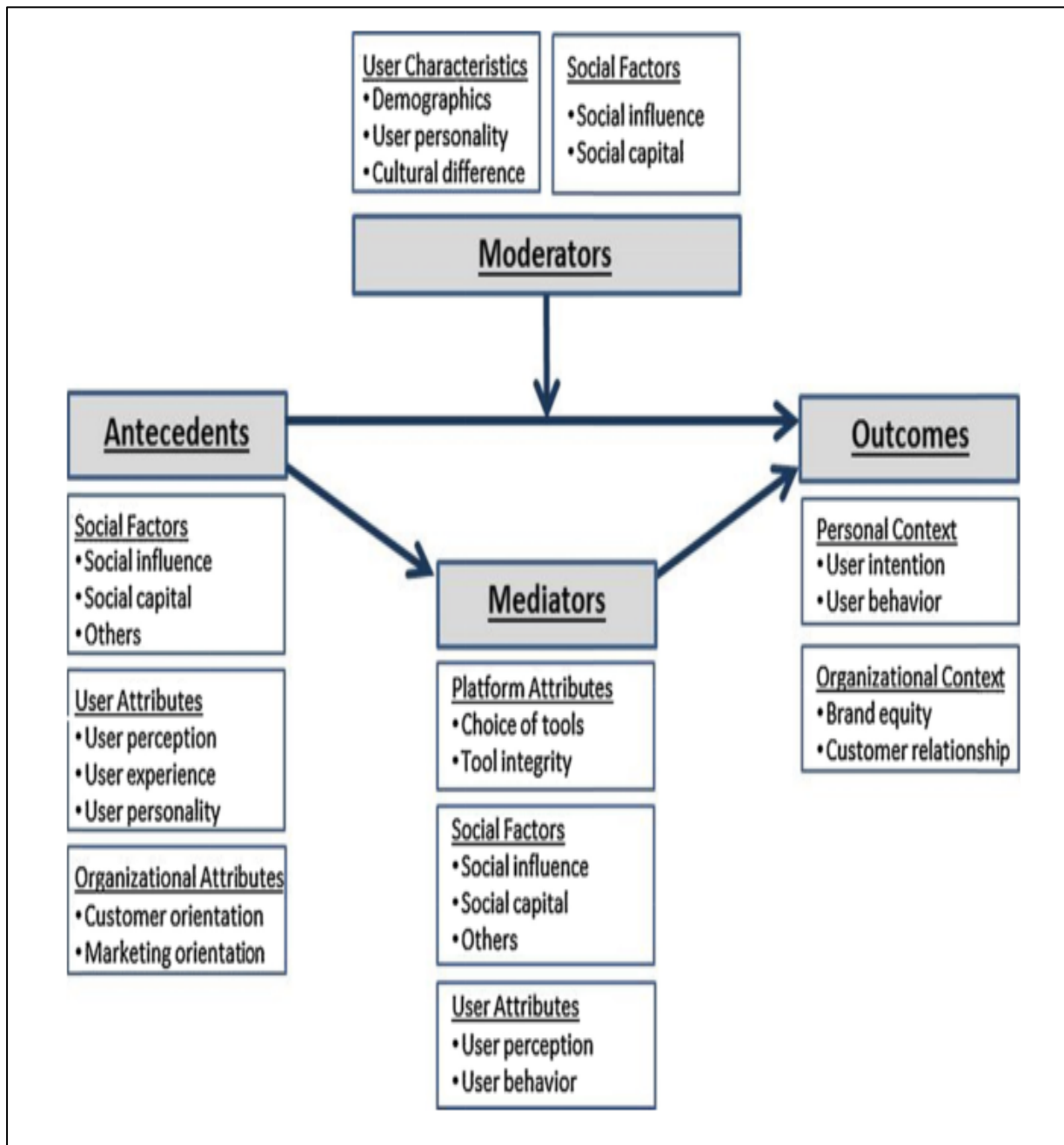
4.5 Attributes Adoption in Social Media Research

In terms of different social media studies on users' behaviour towards social media activities, Nagi et al. (2015) introduced a causal-chain framework of social media research. Their framework was mainly attributed to the model of Mohammed et al. (2010), which introduced input- moderator–mediator-output, and that involves antecedents in the form of inputs, moderators, and mediators, and outcomes in the form of outputs. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), the antecedents are considered input variables that eventually lead to the outcomes; moreover, the relations between these two are defined by the mediators. Finally, the direction/strength of the relationships is influenced by the mediators and moderators.

As presented in Figure 4.6, the causal-chain framework of social media research introduces each variable, and it is gathered in their respective positions (antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes); however, some variables appear in two locations because these variables are used in different locations by different studies.

For example, the variable ‘social influence’ is shown as an antecedent and a mediator in one piece of research (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002); it was used as an antecedent, while it was used as a mediator in another piece of research (Dholakia et al., 2004).

Figure 4.6: Causal-chain framework for social media research.



Source: Nagi et al. (2015)

4.5.1 Antecedents

Based on the causal-chain framework (Nagi et al., 2015), an antecedent known as inputs is split into three essential categories: social factors, user attributes, and organisational attributes. The next part highlights each part separately.

A. Social factors.

The term 'social factors' has been used by different academics, with social influence and social capital as antecedents, to determine people's socio-psychological motives. Moreover, based on the social influence model, subjective norms, group norms, and social identity all have been employed to examine the motive for acting in a certain way and the change in individuals' behaviour. The social capital model involves elements such as social ties, social interaction, trust, and reciprocity (Nagi et al., 2015), which all have been applied in social media research, including Chiu et al. (2006), Ip and Wagner (2008), Lin et al. (2009), Chai and Kim (2010), Shiue et al., 2010, Chiu et al. (2011), and Hau and Kim (2011); they all used the items in social media research with the aim of mapping users' knowledge sharing, users' intention and behaviour, and group cohesion. Finally, other academics have considered different social factors as inputs in the causal-chain framework, including Dholakia et al. (2004). Their study uses social enhancement in the form of an antecedent to investigate individuals' desires. Wei (2009) also used social power as an antecedent in his study to determine the gap in knowledge between filter blogs and personal journals.

B. User attributes.

When looking at user attributes, many studies give a lot of attention to user perception, user experience, and user personality to determine users' attitudes, behaviour, and characteristics on different social media platforms (Nagi et al., 2015). The factor of user perception was heavily employed by a number of studies that theoretically employed TAM to investigate social media ease of use and perceived usefulness, including the work of Hsu and Lin (2008), where they employed TAM to examine user attitude and intention towards blog platforms.

At the same time, Casaló et al. (2010) used TAM with the online travel community to explore users' intention to use and advise others about this community. Additionally, Casaló et al. (2011) adopted TAM to understand online users' intentions regarding recommendations.

Regardless of the usage of TAM, other studies, including Parra-López et al. (2011), have adopted a theoretical model to investigate the perceived benefits which influence the intention to use social media in terms of planning and receiving trip recommendations. In contrast, Lu and Hsiao (2010) introduce perceived value regarding emotional value, social value, price/value for money, and performance/quality as a way of understanding an individual's intention to make a purchase.

Another variable in the user attributes category of social media activities is user experience. The concept has been deemed crucial in various social media studies, such as by Nambisan and Watt (2011), in their effort to highlight users' attitudes toward products, brands and the quality of services on social media. They employed different kinds of user experience such as pragmatic, hedonic, sociable, and usable. Around the same time, Akar and Topc (2011) confirm the link between the social media experience and user attitudes towards marketing activities.

User personality is an additional factor that was also considered an antecedent in social media research. For instance, Huang et al. (2010) conducted a study on bloggers by examining their level of involvement in association with the impact of advertisement and brand attitudes. At the same time, Lu and Hsiao (2010) examined personality traits to study users' intention to gather purchase-related information and services from social media sites.

C. Organisational attributes.

In terms of organisational attributes academics have established two principal input variables to try to understand the impact of social media usage on different brands' elements like revenue, brand building, and customer relationships: customer orientation and marketing orientation (Nagi et al., 2015), customers' orientation mainly focuses on examining consumer behaviour and actions regarding choosing a product and brand, while being influenced by social media information.

Karakaya and Barnes (2010) presented a study that investigated the customer care experience of product and brand choices following the influence of online reviews and confirmed a strong relationship between online consumer opinion and consumer choices in social media platforms. Meanwhile, De Valck et al. (2009) produced a study that explored consumers' characteristics in the online community to highlight their pre-and post-purchase evaluation and information search activities.

On the other hand, market orientation is entirely associated with using marketing principles in the social media framework. Chen et al. (2011) investigate the impact of product quality and price on consumer online review posting behaviour. Their study concludes that marketing variables negatively or positively impact online posting behaviour, which eventually affects consumers' product and brand choices.

Additionally, Hsiao et al. (2010) analysed the influence of information quality and system quality in relation to expectation, perceived performance, and disconfirmation regarding the association between blog-user satisfaction.

4.5.2 Mediators

Mediators are known as variables that describe the causal relationships between antecedents and outcomes (Preacher et al., 2007). With the link to social media studies, these variables can be categorised into three main domains: platform attributes, social factors, and user attributes.

A. Platform attributes.

Platform attributes include different tools which have a significant impact on the relationship between inputs and outcomes. In the social media framework, several tools include Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, all of which have been created for different aims and suit different target groups. Therefore, implementing such tools may have an effect by mediating the level of influence on behaviour (Nagi et al., 2015).

For example, Chen (2010) examined how using Twitter actively satisfied the need to communicate with others, and concluded that the use of Twitter could mediate such a relationship. Further studies by Hsieh et al. (2010) and Wang and Lin (2011) also confirm how valuable these tools can be for information and system quality, which eventually leads to the mediation of the assumed behaviour.

B. Social factors.

Social factors are another kind of mediator for social media that includes social influence and social capital. These factors have been employed in different social media studies in order to establish the relationship between input and outcome variables. Dholakia et al. (2004) adopted social influence as a mediator variable to study user participation in online communities. Other schoolers employed social capital as a mediator with an aim to examine individuals' intentions and behaviour, such as Hsiao et al. (2010), who utilised the role of trust in mediating individuals' intentions to purchase.

C. User attributes.

The last group of mediators are known as user attributes. Previous studies have confirmed the mediating impact of user perception and user behaviour. Even though this variable has been extensively employed as an antecedent, it has also been considered a mediator. In particular, Kwon and Wen (2010) used TAM to determine its mediating influence on social media use. Lin et al. (2009) utilised personal perceptions as a way to mediate users' behaviour in a professional online community. Finally, Lu and Hsiao (2010) proposed a mediating impact of perceived value on individuals' intention to pay.

Like user attributes, user behaviours have also been employed as mediators in different studies to investigate the impact between antecedents and outcomes. In particular, Hossain and de Silva (2009) investigated consumers' attitudes toward social media usage and used their research to mediate the relationship between the input variables of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and influence of ties and the output variable of behavioural intention, which influenced the actual usage.

Other academics such as Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002), Blanchard (2008), Casaló et al. (2010), Casaló et al. (2011), Chang and Zhu (2011), Chiu et al. (2006), Hau and Kim (2011), Hsu and Lin (2008), Huang et al. (2010), and Kang et al. (2007) also considered individuals' attitude towards social media usage under the mediation impact of individuals' intention and/or behaviour.

4.5.3 Moderators

A moderator variable can be classified in terms of its direction, as it influences the direction and/or strength of the correlation between the dependent and independent variables (Baron and Kenny, 1986). In social media studies, the moderators' variables can be categorised into two main categories: user characteristics and social factors.

A. User characteristics.

User characteristics are known as demographic variables, an individual's personality, and cultural diversity. Previous studies within this domain have examined how individuals' characteristics on social media platforms may influence the strength and/or direction of the relationship between antecedents and the expected behaviour. This was in the intention of Zhang et al. (2009), Chen (2010) and Correa et al. (2010), and Ahmed et al. (2016). Demographic factors such as age and gender will be applied in this research, as well as a consideration of other potential associations between other demographic factors like education, income, and marital status.

B. Social factors.

On the other hand, many studies have focused on examining social factors such as social influence and social capital, and how they can be employed as moderator variables. Furthermore, Casaló et al. (2011) utilised social influence in the form of a moderator when looking at the relationship between user perceptions and their intention to follow recommendations.

Also, Fischer and Reuber (2011) introduced two social influence variables, community orientation and community norm adherence, in their aim to identify their impact on social interactions on Twitter. Hossain and de Silva (2009) also proposed a study on the effects of social capital on social ties, which moderates the link between consumer attitudes toward usage and consumer behaviour intention.

4.5.4 Outcomes

The outcomes are the hypothesised results of the antecedents under the effect of mediators and moderators (Nagi et al., 2015). Within the social media study framework, the outcomes are classified into personal and organisational contexts.

A. Personal context.

The first dimension is personal context, which includes user intention and user behaviour and can be considered an essential outcome; this has been widely discussed by academics in the field of user intention, which has been the focal point of some valuable social media studies; for example, Parra-López et al. (2011) introduced a study to investigate users' intention to use social media in relation to the benefits of the usage. Correa et al. (2010) proposed a study that associated social media usage with personality traits. Moreover, Steyn et al. (2010), in their study on public relations, examined the relationship between the intention to use social media and perceived effectiveness. Meanwhile, Cheung and Lee (2010) conducted a study on the collective intention for social media usage concerning subjective norms, group norms, and social identity.

On the other hand, user behaviour is another element of the personal context within social media studies. Such an item contains the user's change of behaviour, including the need for connection, knowledge sharing, satisfaction, and effectual cognition (Nagi et al., 2015). Chen (2010) examined the need for connection for Twitter users and proposed that many Twitter users could be seen to enjoy a need for connection.

B. Organisation context.

The organisation context is mainly associated with brand equity and the customer relationship, which are the outputs in the causal-chain framework. In particular, Colliander and Dahlén (2011) drew a comparison between brand publicity on social media platforms in traditional media. They concluded that blogs are important in terms of increasing brand attitudes that drive purchase intentions. Also, Freberg et al. (2011) conducted a study on social media influencers and their benefits to brands. They determined that their influence on brand equity was based on their credibility as perceived by social media users.

Customer relationship has also been considered and examined in different social media studies. For instance, Porter and Donthu (2008) introduced an investigation within the context of online communities. They reviewed how brands sponsoring online communities played a role in making the brands trusted and valued. They concluded that trust played a role in motivating consumers to act rationally towards sponsoring the brand. It also played a role in motivating users to share personal information, participating in a new product campaign, and recognising user loyalty.

In contrast, Akar and Topc (2011) presented research within the social media marketing perspective and highlighted the factors influencing consumers' attitudes toward social media marketing. They found a valid link between social media and customers' attitudes and proposed the primary importance of social media marketers developing marketing activities to enhance their consumers' relationships.

4.6 Attributes adoption in social media and eWOM Studies

After discussing different theories associated with social media, theories employed in this study, and general attributes adopted in social media research, this section will follow up by discussing an aspect more relevant to the study of visual electronic word of mouth in social media. Since this study concentrates on electronic word of mouth's visual character, it is vital to address this aspect in depth. Moreover, this section presents different factors used in social media and eWOM studies and classifies them into four main categories: factors associated with the response; factors associated with the stimulus; factors associated with the communicator; and factors associated with the receiver. Following on from that is a discussion of different factors employed in this research, clarification of each factor, hypotheses and finally, the proposed research model.

Hovland (1948), one of the leading authors in social communication studies, refers to social communication as 'the process by which an individual (the communicator) transmits stimuli (usually verbal symbols) to modify the behaviour of other individuals (communicates)' (p. 317). Social communication, which is in our case visual eWOM communication, includes four central elements; the response, which is known as the influence or action; the behaviour change influenced by the communicator. The stimulus is known as the message (visual eWOM) sent by the communicator. The communicator, here the social media influencer, is the source or person who sends the content. The receiver is the people (followers) who respond to the communication (Cheung and Thadani, 2012). Tables 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8 discuss each element in detail.

As shown in Table 4.5, there are different factors associated with the response. However, based on this research's aim and IACM, factors like attitude, information adoption, information usefulness and purchase intention will be employed in this research.

Table 4.5: Factors associated with the response.

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
Attitude	User's impression regarding a person, brand, products, services, and websites.	Chu and Kamal (2008); Doh and Hwang (2009); Lee, Park and Han (2008); Lee and Youn (2009); Sen and Lerman (2007)
Information adoption	A method in which users purposefully engage in using information.	Cheung et al. (2008); Cheung et al. (2009); Liu (2006); Park and Lee (2009); Steffes and Burgee (2009); Zhang and Watts (2008)
Information usefulness	The perception of eWOM content being useful.	Cheung et al. (2008)
Trust	The general view of the truthfulness of the message.	Awad and Ragowsky (2008); Liu (2006)
Purchase intention	The will to purchase a product in the future.	Bickart and Schindler (2001); Doh and Hwang (2009); Huang and Chen (2006); Lee and Youn (2009); Park and Lee (2009); Park and Kim (2008); Park, Lee and Han (2007); Sher and Lee (2009); Xia and Bechwati (2008)
Product choice/purchase decision	Products that a consumer determines to purchase at e-commerce websites.	Huang and Chen (2006); Riegner (2007); Senecal and Nantel (2004); Steffes and Burgee (2009)
Repurchase intention	The willingness to purchase a product over again in the future.	Gauri et al. (2008)
Expected spending	The expected amount of money that will be spent to purchase a product.	Bickart and Schindler (2001)
Knowledge about product	Knowledge about the product category.	Bickart and Schindler (2001)
Thought about product	The extent to which consumers have thought about the product type.	Bickart and Schindler (2001)
Social presence	The degree to which a psychological link has been established between a user and a website.	Kumar and Benbasat (2006)

Perceived usefulness	The degree to which a user considers a website to be useful for his/her shopping target.	Kumar and Benbasat (2006); Xia and Bechwati (2008)
eWOM review credibility	The degree to which eWOM advice offers accurate and truthful content.	Cheung et al. (2009); Doh and Hwang (2009); Park and Lee (2009)
Perceived popularity of the product	Perceived level of popularity of a particular product.	Park and Lee (2008)
Perceived informativeness of message	The extent to which an eWOM message is able to offer necessary information which helps readers understand the product.	Park and Lee (2008)
Perceived product quality	Perceived level of product quality.	Lee and Lee (2009)
Willingness to recommend	Willingness to recommend products in the future.	Lee and Youn (2009)
Helpfulness	Perception of the helpfulness of reviews.	Sen and Lerman (2007)

Table 4.6 follows up by highlighting the second set of factors associated with the stimulus after addressing factors associated with the response. In this research, only factors such as quality and quantity from the stimulus perspective will be included.

Table 4.6: Factors associated with the stimulus.

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
Argument Quality - Relevance - Timeliness - Accuracy	Argument quality views as the strength of arguments in the message content, Relevance refers to the messages being relevant and useful for making a purchase decision. Timeliness refers to the content being current and up to date. Accuracy refers to the trustworthiness of the matter.	Awad and Ragowsky (2008); Cheung et al. (2008); Cheung et al. (2009); Chu and Kamal (2008); Lee, Park and Han (2008); Park, Lee and Han (2007); Sher and Lee (2009); Zhang and Watts (2008)

Information enjoyment	Enjoyment is used to express the motivation of consumers. Moreover, the more enjoyable the content found by the consumers, the more likely they will make a purchase.	Childers et al. (2001); Monsuwe´ et al. (2004)
Recommendation framing (valence)	The parity of an eWOM message and whether it is positive or negative.	Gauri, Bhatnagar and Rao (2008); Lee and Lee (2009); Lee and Youn (2009); Park and Lee (2009); Sen and Lerman (2007); Xia and Bechwati (2008)
Recommendation sidedness (ratio of the positive message: negative message)	A one-sided message shows either the positive or negative factors but can not be both. A two-sided message shows both positive and negative factors.	Cheung et al. (2009); Doh and Hwang (2009); Gauri, Bhatnagar and Rao (2008); Huang and Chen (2006); Lee, Park and Han (2008)
Number of reviews (Quantity)	The total number of posted reviews.	Gauri, Bhatnagar and Rao (2008); Gupta and Harris (2005); Lee, Park and Han (2008); Park and Lee (2009); Park and Kim (2008); Park, Lee and Han (2007); Sher and Lee (2009)
Review type	The kind of a review (e.g., experiment vs real).	Park and Kim (2008); Xia and Bechwati (2008); Park and Lee (2008); Senecal and Nantel (1994)
Recommendation rating	The rating provided by other users regarding eWOM advice.	Cheung et al. (2009)
Recommendation consistency	If the eWOM recommendation is coherent with other users' experiences regarding the same product/service.	Cheung et al. (2009)
Review rate	The rating given by users on a product/service.	Lee and Lee (2009)
Sales volume	The number of products sold.	Huang, Lurie and Mitra (2009)

Regarding the third set of factors that comes under the category of factors associated with the communicator, this research will only be utilising source credibility and source expertise, as seen in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Factors associated with the communicator.

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
Source credibility - Expertise - Trustworthiness	A source's perceived ability (expertise) / intention to offer accurate information (trustworthiness).	Cheung, Lee and Rabjohn (2008); Cheung et al. (2009); Senecal and Nantel (1994); Zhang and Watts (2008)
Source type	The source of recommendation information (e.g., consumers' opinions, friends, salesperson, etc.).	Huang, Lurie and Mitr (2009); Kumar and Benbasat (2006)
Attribution	Attribution to the user's purpose in publishing the review.	Lee and Youn (2009); Sen and Lerman (2007)
Social tie	The strength of a connection between two consumers.	Steffes and Burgee (2009)
Homophily	The degree of similarity in age, gender, education, and social status between users.	Steffes and Burgee (2009)

The last set of factors to consider in eWOM literature are those associated with the receiver. Moreover, based on this study's particular requirements, factors such as the need for information, gender, age, consumer confusion, and subjective norms will be used in this research; Table 4.8 provides an illustration of this to aid understanding.

Table 4.8: Factors associated with the receiver.

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
Prior knowledge (of review topic/platform)	Previous awareness of the review subject and the application.	Cheung, Xiao and Liu (2012); Park and Kim (2008)
Confirmation of prior belief	Whether the received content regarding the reviewed product/service is confirmed or not with their previous knowledge of the matter.	Cheung et al. (2009)
Involvement	The degree to which a user has psychological or emotional links regarding a stimulus or stimuli.	Cheung et al. (2009); Doh and Hwang (2009); Lee, Park and Han (2008); Park and Lee (2008); Park, Lee and Han (2007)
Motivation to process information	Consumers' (reviewer of the eWOM content) desires to think about the information.	Gupta and Harris (2005)
Need for information	A term used to explain consumers' advice seeking' and 'opinion seeking'.	Hennig-Thurau et al., (2004); Wolny and Mueller (2013); Chu and Kim (2011)
Focused search	The degree to which consumers have prior information needs in their minds before their search for products/services related information.	Zhang and Watts (2008)
Gender	Gender of the reviewers (male/female)	Awad and Ragowsky (2008)
Age	Age of the reviewers	Venkatesh et al. (2003)
Consumer confusion	An overload or ambiguity of content which causes a negative effect on consumers' information evaluation.	Walsh et al. (2007)
Product preferences	Consumers' evaluation of products' features such as colour, style, and shape.	Lee and Lee (2009)
Consumer scepticism	The tendency toward doubt	Lee and Youn (2009); Sher and Lee (2009)
Cognitive personalisation	The degree of how consumers view prior experiences in a self-referential approach.	Xia and Bechwati (2008)

Subjective norms	Variables that cause people to have social pressure to behave in certain ways.	Ajzen (1991)
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4.7 Clarification of factors

After providing an overall view of factors associated with social media research and eWOM, this section goes a little bit deeper by providing more insight into which factors are more pertinent to this research. As this study aims to examine the influence of visual eWOM on consumers' purchase intentions, this section highlights the factors from IACM, which confirmed the impact of eWOM in this case, as well as other variables which have been proven significant by scholars in their attempt to investigate what influences consumers' purchase intentions. Before doing such, figure 4.7 presents the research model of this study, while Table 4.9 introduces the factors used in this research.

Figure 4.7: The proposed research model.



Table 4.9: Research factors.

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	REFERENCES
INDEPENDENT		
INFORMATION QUALITY	The quality of influencer's visual eWOM	Lee and Shin (2014); Park et al. (2007)
SOURCE CREDIBILITY	The credibility of the influencer	Dou et al. (2012); Hsu and Tsou (2011); Nabi and Hendriks (2003); Park et al. (2007); Prendergast et al. (2010)
NEED FOR INFORMATION	The need for the influencer's visual content	Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004); Wolny and Mueller (2013)
INFORMATION QUANTITY	The quantity of the influencer's visual eWOM	Do-Hyung et al. (2007); Lee (2009)
ATTITUDE TOWARDS INFORMATION	The attitude towards the influencer's visual eWOM	Prendergast et al. (2010)
INFORMATION USEFULNESS	The usefulness of the influencer's visual eWOM	Lee and Koo (2015); Liu and Zhang (2010); Xia and Bechwati (2008)
INFORMATION ADOPTION	The adoption of influencer's visual eWOM	Cheung and Thadani (2012); Cheung et al. (2009); Erkan and Evans (2014)
SOURCE EXPERIENCE	The influencer's experience	Lerrthairaku and Panjakajornsak, (2014); Blackwell et al. (2006)

SUBJECTIVE NORMS	The consumers' attitude towards the influencer's visual eWOM, considering how others react to this an influencer within their social group	Povey et al. (2000); Al-Swidi et al. (2014)
MODERATOR		
CONSUMER CONFUSION	The consumer level of confusion regarding influencer's visual eWOM (including information overload, information similarity, and information ambiguity)	Malhotra (1984); Walsh et al. (2007)
GENDER	How consumers' reactions are different based on their gender	Venkatesh et al. (2003)
AGE	How consumers' reactions are different based on their age	Venkatesh et al. (2003)
DEPENDENT		
PURCHASE INTENTION	The consumers' purchase intentions toward SMEs restaurants	Bickart and Schindler (2001); Doh and Hwang (2009); Huang and Chen (2006); Kumar and Benbasat (2006); Lee and Youn (2009); Park and Lee (2009); Park and Kim (2008); Park, Lee and Han (2007); Sher and Lee (2009); Xia and Bechwati (2008)

After presenting all the variables employed in this research, as shown in Table 4.9, the coming section provides more information about each factor, linking them to purchase intention. It then introduces the hypotheses associated with each variable.

4.7.1 The quality of visual eWOM and purchase intention

The quality of information has been identified as an essential aspect of a message's meaning (Yeap et al., 2014). Nowadays, thanks to the Web 2.0 features, everyone can create online content; therefore, the quality of such content has become more significant to consumers (Reichelt et al., 2014; Yoo et al., 2015), as it performs a critical role in the formation of consumers' evaluations of brands (Filiari and McLeay, 2014). Prior researchers have examined the information quality within the context of eWOM (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Cheung et al., 2008) and discovered how influential it could be to consumers (Lee and Shin, 2014). For instance, Park et al. (2007) introduce a study which focuses on the quality of reviews on shopping websites and their influences on consumers' purchase intentions.

Thinking of how 'a picture is worth a thousand words', and after the discussion of Instagram and Snapchat's main features (focused on visual content communication), high-quality visual content may raise the eWOM message quality and reduce the uncertainty issue with online usage. Lin et al. (2012) confirm this link by stating that visual information could increase consumer attitudes towards eWOM information quality and reliability, therefore creating higher product interest and purchase intention.

Through a view of Saudi consumers and their social media heavy usage, it's been estimated that there are around 27 million users of social media in the Kingdom (Datareportal, 2021); therefore, they are exposed to a vast amount of social media visual content, so the quality of such content can play a significant role in their behaviour, as they can easily distinguish content with high quality from others with low visual quality.

This study predicts the quality of visual eWOM content shared by social media influencers on Instagram and Snapchat as one of the determinants of visual eWOM on social media, which influences consumers' purchase intentions. Based on the above discussion and IACM, this study draws the following hypothesis:

H1: The quality of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.2 Source credibility and purchase intention

A source's credibility is defined as 'a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message' (Ohanian, 1990, p. 41). Therefore, in the technological era, consumers can gather product-related content from different sources, but the level of credibility determines which one is to be trusted.

Heriyati and Siek (2011) confirm this, showing that the credibility of an information source determines a consumer's attitude toward it, as sources with high credibility reflect significantly on the level of influence on the receiver's action compared to sources with low credibility.

Thinking about this study in particular, advertising literature on endorsements has shown a respectable amount of attention towards the impact of source credibility, such as Friedman and Friedman (1979); Atkin and Block (1983); Ohanian (1990); Goldsmith et al. (2000). This relation between source credibility and purchase intention has been approved by prior studies such as Wathen and Burkell (2002), Senecal and Nantel (2004); Cheung et al.(2008); Heriyati and Siek (2011); and Fan and Miao (2012).

As same as the quality of social media visual content, source credibility on the hand, can be a vital factor, more precisely in a country like Saudi Arabia. Due to the higher usage of social media among Saudi people (Datareportal, 2021), as they interact with each other and introduce to a vast amount of visual content shared by social media influencers, as they spend more than 3 hours everyday surfing through social media content (Global Media Insight, 2021). Therefore, they can easily recognise social media influencers who introduce content with a high level of credibility from others.

Regarding the earlier discussion with consideration to IACM, this study introduces the following hypothesis:

H2: The influencer's credibility in Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.3 Source (Influencers) experience and purchase intention

The idea of sharing and discussing views and opinions is a fundamental and well-established behaviour, and it occurs naturally when socialising and engaging with others. Considering how modern technology has changed different aspects of our daily lives, this behaviour of discussing and sharing information has also been modified into social media applications (Heinonen, 2011).

These applications introduce various features to serve a purpose in a form known as electronic word of mouth, where consumers can communicate and share content directly with others. Brands can also do the same in a cost-effective way to promote their brands to current and potential consumers (Chi, 2011).

According to Blackwell Miniard and Engel (2006), when consumers are making purchase decisions, their deliberations are influenced by different factors that have a significant role in the final decision. Such factors include the environment in the form of websites or by circumstances in the form of discussion and how other people may react to the decision. Moreover, in most cases, consumers spent a decent amount of time reading and reviewing other consumers' experiences regarding similar products or providers. These viewpoints and experiences have a high level of impact on consumers' purchase intentions and, therefore, the final purchase decisions (Lerrthaitraku and Panjakajornsak, 2014). This relationship between source expertise and purchase intention has been emphasised by different academics (Maddux and Rogers, 1980; Ohanian, 1991; Wilson and Sherrell, 1993).

From a Saudi cultural perspective, people of the Kingdom are not shy from social media content, and the number of users matches such view (Datareportal, 2021). Hence, when people are on social media as much as Saudis do, it is easy to know which social media influencers provide visual content and suggestions based on their experiences. Subsequently, social media influencers with experiences in a particular field can be undoubtedly found.

Therefore, based on this idea that source experience and purchase intention have an impact, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: An influencer's expertise has a positive influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.4 Need for visual eWOM and purchase intention

The consumer's need for information is a concept that received some scholarly consideration, due to its role in driving consumers to interact with each other in the form of WOM (Sundaram and Hills 1998). Later, it has been used in other perspectives as 'advice-seeking' (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Wolny and Mueller, 2013) and 'opinion seeking' (Chu and Kim, 2011). Flynn et al. (1996) emphasise the significance of the need for information by confirming that, in the decision-making process, consumers who are in high need of information tend to obtain it from various sources.

Therefore, it was subsequently adopted in consumer behaviours towards eWOM information, as 'needs for information' can impact consumer purchase intention. Viewing the extant literature in this way, this study employs the need for information into its model as an independent variable to purchase intention.

Based on the well-known concept that the more you read, the more eager you become to obtain more. People of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia spend a lot of their time on social media (Global Media Insight, 2021), so it is easy to assume they are in fact enjoying surfing through visual online content. With such an assumption in mind, we can conclude that they spend as much time because they are eager and want to gather and become aware of as much visual content as possible.

Following this discussion and keeping IAM and IACM in mind, this research represents the following hypothesis:

***H4:** Consumers' need for information has a positive impact on their purchase intentions.*

4.7.5 Attitude towards visual eWOM and purchase intention

Attitude towards information is a further factor that this study recognises as one of the visual eWOM content determinants on Instagram and Snapchat, that influences consumers' purchase intentions. This component is applied from Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) TRA and recently Erkan and Evans' (2016) IACM. Consumer attitudes toward eWOM have been empirically investigated (Park et al., 2007; Prendergast et al., 2010; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

Consequently, prior studies have emphasised the role of attitude and its effect (Mir, 2012; Jung et al., 2016; Kodjamanis and Angelopoulos, 2013; Lee et al., 2016; McCaughey et al., 2016).

Moreover, a relatively recent study by Mclean et al. (2020) has also emphasized the significant relationship between attitude and consumers' purchase intentions. As well as the study by Alyahya and McLean (2021) as it confirms the importance of information in the virtual reality in regards to attitudes and consumers' intentions. The high level of scholarly attention given to attitude indicates its significance for other studies, as they consider attitude when investigating how consumer behaviour has changed as a result of social media activities (Alalwan et al., 2017). Consumers with a positive attitude towards information (visual eWOM) on Instagram and Snapchat are most likely to have a higher purchase intention, as different theories have notably determined the link between attitude and consumer purchase intention. In addition to TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), TPB (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), and IACM (Erkan and Evans, 2016), the relationship between attitude and purchase intention has been confirmed.

Looking through the relationship between attitude and purchase intention from a Saudi consumer's perspective. Such a link can be proposed to be essential since Saudis use social media at a high level (Datareportal, 2021), with an average of more than 3 hours per day (Global Media Insight, 2021); it can be safe to assume they are in fact enjoying such social media content and therefore the influencers who provide such. As a result, Saudi consumers on social media who enjoy viewing visual content from influencers have a positive attitude toward them.

In light of this and with consideration of TRA and IACM, this study introduces the following hypothesis:

H5: Consumers' attitude toward visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.6 Visual eWOM usefulness and purchase intention

Information usefulness is identified as a critical predictor of information adoption (Davis, 1989; Sussman and Siegal, 2003) and purchase intention (Lee and Koo, 2015). Consumers interact with the information only if they believe it is useful. Prior studies have indicated that eWOM information usefulness impacts information adoption (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Liu and Zhang, 2010). Moreover, Nabi and Hendriks (2003) suggest that in social media, consumers adopt online information if they consider it useful.

Another finding based on a web-based survey of 932 Internet users confirmed that there is a link between usefulness and behavioural intention (Ahn et al., 2004). Prior studies have similarly established this positive relationship (Chen et al., 2002; Limayem et al., 2000; Trivedi and Kumar, 2014).

From the state of mind that Saudi consumers are very active on social media applications, as they spend nearly four hours per day on such applications (alareebict, 2022), we can draw an assumption that they can distinguish between influencers' visual content, which they categorised to be useful from others.

In light of this, this study introduces the following hypothesis:

H6: The usefulness of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers in Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.7 Visual eWOM adoption and purchase intention

People on social media, either intentionally or unintentionally, are presented with a lot of eWOM information, and previous studies have determined this information to have an impact on consumers' purchase intentions (Iyengar et al., 2009; See-To and Ho, 2014; Wang et al., 2012). Nevertheless, not all eWOM information on social media has the same influence on consumers (Yang, 2012).

Consumers who adopt the received eWOM information are expected to have higher purchase intentions. Although the effect of the adoption of eWOM information on purchase intention has not been empirically examined yet, the connection has been suggested by prior studies (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Cheung et al., 2009).

As same as the usefulness of influencers' visual content, the adoption of such content, on the other hand, can also be proposed and assumed to impact Saudi consumers' purchase intentions. Taking into consideration the more time Saudi people spend viewing and determining which visual content appears to be useful, the adoption of such useful visual content can be concluded.

Consequently, linking this to IACM, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H7: The adoption of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.8 Visual eWOM quantity and purchase intention

The quantity of visual content is another factor which is discussed in this study. Chatterjee (2001) mentions that consumers feel less discomfort about purchasing decisions after reading other consumers' experiences, because they feel that many other consumers have bought the same products. Moreover, the quality and quantity of information generated by consumers' reviews influence the intention to purchase, as they increase the level of trust (Do-Hyung et al., 2007).

What influence the quantity of content has on purchase decisions has been a topic of academic study for quite some time (e.g., Hahn et al., 1992; Helgeson and Ursic, 1993; Jacoby et al., 1974; Keller and Staelin, 1987; Malhotra, 1982; Wilkie, 1974). The relationship has been investigated by Kim and Lennon (2000), who confirm a positive association between the quantity of information and consumer purchase intention. Additionally, Lee (2009) determines that the number of reviews positively influences consumer purchase intention since the vast number of reviews indicates the popularity of a product.

In a country like Saudi Arabia where there are around 27 million use social media actively (Datareportal, 2021). It is not hard to assume that firms from different categories would see such a high number as a tremendous marketing tool to reach their current and potential consumers online.

Therefore, social media users in Saudi Arabia are being exposed to a vast number of visual content in various social media applications; as a result, it can be logical to draw the assumption that the more visual content Saudi consumers view on social media applications, the more influenced they become of such content.

Therefore, the study predicts the following hypothesis:

H8: *The quantity of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.*

4.7.9 Subjective norms and purchase intention

Subjective norms are also a key factor in this study. The term refers to a social factor that creates social pressure to act in a certain way (Ajzen, 1991). Subjective norms are an individual's understanding of others' opinions, which guide their behaviour in a given situation (Cialdini and Trost, 1998). Furthermore, norms have the power to impact people's actions since norms play a role in determining people's expected actions based on their approval of those in their social world (Cialdini, 2001). Venkatesh and Davis (2000) confirm that individuals act differently if they believe the people who are close to them approve of certain activities, even though they themselves might not prefer them.

In the modern era of social media applications, subjective norms and their impact on consumer behaviour have shown some notable increases; this relationship has received a certain amount of interest from both academics and practitioners, which indicates that it is worth understanding the changes in consumers' actions in the marketplace that are brought by modern technology (Qin et al., 2011). From a more theoretical perspective, TRA suggests that when important people in an individual's life like family, supporters or colleagues approve of their behaviour, it becomes very likely they will, in fact, perform the action that is approved of, as those people have an influence over what the decision-makers see as approval or disapproval behaviour.

Unlike other countries, Saudi Arabia presents a unique character as the people of the Kingdom are very close with their family members (Hofstede, 1984), and they live and spend time with them almost daily.

Hence, assuming they contact each other on online methods can be deemed logical. From such a perspective, Saudi consumers are very close with their families, and they take into consideration their opinions and approvals of what they view on social media applications. It concludes that the approval of influencers' visual content on social media has become more vital for Saudi consumers in comparison to other countries, more precisely due to the attachment of Saudis to their families.

Consequently, based on this understanding of TRA and TPB, and considering the importance of family members in Saudi society, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H9: Subjective norms towards an influencer's visual content have a positive impact on consumer purchase intentions.

4.7.10 The moderator role of consumer confusion

After addressing the direct relations between different factors and purchase intention, this section introduces the indirect impact of three factors: consumer confusion, gender, and age.

In recent years the power of controlling the market has shifted from marketers to consumers. This has led to consumers ruling the market, which is known as a consumer democracy (Bosshart, 2004); this is causing brands to flood the market with various options (Schweizer et al., 2006), thus leaving consumers who are 'spoiled for choice'. Nevertheless, Malhotra (1984) shows us that if consumers are presented with too much brand-related information, it will eventually influence their decision making negatively, as it exceeds their processing ability, causing information overload and confusion. Walsh et al. (2007), who are considered the fathers of consumer confusion studies, indicate that the term consumer confusion derives from consumer confusion proneness, which is 'consumers' general tolerance for processing similarity, overload or ambiguity information, which negatively affects consumers' information processing and decision-making abilities' (Walsh et al., 2007, p. 699).

This issue has become more prevalent lately because of the constant creation of products, product imitations, and an enormous amount of brand-related information, all of which combine into an issue known as consumer decision-making confusion (Persaud and Azhar, 2012; Schweizer et al., 2006). Even though this issue is very crucial for both marketers and consumers, the concept of consumer confusion appears to be a relatively recent one in marketing and consumer studies (Matzler and Waiguny, 2005), is not referred to in well-known consumer behaviour textbooks (Schweizer et al., 2006), and has received little research interest (Turnbull et al., 2000; Walsh et al., 2007). This provides the opportunity for future research to look into consumer confusion and apply this idea to other countries (Walsh and Mitchell, 2010).

Moreover, Walsh et al. (2007) indicate that an overload of information and options is a significant element of consumer confusion, which they define as 'consumers' difficulty when confronted with more product information and alternatives than they can process in order to get to know, to compare and to comprehend alternatives' (Walsh et al., 2007, p. 704).

Regardless of whether the product-related information received by the consumer is too much or too little, it can be a source of confusion (Jacoby, 1977; Russo, 1974). Moreover, receiving too much product/service content, even if it seems favourable, can create pressure for consumers, as they might not be able to process so much content. On the other hand, some consumers are underinformed; regardless of the amount of information they receive, they are still trying to obtain more. To reduce this confusion and uncertainty, consumers could seek specific information to support their purchase decision (Hansen, 1972). Köksal (2011) and Turnbull et al. (2000) emphasise that facing uncertainty and confusion creates a need for increased information search before deciding.

Consequently, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H8A: Consumer confusion is negatively moderated by the relationship between the quantity of visual content and consumers' purchase intentions.

4.7.11 The moderator role of gender

As this study was conducted on Saudi consumers, it appeared significant to address demographic variables to provide a clearer picture of how these will affect subjects' behaviour. Therefore, this research considered gender and age as demographic variables. Gender is a factor that was introduced from The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT). Prior studies have denoted men as more task-oriented than women (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Minton and Schneider, 1985; Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). Moryson and Moeser (2016) consider the impact of performance expectancy to be much higher for men than women. The difference between genders in their attitudes and behaviour is a subject that has long been a topic of discussion for researchers in psychology and business literature. Chaganti (1986) states that women are more driven by non-economic factors than men, while other studies in finance have confirmed that men are more likely to take risks (Bajtelsmit and VanDerhei, 1997; Hinz et al., 1997) and have more confidence than women (Lundeberg et al., 1994); overall, men seem to trust themselves more in the decision-making process (Lewellen et al., 1977).

Other psychology-related literature on gender, such as Eagly (1995, p. 148), indicates that they 'are in general agreement that their meta-analytic findings yield evidence of differences'. Powell and Ansic (1997, p. 607) confirm that 'one gender difference which is persistently found in both the general and business-specific literature is a lower preference for risk amongst females'.

Given the above discussion on gender differences in behaviour, we can reasonably assume that men's and women's purchase intentions will also be different.

Therefore, this study forms the moderating hypotheses of gender and its influence on consumer purchase intention as follows:

H8B: *The relationship between the quantity of information and purchase intention is positively moderated by gender (women) as women are more risk-averse than men; therefore, the volume of content would be more reassuring to women than men.*

H3A: *The relationship between source experience and purchase intention is positively moderated by gender (women) as women are less likely to be risk-takers than men; therefore, they are more willing to trust a source with a lot of experience.*

4.7.12 The moderator role of age

Age is a significant factor in consumer behaviour and attitudes (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Klippel and Sweeny, 1974). Even though the idea that people behave differently based on their age is well-established, studies confirming this are minimal (Moryson and Moeser, 2016). In their research, Venkatesh et al. (2003) determined that performance expectancy has a greater impact on young people's intention to use technology than older people's (Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). Even though different studies are adopting UTAUT and its branches in several settings, studies with empirical evidence on UTAUT continue to be limited (Moryson and Moeser, 2016).

In particular, Williams et al. (2011) employ a meta-analysis in order to examine different UTAUT research and suggest in their conclusion the significance of considering gender, age, and experience as moderating variables to reach a much broader understanding of the sociodemographic effect on the acceptance of the modern technology.

From the influences mentioned above that age has on consumer decision making, this study formulates the following moderating hypotheses of age and its influence on consumer purchase intentions:

H8C: *The relationship between the quantity of information and purchase intention is positively moderated by age, as the volume of content would be more reassuring to older consumers than to younger ones.*

H3B: *The relationship between source experience and purchase intention is positively moderated by age (old consumer), as influencers with a lot of experience would be more reassuring to older consumers than to younger ones.*

Table 4.10: Research hypotheses.

VARIABLES	HYPOTHESES
Visual eWOM quality	H1: <i>The quality of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Source credibility	H2: <i>The influencer's credibility on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Source experience	H3: <i>An influencer's expertise has a positive influence on consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Need for visual eWOM	H4: <i>Consumers' need for information has a positive impact on their purchase intentions.</i>
Attitude toward visual eWOM	H5: <i>Consumers' attitudes toward visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influence consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Visual eWOM usefulness	H6: <i>The usefulness of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Visual eWOM adoption	H7: <i>The adoption of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Quantity of visual eWOM	H8: <i>The quantity of visual content (VeWOM) shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram positively influences consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Subjective norms	H9: <i>Subjective norms towards an influencer's visual content have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Consumer confusion	H8A: <i>Consumer confusion negatively moderates the relationship between the quantity of visual content and consumers' purchase intentions.</i>
Gender	H8B: <i>The relationship between the quantity of information and purchase intention is positively</i>

	<p><i>moderated by gender (women) as women are more risk-averse than men; therefore, the volume of content would be more reassuring to women than men.</i></p> <p>H3A: <i>The relationship between source experience and purchase intention is positively moderated by gender (women), less likely to be risk-takers than men; therefore, they are more willing to trust a source with a lot of experience.</i></p>
Age	<p>H8C: <i>The relationship between the quantity of information and purchase intention is positively moderated by age, as the volume of content would be more reassuring to older consumers than to younger ones.</i></p> <p>H3B: <i>The relationship between source experience and purchase intention is positively moderated by age (old consumer), as influencers with a lot of experience would be more reassuring to older consumers than to younger ones.</i></p>

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter began by presenting the theoretical background and the developments of hypotheses for this research, and the theories used were reviewed. The theoretical background of the research model was developed along with the relevant research hypotheses. Therefore, the following chapter introduces a discussion of the research context of Saudi Arabia in order to provide a general perspective of its economy, culture, SME sector and social media usage.

CHAPTER FIVE
RESEARCH CONTEXT (SAUDI ARABIA)

5 Chapter Five: Research Context (Saudi Arabia)

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have looked in-depth at social media, social media influencers, and the theoretical framework of this study. Therefore, this chapter will introduce a different perspective and focus on the context of this research, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This country has many unique characteristics, which will be highlighted herein. This section begins with an introduction to general knowledge about Saudi Arabia, followed by an overview of Saudi culture and an examination of what gives Saudi Arabia its unique cultural perspectives. Then, this chapter will examine some matters related more closely to the research focus, namely the SME sector in Saudi Arabia, by providing more knowledge about this sector and the restaurant sector. Finally, this chapter concludes with a discussion of this research's key focus, which is social media and social media influencers in Saudi Arabia.

5.2 Saudi Arabia the Country

Saudi Arabia covers one of the largest areas in the Middle East, totalling around 2.25 million kilometres (World Bank, 2016). The country has a total population of 35 million, and nearly half of this population are under 31 years of age (worldmeeter.info 2021). The people of Saudi Arabia include a mixture of tribes and various immigrants who have combined to create the Saudi culture (Al-somali et al., 2015), a culture which is deeply rooted in Islam and the traditional values of the Arabic people in the region (Al-somali et al., 2015). The country of Saudi Arabia is one of the G20 nations and is an influential member of the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC) (Al-somali et al., 2015).

The Saudi economy is ranked in the top 20 largest economies worldwide and is considered a rapidly developing economy (Statistics Times, 2016; World Bank, 2016). In terms of natural resources, the land of Saudi Arabia is rich in oil, gas, gold, copper, and iron (CIA, 2015). The Kingdom's economy mainly relies on four categories: oil, banking, telecommunications, and health.

However, it comes as no surprise that the oil sector is by far the primary sector, as Saudi Arabia is the largest oil-exporting country in the world (Al-somali et al., 2015), the revenue of oil exports has been invested in different areas to develop the country, aiding the country's financial stability and allowing it to develop other essential aspects, such as investing heavily in Information Technology (IT).

5.3 The Culture of Saudi Arabia

Each independent country of the 22 Arabic lands has its own culture, meaning that studying Arabic culture can be very complex due to the diverse range of ethnicities, religious communities, and linguistic groups. Nevertheless, there are still some commonalities that bring these countries together. Formal Islamic language is the most widely used language in the Arab world. Another common factor between the Arabic countries is the fact that the Arabic culture is collectivist. Arabic people are very loyal to their family, as they value and cherish them (Hofstede, 1984); 'Arabs from different countries define themselves according to the tribe they belong to, the family they belong to and finally the country they belong to' (CITC, 2014).

Saudi Arabia has many principles which shape the culture of Saudi people, based mainly on religion, followed by tribal customs. Saudi Arabia stands in a unique position in the Islamic world, as it is the land of the Two Holy Mosques. This plays a significant part in creating the tradition, social manners, practices, and obligations of Saudi society. The same goes for kinship and tribal relations, as these values still play an important role that has an impact on the individual's activities in society (Aldraehim et al., 2012). Islam can be considered the first and main feature of Saudi culture, which is a set of principles and behaviours based on the Koran and the Sunna. The Koran has influenced and created the culture and legal system not only in Saudi but in so many other Arabic countries (Hofstede, 1998). Islam is the driving force behind most Muslims' behaviour: 'In Islamic countries, the influence of religion is obvious in every aspect of Muslims' lives, affecting social norms, behaviour and relationships' (Michell and Al-Mossawi, 1999, p. 428).

However, it may seem very hard for those who are not Muslims to separate religion from culture: 'Non-Muslims sometimes become confused about whether a Muslim is doing something because it is a religious duty or because it is part of his or her culture' (Williams, 2008, p. 8).

Family is another source of the principles that shape the culture of the Saudi people. Family members are expected to maintain good relations with their relatives and provide help when needed; this feeling of belonging creates a sense of security and offers people a network of relations within the community (Kabasakal and Bodur, 2002). The high esteem in which Saudi people hold their family is clear in how they accept or reject behaviours, as they always give consideration to their family members, whose opinions they value and cherish. This point is fascinating for this study in particular because the acceptance and credibility of eWOM communication can be highly significant when it comes via a family member rather than other sources. With this in mind, it can be concluded that due to the unique cultural and religious attributes of Saudi Arabia, more research is required in order to improve understanding of the impact of these unique characteristics on the field of online social media (Alaraifi, 2020), which this research aims to address.

5.4 SME Sector in Saudi Arabia

As this study concentrates on the SME sector in Saudi Arabia, it seems logical to introduce the sector in more detail. The definition of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) varies from one country to another. In Saudi Arabia, however, there are no government authority sponsors for dealing with SME-related matters, so there is no unified definition of SMEs (Al-Saleh, 2012). Therefore, each institution in Saudi has its own definition of SMEs. There are three significant standards applied to differentiate SMEs: number of employees, business assets, and annual turnovers (Hertog, 2010). This research applies the number of employees as the main criteria, based on the SME definition presented by The Saudi Ministry of Commerce and Investment. Small-sized enterprises are defined as businesses with less than 50 employees, and medium-sized enterprises are businesses with less than 200 employees (JCCI, 2016).

The economy of Saudi Arabia has heavily relied on the growth of the SME sector, as the sector is responsible for improving employment rates and providing revenue for a particular economy (Ates et al., 2013). In a more statistical form, the SME sector in Saudi Arabia occupies 99% of institutions and is behind 62% of the employment rate (SAGIA, 2016). Moreover, SAGIA (2016) emphasises that the SME sector is playing a crucial role in terms of providing income to enhance some major national economic goals, including 1) the diversity of the country's income sources through the private sector, 2) introducing the country's local products and services, 3) balancing the country's economic growth.

5.5 Restaurants Sector in Saudi Arabia

As previously addressed, culture has a substantial impact on Saudis' behaviour. So, from this perspective, the relationship between Saudis and restaurants is influenced by cultural views. The idea of dining out in restaurants is surprisingly new, as the notion of fast-food restaurants did not emerge in the country for more than four decades (Alriyadh, 2012). Moreover, Saudi people have grown up with the idea of eating food in their own homes, so restaurants rarely existed and were mainly there to serve travellers who needed to rest and eat (Alriyadh, 2014). However, nowadays, the restaurant sector in Saudi has undergone a big change, as an investment in the sector has reached more than 17 billion Saudi Riyals (around £3.54 billion) (Slaati, 2015).

The return on investment from the sector in 2015 was around 23 billion Saudi Riyals (£4.80 billion). Moreover, according to the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities, the revenue from food and beverage services in restaurants and cafés has grown by 87% since 2006 (Ahmed, 2016). According to the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the sector is classified into three main sections: fast food 56%, full-service restaurants 35%, and coffee shops 8% (Alriyadhtrading, 2018).

As more investors entered the restaurant sector, it led to a shift in Saudis' perspectives regarding eating in restaurants. The high level of investment in the sector has caused growth across the country. According to the General Authority for Statistics, in 2014, the number of restaurants reached 15,782 (Stats, 2018).

Consequently, the country is now considered one of the leading consumer-oriented communities globally (Assad, 2008). Saudi is ranked the fourth highest consuming country worldwide, and restaurants and hotels are the best targets for Saudi consumers (Al-Madina, 2014).

Despite the rapid growth in the restaurant sector, a study by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Riyadh reported that the capital fund of 97% of restaurants does not pass one million SR (£4,900,000), and 85% of these restaurants do not annually pass 500,000 SR in revenue (Aawsat, 2010). Although restaurants in Saudi are successful in terms of performance and financial investment, they have faced some issues with marketing techniques. Moreover, 85% of restaurants are owned by independent individuals, and 61% admit to not using modern advertising techniques (Aawsat, 2010). Consequently, they employ traditional, well-known methods such as advertisements in newspapers, flyers, and talking to consumers to get their opinions and experiences regarding taste and services (Bouznif et al., 2018).

On the other hand, with the advanced technology evolution and the rise of the social media era, there has been a movement towards a new form of marketing in Saudi Arabia and worldwide, which is the use of influencers to increase awareness about restaurants on social media – a new word-of-mouth technique (Bouznif et al., 2018). The use of social media in Saudi Arabia, specifically the use of Snapchat and Instagram, will be explained in-depth in the following sections.

5.6 Social Media Marketing in Saudi Arabia

From the above discussion, it is clear that there has been a shift in the Saudi restaurant sector thanks to significant investments, as well as a transformation in Saudi's cultural perspectives toward restaurants. Although some restaurants still use traditional techniques to promote their restaurants, the regular usage of social media among Saudis has encouraged businesses to take advantage of this method to attract more awareness to their brands. Saudi Arabia has the largest population in the Gulf region, estimated at around 35 million in 2021 (Worldmeter, 2021), and over 33 million people of that population are active Internet users, with over 27 million actively using social media (Datareportal, 2021).

Therefore, it is unsurprising that businesses in Saudi Arabia are trying to maximise their social media usage to reap as many rewards as possible (Askool, 2012). According to Tamer (2013), Arabic firms spent around 4% (£351.40 million) of their overall spending on social media marketing. More recent research indicates that in 2016, the spending on social media marketing increased by 15%-20%. Particularly in Saudi Arabia, the overall advertising spending is around £1.25-1.64 billion. Therefore, the spending on social media marketing has reached £207.72 million (Moatasem, 2016). These numbers show how social media usage is in rapid growth on both the business and consumer sides.

For instance, Snapchat is one of the most recent and most viral photo-sharing platforms, and Saudi Arabia has the highest rate of social media usage in the Middle East. According to Damian Radcliffe, a journalism professor at the University of Oregon, based on a study he co-authored, 'There are nearly 13.5 million users of Snapchat in Saudi Arabia, and between 21-25 per cent of the population use the service every day.' He also states, 'Given this, it is not surprising that Snapchat opened an office last year in Dubai and is already looking to expand in the region'. Snapchat has become popular worldwide, and in Saudi Arabia, the platform is among the top five applications in the Apple and Google Play stores (Saudi Gazette, 2018).

Rabia Yasmeen highlights the point about international and local restaurants opening in Saudi Arabia. The cost of media advertising like TV is exceptionally high, making it difficult to use with a low return on investments. Therefore, a new effective yet affordable version of an advertising channel such as Snapchat has garnered some attention. Yasmeen states that 'Snapchat is popular, especially for its engaging features, which many other social media apps lack in terms of peer-to-peer engagement'. More precisely, Snapchat indicates that Saudi users use the application camera around 40 times per day, which increases to 45 during Ramadan. Moreover, Saudis spend an average of 35 minutes a day on Snapchat; 42% of them start the day surfing the application and 37% surf before they sleep. In terms of Snapchat advertisements, the platform has had 3 million views, and 12% have responded and interacted with the advertisement, which is considered a vast number of reactions (Saudi Gazette, 2018).

Looking at the reasons behind such a high number of user interactions on Snapchat, the Snapchat manager in the Middle East emphasises that one of the main reasons for such popularity is the 'privacy' of the application compared to other platforms. There are 9 million daily users in Saudi Arabia, 55% of whom are women and 50% of whom seek advice from other users; one of the application's key features is the fact that media disappears after a short period of time, allowing a deal of privacy (Saudi Gazette, 2018).

Instagram is another relatively new application that is frequently used worldwide. According to Jonathan Labin, Managing Director, Middle East, North Africa and Pakistan at Facebook, 'Instagram is growing at an unprecedented rate. [...] We have doubled in size from 300 million to 600 million in the last two years alone, and today we are sharing that 63 million people in In the Middle East use Instagram every month – making the region one of Instagram's fastest-growing communities globally.' He also looks at this from a business angle, saying, 'This is good news for businesses in MENA; we know that more than 70% of Instagrammers follow a business, with 75% saying that they take action after seeing a post, from visiting a website to searching, shopping, or telling a friend' (Arabianbusiness, 2017).

In detail, social media influencers in Saudi Arabia are not as different as people think when compared to other countries. Moreover, of course, the Saudi people have their own traditional and cultural heritage. However, from a comprehensive picture, they are similar to other influencers worldwide but with respect to religion and cultural boundaries, including the type of products and services they promote; for example, as it is understood, no alcohol is allowed in Islam, so any product or services in such category are not permitted. However, what female influencers choose to wear are their right as long as they respect the culture and religion of the Kingdom, as it is shown in the exhibits below examples of Saudi influencers.

Figure 5.1: Example of Snapchat account of Saudi female influencer (Sarah Artist).

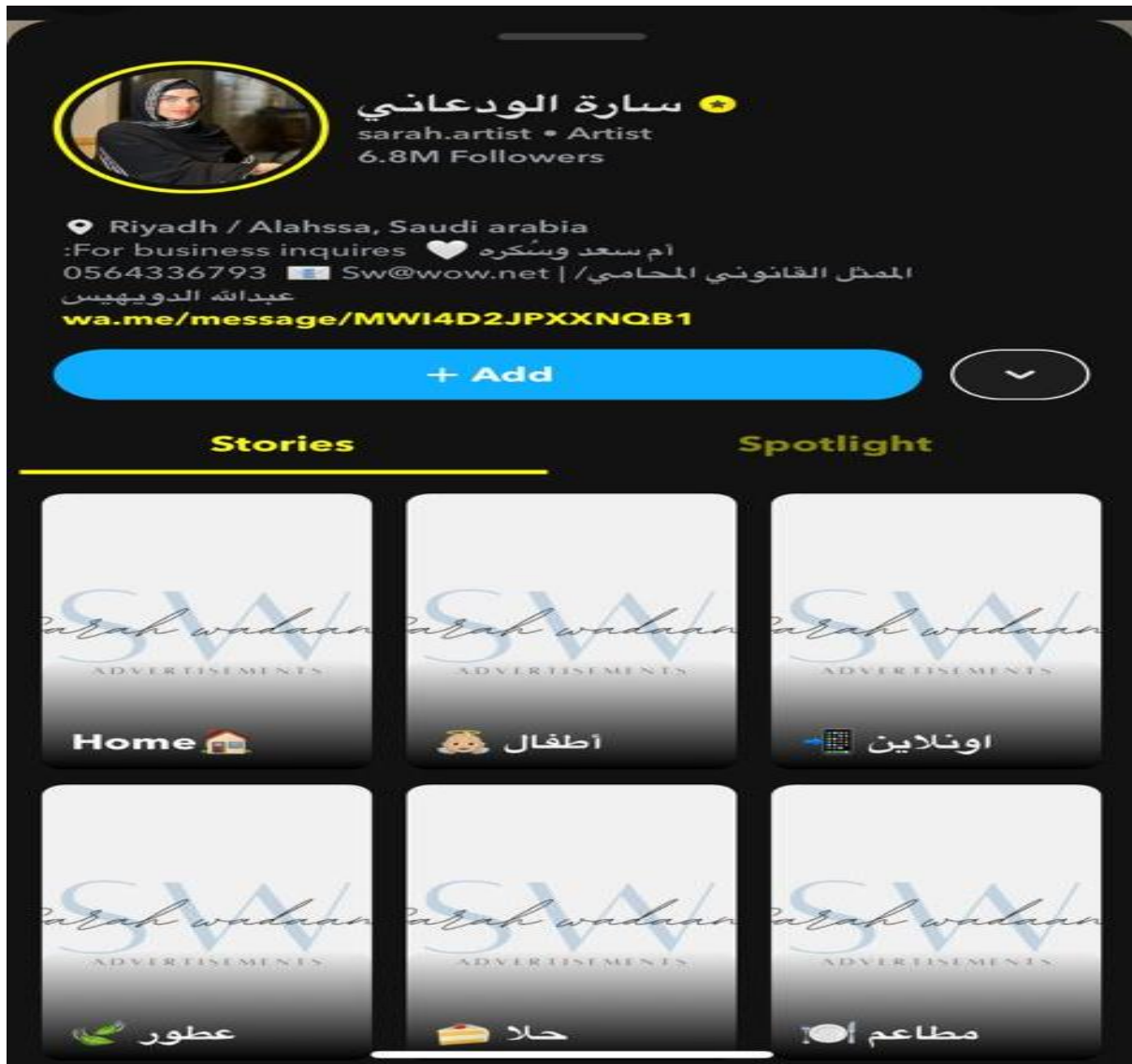
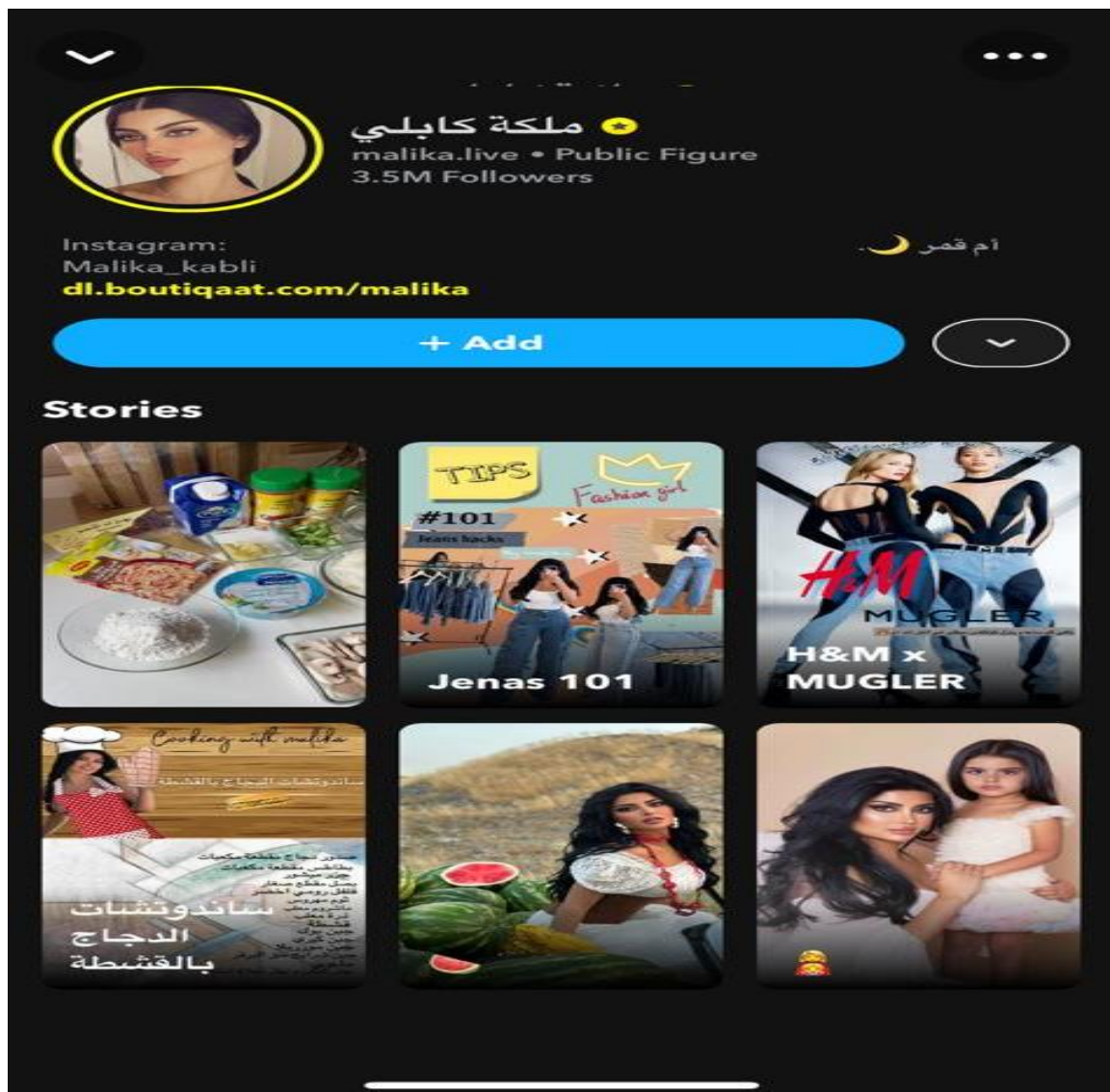


Figure 1

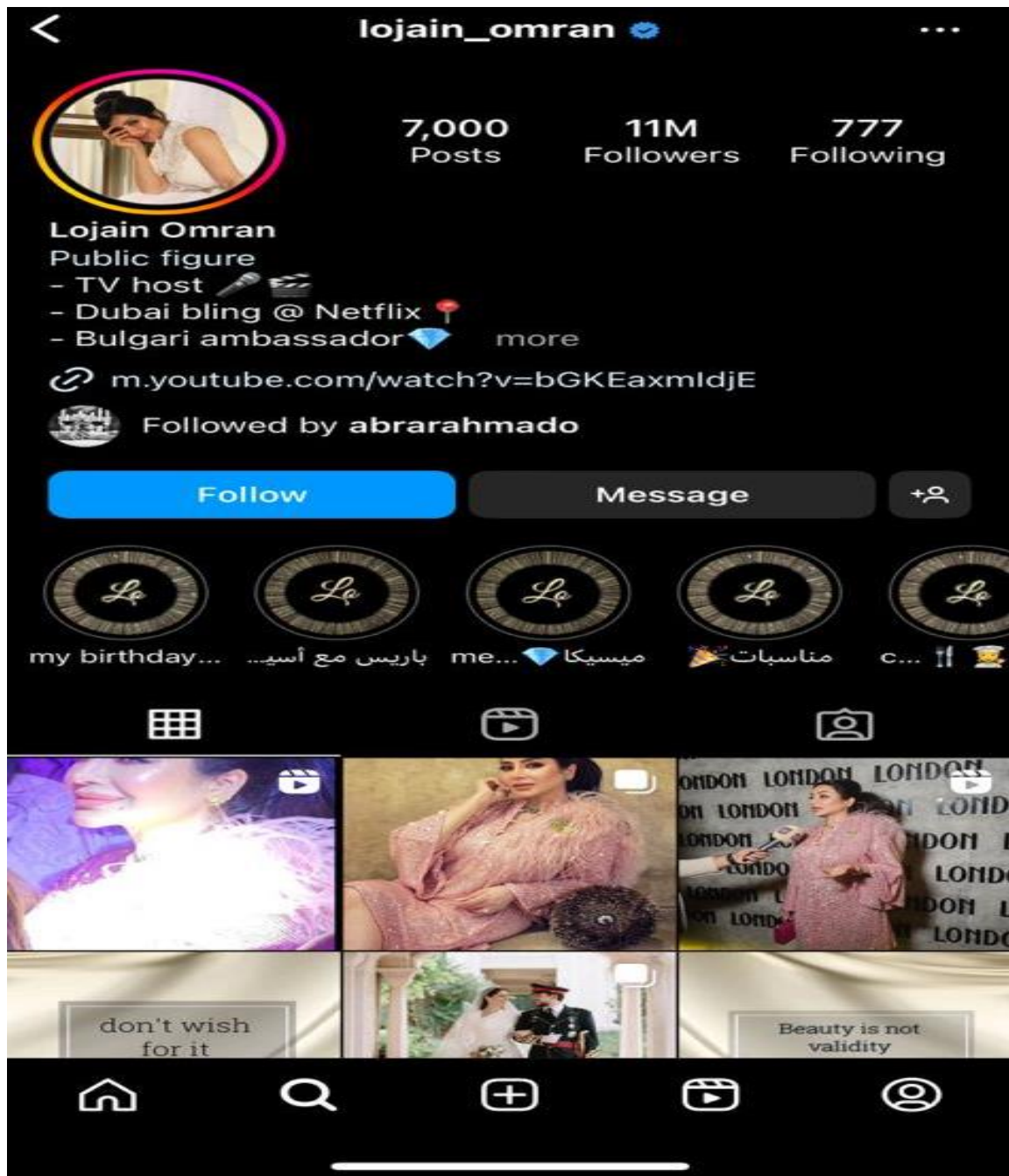
As shown in Figure 5.1, this is an example of the Snapchat profile of one of the well-known Saudi influencers. It shows the number of followers which is 6.8 Million, locations as well as how to get in touch with her regarding any possible business-related matters. The second part of the profile, it introduces the products and services she is endorsing. Moreover, it categorises them into six parts (products/services for homes, children products/services, technology products/services, perfumes, desserts and restaurants). As it can be seen in her profile picture, she is wearing the traditional abaya without the face covers, which is still normal and in agreement with the religious and cultural regulations of Saudi Arabia.

Figure 5.2: Example of Snapchat account of Saudi female influencer (Malika)



The second example of a Saudi social media influencer indicates a similar way of presenting the profile information. However, this influencer (Malika) organised the products and services she promotes in a more random view, without any organising based on types of products/services. In detail, it can be easily noticed that she is not wearing the abaya, which is a personal decision as long as she wears a respectful dress when she is out in public.

Figure 5.3: Example of Instagram account of Saudi female influencer (Lojain Omran).



Influencers' profiles on Instagram can be somehow different from Snapchat. In detail, the Instagram account, as shown in Figure 5.3, presents the basic information, including the number of posts and followers (11 Million). However, a further feature introduced by Instagram as it allows users to include hashtags in pictures, which most influencers use to mention products/services they promote, as seen in Figure 5.4, Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.4: Example 1 of the including of in picture mention on Instagram accounts by Saudi influencer.



Figure 5.5: Example 2 of the including of in picture mention on Instagram accounts by Saudi influencer.

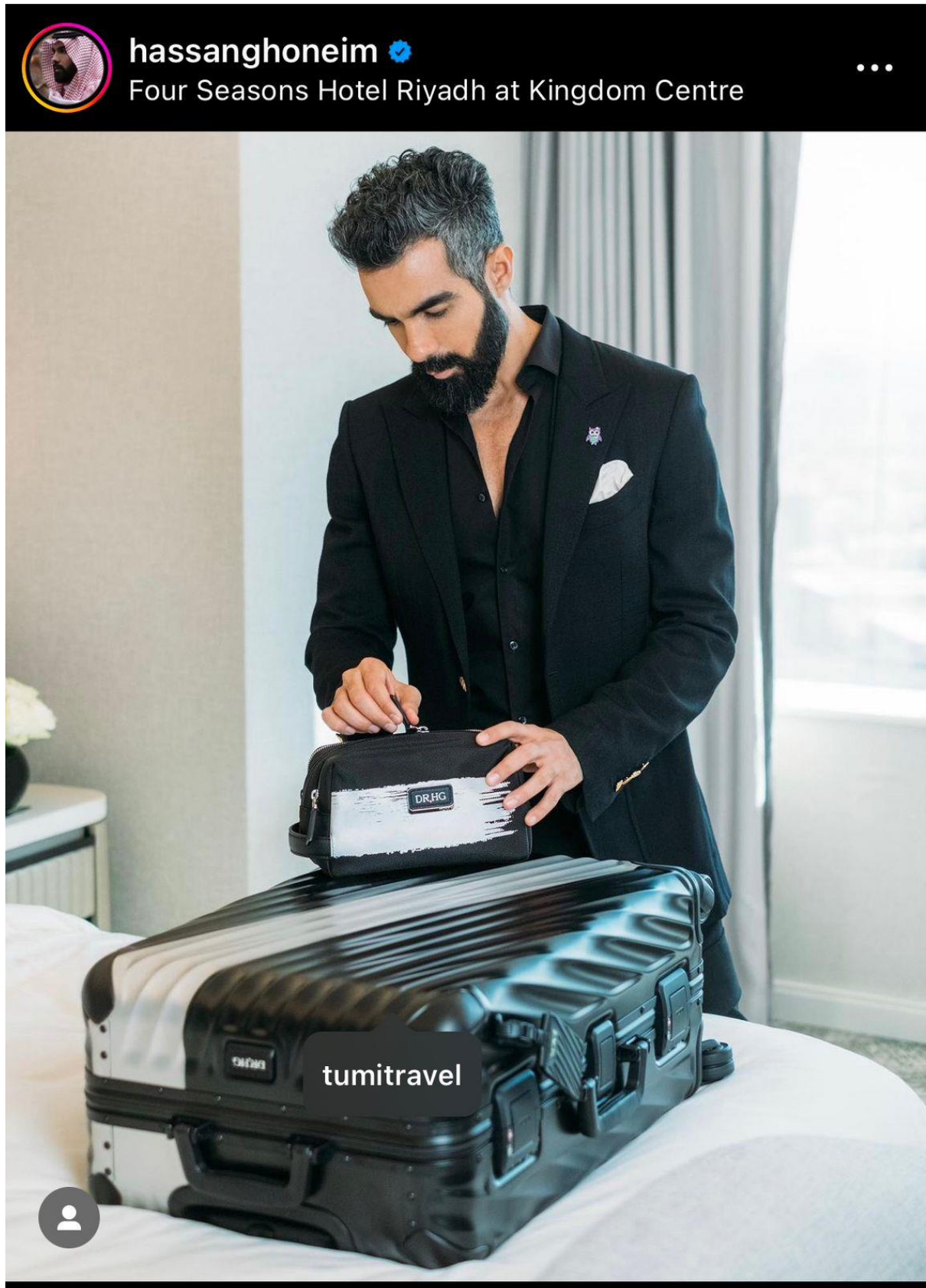


Figure 5.6: Example 3 of the including of in picture mention on Instagram accounts by international influencer.



Based on the previous illustrations of differences between Snapchat and Instagram in terms of displaying social media visual content. It can be noticed that even though there are some personal differences in the way female influencers choose to present themselves to the public eyes. Yet, there are a lot of similarities between social media influencers from Saudi and influencers from other countries, as displayed in Figure 5.4, Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6.

As mentioned earlier, in Saudi Arabia, influencers have recently been found to be an effective marketing tool for increasing online sales and creating brand-related online content. Thus, it can be concluded that this technique significantly influences consumers' purchase intentions (Alhafi and Ahmed, 2021). However, further investigation is still needed on the impact of online social media in Saudi Arabia (Alaraifi, 2020).

5.7 Conclusion

It is clear that the country of Saudi Arabia holds a unique position not only in the world but more precisely, in Arabic land. The size of the country and its population have given Saudi Arabia its unique culture, which significantly differentiates the country and its people from others.

This chapter has also highlighted the importance of religion, language, and family to the formation of Saudi culture. Regarding the economy of Saudi Arabia, this chapter provided a broad overview of the importance of oil and how such resources have played a significant part in the evolution of the country. SMEs in Saudi Arabia have also been discussed, along with the restaurants sector, and it was highlighted that Saudi Arabia and its citizens are no strangers to well-known franchised restaurants and consider dining out as one of their main recent forms of entertainment.

Additionally, the people of Saudi Arabia have been shown to be open to the world, connected, and interactive.

The discussion in this chapter has highlighted how Saudi Arabia is considered a high usage country in terms of Internet usage, as around 98% of Saudis are active Internet users. This high level of usage is reflected in the high rate of social media usage, with over 77% of the population engaging with social media.

These interesting figures encourage further research to understand this usage and the various influences Saudi people receive from social media platforms.

CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGY

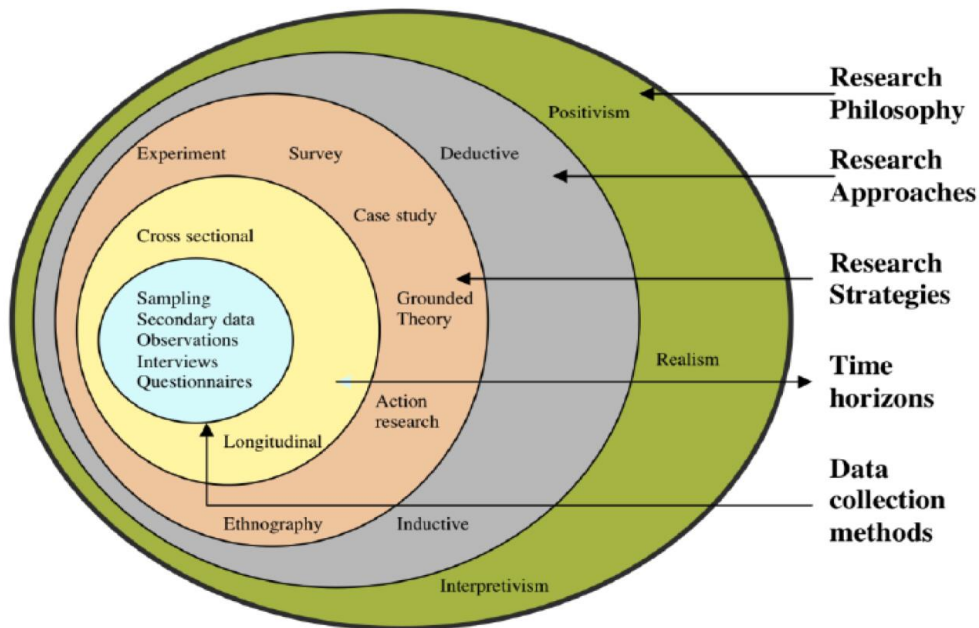
6 Chapter Six: Methodology

6.1 Introduction

This research investigates the influence of visual social media content on consumers' purchase intentions in Saudi Arabia, focusing on social media influencers' visual eWOM. The previous chapters provide the conceptual framework of this study. Therefore, to meet the aim of the study, this chapter introduces a comprehensive description and justification for the methodology used in this study.

According to Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 55), research methodology can be identified as 'the overall approach to the research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of the data'. Saunders et al. (2007, p. 83) introduce the research process as an onion with a series of layers (Figure 6.1). This chapter will add a critical review of the research philosophy regarding the epistemological and ontological positions applied in the research. This section will also detail the research approach, research purpose, and data collection timeframe. The chapter will detail the research strategy and the methods used for data collection associated with the research problem. The research instrument will be described with detailed analysis, and the method for measuring the research variables is also provided.

Figure: 6.1 The research process.



Source: Saunders et al. (2007, p. 83)

6.2 Research Philosophy

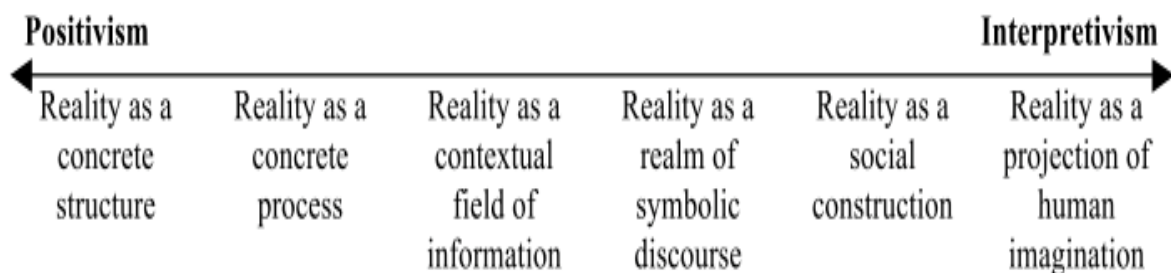
At the basis of any study lie the researcher's primary theories of what central domain they are investigating. This is the fundamental research philosophy associated with viewpoints of evolving knowledge and includes critical hypotheses that play a crucial role in affecting the path of how the researcher runs or addresses their study (Bryman and Bell, 2007; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009).

Easterby-Smith et al. (2004, p. 24) introduce a clear justification for the significance of philosophical assumptions in the field of management: 'It can help to clarify research design'. This not only involves considering what kind of evidence is required and how it is to be gathered and interpreted but also how this will provide good answers to the fundamental questions being investigated in the research to recognise which designs will be successful and which will not. It should support the researcher in avoiding going down dead ends and should indicate the limitations of particular approaches. Knowledge of philosophy can help researchers identify and even create designs that may be outside of their past experiences.

Furthermore, it may also suggest how to adapt research designs according to the constraints of different subjective or knowledge structures. Academics such as Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson (2012) claim that three purposes demonstrate the importance of acknowledging the philosophical concerns associated with any research. The first purpose is to help to define the research design, which includes clarifying which type of data is needed and how the data is obtained and analysed. The second purpose is to establish how the research philosophy can be beneficial for researchers looking to find the most practical study design for their study's aims and objectives. Finally, it facilitates the classification and the adaption of research design, taking into account the limitations and restrictions that might appear through the research process. More precisely, acknowledging the philosophical concerns that are encountered throughout the lifetime of the research helps the researcher determine their role while amplifying their status in association with the research.

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), research philosophies can be classified as a continuum within two extremes, identified as positivism and interpretivism. Positivism acknowledges reality essentially as a 'concrete structure', while interpretivism acknowledges it as a 'projection of human imagination' (Creswell, 2009; Morgan and Smircich, 1980). Furthermore, as demonstrated in Figure 6.2, Morgan and Smircich (1980) introduce six levels on this 'continuum of core ontological assumptions'.

Figure 6.2: Continuum of core ontological assumptions.



Adapted from Morgan and Smircich (1980).

Collis and Hussey (2009) confirm the importance of utilising research philosophies, as they are believed to have an essential association with the researcher's approach and methods. The assumptions of chosen paradigms can also be beneficial in assisting the researcher in achieving the aim of the research. As illustrated in Table 6.1, various research paradigms can have different ontological assumptions and epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, and methodological assumptions. Table 6.2 presents the main characteristics of these two paradigms.

Table 6.1: The assumptions of positivism and interpretivism.

Assumption	Question	Positivism	Interpretivism
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is objective and singular, apart from the researcher.	Reality is subjective and multiple, as seen by participants in a study.
Epistemological	What is the relationship between the researcher and the researched?	The researcher is independent from what is being researched.	The researcher interacts with what is being researched.
Axiological	What is the role of values?	Value-free and unbiased.	Value-laden and biased; rhetorical.
Rhetorical	What is the language of research?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal - Based on set definitions - Impersonal voice - Use of accepted quantitative words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal - Evolving definitions - Personal voice - Use of accepted qualitative words

Methodological	What is the process of research?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deductive process - Cause and effect - Static design (categories isolated before the study) - Context-free - Generalisations leading to prediction, explanation and understanding - Accurate and reliable through validity and reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inductive process - Mutual simultaneous shaping of factors - Emerging design (categories identified during the study) - Context-bound - Patterns, theories developed for understanding - Accurate and reliable through verification
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Source: Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 49)

Table 6.2: The main features of positivism and interpretivism.

Positivism	Interpretivism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to produce quantitative data • Uses large samples • Concerned with hypothesis testing • Data is highly specific and precise • The location is artificial • Reliability is high • Validity is low • Generalises from the sample to the population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to produce qualitative data • Uses small samples • Concerned with generating theories • Data is rich and subjective • The location is natural • Reliability is low • Validity is high • Generalises from one setting to another

Source: Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 55)

6.2.1 Positivism

Positivist forms of research assume that accurately defining reality relies on the researcher's ability and instruments; for this purpose, it is more commonly associated with quantitative methods and statistics (Collis and Hussey, 2003). The quantitative and deductive approach tries to assume and describe the world's social issues in the form of investigating the relationship between its elements. Moreover, the positivist style of research uses the previously tested connection among components, which is tested by employing a structural instrument (Babbie, 1997; Orlikowski and Baroudi, 1991).

Moreover, this research style helps in designing theories with appropriate hypotheses by utilising the existing literature (Creswell, 2009). It uses statistical data collection to examine and describe people's behaviour (Saunders et al., 2012). Since the gathered data is numerical, the results most of the time indicate valid or invalid outcomes. This is usually known as acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses (Saunders et al., 2012).

6.2.2 Interpretivism

Interpretivism, on the other hand, denotes that we cannot measure reality, considering it to be in people's minds and subjective. It also argues that reality can be influenced only if it has been under the act of study (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Hence, interpretivism contains an inductive approach, so it employs qualitative methods to gather an understanding of social issues. In this paradigm, the data is considered unclear or hidden and requires further thinking to be unveiled (Schwandt, 2000). The researcher can gather such data by interacting with participants (Ponterotto, 2005). Therefore, the interactive style favours the use of qualitative data collection methods to reach the aim of understanding people's behaviour.

6.2.3 Pragmatism

According to Saunders et al. (2012), in addition to positivism and interpretivism, there is a third type which is referred to as pragmatism. A pragmatist paradigm believes that it depends on the research question to determine the research philosophy. Furthermore, in cases where the research question does not emphasise the positivist or interpretivist paradigm, the pragmatist paradigm considers it reasonable to use both philosophies (Saunders et al., 2012).

Since the problem itself is seen as the most crucial aspect of the paradigm, not the methods used (Patton, 2015), researchers are allowed to work with all methods to clarify the problem (Creswell, 2009). Pragmatists can combine both methods in the same study, as the study can employ quantitative techniques to summarise many data and reach outcomes, and at the same time, it can employ qualitative techniques to understand social issues from the participants' perspectives. This paradigm is also favoured by researchers in fields like social and behavioural sciences (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

6.2.4 Rationale for the Adopted Research Philosophy

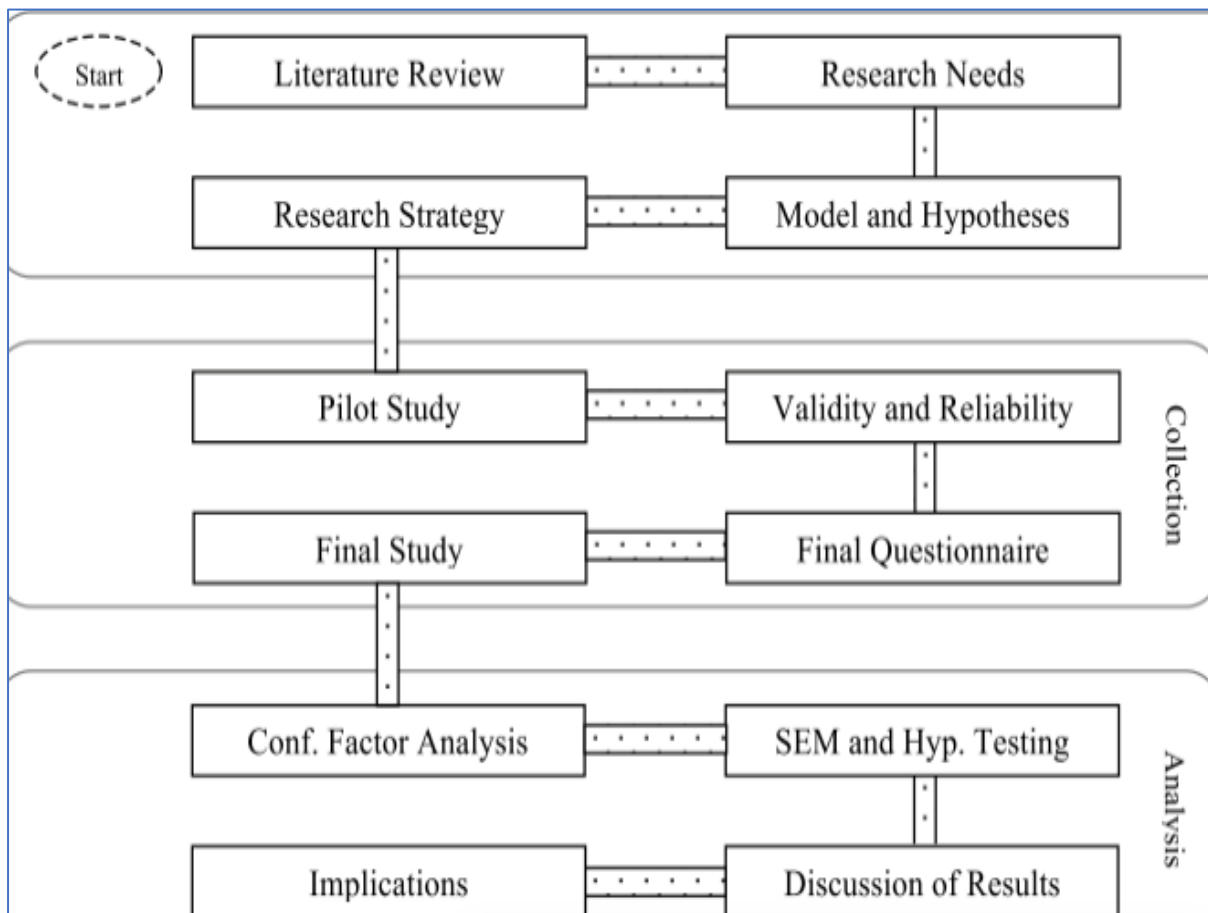
From the previous discussion of positivism, interpretivism, and pragmatism, it should be clear that this research has adopted a positivist approach. To do so, I began by reviewing the relevant literature and developing a research model and hypotheses. Furthermore, I followed through by employing quantitative methods to examine the proposed model, since quantitative methods are more usable for testing the relationship between variables and exploring the hypotheses using collected data (Saunders et al., 2012).

This section has introduced several research philosophies, as well as the most appropriate philosophy for this research. The following section presents the design of this study.

6.3 Research Design

Research design can be described as the overall strategy of the research that supports the answering of the research questions (Saunders et al., 2012). A comprehensive design that involves clear research objectives, identified research questions, a particular data collection source, and methods to analyse data can be beneficial for researchers to manage and direct their research (Saunders et al., 2012). The main aim of the research design is to 'ensure that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the research question as unambiguously as possible' (de Vaus 2001, p. 9).

Figure 6.3 Research Design.



Source: Erkan (2016)

6.4 Research Approach

Another essential part of research besides research philosophy is the research approach. This part presents and reviews deductive and inductive methods. Eventually, the last part of this segment verifies the selected research approach.

6.4.1 Deductive and Inductive Approaches

According to Bryman and Bell (2011), there are two primary research approaches regularly used by researchers, known as the deductive approach and the inductive approach:

A- Deductive approach:-

This is commonly related to quantitative research, as the research theory guides the study (Collis and Hussey, 2009). The quantitative research method examines theories by investigating the relationship between variables (Creswell, 2009). Moreover, it begins by examining hypotheses in a deductive way and carries out empirical testing to approve or reject them; so, it is in correlation with the positivist paradigm (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Quantitative studies run either experiments or surveys to collect data (Saunders et al., 2012).

B- Inductive approach:-

In contrast to the deductive approach, the inductive method is mainly related to the use of qualitative research, as the theory results from the research (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Moreover, the utilisation of qualitative methods is mainly employed to achieve the purpose of investigating social or human issues through learning how people behave as individuals or groups (Creswell, 2009). The inductive method applies research questions in order to shorten the range of the research and form judgments from its findings; consequently, it is fair to say that it is more closely related to the interpretivist paradigm (Bryman and Bell, 2011). The qualitative style uses one of the following methods to collect data: case study, grounded theory, narrative inquiry, and ethnography (Saunders et al., 2012).

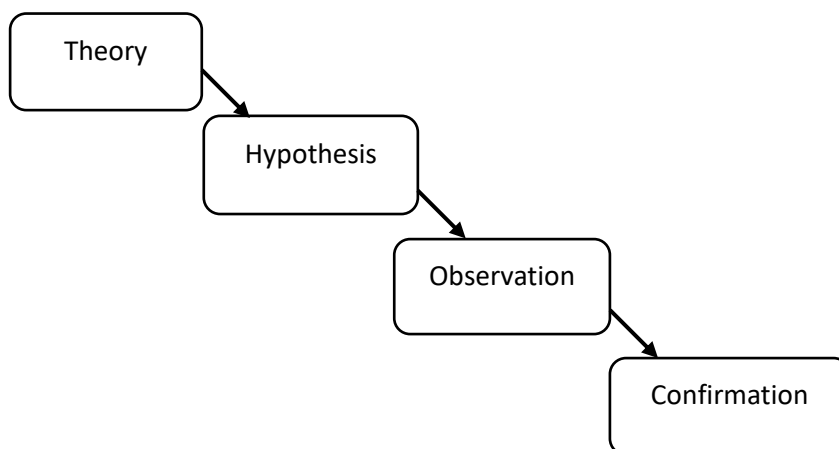
For more details on the differences between each method, Table 6.3, Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.5 present a comparison between the deductive and inductive approaches illustrated.

Table 6.3 The differences between deductive and inductive approaches.

	Deductive Approach	Inductive Approach
Logic	In deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be correct	In inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions
Generalizability	Specialising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general
Use of data	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon and identify themes and patterns
Theory	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building

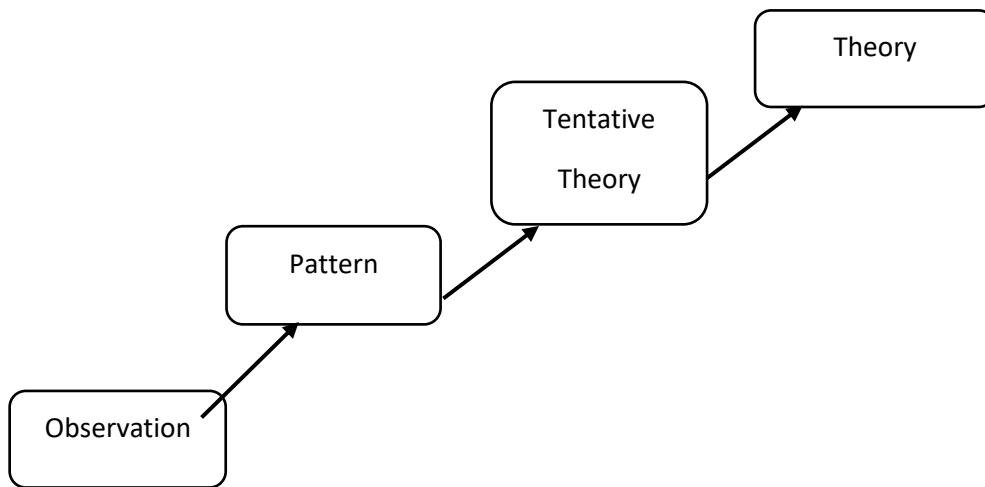
Source: Saunders et al. (2012, p. 144)

Figure: 6.4 Deductive Approach



Source: (Trochim and Donnelly, 2001)

Figure: 6.5 Inductive Approach.



Source: (Trochim and Donnelly, 2001)

6.4.2 Rationale for the Adopted Research Approach

According to Collis and Hussey (2009), it is important to select the most appropriate research approach because it enables the researcher to achieve the study's aims and objectives. This research has developed a theoretical model with all its related hypotheses, which were developed based on the literature review.

This research, consequently, has developed instruments to measure each of the nine variables (quality, credibility, need for information, attitude towards information, usefulness, adoption, quantity, experience, norms and their impact on consumer purchase intention) that were applied to statistically evaluate the influence of visual content on social media created by social media influencers about SMEs restaurants in Saudi Arabia on consumer purchase intention.

This next section introduces several research approaches as well as the most suitable approach for this research.

6.5 Qualitative vs Quantitative research

Over the years, there have been major attempts to determine the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative research. For example, McDaniel and Gates (2010) and Wilson (2012) emphasise the main differences from a statistical perspective. In contrast, Wilson (2012, p. 130) refers to quantitative research as 'research which is undertaken using a structured research approach with a sample of the population to produce quantifiable insights into behaviour, motivations and attitudes'. Furthermore, qualitative research can be referred to as 'research which is undertaken using an unstructured research approach with a small number of carefully selected individuals to produce non-quantifiable insights into behaviour, motivations and attitudes'. In most cases, a quantitative approach can be structured in the style of questionnaires and experiments, which are forms introduced in statistical data, and provide knowledge regarding consumer behaviour, attitudes and motivations (Shao, 1999).

Moreover, since quantitative research offers numerical data, statistical analysis can be undertaken. The quantitative approach offers a large sample, which provides researchers with more reliable data about the target audience. The most common quantitative research method is a survey questionnaire, as questionnaires provide the researchers with greater flexibility with where the research is conducted and the availability of the target audience (Aaker, Kumar and Day, 2001). However, modern technology has enabled survey questionnaires to be conducted in different forms, such as by computer-based technology or verbally in writing (Wilson, 2012).

On the other hand, qualitative research can be conducted through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observations. Even though the collected data in the qualitative approach is unquantifiable, it offers a 'deeper and more penetrating insight' (Wilson, 2012, p. 103) into a topic that cannot be reached effectively through quantitative approaches.

Tables 6.4 and 6.5 draw a comparison between the two study approaches, quantitative and qualitative, and the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

Table 6.4: The differences between quantitative and qualitative research.

Element	Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Nature of reality	Objective: simple, single, tangible, sense-impression	Subjective: problematic, holistic, a social construct
Hypothesis	Developed before the research	Developed within or after the research
Purpose	To examine the hypothesis the research was developed with	To extract and discover thoughts
Approach	Objective	Subjective
Context	Independent of context	Situationally restrained
Epistemology	Focus on why things occurred	Focus on how things occurred
Study Orientation	Particularistic: examines elements and variables	Holistic: examines entire units
Focus	On variables	On interactive processes, events
Researcher Role	Passive: separation, unengaged with the object	Active: interactive, engaged with the object
Emphasis	Places interest in examining differences	Places interest in examining similarities
Design	Highly organised and prescriptive	Highly organised but not prescriptive
Key to Research	Reliability	Authenticity
Research Basis	Depends on facts	Depends on understanding
Measurements	Objective facts	Built on social reality, cultural meaning
Sampling	Is representative	It might not be representative; it might be a limited sample
Replication	Procedures are standard, and replication is expected	Procedures are particular, and replication is very uncommon

Data Collection	In the form of numbers with specific measurements	In the form of words and images from documents, observations, and transcripts
Data Analysis	Quantitative and mathematical: major use of statistics.	Less related to statistics, more on verbal and quantitative analysis.
Interpretation	Conducting with the aid of using statistical tables or charts and inspecting how and in what manner they provide relationship to the hypothesis.	Conducting through extracting issues or generalisation from evidence and arranging data in a logical picture.
Reporting	Extremely integrated results	Primarily not integrated results, but a lot of narrative characterisation; it does not contain numerical information

Adapted from Sarantakos (1998), Taylor and Trumbull (2000), Mostyn (1985), Creswell (1994), Denzin and Lincoln (1994), Guba and Lincoln (1994), Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) and Neuman (2000, 2003).

Table 6.5: Advantages and disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative research

Advantages of Quantitative Research	Advantages of Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods permit greater accuracy because of dependable of variables • Replicability • Methods can be either structured or standard • Statistical analysis that permits complex analysis • Enhances the data reliability and confidentiality • Possibility of generalisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define theories and practices • Provide rich knowledge • Much simpler to recognize by the readers and the researcher • More flexible • More value targeted to participants' opinions as it encourages participants to share • The approach can be viewed as narrative

Disadvantages of Quantitative Research	Disadvantages of Qualitative Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflexibility of methods used • Deterministic style • Ignores of some key aspects • Ignores the characteristics of human existence • The belief of an 'objective' honesty • Allows incomplete knowledge • Not appropriate for certain immeasurable events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty of measuring, as the data are not hard copy. • Can be considered subjective, 'non-scientific' • Raises the risk of bias, due to high level of involvements by researchers • Limited samples size • Data are more time consuming to collect and analyse • Not easy to scientifically summarise and compare • Considered less reliable compare to quantitative research method • Difficulty to generalise to related circumstances

Source: (Neuman, 2000; Hughes, 2006, and Ramona, 2011)

After discussing the quantitative and qualitative approaches, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each one, and with acknowledgement of the research aim, this study will be conducted through a quantitative approach.

6.6 Research Strategy

According to Saunders et al. (2012), research strategy can be recognised as the link between the chosen research paradigm and the chosen method for data collection and analyses. Saunders et al. (2012) further propose the various research strategies such as experiments, surveys, archival research, case studies, ethnography, action research, grounded theory, and narrative inquiries (Table 6.7).

Within these strategies, experiments and surveys are more closely related to quantitative research design; archival research and case studies are closer to mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative combined). Finally, ethnography, action research, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry fall more into the bracket of qualitative research design. Tables 6.6 and 6.7 introduce a summarised comparison between the different research strategies.

Table 6.6: Different research strategies

Strategy	Form of Research Question	Requires Control over behavioural events	Focuses on Contemporary
Experiment	How, Why?	Yes	Yes
Survey	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes
Archival analysis	Who, what, where, how many, how much?	No	Yes/No
History	How, why?	No	No
Case study	How, why?	No	Yes

Source: (Yin, 2003).

Table 6.7: Research strategies with linked research approaches.

Research Approach	Research Strategy
Quantitative	Experiment Survey
Mixed	Archival research Case study
Qualitative	Ethnography Action research Grounded theory Narrative inquiry

Source: (Saunders et al., 2012)

Collis and Hussey's (2009) point of view suggests a definite link between the selected research philosophy and its impact on the research strategy. Therefore, as this study applies a quantitative approach, experiment and survey strategies seem to be two possible options.

6.6.1 Experiment as a Research Strategy

Collis and Hussey (2009) verify that experimental studies can test controlled circumstances to investigate the validity of hypotheses and answer research questions. Moreover, this strategy can be employed in a natural environment or a laboratory. This type of research plays a role in assisting researchers in examining the connection between variables in the research. As the researchers form all variables, they can manipulate the variables in order to recognise their effect on each other (Saunders et al., 2012).

Prior studies in fields related to this study have applied an experiments approach, such as examining the impact of eWOM content. This was tested on customers in a laboratory environment (Sen and Lerman, 2007; Zhang et al., 2010). For example, Lee and Youn's (2009) research aims to examine the impact of various eWOM applications on consumer brand judgment, so they produce their own eWOM content and then show it to participants.

However, taking into consideration the aims and objectives of this study, the experimental approach does not appear suitable for this study. Since this study aims to investigate the influence of visual eWOM created by social media influencers, the visual eWOM content examined within the research should be actual content. More precisely, the visual eWOM content examined in the research would be better produced by influencers or by the friends/family of the participants. Thus, the experimental approach does not seem appropriate for this research. Instead, the survey approach will be used as the research strategy because a survey 'provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population' (Creswell, 2014, p. 14).

6.6.2 Survey as a Research Strategy

Survey approaches are mainly used to collect data from a sample in order to analyse them statistically and apply the outcomes to a population (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Using a survey enables researchers to gather data from a large population in a cost-effective method (Saunders et al., 2012).

This research strategy is often linked with a deductive approach, an approach that begins with the examination of hypotheses to approve their validity or rejection (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Furthermore, this kind of strategy is suited for a study that intends to examine its theory to provide more insight into social issues (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Therefore, it seems reasonable that the survey method is the most appropriate for this study. This study intends to examine its hypothesis and will, therefore, a large amount of data to be analysed statistically.

A further consideration is that this strategy offers a) quick, b) convenient and c) affordable methods to collect data from a high number of participants, making it seems most suited to this study (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Malhotra et al., 2012; Saunders et al., 2012). Secondly, this method makes the data analysis much more manageable since the participants are provided with fixed answers to choose from (Malhotra et al., 2012). However, Denscombe (2007) criticises survey strategy, saying that it focuses more on data accumulation and data clarification than theory. It also displays a low response rate and has the possibility of bias within samples. Despite these criticisms, the strategy has many benefits, as presented earlier, including cost-effectiveness and convenience (Collis and Hussey, 2009).

Therefore, this study has adopted the survey as a research strategy. According to Fowler (2014), there are three primary elements for adopting a survey as a research method: data collection method, instrument development, and sampling. Those elements are discussed in the coming sections.

6.7 Data Collection Method

In the survey strategy, there are several data collection methods to select. In this section, the selected survey strategy is presented as well as the reasons for the selection.

6.7.1 Survey Method

There are different data collection methods, including self-administered questionnaires, telephone interviews, and face-to-face interviews. In order to select the most suitable and effective methods, the advantages and disadvantages must be considered, as well as the aim and objectives of the study. This study aims to manage large-scale empirical inquiries in order to achieve the primary goal of approving or rejecting its theoretical model and hypotheses. To reach such aim, this study selects the self-administered questionnaire for data collection.

Questionnaires are thought to be one of the most common data collection methods for gathering data from a large sample (Saunders et al., 2012); this method, therefore, fits the aim of this research. The questionnaire is recognised as a time- and cost-effective method (Bryman and Bell, 2011). This method also appears to be very convincing for both parties, researchers as well as participants, as participants can answer quickly and, therefore, the researchers can analyse the questions shortly (Gray, 2014).

Nonetheless, telephone or face-to-face interview techniques do not seem as convenient as the self-administered questionnaire technique; researchers and participants have to figure out a place and time that suit both parties, which seems very challenging to arrange, especially if we consider the significant number of participants. Hence, the questionnaire method is favoured in this study as a data collection method. Table 6.8 provides more insight into the advantages and disadvantages of using the questionnaire.

Table 6.8: Advantages and disadvantages of using a questionnaire as a data collection method.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficial method when it comes to collecting data about peoples' attitudes, motivations, and intentions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technique of questions may seem suitable for most respondents yet not suitable for understanding respondents' actual feelings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Useful in terms of maintaining participants' privacy, as they answer the questions anonymously. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low level of flexibility, as researchers cannot edit or change questions during the data collection process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It helps in demonstrating the features of a large sample 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It requires the assurance of a large number of responses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some cases, it appears confusing for respondents to remember information, especially if questions are considered controversial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It does not require the attendance of a researcher, as he/she can conduct the data collection from a different location through the mail or electronically through email or other modern devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes respondents decided not to answer some questions, which is reflected in the response rate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable the researchers to ask more questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The respondents should have the ability to read so they can be able to answer questions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gives the researchers the chance to arrange the questions in more appealing forms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In some cases, it seems hard to confirm that the people who answer the questions are actually the target audience.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows researchers to reach respondents in a wide geographical area in a short period of time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The researcher cannot determine any confusion that their questions may create.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It requires less effort compared to other methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The likelihood for respondents to include their personal issues is very slim, except if the questionnaire contains open questions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It gives respondents enough time to think before answering each question, which causes less pressure and more accurate answers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents do not need much time to complete the questionnaire. • The opportunity to use a large sample size, which enhances the likelihood of obtaining critical statistical results. 	

Source: (Wright, 2005; McClelland, 1994).

Considering the advantages and disadvantages mentioned above, the questionnaire method is a widespread technique in business research (Collis and Hussey, 2009); nevertheless, researchers should consider a few elements for the intended use. The form of the questionnaire can play a factor in the participant rate, reliability, and validity of the data, which should be handled precisely (Collis and Hussey, 2009; Saunders et al., 2012). However, there are a few tips provided from prior academics which might be helpful in reaching high participant rates with reliable and valid data.

For example, a) including a cover letter and giving clear guidance for participants, b) trying to use as short questions as possible and c) using appealing designs (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Consequently, this study considered those tips and employed them as possible in the design process of the questionnaire. Additionally, a particular account was provided for the development of instrument measurements. The following section introduces these measurements with a summarised description.

6.7.2 Questionnaire Development

Developing instrument measurements is a further significant element in data collection; it is essential because it has a primary effect on the reliability and validity of the data. This importance is unsurprising as it has been justified by Bryman and Bell (2011), who advise employing measurements that have been already tested in prior studies. Consequently, in this research, the measurements were carried out from the existing literature and adjusted to be compatible with the study's aim and objectives. Table 6.9 describes in detail all the measures used in this study. The questionnaire of this study was created using a multi-item approach; every construct was measured using different parts to achieve more validity and reliability. Every variable was implemented by employing the Likert scale (Bryman and Bell, 2011). A five-point rating measure was adopted: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. This study also added a further validation element by including positive and negative questions in order to make sure that the participants carefully read and answer all the questions (Saunders et al., 2012).

Table 6.9: Instrument measurements

Construct	Measure	Author
Dependent Variables		
<p>Visual eWOM (content) Quality</p>	<p>The visual content on Instagram and Snapchat about restaurants which are created by social media influencers in social media...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ VQ1 I think they are a great source of restaurant information and supply relevant product information. ➤ VQ2 I think they provide convincing restaurant information. ➤ VQ3 I think they are easy to understand. ➤ VQ4 I think they provide complete information about the restaurant. ➤ VQ5 I think they provide up-to-date information about the restaurant. ➤ VQ6 In general, I think the quality of them is high. 	<p>VQ1, VQ2 and VQ6 Adapted from Logan et al. (2012)</p> <p>VQ3 and VQ4 Adapted from (Park et al., 2007)</p> <p>VQ5 Adapted from (Ducoffe, 1995,1996)</p>
<p>Source (Influencer) Credibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SC1 I think the influencers who provide the visual content are credible. ➤ SC2 I think the influencers who provide the visual content are accurate. ➤ SC3 I think the influencers who provide the visual content are knowledgeable. ➤ SC4 I think the influencers who provide the visual content are reliable. 	<p>SC1 Adapted from (Prendergast et al., 2010)</p> <p>SC2, SC3 and SC4 Adapted from Cheung, Lee and Rabjohn (2008); Sussman and Siegal (2003)</p>

<p>Visual eWOM Usefulness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ VU1 I think they are generally useful. ➤ VU2 I think they are generally informative. ➤ VU3 I think they are effective. ➤ VU4 I think they increase my effectiveness when I choose a restaurant. 	<p>VU1 and VU2 (Adapted from Bailey and Pearson, 1983)</p> <p>VU3 and VU4 Adapted from Gefen et al. (2003) and Koufaris (2002)</p>
<p>Needs of Visual eWOM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NOI1 I like to apply them when I consider new restaurants. ➤ NOI2 If I have little experience with a restaurant, I often use them. ➤ NOI3 I always consult them to choose the best alternative for me. ➤ NOI4 I frequently gather them before making a purchase. 	<p>Adapted from (Chu and Kim, 2011)</p>
<p>Attitude towards Visual eWOM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ AT1 I always read them when I choose a restaurant. ➤ AT12 If I do not read them when I buy a product, I worry about my decision. ➤ AT3 They impose a burden on me when I buy a product. ➤ AT4 They irritate me when I buy a product. 	<p>Adapted from (Park et al., 2007)</p>
<p>Visual eWOM Adoption</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IA1 I think influencers' visual content is a great source for restaurant information and contributes relevant restaurant information. ➤ IA2 It makes it easier for me to make a purchase decision. 	<p>Adapted from (Cheung et al., 2009)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IA3 It enhances my effectiveness in making a purchase decision. ➤ IA4 It motivates me to make a purchase decision. 	
Visual eWOM Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ VQ1 The amount of visual content about restaurants indicates they are great. ➤ VQ2 The higher the number of visual content shared by influencers means that the restaurant is popular. ➤ VQ3 The more a restaurant is mentioned in front of me, the more I am aware of it. ➤ VQ4 The amount of visual content motivates me to make a purchase decision. 	<p>VQ1 and VQ2 Adapted from (Lin et al., 2013)</p> <p>VQ3 and VQ4 Adapted from (El-desouky, 2011)</p>
Influencer's Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IE1 I depend more on an influencer whom I think is experienced. ➤ IE2 I depend more on an influencer whom I think is knowledgeable. ➤ IE3 These influencers provide different restaurants' content than other sources. ➤ IE4 I think these influencers have the ability to judge restaurants. ➤ IE5 These influencers provide different restaurant information I had not considered. 	Adapted from Lin et al. (2013)
Subjective Norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SN1 If I have little experience with an influencer's content, I often ask my friends about it. 	adapted from (Bearden et al., 1989)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SN2 It is important that my family and friends like the influencers I rely on when choosing a restaurant. ➤ SN3 I usually gather information from my family and friends about an influencer's content before I make a decision. 	
Moderators Variables		
Consumer Confusion (Overload Confusion, Similarity confusion, and Ambiguity confusion)	<p>When seeing Instagram and Snapchat visual content about restaurants created by influencers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ CC1 They give so many options, so it is hard to know which restaurants meet my needs best. ➤ CC2 They are very similar and it is, therefore, hard to distinguish between them. ➤ CC3 They indicate so many restaurant options that I sometimes feel confused. ➤ CC4 Due to the high level of similarity between influencers' visual content, it sometimes becomes hard to detect the new restaurants. ➤ CC5 I felt confused because of influencers constantly updating the restaurants' visual content. 	adapted from Walsh et al. (2007)
Independent Variables		
Purchase Intention	After considering visual content on Instagram and Snapchat about restaurants which are created by social media influencer...	Adapted from (Coyle and Thorson, 2001;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PI1 It is very likely that I will try the restaurants. ➤ PI2 I will definitely try the restaurants. ➤ PI3 I will recommend the restaurants to my friends. 	Prendergast et al., 2010)
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As the previous table presented the instrument measurements of the survey questions, some justifications for including some variables over others need to be introduced in order to provide a comprehensive picture of the purposes of including each variable. Starting from the quality of social media visual content shared by influencers on Instagram and Snapchat. The reason behind including such was primarily due to the fact that nowadays, Saudi consumers are being exposed to so much visual content on social media, as it was mentioned in previous chapters; therefore, the quality of content and the way it was presented has a significant impact in determining the level of effect on consumers behaviour.

Regarding source credibility, it was considered over other related variables such as persuasiveness, accuracy and expertise. The purpose of such excluding of persuasiveness is based on my observations of social media influencers in Saudi Arabia over the last few years, as Saudi influencers try to present and promote products/ services in a more realistic way as part of their lifestyle with no indications of the restaurants are being sponsored of presented content; therefore, there was no persuasiveness involve. Accuracy, on the other hand, was not considered because of the point that one of the primary targets of this study is to focus on the source of the social media visual content, which is Saudi influencers, and accuracy is more related to the content itself other than the source of the content.

Finally, regarding the including of source expertise. The reason behind doing such was determined based on the importance of presenting expertise as a separate variable, not within source credibility. In detail, source expertise was discussed in earlier chapters and justified as an essential variable in consumer behaviour studies.

By taking more close consideration of Saudi social media influencers, we can easily view that even though most Saudi influencers on social media promote so many different products/services, however, each one of them has their own interests and specific field where their views and suggestion are determined to be valuable. For example, even though almost all of them can be under the category of everyday lifestyle influencers, we can easily view each influencer who belongs to a particular field, such as fashion, travel, food, sports, Tv and so on. Thus, presenting source expertise as a separate variable was primarily for the previous reasons.

The justifications of the remaining variables, including usefulness, need of information, attitude, adoption, quantity of visual content, subjective norms, confusion and purchase intention, were discussed in previous chapters.

6.8 Sampling Strategies

According to Burns (2000), sampling strategy refers to taking a part of the target audience of the population, conducting an investigation and then generalising the results to the rest of the population. Moreover, Bryman and Bell (2011) see the sample as any part of the population which has been picked to be explored and examined. Taking into account the research context highlighted earlier, the population of this study is social media users in Saudi Arabia and more precisely, those who use Instagram and Snapchat. However, it doesn't appear practical for this research to examine the entire population due to obvious reasons such as time, cost and access (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

When choosing the appropriate sample, there are two approaches: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In the first approach, each part of the population has an equal chance to be selected (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In the second, each part does not have an equal chance of being selected (Saunders et al., 2012). This method features convenience, quota and snowball sampling (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Therefore, this research used convenience sampling due to its high efficiency in terms of time, cost, and effort.

With regards to this study's aim and objectives, choosing the target audience was based on the primary focus on finding people from a local community who are active in social media or at least use social media and are familiar with the most recent applications which in our case were Instagram and Snapchat. To do so, I reached friends and family members through social media applications such as WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat and asked them to participate in the survey and share the survey link with their friends. So I got in touch directly with over 50 people of family members and friends, and they were extremely helpful in sharing the survey with their friends through social media applications.

To gather many responses from consumers who are familiar with Saudi social media influencers, I reached out to some social media influencers (accounts with a few thousand followers) who live in my local area and asked them to participate and share the survey link with their followers, and they were surprisingly encouraged to do so. Hence, in a few days, the survey was spread all over my local area, and I received comments and encouragement thoughts from so many people I don't even identify with, appreciating my consideration of such a crucial and modern topic as they all are being influenced by almost every time they open their social media applications.

6.9 Pilot Testing

In this study, a pilot test was carried out to test the research questionnaire. This was a crucial step before using it for data collection; a small group of participants who reflected the target sample were selected. The pilot test allows for a complete overview of the questions and highlights any confusion or misleading questions which may make the participants uncomfortable (Bryman and Bell, 2011; Cooper and Schindler, 2014). This research, therefore, conducted a pilot test on 10 participants, who were encouraged to fill out the survey and provide comments.

This study also reached out informally to members of the linguistic department for feedback on the language used in the survey since the questions were translated from English to Arabic. Consequently, critical comments were collected from both parties and improvements were made.

Even though the main aim was to present flawless survey questions, some parts of the survey received few criticisms. The first comment was entirely pointed to the number of questions, as few people from the pilot testing (10 participants) mentioned that there were so many questions to fill in, and they were bored by the end of the survey. The second comment was aimed at the fact that some questions needed to be presented clearly, and they seemed confused and unsure how to answer them. Therefore, to fix such issues, in the first comment regarding the length of the survey, I reformulated the survey more conveniently by putting the questions regarding demographic parts at the end of the survey so they do not have to overthink or spend anytime answering them. Regarding the second comment on the clarity of some questions, which was expected considering the fact that questions were written originally in English and had to be translated into Arabic. So, I rewrite them more clearly and directly as possible after considering the feedback from my colleagues in the linguistics department.

6.10 Preliminary examination of the data

After providing an overall view of the methodology of this study, including the research philosophy, research design, research approach and data collection method, the second part of this chapter follows up by introducing a preliminary examination of the data, with highlights on data screening and handling, and more precisely, having the data ready for analysis. Overall, a total of 934 individuals responded to the survey (this number includes all those who clicked on the survey link). The survey was distributed to family and friends via social media. I also reached out to friends who have social media accounts with a reasonably large number of followers. The aim of data collection was to collect around 500 participants, and luckily it almost reached 1,000. The data collection was carried out over a period of two months.

After data screening and filtering, the following were eliminated: respondents who did not answer any questions; respondents with more than 5% of data missing; respondents who did not use either Instagram or Snapchat; respondents who did not watch or follow social media influencers and unengaged responses.

A final number of pure target consumers of 512 respondents was obtained, with a response rate of 55%.

6.10.1 Missing values

As shown in Table 6.10, the number of survey items with missing values that the study had to replace was less than 5%, with the mean for continuous scale variables and the median for ordinal scale variables. More details are presented in the following sections.

Table 6.10: Missing data.

Item	Valid	Missing
Q6	512	1
Q17	512	1
Q31	511	2
Q32	511	2
Q33	511	2
Q34	509	4
Quality 1	512	1
Quality 2	512	1
Quality 3	512	1
Quality 6	512	1
Usefulness 4	511	2
Need 2	512	1
Need 4	512	1
Attitude 1	512	1
Attitude 4	512	1
Adoption 1	512	1
Quantity 1	512	1
Quantity 2	509	4
Quantity 3	509	4
Quantity 4	510	3

Confusion 1	510	3
Confusion 2	510	3
Confusion 3	512	1
Confusion 4	510	3
Confusion 5	510	3
S. Credibility 1	511	2
S. Credibility 2	509	4
Expertise 1	511	2
Expertise 2	510	3
Expertise 3	512	1
Expertise 4	510	3
Expertise 5	511	2
Norms 1	510	3
Norms 3	512	1
P. Intention 1	510	3
P. Intention 2	511	2
P. Intention 3	511	2
Q88	509	4
Q89	511	2
Q90	511	2
Q91	511	2
Q92	511	2

6.10.2 Data screening

Data screening is considered an essential preparatory step in conducting quantitative analysis since this step helps the researcher to have the data ready for further analysis, including the identification of outliers, tests for normality, structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis and the detection of missing data (Hair et al., 2010). Furthermore, data screening can help the researcher eliminate surplus data, which refers to data that does not have a high level of relevance to the research aim, and this eventually improves the data quality (Acton et al., 2009).

Data screening is described as the step where the researcher reviews the received data to determine whether the respondents have successfully answered every survey questionnaire (Pallant 2013). This stage of data preparation includes coding the collected data and then entering it into the SPSS programme. The process then continues with a check for entry errors and missing data, which will be discussed in detail in the next section.

6.10.3 Missing Data

Missing data is an issue that may occur due to a problem with the respondent's data entry on either electronic or hard copy surveys; for example, a respondent may miss a question intentionally because of time or even for privacy concerns (Tsikriktsis, 2005). Missing data is a concern in data analysis and, more precisely, in quantitative research (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2000). This issue can be critical when the analysis involves the use of software since missing data may cause a delay in the analysis (Allison, 2009). Respondents' missing data could become a crucial problem, as it has a major effect on the research aim; therefore, it is vital to reduce the impact of these potential errors (Baraldi and Enders 2010). The handling of missing data is explained in the next section.

6.10.4 Handling of Missing Data

According to Hair et al. (2014), missing data can be handled with different approaches, such as by eliminating respondents who miss 15% of the questions. Others like Cohen and Cohen (1983) have suggested that the data be removed in cases where just 10% is missing. Schafer (1999) suggests 5% as a cut-off, which was the method applied in this study. In this research, which was conducted through an online questionnaire, there was a total of 934 respondents who clicked on the survey link. In the next step, respondents who did not answer any questions and those with more than 5% of responses missing were removed. Then, respondents who did not use either Instagram or Snapchat and did not watch or follow social media influencers were excluded. Finally, unengaged respondents were excluded, leaving a final number of pure target consumers of **512**, with a response rate of **55%**.

6.10.5 Outliers (Univariate and Multivariate)

Detecting outliers is a further step in the data screening process. Data with outliers is viewed as an issue in the data analysis process, that is essential to address since it affects the overall outcomes of the research study. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), an outlier is a case with such an extreme value on one valid table or such a strange combination of scores on two or more variables.

Rogelberg (2004) defines an outlier as a set of numerical data that is different from the rest of the dataset. According to Hair et al. (2010), an outlier is an extreme value that varies from the rest of the data set. The outlier is a value that can be either very high or very low, leading to the data becoming abnormal and misleading (Hair et al., 2010; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2014).

An outlier may come about for various reasons, including an error in data entry, extreme values, measurement error, or a misrepresentation of a respondent's intended answers. Nevertheless, an outlier remains an accurate and legitimate response that happens to differ from the rest of the data (Hair et al. 1998; Tabachnick and Fidell 2007). In some cases, this unique value should not be ignored; however, keeping or deleting outliers might not be an easy process for a researcher (Hair et al. 1998; Tabachnick and Fidell 2007). In this research, the data was reviewed for outliers using a univariate detection approach (Hair et al., 2010), in which every variable has to be converted to a standard score. Based on Field's (2008) suggestion, if the sample size is greater than 80, an outlier would have a standard score of ± 3.29 or above, and data like that did not exist in this research. Table 6.11 presents the standard scores of all variables.

Table 6.11: Standard scores.

QUALITY	ZQUALITY 1	ZQUALITY 2	ZQUALITY 3	ZQUALITY 4	ZQUALITY 5	ZQUALITY 6
VALID	512	512	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-1.77858	-1.71131	-1.94239	-2.06914	-1.55617	-1.98119
MAXIMUM	1.81012	2.02113	1.63496	1.63505	2.41770	1.64804

USEFULNESS

	ZUSEFUL 1	ZUSEFUL 2	ZUSEFUL 3	ZUSEFUL 4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.05060	-2.00884	-2.23343	-2.31955
MAXIMUM	1.82002	1.90562	1.99790	1.52074

NEED OF INFORMATION

	ZNEED 1	ZNEED 2	ZNEED 3	ZNEED 4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-1.94570	-2.19690	-2.17988	-2.12862
MAXIMUM	1.53751	1.78122	1.81332	1.76024

ATTITUDE

	ZATTITUDE 1	ZATTITUDE 2	ZATTITUDE 3	ZATTITUDE 4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.56238	-2.72535	-2.67068	-2.06559
MAXIMUM	1.21570	1.01561	1.29277	1.43924

ADOPTION

	ZADOPTUIN 1	ZADOPTUIN 2	ZADOPTUIN 3	ZADOPTUIN 4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.22623	-2.23903	-2.08754	-1.95434
MAXIMUM	1.74876	1.85154	1.73993	1.85755

QUANTITY

	ZQUANTITY 1	ZQUANTITY 2	ZQUANTITY 3	ZQUANTITY 4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.15268	-1.71242	-1.78313	-1.97624
MAXIMUM	1.47288	1.74279	2.06092	1.77477

***CONFUSION**

	ZCONF 1	ZCONF 2	ZCONF 3	ZCONF 4	ZCONF 5
VALID	512	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.12718	-2.00045	-1.97640	-1.58495	-1.28999
MAXIMUM	1.56161	1.77204	1.62473	1.85359	1.83651

S.CREDIBILITY	ZS_CREDIBILITY	ZS_CREDIBILITY	ZS_CREDIBILITY	ZS_CREDIBILITY
	1	2	3	4
VALID	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-2.18529	-2.94555	-2.98950	-2.15064
MAXIMUM	1.63012	1.15818	1.16698	1.52591

EXPERIENCE	ZEXP 1	ZEXP 2	ZEXP 3	ZEXP 4	ZEXP 5
VALID	512	512	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-1.94530	-1.95721	-2.15206	-1.97526	-2.58846
MAXIMUM	1.48620	1.51925	1.66389	1.78085	1.21166

NORMS	ZNORMS 1	ZNORMS 2	ZNORMS 3
VALID	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-1.74445	-1.61373	-1.36610
MAXIMUM	1.74104	1.87248	2.06254

P.INTENTION	ZP_INTENTION 1	ZP_INTENTION 2	ZP_INTENTION 3
VALID	512	512	512
MINIMUM	-1.90879	-2.11815	-2.23354
MAXIMUM	2.18033	1.57060	1.66611

This research also used the Mahalanobis distance test to detect multivariate outliers. Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p. 99) state that 'Mahalanobis is evaluated as D2 with degrees of freedom equal to the number of variables.' Tables 6.12 and 6.13 present an illustration of Mahalanobis distance values (χ^2 at $p < .001$ is 29.588).

Table 6.12: Mahalanobis distance values.

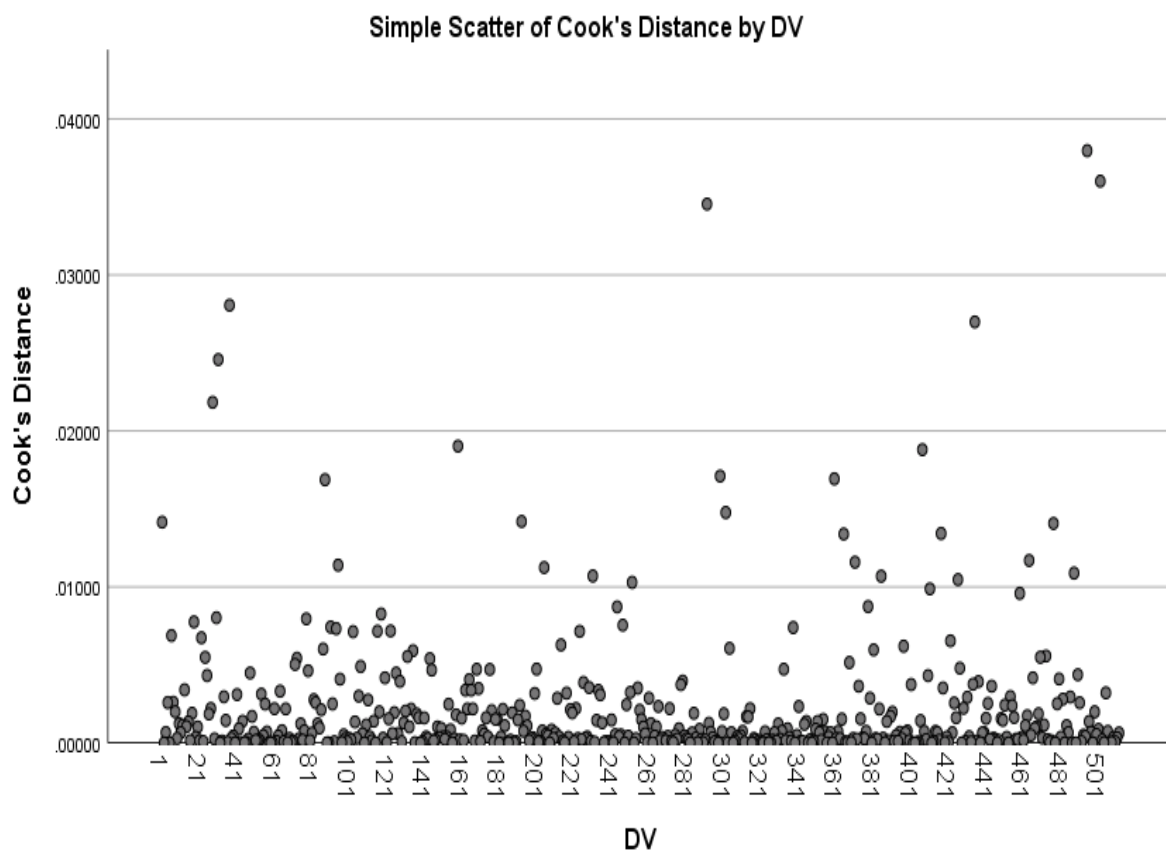
ID	MAH	pMAH
502	63.09829	.0000
430	33.65749	.0002
144	32.59982	.0003
495	27.81941	.0019

Table 6.13: Mahalanobis distance values and Cook's distance.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	0.7151	4.8566	3.1517	0.68972	512
Std. Predicted Value	-3.533	2.472	0.000	1.000	512
Standard Error of Predicted Value	0.040	0.211	0.082	0.021	512
Adjusted Predicted Value	0.7042	4.8614	3.1523	0.68948	512
Residual	-1.92833	1.75443	0.00000	0.60281	512
Std. Residual	-3.171	2.885	0.000	0.991	512
Stud. Residual	-3.197	2.942	0.000	1.002	512
Deleted Residual	-1.96017	1.82446	-0.00058	0.61650	512
Stud. Deleted Residual	-3.227	2.964	-0.001	1.005	512
Mahal. Distance	1.248	60.754	8.982	5.448	512
Cook's Distance	0.000	0.038	0.002	0.005	512
Centered Leverage Value	0.002	0.119	0.018	0.011	512
a Dependent Variable: DV					

As shown in Table 6.12, there is no notable difference in the Mahalanobis distance values. Only one case, 495, can be considered different from the others. However, according to Hair et al. (2010), with a large sample size (> 200), this case cannot be recognised as an extraordinary multivariate outlier. Moreover, taking into account Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007) suggestion, Cook's distance values were also employed. The results showed no value under the cut-off point, which indicates no possible outliers that may have impacted the analysis outcomes.

Figure 6.6: Simple scatter of Cook's distance by DV.



As shown in Figure 6.6, there were a few high values; however, considering the minimum of .00 and the maximum of .04, these values did not appear to be extremely high compared to the others. The following section discusses another data cleaning step known as normality.

6.10.6 Normality

Normality refers to the level at which the sample data is distributed normally (Howell, 2007). According to Hair et al. (2006, p. 79), 'if the variation from the normal distribution is sufficiently large, all resulting statistics are invalid because normality is required to use the F and T statistics.' Moreover, in testing the normality of each variable, skewness and kurtosis are the most widely used statistical measures (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

In this research, skewness and kurtosis were calculated to determine if the data was normally distributed. Accordingly, in agreement with Hair et al. (2010), the data was to be recognised as accepted if it was in the range of ≤ 2.58 . Table 6.14 shows the normality of data distribution, as the mean and median had similar values.

Table 6.14: Normality of data distribution.

	Valid	Mean	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis
Quality	512	2.9954	3	0.019	-0.18
Usefulness	512	3.1748	3.25	-0.077	0.116
Needs of information	512	3.2041	3.25	-0.029	-0.191
Attitude	512	3.6699	3.75	-0.512	0.127
Adoption	512	3.1655	3	0.06	-0.16
Quantity	512	3.0801	3	-0.001	-0.108
Confusion	512	3.0234	3	0.003	-0.282
S. Credibility	512	3.5947	3.75	-0.545	0.566
S. Experience	512	3.3207	3.4	-0.197	-0.057
Norms	512	2.8158	2.6667	0.238	-0.398
P. Intention	512	3.1517	3	-0.084	-0.233

6.11 Ethical Consideration

The definition of ethics is the morals and values that should be acknowledged during the research process (Blumberg et al., 2014; Cooper and Schindler, 2014). More precisely, Punch (2005) highlights the importance of considering ethics when the study involves human participants, as the study must consider the participants' confidentiality (Collis and Hussey, 2009). Cooper and Schindler (2014) provide a guideline for researchers to consider as follows:

- a) Participants' rights should be protected.
- b) The research sponsor should be informed.
- c) The study should be formulated in line with ethical requirements.
- d) In some cases, the safety of the team conducting the study should be considered.
- e) The study should follow the research design.

In the case of this study, the process of the research took into consideration all ethical requirements. All participants were informed before their participation about the aims of the study. The participants' responses remained confidential, and they were analysed aggregately, not individually. Moreover, the participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the survey at any time without any obligations. Finally, the data collection process was conducted and guided by the University of Stirling Research Ethics Committee.

6.12 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overall perspective on the methodology employed in this study by addressing the research philosophy, research design, research approach and data collection method, as well as describing the preliminary examination of the data. It has addressed the method used to collect the data as well as the tools used to make the data ready for analysis. Therefore, the following chapter discusses the data analysis in more detail.

CHAPTER SEVEN
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

7 Chapter Seven: Data Analysis and Findings

7.1 Introduction

Previous chapters have introduced an overall understanding of the concept of social media and recent application developments, as well as the related and valuable evolution known as the social media influencer. Previous chapters have also gone through the various theories and models employed in this research, and presented the methods used to collect and analyse the collected data. This research will now move on to the intriguing aspect of presenting the analysis results and findings of these efforts, which is the focus of this chapter.

The chapter is divided into two main sections for this purpose, starting with the presentation of the analysis and results of the first part of the survey, including demographic information, social media usage, restaurant behaviour, and social media influencers. The second section of this chapter introduces the analysis and findings of the other part of the survey, including structural equation modelling, confirmatory factors analysis, validity, and hypotheses testing.

7.2 Analysing of the First Part of the Research Statistic

7.2.1 Demographic profile

This section addresses the first part of this chapter which focuses on presenting and analysing the demographic character of the survey respondents.

Table 7.1: Demographic profile

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	163	31.8
Female	349	68.2
Age	Frequency	%
18 - 25	149	29.1
26 - 35	175	34.2
36 - 45	99	19.3
46 - 55	69	13.5
More than 56	20	3.9
Marital Status	Frequency	%
Single	197	38.5
Married with no children	264	51.6
Married with children	35	6.8
DivorcedWidowed/	16	3.1
Education	Frequency	%
Less than High School	4	.8
High School	41	8.0
Two Year College Degree	29	5.7
Undergraduate Degree	360	70.3
Graduate Degree	78	15.2
Occupation	Frequency	%
Government/Public Sector	151	29.5
Private Sector	75	14.6

Business Owner/Self Employed	13	2.5
Student	116	22.7
Housewife/Homemaker	60	11.7
Unemployed	51	10.0
Retired	46	9.0
Income	Frequency	%
None	110	21.5
Less than 5.000	126	24.6
5.001 - 10.000	95	18.6
10.001 - 15.000	99	19.3
15.001 - 20.000	53	10.4
More than 20.001	29	5.7
Total	512	100.0

7.2.2 Gender

As shown in Table 7.1, the sample included a total number of 512 respondents, 163 (32%) of whom were male and 349 (68%) of whom were female.

7.2.3 Age

As illustrated in Table 7.1, age groups were divided into five main categories: 18–25, 26–35, 36–45, 46–55, and 56 years or older. Specifically, around 63% of the respondents were considered part of the young generation between the ages of 18–35, while 37% were considered part of an older age group between 36–56.

This is unsurprising, considering that younger generations are generally more familiar with social media applications than older generations, and when taking into account Saudi Arabia's demographics, as the median age in Saudi Arabia is 31.8 years (World Meters, 2020).

7.2.4 Marital Status

This research has introduced four main categories in its method for identifying Saudi consumers' marital status and its relation to their intention towards a restaurant purchase behaviour. The four categories are single, married with no children, married with children, and divorced/widowed. The results appeared to be as expected, as most respondents who used social media applications were a part of the younger generation; therefore, about 90% of the respondents fell into the first two categories, single and married with no children, as shown in Table 7.1.

7.2.5 Education

This study divided respondents' education into five main categories: less than high school, high school, two years of a college degree, undergraduate degree, and graduate degree. The majority of respondents (70%) fell into the category of having an undergraduate degree. Again, this is understandable, as most respondents were younger and were regular social media users, which means they were more likely to be consumers with undergraduate degrees. This is illustrated in Table 7.1.

7.2.6 Occupation

The study denoted seven categories of occupations for the survey's respondents: government/public sector, private sector, business owner/self-employed, student, housewife/homemaker, unemployed, and retired. The results show that around 50% of respondents were students or government/public sector employees. More details are provided in Table 7.1.

7.2.7 Income

Respondents were divided into the following six income categories in Saudi Riyals: no income, less than 5,000, 5,001–10,000, 10,001–15,000, 15,001–20,000, and more than 20,001. The results showed that people with no income comprised over 20% of the sample. This is in line with the previous occupation responses, as over 20% of respondents were students.

People with 10,000–20,000 income constituted around 30%, which seems reasonable if we consider the average income of Saudi Arabia, which is around 14,800 (Argaam, 2019). More information is provided in Table 7.1.

Following this discussion of the study sample's demographics, the next section will provide more information on the main focus of this research, which is social media. The study aims to provide a general understanding of the usage of this technology among Saudi consumers, starting from an overall understanding of social media usage, to a more detailed analysis of specific types of social media and their impact on Saudi consumers.

7.2.8 Social Media Usage

The results show that a significant number of respondents reported high social media usage, as more than 80% of consumers had been using social media for more than four years. More details are provided in Table 7.2. The data confirms the reports of high levels of social media usage among Saudi consumers, as 92% of consumers used social media daily, reflecting the importance of this new technology to Saudi people. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 provide more details on social media usage behaviour.

Table 7.2: How long have you been using social media platforms?

	Frequency	Percentage
Less than a year	7	1.4
1–3 Years	77	15.0
4–6 Years	159	31.1
More than 6 Years	269	52.5
Total	512	100.0

Table 7.3: How often do you use social media?

	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	473	92.4
4–5 times a week	24	4.7
Once or twice a week	14	2.7
Rarely	1	.2
Total	512	100.0

The results indicated high use of social media applications like Snapchat and Instagram, medium use of Twitter, and exceptionally low Facebook use among Saudi consumers. Specifically, 73% of respondents did not use Facebook at all, 58% used Twitter at a medium to an extremely high level, 77% used Instagram at a medium to a very high level, and 89% used Snapchat, with 58% reporting very high use. The following table provides more details.

Table 7.4: Social media applications.

Usage by %	Yes	No
Facebook	27.1	72.9
Twitter	83.8	16.2
Instagram	94.9	5.1
Snapchat	97.5	2.5

7.2.9 Restaurants

After introducing the analysis of the respondents' demographic characteristics and their social media use, this section addresses the primary sector of the research, restaurants, starting with a general account of consumers' restaurant behaviour and preferences and then linking this to social media applications.

The data indicate that 57% of Saudi consumers dined at restaurants at least once a week. The data also shows that 80% of consumers spent less than 100–300 SR (27–80\$) per visit. In terms of their visiting behaviour, the data indicates that 90% of Saudi people dined in restaurants with their family and friends. These figures are understandable in light of the cultural context, since Saudi people are generally incredibly close with their family members and often live with them.

This data is also in line with the fact that most of the respondents were single or married with no children; therefore, spending around 100–300 SR seems logical, as people were largely dining as singles or couples with no children. When asked what kind of restaurants they preferred, 78% specified casual dining, 68% reported fine dining, 61% chose coffee shops, and around half (51%) preferred fast food. Tables 7.5 and 7.6 provide further details.

Table 7.5: Restaurant spending behaviour.

How often do you eat at restaurants	Daily	Few times a week	Once a Week	Once or twice a month	Very rare	Never
%	3.5	23.6	29.9	22.5	19.5	1.0
On average, how much do you spend on restaurants per visit?	Less than 100	100 – 300	301 - 500	501 - 700	More than 700	
%	2.9.5	50.4	15.0	4.1	1.0	
How do you often eat at restaurants?	Alone	With friends	With family members	With colleagues	Other	
%	7.0	25.8	63.9	2.0	1.4	

Table 7.6: Restaurant preferences.

What is your level of preference for the following?	No–Low Preference	Medium–Very High Preference
Fast food	49.4%	50.1%
Fine dining	32.5%	67.6%
Casual dining	22.3%	77.7%
Coffee shop (that serves food)	38.8%	61.3%

The respondents' restaurant behaviour and preferences give an overall understanding of Saudi people and how they dine; this creates a clear path for the next section, which focuses on the visual content on social media about restaurants.

It addresses restaurant-related content by drawing a comparison between face-to-face recommendations, family/friends on social media, social media influencers, and restaurants' official social media pages. The data shows that 79% of Saudi consumers relied on face-to-face recommendations for restaurants, 66% relied on friends/family on social media, 48% checked restaurants' social media pages, and 39% followed social media influencers' pieces of advice, as shown in table 7.7.

7.7: Restaurant-related content.

Where do you find most restaurant-related content?	No–Low Preference	Medium–Very High Preference
Word of mouth communication with friends/family	21.3%	78.7%
Electronic word of mouth communication with friends/family via social media	34.1%	65.9%
Social media influencers	60.6%	39.4%
Restaurants' official social media pages	52.4%	47.6%

As shown in table 7.7, Saudi consumers have a high level of trust in family and friends' recommendations, which is to be expected. People are more likely to listen to and rely on suggestions from people they know than from anonymous sources. However, Saudi consumers still rely on word-of-mouth recommendations from family and friends. If we compare that to other sources like social media influencers, we can obviously see the level of trust Saudi consumers have in their peers, either in the form of offline WOM or online WOM. While restaurants' official social media pages received a respectable number of responses, only around half of the Saudi consumers rely on these sources to inform them about what restaurants have to offer.

The source of restaurant-related content is important, and Saudi consumers have different preferences when it comes to restaurant-related content, either from family/friends offline (WOM), family/friends online (eWOM), social media influencers or restaurants' official social media accounts. The next section shows where Saudi consumers found online restaurant-related content by comparing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.

Table 7.8: Comparison between various sources of restaurants' visual content on social media.

Where do you find most restaurant-related content on social media?	No–Low Preference	Medium–Very High Preference
Facebook	96.6%	3.4%
Twitter	66.6%	33.4%
Instagram	19.4%	80.6%
Snapchat	13.5%	86.5%

As shown in Table 7.8, the analysis shows that consumers found visual content about restaurants on social media as follows: 87% found content on Snapchat, 81% on Instagram, 33% on Twitter, and 3% on Facebook. These figures support the decision to choose Instagram and Snapchat as the primary social media applications for this research on consumer behaviour towards restaurants' visual content.

The previous discussion has provided an overall understanding of Saudi consumers and their restaurant behaviour, and has moved on to the sources of restaurant content and restaurants' visual content on various social media applications.

Subsequently, the following analysis addresses this research's main focus: restaurants' visual content on social media posted by the social media influencer.

7.2.10 Influencers

The above section explains the data on consumers' demographic characteristics, social media usage, restaurant preferences, and restaurants' visual content. Therefore, this section discusses the analytics of social media influencers as restaurant content creators.

By analysing the different responses regarding which types of social media influencers people followed, the results indicated that 41% followed the category of social influencers, who are ordinary people with a large following. They are not known to be experts in one industry, so they are not tied to one type or limited to a particular category. More precisely, they cannot be considered part of a specific industry. They use their large number of followers to promote different types of products and services, from restaurants to beauty products to cars.

On the other hand, 36% followed influencers who are known in the beauty/make-up industry, 33% followed influencers who are primarily known under the category of health and fitness, 19% followed sports influencers (influencers who in real life play a specific sport, such as Cristiano Ronaldo, a well-known celebrity who gained recognition from being a football star), and 11% followed actor/actress influencers (influencers who are TV/movie stars and use their familiar faces to promote different products/services). This data makes sense, considering that 68% of the respondents were female, so it is to be expected that there would be more followers of beauty/make-up and social influencers than, for example, sports influencers, as presented in table 7.9.

7.9: Most followed influencer category.

Most followed influencer category	No–Low Preference	Medium–Very High Preference
Actor/Actress	89.5%	10.5%
Sports	80.7%	19.3%
Health	67.3%	32.7%
Social Influencers	58.6%	41.4%
Beauty /Makeup	64%	36%

As can be seen in Tables 7.10, 7.11 and 7.12, when considering influencers' visual content, the analysis shows that 65% of respondents visited influencers' pages daily, and 53% of respondents see visual content about restaurants on these influencers' accounts daily. However, 52% admitted that this content did not motivate them to try the restaurants, and 60% indicated that they had either never visited the restaurants or only did so once or twice.

By delving a little deeper into social media data, we can draw some comparisons between genders/age groups. There seems to be a little discrepancy between genders when it comes to visiting influencers' social media accounts: 32.5% of men and 35% of women said they visited these accounts more than twice a day. Moreover, further similarity can be seen in the second question, 'How often do you view in your subscriptions or come across visual content about restaurants in influencers' social media accounts?'. The results show similar responses between the two genders, with 29% of men and 34% of women saying they view visual content about restaurants more than twice a day on accounts like this.

Table 7.12 looks at the level of motivation visual content have on Saudi consumers, and this also shows almost comparable results across the genders; 35% of men and 32.5% of women said this visual content gave them medium motivation to try the restaurants, while 34% of men and 35% of women felt only a low motivation from these posts.

When it comes to actually trying restaurants as a result of influencers' visual content, the data indicates that 35% of men and 37% of women have tried the restaurants once or twice, and 23% of men and 24% of women have never tried them as a result of influencers' visual content. Therefore, looking a little more closely at the data to find out if there is any variation between the answers given by Saudi men and women, we can conclude that there are no noticeable differences between the genders in their behaviour towards social media influencers and their visual content on restaurants, as shown in Table 7.13.

On the other hand, if we try to investigate the data set based on the age group, we must examine whether there are variations between the different age groups in their behaviour towards social media influencers and their visual content on restaurants. Tables 7.10–7.13 give more details.

When looking at how often Saudi consumers visit influencers' social media accounts, the data shows that the consumers within the age group 18–35 are the ones with the high visiting rate (22%) as they visit these pages more than twice a day. Somehow, identical results can be seen with the same age group and how often they view restaurants' visual content on influencers' pages. Nevertheless, when it comes to the level of motivation this visual content has on Saudi people, consumers between the ages of 18–35 admitted low (20.7%) to medium (24%) motivation. Also, they revealed they had tried restaurants because of influencers' visual content once or twice (24%). So, we can summarise the variations between the different age groups and their social media/restaurant behaviour by acknowledging that consumers between the ages of 18–35 are the ones with the highest visiting rates to influencers' accounts and the highest frequency of viewing influencers' visual content on restaurants, yet they have low–medium motivation actually to try the restaurants, and they only tried them once or twice.

Table 7.10: Visit influencers' social media accounts?

	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Gender	Age	Age	Age
			Male	Female	18–35	36–55	56 and above
More than twice a day	175	34.2	32.5%	34.9%	22%	11.5%	.6%
Once or twice a day	157	30.7	28.8%	31.5%	18.7%	10.3%	1.6%
4–5 times a week	55	10.7	11.6%	10.3%	7%	3.3%	.4%
Once or twice a week	73	14.3	19.6%	11.7%	9.3%	4.3%	.6%
Less than once a week	52	10.2	7.3%	11.4%	6%	3.3%	.8%
Total	512	100.0	163	349	324	168	20

Table 7.11: Viewing (in your subscriptions or come across) visual content about restaurants in influencers' social media accounts?

	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Gender	Age	Age	Age
			Male	Female	18-35	36-55	56 and above
More than twice a day	165	32.2	28.8%	33.8%	22%	10%	.1%
Once or twice a day	105	20.5	22.7%	19.5%	11.5%	7.6%	1.3%
4-5 times a week	67	13.1	13.5%	12.9%	8.9%	3.5%	.6%
Once or twice a week	68	13.3	14.1%	12.9%	8.4%	4.9%	-
Less than once a week	107	20.9	20.8%	21%	12.3%	6.8%	1.7%
Total	512	100.0	163	349	324	168	20

Table 7.12: Motivation to try the restaurants.

	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Gender	Age	Age	Age
			Male	Female	18-35	36-55	56 and above
High motivation	64	12.5	12.8%	12.3%	8.6%	3.7%	.2%
Medium motivation	180	35.2	35%	35.2%	24%	9.4%	1.7%
Low motivation	178	34.8	33.7%	35%	20.7%	12.5%	.1%
No motivation	90	17.6	18.4%	17.1%	10%	6.6%	.1%
Total	512	100.0	163	349	324	168	20

Table 7.13: Trying a restaurant because of influencers' visual content.

	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Gender	Age	Age	Age
			Male	Female	18-35	36-55	56 and above
Always	30	5.9	5.5%	6%	3.7%	2%	.2%
Most of the time	64	12.5	15.3%	11.1%	6.6%	5.5%	.4%
A few times	112	21.9	21.5%	22%	15.6%	5.2%	1%
Once or twice	187	36.5	35%	37%	24%	11.1%	.8%
Never	119	23.2	22.7%	23.5%	12.7%	9%	1.6%
Total	512	100.0	163	349	324	168	20

In order to figure out whether there were any associations between these behavioural categories regarding social media content, and gender/age demographics, a Chi-squared test was run in SPSS, and the results indicated that there were no associations between gender and age with the following: visiting influencers' social media accounts, viewing restaurant-related content on influencers' social media accounts, motivation to try restaurants based on influencers' content, and actually trying the restaurants. The only association revealed by the data is the relationship between age and motivation to try restaurants based on influencers' posted content, as seen in Table 7.14.

Table 7.14: Chi-squared test for age and motivation to try restaurants

Chi-squared Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson's Chi-squared	5.344 ^a	1	.021		
Continuity Correction ^b	4.928	1	.026		
Likelihood Ratio	5.366	1	.021		
Fisher's Exact Test				.022	.013
Linear-by-linear Association	5.334	1	.021		
N of Valid Cases	512				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 89.59.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

Since the aim of this research is to provide as much data as possible on the character of Saudi consumers, we will also analyse other demographic factors, including education, income, and marital status, and the association between these factors and visiting influencers' social media accounts, viewing restaurant-related content on influencers' social media accounts, motivation to try restaurants based on influencer-posted content and finally trying the restaurants. The results indicate no associations between these factors. However, the data shows an association between income and trying restaurants based on influencers' visual content, as seen in Table 7.15.

Table 7.15: Chi-squared test for income and trying the restaurants.

Chi-squared Tests					
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2- sided)	Exact Sig. (1- sided)
Pearson's Chi-squared	4.439 ^a	1	.035		
Continuity Correction ^b	4.051	1	.044		
Likelihood Ratio	4.415	1	.036		
Fisher's Exact Test				.038	.022
Linear-by-linear Association	4.430	1	.035		
N of Valid Cases	512				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 72.82.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table.

7.3 Findings and Summary of the First Part of the Data Analysis

The first section of the survey was mainly concentrated on providing data to answer the first research question, **RQ1**: What is the level of impact social media influencers have on consumers' purchase intentions regarding restaurants? To achieve this aim, the survey started by asking questions to obtain comprehensive information about Saudi consumers, including general demographic information, social media applications, and social media usage. An analysis of these responses led to increased clarity on the focus of the research, which is the restaurant sector. Then, more detailed information was obtained on the consumers' restaurant behaviours. Finally, the primary domain of this research, social media influencers, was highlighted.

This research achieved a final sample size of 512, of which 68% were female and 32% were male. A total of 63% of the respondents were between the ages of 18–35. As discussed earlier, this is unsurprising considering the general youth of the Saudi population, 50% of whom are under 35. This was also expected since the focus of this study was on social media, and typically people who use social media and follow the latest trends are from the younger generation. Furthermore, this data is supported by the high instance of social media use among Saudi people, as 92% of the sample size used social media daily. Snapchat and Instagram were the two most frequently used applications, with 89% of respondents using Snapchat and 77% using Instagram. Hence, choosing Snapchat and Instagram as the two main applications in this study seemed reasonable.

The data indicate that Saudi consumers rely heavily on restaurants, as 57% of the sample size admitted to eating at restaurants at least once a week. Moreover, in terms of their preferences, 90% of consumers preferred to dine in restaurants with their family and friends; such numbers were somehow expected, considering how close Saudi people are to their family members.

The data also shows how Saudi consumers learned about restaurants. Specifically, 79% of the sample size learned about restaurants from their family and friends via face-to-face encounters, and 66% learned about them on social media. Another 48% were exposed to restaurant-related content on the restaurants' social media accounts, and finally, 39% received recommendations from social media influencers. Regarding which social media applications Saudi people used to find restaurant-related visual content, the data shows that 87% of those sampled found restaurants' visual content on Snapchat and 81% on Instagram, which further supports the selection of these applications for this research. Finally, in terms of social media influencers, 65% of those surveyed said they visited influencers' Snapchat/Instagram pages daily. Furthermore, 53% acknowledged seeing restaurant-related content posted by influencer accounts (Snapchat/Instagram) almost daily/a few times a day. However, 52% admitted that such influencers' visual content did not motivate them to try the restaurants. Another 60% reported that they had never tried certain restaurants or had only visited them once or twice due to influencers' visual recommendations.

A further analysis was conducted to examine any significant variations between different categories of the sample unit. Moreover, the research tried to shed some light on the differences between genders and age groups. The result was an interesting level of similarity between Saudi men and women in their restaurant behaviour and their susceptibility to influence from social media influencers. The data also shows that consumers between the ages of 18–35 have the highest viewing rate of influencers' social media pages, as over 33% of them said they saw restaurants' visual content on these pages at least once a day. However, in terms of the actual impact such visual content has on their restaurants' choices, only 8% of the age group admitted that this content motivated them highly to try the restaurants. Furthermore, 24% of Saudi consumers between the ages of 18–35 have tried restaurants once or twice because they were motivated by influencers' visual content.

These numbers appear to be exceptionally significant due to the high percentage of daily visits and the high percentage of influencers' visual content. Nevertheless, the motivational aspect of trying these restaurants is still incredibly low, which raises questions about the actual benefit of employing social media influencers as a marketing method. It is important to evaluate the visual content social media influencers are producing in order to understand this discrepancy. This will be addressed in the second part of this chapter, which looks more closely at the visual content, the content creator (influencers), and consumers' attitudes toward visual content.

7.4 Analysing of the second part of the research statistics

After discussing the first question of this research, which focuses on analysing the actual impact influencers' visual content has on consumers' restaurant behaviour, this section follows up by looking at the second research question of the study, which concentrates on the impact of visual content itself, characteristics, influencer characteristics, consumer attitude, and their impact on consumer purchase intention, in order to provide a complete picture of influencers' impact on Saudi consumers. The following test will be conducted through the analyses of descriptive statistics: reliability test, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity, as well as structural equation modelling and confirmatory factor analysis.

In the survey administered for this study, responses to all items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with alternatives ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to 'strongly agree' (5). As shown in Table 7.16, the mean scores for all variables were as follows: information quality (visual content quality) was between 2.57 and 3.23, information usefulness (visual content usefulness) was between 3.05 and 3.42, the need for information (need of visual content) was between 3.18 and 3.23, attitude toward information (attitude toward visual content) was between 3.36 and 3.91, information adoption (adoption of visual content) was between 3.05 and 3.24, information quantity (visual content quantity) was between 2.86 and 3.38, consumer confusion due to visual content was between 2.84 and 3.31, source credibility (influencers credibility) was between 3.29 and 3.88, source expertise (influencers expertise) was between 3.10 and 3.72, subjective norms were between 2.59 and 3.00, and purchase intention (intention to try restaurants) was between 2.87 and 3.30. The means appear to be appropriate in this research considering the large sample size and the fact that it did not include outliers. Moreover, as Saunders et al. (2012) have emphasised, employing the mean value is the most common measure to explain statistical relationships.

Table 7.16: Descriptive statistics of survey measurements.

VARIABLE	MEASURES	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
INFORMATION QUALITY	Quality_1	2.98	1.115
	Quality_2	2.83	1.072
	Quality_3	3.17	1.118
	Quality_4	3.23	1.080
	Quality_5	2.57	1.007
	Quality_6	3.18	1.102
INFORMATION USEFULNESS	Useful_1	3.12	1.033
	Useful_2	3.05	1.022
	Useful_3	3.11	0.945
	Useful_4	3.42	1.042
NEED OF INFORMATION	Need_1	3.23	1.148
	Need_2	3.21	1.006
	Need_3	3.18	1.002
	Need_4	3.19	1.029
ATTITUDE	Attitude_1	3.71	1.059
	Attitude_2	3.91	1.069
	Attitude_3	3.70	1.009
	Attitude_4	3.36	1.141
INFORMATION ADOPTION	Adoptuin_1	3.24	1.006
	Adoptuin_2	3.19	0.978
	Adoptuin_3	3.18	1.045
	Adoptuin_4	3.05	1.049
INFORMATION QUANTITY	Quantity_1	3.38	1.103
	Quantity_2	2.98	1.158
	Quantity_3	2.86	1.041
	Quantity_4	3.11	1.066
SOURCE CREDIBILITY	S_Credibility_1	3.29	1.048
	S_Credibility_2	3.87	0.975
	S_Credibility_3	3.88	0.962
	S_Credibility_4	3.34	1.088
SOURCE EXPERTISE	Exp_1	3.27	1.166

	Exp_2	3.25	1.151
	Exp_3	3.26	1.048
	Exp_4	3.10	1.065
	Exp_5	3.72	1.053
SUBJECTIVE NORMS	Norms_1	3.00	1.148
	Norms_2	2.85	1.147
	Norms_3	2.59	1.167
PURCHASE INTENTION	P_Intention_1	2.87	0.978
	P_Intention_2	3.30	1.084
	P_Intention_3	3.29	1.026

7.4.1 Construct reliability

Prior researchers have confirmed construct reliability as a fundamental statistical approach, especially in terms of investigating the level of reliability between the utilised measurements in the research. According to Hair et al. (2014), construct reliability can be described as the coherence of measurements. Hair et al. (2014) further emphasise that construct reliability plays a role in indicating the degree to which all items in variables affect one construct. Meanwhile, the construct's internal coherence can be seen as the primary determinant of reliability (Cortina, 1993; Pallant, 2013). Furthermore, several researchers such as Churchill (1979), Steenkamp and van Trijp (1991) and Cortina (1993) have recognised internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient) as a primary measure for examining the reliability of internal coherence. Hence, this research employs these measures due to their common use as well as their accessibility and clarity.

According to Hair et al. (1998) and Pallant (2013), an acceptable value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.7 or higher. Moreover, a more recent study by Hair et al. (2014) has emphasised that in exploratory research, Cronbach's alpha is a valid measure of reliability when the value is between 0.6 and 0.7. In contrast, Bacon (2004) has indicated that in the case of a large sample size, values lower than 0.7 should be accepted.

As shown in Table 7.17, all variables were above 0.7. However, those for the need for information, subjective norms, and usefulness were below .07. Taking into consideration the large sample size (more than 500) and the previous justifications, these reliability measures should be acceptable.

Table 7.17: Cronbach's alpha values for all items.

	Variable	Number of the Measures	Cronbach's Alpha	Type
1	Quality	6	.885	High Reliability
2	Source Credibility	4	.766	High Reliability
3	Need of Information	4	.677	Moderate Reliability
4	Usefulness	4	.560	Moderate Reliability
5	Adoption	4	.800	High Reliability
6	Quantity	4	.817	High Reliability
7	Attitude	4	.800	High Reliability
8	Norms	3	.657	Moderate Reliability
9	Source Experience	5	.855	High Reliability
10	Purchase Intention	3	.867	High Reliability
11	Consumer confusion	5	.831	High Reliability

7.4.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

KMO and Bartlett's tests are used to determine whether the data is, in fact, appropriate to be examined through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Hinton et al., 2014). Specifically, KMO values should range from 0 to 1, with a value closer to 1 indicating perfection (Hinton et al., 2014). Furthermore, according to Kaiser (1974), KMO values between 0.5 and 1.0 mean that the data are more suited to be tested via CFA, while a value below 0.5 indicates otherwise. In this research, as shown in Table 7.18, the KMO was 0.9, which is closer to 1 and above 0.5, indicating perfection and readiness to be examined via CFA.

Table 7.18: KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity.

KMO and Bartlett's Test	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.902
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square	5168.111
Df	210
Sig.	.000

7.5 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

According to Hair et al. (2006) and Byrne (2010), structural equation modelling (SEM), which is utilised in this research, is a well-known statistical method that was developed to serve the purpose of examining and analysing the relationship between hypotheses within a research model. The SEM technique is a widely used method in various research fields, including economics, psychology, and sociology (Hooper et al., 2008).

In this research, this technique was employed to investigate the link between variables based on factor analysis (Sullivan, 2009; Hair et al., 2010). Other advantages of utilising SEM in this research were that it allowed the hypotheses to be examined together instead of examining each construct individually (Byrne, 2013).

This technique can also help identify how hypotheses come together to create a pattern matrix. An additional benefit of using SEM has been identified by Lacobucci et al. (2007), as they confirm that when comparing SEM to regression, SEM is more serviceable in terms of eliminating the standard error when considering how all the variables are investigated as one. Consequently, SEM appears to be beneficial and accurate when identifying the relationships between variables (Hair et al., 2010).

The following section presents the results of CFA and the structural model of this study. As noted and confirmed in our previous discussion and literature review, we initially considered ten constructs. However, upon conducting a thorough preparatory exploratory examination of the data, we determined to reduce the total number of items used in this research from 41 to 26. It was presented in an earlier section, more specifically table 7.16, this research started with 41 items; however, after conducting the pattern matrix, which is a crucial method to explain the factors loading, we reached a final number of 26 items that do not load on other factors as seen in table 7.19.

Table 7.19 illustrates the pattern matrix, which is known as the intercorrelations between the variables. By employing this measure, we can see that variables with loading into factors and variables with loading on other factors must be eliminated in order to have a clean and ready pattern matrix to perform a model fit.

Table 7.19: Pattern Matrix^a

Pattern Matrix ^a											
		Factor									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Info Quality 2	.727									
2	Info Quality 3	.817									
3	Info Quality 4	.726									
4	Info Quality 5	.954									
5	Info Quality 6	.695									

6	P .Intention 1		.944								
7	P .Intention 2		1.007								
8	P. Intention 3		.803								
9	Attitude 1			.750							
10	Attitude 2			.990							
11	Attitude 3			.896							
12	Adoption 2				.779						
13	Adoption 3				.955						
14	Adoption 4				.686						
15	S Credibility 1					.424					
16	S Credibility 2					.997					
17	S Credibility 3					.901					
18	Norms 1						.467				
19	Norms 2						.833				
20	Norms 3						.878				
21	Quantity 1							.685			
22	Quantity 2							.899			
23	S Expertise 1								.780		
24	S Expertise 2								.725		
25	Usefulness 1									.966	
26	Need of Info 2										.726

Table 7.20: KMO and Bartlett's Test after Fixing Pattern.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.926
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6743.369
	df	325
	Sig.	0.000

7.5.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

This research employed CFA to measure the research model. CFA is considered a branch of the SEM statistical analysis method (Byrne, 2009), which is evident insofar as they both use the same principles and measurements. Therefore, the use of CFA helps the examination of theories versus the collected data (Adams et al., 2007; Kline, 2010). This study's introduced research model was built on the foundation of the researcher's understanding of the theories and the structure of the variables within the literature (Kline, 1998). Additionally, by applying CFA, it was possible to examine each variable's psychometric and unidimensional values.

Consequently, CFA was viewed as a proper statistical method for this study to determine the influence of visual content in social media on consumers' purchase intentions. According to Hair et al. (2006), in order to assess the measurement model using CFA, other tests need to be administered, such as goodness-of-fit criteria indices, reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The following section introduces and examines these criteria.

A. The goodness of fit (GOF) indices

[A] Goodness of Fit (GOF) index is defined as the geometric mean of the average communality and average R2 for all endogenous constructs. It can be used to determine the overall prediction power of the large complex model by accounting for the performance of both measurement and structural parameters (Akter, D'Ambra and Ray, 2011, p. 4).

The research variables included the following: information quality (IQ), source credibility (SC), information usefulness (IU), need of information (NOI), attitude towards information (ATT), information adoption (IA), information quantity (IQU), source expertise (SE), subjective norms (SN), and purchase intention (PI). However, after eliminating factors and measures that were loaded on other variables, we reached a final CFA with ten variables and 26 measures. Based on the suggestion of Hair et al. (2010), CFA and the structural model should be examined with the use of no less than four tests in order to evaluate the model fit. Nevertheless, this study went further and used eight goodness-of-fit indices, which included the following: chi-square (χ^2) to the degree of freedom (Df), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), incremental fit index (IFI), Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the p-value of close fit (PCLOSE). Table 7.21 shows the goodness-of-fit indices for the CFA, as well as the preferred criteria for each test (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 7.21: Goodness of Fit (GOF) indices

Model Fit Indices	Recommended Criteria	Default model
X ² / Df	1:3	2.520
GFI	≥ 0.90	.913
AGFI	≥ 0.80	.883
IFI	≥ 0.90	.946
TLI	≥ 0.90	.933
CFI	≥ 0.90	.946
RMSEA	< 0.50	.055
PCLOSE	> 0.50	.089

The results show that the model has, in fact, achieved all the recommended criteria, more precisely, χ^2 / Df (2.520), which is between 1:3 as recommended, GFI is (.913), which is higher than ≥ 0.90 . The AGFI (.883) is higher than ≥ 0.80 , IFI (.946) is above ≥ 0.90 , TLI (.933) is higher than ≥ 0.90 , CFI (.946) is above ≥ 0.90 , RMSEA (.055) which is lower than < 0.50 ; PCLOSE (.089) is below the recommended range which is > 0.50 , but we can consider Hair et al.'s (2010) suggestions which state that four measures should be conducted for Goodness of Fit (GOF) – we already achieved seven. Therefore, the evaluation of the model fit is believed to be fine.

B. Construct Validity

Finalising the CFA results is a crucial aspect of the data analysis, but confirming these results' validity appears to be as important. Hair et al. (2010) have demonstrated the significance of using the construct validity method to determine CFA results' validity. Furthermore, construct validity tests the scales and measures to conclude if the CFA results indeed mirror the study's perception (Bryman and Bell, 2011). In this research, two tests were performed to determine construct validity: convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity is a tool used to evaluate the construct validity; according to de Vaus (2002), convergent validity indicates higher relation between variables that load on the same construct. Convergent validity is determined through the measure of the factor loading critical ratio (t value), composite reliability (CR), and the average variance extracted (AVE). As suggested by Hair et al. (2010), factor loadings should be higher than 0.50. Also, the AVE needs to be higher than 0.5, and the CR needs to be higher than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2006). As shown in Tables 7.22, 7.23, and 7.24, all factor loadings were higher than 0.5. In contrast, the AVE and CR results were above the recommended criteria (0.5) for all variables. Nevertheless, subjective norms appeared to be lower than recommended; however, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), in such cases where the AVE is less than 0.5 (0.492). However, the CR is higher than 0.6 (0.655); the convergent validity of the CFA results' construct is acceptable.

Table 7.22: Convergent Validity

Variable	Measure	Factor Loading
<i>Information Quality</i>	IQ2	0.73
	IQ3	0.86
	IQ4	0.82
	IQ5	0.64
	IQ6	0.72
<i>Source Credibility</i>	SC1	0.69
	SC2	0.84
	SC3	0.85
<i>Source Experience</i>	SE1	0.83
	SE2	0.91
<i>Attitude</i>	ATT1	0.78
	ATT2	0.75
	ATT3	0.77
<i>Subjective Norms</i>	SN1	0.74
	SN2	0.67
	SN3	0.44
<i>Purchase Intention</i>	PI1	0.81
	PI2	0.87
	PI3	0.81

<i>Information Quantity</i>	IQU1	0.80
	IQU2	0.69
<i>Adoption</i>	IA2	0.78
	IA3	0.71
	IA4	0.62

Additionally, according to Hair et al. (2006), discriminant validity can be explained as the degree to which one construct is separate from the others. Two approaches can be conducted to ensure the distance between the two constructs (Hair et al., 2010). Having two correlations above 0.85 is a sign of discriminant validity which indicates the same construct (Hair et al., 2010). In such an analysis, the square root of AV needs to be above the other correlation for adequate discriminant validity. Tables 7.23 - 7.25 present the discriminant validity and HTMT analysis in detail. In details, the following tables addresses the discriminant validity of this study after conducting the pattern matrix.

Table 7.23: Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Experience	Quality	Intention	Attitude	Credibility	Adoption	Norms	Quantity
Experience	0.862	0.759	0.520	0.875	0.871							
Quality	0.871	0.577	0.493	0.888	0.620	0.760						
Intention	0.870	0.691	0.520	0.874	0.721	0.651	0.831					
Attitude	0.813	0.593	0.469	0.814	0.577	0.608	0.604	0.770				
Credibility	0.839	0.637	0.498	0.856	0.701	0.702	0.706	0.612	0.798			
Adoption	0.750	0.502	0.331	0.764	0.448	0.547	0.575	0.461	0.442	0.708		
Norms	0.651	0.394	0.370	0.691	0.553	0.497	0.608	0.565	0.486	0.450	0.627	
Quantity	0.717	0.560	0.469	0.731	0.577	0.602	0.630	0.685	0.637	0.415	0.596	0.748

Table 7.24: Discriminant Validity after Fixing Norms

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Experience	Quality	Intention	Attitude	Credibility	Adoption	Norms	Quantity
Experience	0.862	0.759	0.520	0.876	0.871							
Quality	0.871	0.577	0.493	0.888	0.620	0.760						
Intention	0.870	0.691	0.520	0.873	0.721	0.651	0.831					
Attitude	0.813	0.593	0.469	0.814	0.577	0.608	0.604	0.770				
Credibility	0.840	0.638	0.498	0.856	0.701	0.702	0.706	0.613	0.799			
Adoption	0.750	0.502	0.331	0.764	0.448	0.547	0.575	0.461	0.442	0.708		
Norms	0.655	0.492	0.382	0.694	0.555	0.528	0.618	0.590	0.520	0.470	0.702	
Quantity	0.717	0.561	0.469	0.734	0.576	0.600	0.629	0.685	0.636	0.413	0.606	0.749

VALIDITY CONCERNS

Reliability: the CR for Norms is less than 0.70.

Convergent Validity: the AVE for Norms is less than 0.50.

Table 7.25: HTMT Analysis

	Quality	Intention	Attitude	Credibility	Adoption	Norms	Quantity	Experience
Quality								
Intention	0.656							
Attitude	0.599	0.605						
Credibility	0.722	0.741	0.643					
Adoption	0.562	0.589	0.470	0.454				
Norms	0.455	0.589	0.520	0.455	0.422			
Quantity	0.629	0.638	0.676	0.674	0.442	0.577		
Experience	0.634	0.727	0.575	0.724	0.452	0.538	0.582	

This chapter has introduced and discussed the previous measures and tests to have the data ready for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). As Byrne (2010) highlighted, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is used to test the research measures psychometrically and unidimensionally. Therefore, the measurement model is explored for the purpose of having each item loads on its latent factor (Thompson, 2004). As described in the pattern matrix, all items that did not load on their latent factor have to be eliminated. Thus, goodness-of-fit criteria indices, validity and reliability are conducted in order to assure the measurement model (Hair et al., 2006). The modified measurement model CFA is illustrated in Figure 7.1. Moreover, it shows the causal link between the observed variables and the underlying latent variables tested using CFA (Byrne, 2013).

Additionally, the standardised regression weights for each item are also presented in Figure 7.2; however, to conduct the CFA via AMOS, all variables with less than one item have to be eliminated; otherwise, AMOS cannot perform the CFA. Therefore, usefulness and need of information were eliminated in order to run AMOS. As seen in Figure 7.3, subjective norms has an item with weight less than 0.5, so eventually such item has to be removed and run the AMOS again to preform the final CFA.

Figure 7.1: Initial Factor Analysis (CFA)

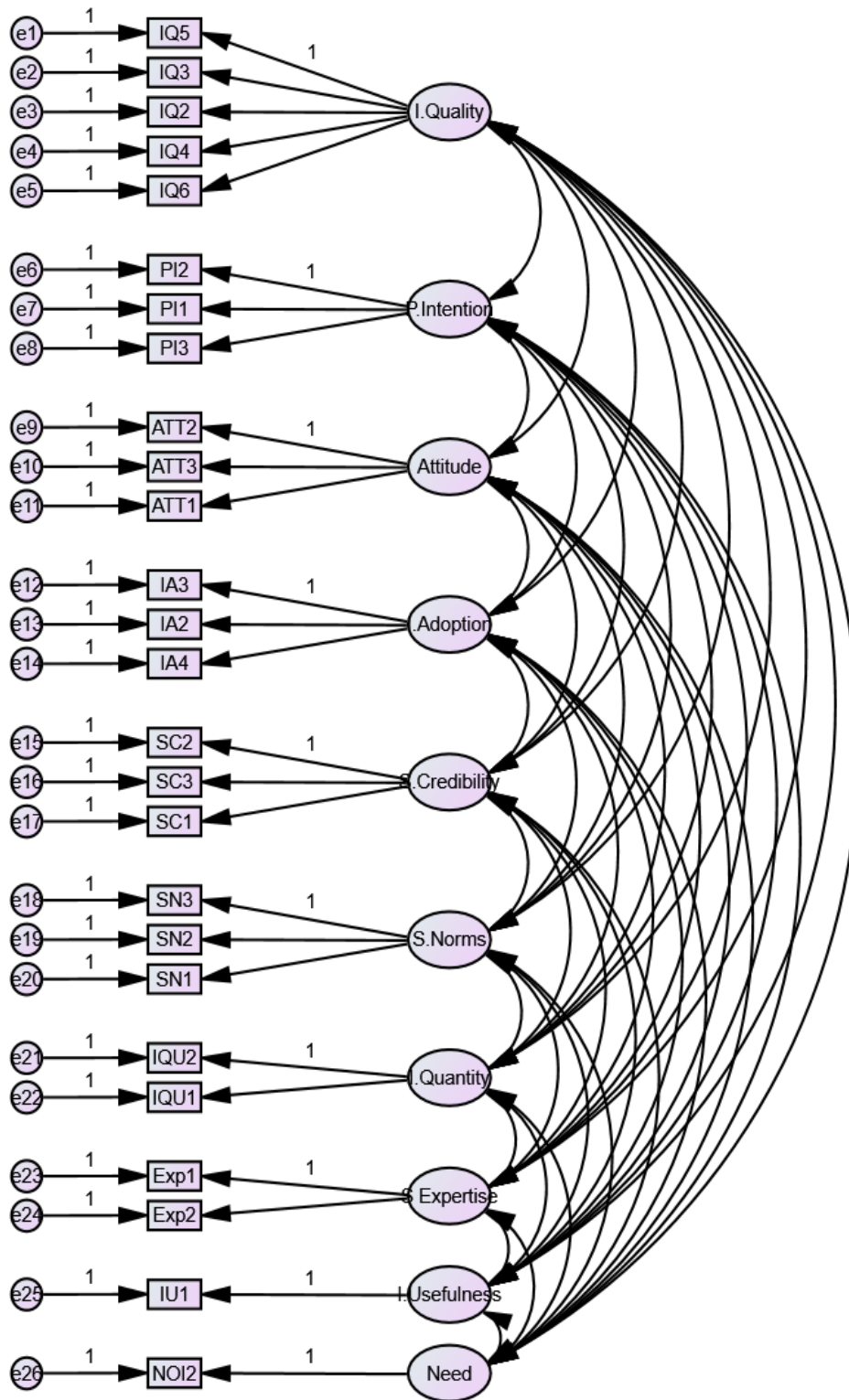


Figure 7.2: CFA Without Need and Usefulness

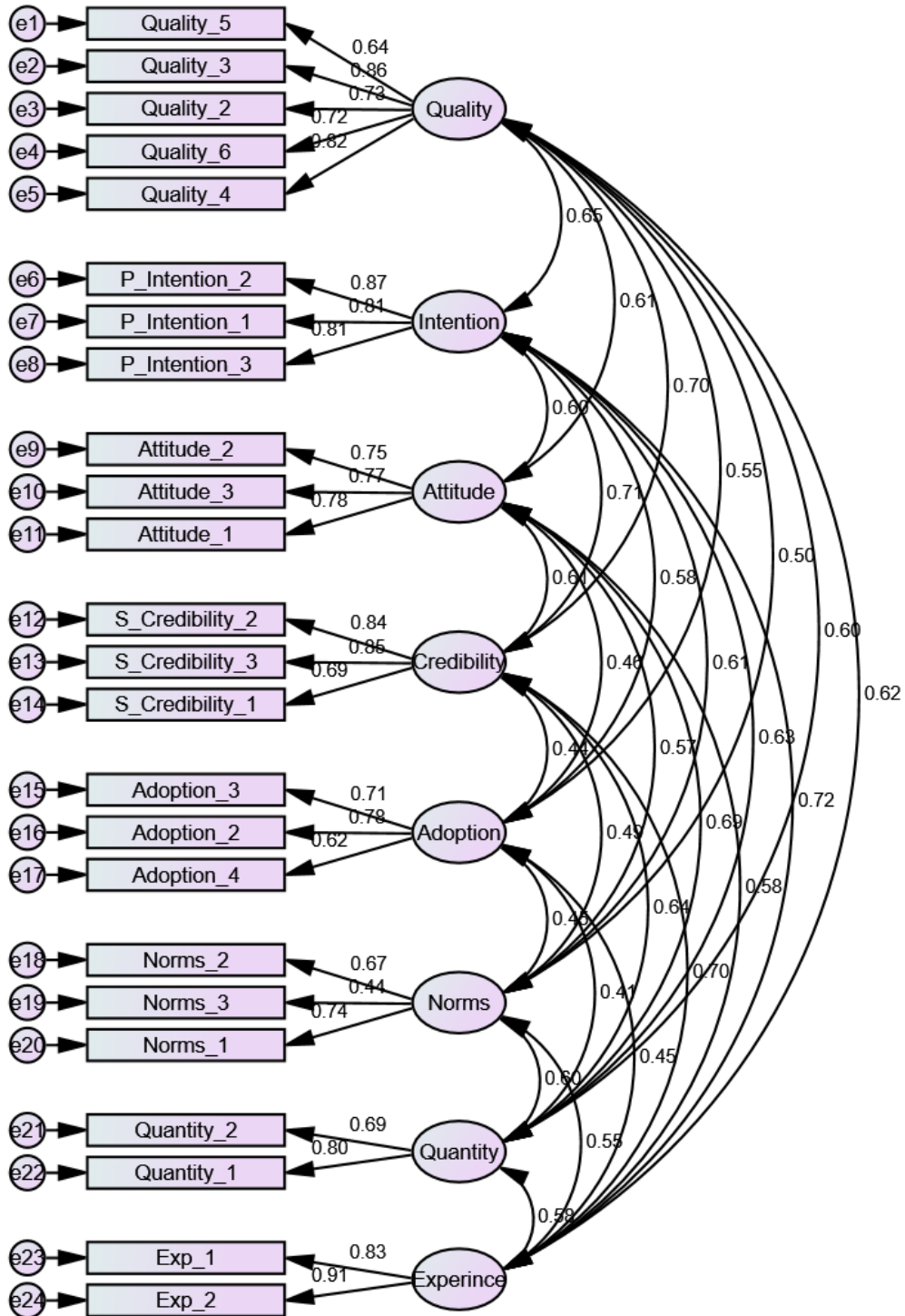
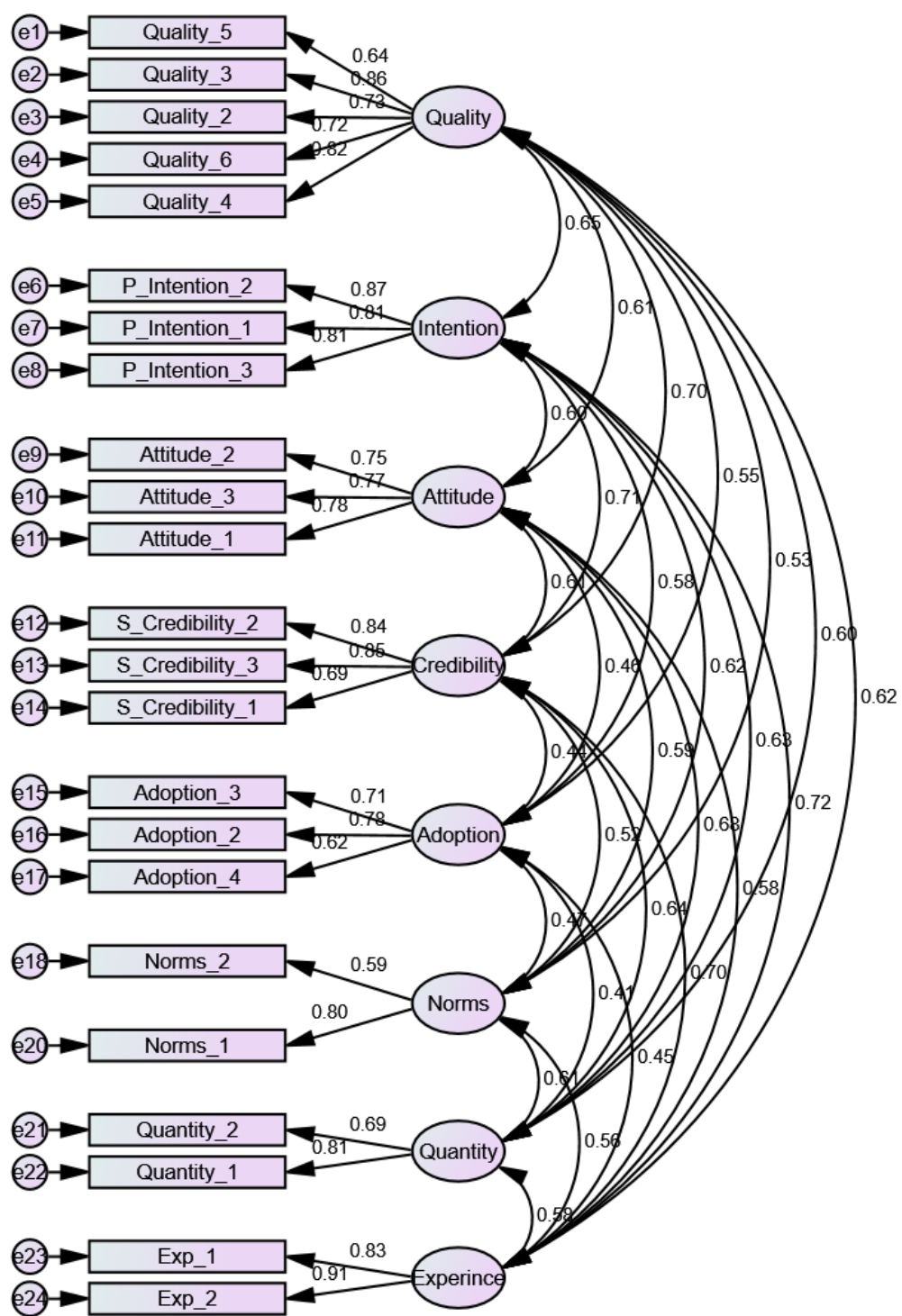


Figure 7.3: CFA After Fixing Norms (Final CFA)



7.5.2 Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

This study's hypotheses were examined through the use of path estimates, critical ratios (t-values), and p-values. Specifically, the relationships between variables were considered significant when the t-value was above 1.96, and the p-value was lower than 0.05. Table 7.26 illustrates the relationships between the eight hypotheses in this research, showing the significance of each one since the t- and p-values for all the hypotheses were above the recommended criteria. In detail, looking at the standardised regression weights of the study hypotheses, it is easy to notice the differences between each variable. Moreover, source expertise has the greatest influence on purchase intention.

In contrast, visual content quality determines to have a low influence on consumers' purchase intentions. All of which reflect the variation in the level of impact such factors have on Saudi consumers. The next chapter provides a deeper understanding and discussion of these hypotheses as well as the different levels of influence they have on purchase intention.

Table 7.26: Hypotheses Testing

HYPOTHESES	ESTIMATE	S.E	C.R	P.VALUE	FINDING
H1: IQ -- PI	.393	.042	9.401	***	Supported
H2: SC -- PI	.541	.049	10.940	***	Supported
H3: IA -- PI	.401	.047	8.607	***	Supported
H4: ATT -- PI	.455	.049	9.359	***	Supported
H5: SN -- PI	.436	.052	8.407	***	Supported
H6: IQU -- PI	.471	.053	8.853	***	Supported
H7: SE -- PI	.654	.060	10.911	***	Supported

Note: Estimate = Standardized Regression Weights (Path Estimate), S.E = Standard Error, C.R = Critical Ratio (t-value), P Value = Significance Value, *** = $p < 0.001$.

7.5.3 Hypotheses Investigation: Moderation Relationships

As previously mentioned, this study aims to examine Saudi consumers' cultural context to see if there are any differences between Saudi consumers based on age and gender. Also, due to the vast amount of social media content that causes confusion among consumers, such a factor will also be used as a moderator, as it was determined vital in the literature. Moreover, this subsection discusses the indirect relationships between variables (moderator variables). According to Hair et al. (2010, p. 770), a moderator is 'a third variable or construct [that] changes the relationship between two related variables/constructs.'

Furthermore, a moderator has also been defined as 'a qualitative (e.g., sex, race, class) or quantitative (e.g., level of reward) variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable' (Baron and Kenney, 1986, p. 1174).

As discussed in the previous chapter, this research assumed the following three moderators, which might affect the relationships between the variables: gender, age and information confusion. Precisely, gender was predicted to impact the relationship between (1) experience and intention and (2) quantity and intention. Age was predicted to impact the relationship between (1) experience and intention and (2) quantity and intention. Finally, information confusion was predicted to impact the relationship between quantity and intention. Two main methods can be employed to test the moderating impact of the proposed variables: the interaction approach and the multi-group approach. In this research, the interaction approach was used; according to Hair et al. (2014, p. 277), 'the product indicator approach is restricted to set up where the exogenous latent variable and moderator variable are both measured reflectively.' Furthermore, the multi-group approach may not be suited for this research since 'dividing the data into groups based on the mean or median is arbitrary and difficult to achieve when more than one continuous moderator variable is included' (Hair et al., 2014, p. 259).

A. Gender as a Moderator

This study also assumed that there would be a moderating effect of gender on consumers in terms of how they evaluate source experience and information quantity; as shown in Tables 7.27 and 7.28 regarding the relation between source experience and purchase intention, the data shows no difference in impact based on gender, as the p-value was .1663, which was higher than $p = 0.05$. For the second assumption of the impact of gender on the relationship between information quantity and purchase intention, there was also no significant effect of gender on the relationship, as the p-value was .2314.

Table 7.27: Source Experience --- P. Intention

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	Df2	p
	.6291	.3958	.5100	110.9228	3.0000	508.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.5116	.1297	11.6538	.0000	1.2568	1.7664
source Experience	.4992	.0372	13.4034	.0000	.4260	.5723
Gender	-.2190	.2039	-1.0741	.2833	-.6196	.1816
Int_1	.0834	.0601	1.3862	.1663	-.0348	.2015

Table 7.28: Quantity --- P. Intention

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	Df2	p
	.5035	.2535	.6301	57.5084	3.0000	508.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.7943	.1455	12.3345	.0000	1.5085	2.0801
Quantity	.4300	.0434	9.9091	.0000	.3447	.5152
Gender	-.3077	.2464	-1.2488	.2123	-.7917	.1764
Int_1	.0892	.0745	1.1981	.2314	-.0571	.2356

B. Age as a Moderator

The other assumption of this study was the moderating effect of age on source experience and information quantity. The data indicates that there was no significant effect of age on the relationship between source experience and purchase intention, as the p-value was .2929. However, the data shows differences based on age regarding the impact of the quantity of information on purchase intention, as the p-value was .0444 (Tables 7.29 and 7.30).

Table 7.29: Source Experience --- P. Intention

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	Df2	p
	.6302	.3971	.5089	111.5370	3.0000	508.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.5180	.1220	12.4385	.0000	1.2782	1.7578

source	.5120	.0366	13.9978	.0000	.4401	.5838
Experience						
Age	-.3175	.2146	-1.4796	.1396	-.7391	.1041
Int_1	.0644	.0612	1.0528	.2929	-.0558	.1846

Table 7.30: Quantity --- P. Intention

Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	Df2	p
	.5089	.2590	.6254	59.1938	3.0000	508.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.8130	.1448	12.5224	.0000	1.5286	2.0975
Quantity	.4120	.0430	9.5732	.0000	.3275	.4966
Age	-.3916	.2461	-1.5911	.1122	-.8752	.0919
Int_1	.1501	.0745	2.0149	.0444	.0037	.2965

C. Confusion as a Moderator

As presented in earlier chapters, this study aims to address the impact of information (visual content) confusion in social media on consumers. As shown in Tables 7.31, 7.32, and 7.33, the model considered a significance level of $p = 0.05$ or lower. Therefore, table 7.33 shows a significant effect of consumer confusion on the relationship between information quantity and purchase intention. To be precise, consumers may feel more confused due to the amount of social media content shared by influencers, which eventually impacts their purchase intention negatively.

Table 7.31: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.537 ^a	.288	.285	.774

Table 7.32: ANOVA Test

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	123.504	2	61.752	102.964	.000 ^b
	Residual	305.270	509	.600		
	Total	428.774	511			

Table 7.33: Coefficients^a

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1		1.221	.146		8.353	.000
		.414	.036	.450	11.643	.000
		.203	.040	.198	5.130	.000

7.6 Findings and Summary of the Second Part of the Data Analysis

After discussing the first research question of the study, which was mainly targeting an overall understanding of social media influencers and their impact on consumers' restaurant behaviour, the second part of this analysis discusses the second question of this research, **RQ2**: What is the impact of visual content characteristics, influencer characteristics, and consumer attitudes on consumers' purchase intentions?

To answer this question, this part of the analysis started by addressing the descriptive statistics, reliability, SEM, and pattern matrix, for which factors loading on other variables had to be eliminated in order to have the data ready for CFA. In CFA, AMOS was used to analyse the goodness of fit, validity, and model fit. The research had to element two variables in the model fit process: information usefulness and need of information. These two variables had only one factor each, and in order to conduct the CFA, AMOS only allows variables with more than one factor, which can be seen in the initial and final CFA model. Following that, this chapter has presented hypotheses testing via AMOS, the results of which are shown in Table 7.26. All seven hypotheses were found to be supported. Finally, this chapter examines the moderators' impacts on the model.

This study assumed that, gender and age would impact the relation between (1) information quantity and purchase intentions, (2) source expertise and purchase intention. According to the results, the data show no effect of gender on the relationship between (1) source experience and purchase intention, (2) information quantity and purchase intention. However, the data shows the impact of age on the relationship between information quantity and purchase intentions. Specifically, age plays a significant role in consumers' trust in the quantity of visual content about restaurants.

Regarding the impact of consumer confusion, the finding indicated that there was an impact of confusion on the relationship between information quantity and purchase intention; specifically, consumers felt more confused due to a large amount of visual restaurants' content shared by influencers on social media.

CHAPTER EIGHT
DISCUSSION

8 Chapter Eight: Discussion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of this research. Via the survey conducted during this research, it begins by obtaining comprehensive information about Saudi consumers, including general demographic information, social media applications, social media usage, restaurants' purchase behaviour and finally, the primary focus of this research: social media influencers in Saudi Arabia. This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section addresses the results found in the first phase of this study, which mainly focuses on the level of impact social media influencers have on consumers' purchase intentions. The second section of this chapter introduces a discussion of the results of the second part of this research, which aims to investigate the impact of visual eWOM characteristics, influencer characteristics, and consumer attitudes on consumers' purchase intentions. This discussion increases understanding of the impact of social media influencers' content in general, as well as the character of influencers and consumers' attitudes toward visual eWOM and its influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

8.2 Discussion of Results Found in the First Phase

As mentioned above, the first phase of this research was designed to increase knowledge about Saudi consumers via the analysis of these main facets: the demographic characteristics of Saudi consumers, social media usage, restaurant behaviour, social media influencers and finally, the relationships between gender, age and social media behaviour.

8.2.1 Demographic characteristics

Based on the findings on the demographic character of the Saudi population, they concluded intriguing but perhaps expected findings due to the study's focus on social media; as typically, social media users and followers of trends are from the younger generation. Furthermore, these numbers are supported by the popularity of social media applications among Saudi people, as 92% of the sample used social media daily.

This fascinatingly high number was confirmed above, as Saudi Arabia's population is around 35 million, and 33 million use the Internet daily. Moreover, Saudi Arabia has over 27 million active users on social media (Datareportal, 2021). This research has investigated whether demographic factors play a significant role for consumers, examining those from different age groups, genders, incomes, education, and marital status. The study explored whether consumers have any variations regarding their social media behaviour based on their demographics. In terms of gender differences, the findings of this show that social media behaviour is the same across genders, showing that this factor has no effect on Saudi consumers' social media behaviour. This finding appears crucial for businesses aiming to target consumers through social media applications, more precisely Instagram and Snapchat, as they do not need to create specific marketing strategies for each gender since the data supports the fact that Saudi men and women have no difference in their social media behaviour. Earlier studies have indicated gender differences in both psychology and business, such as (Moryson and Moeser, 2016; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Minton and Schneider, 1985; Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). However, the findings of this study of Saudi consumers confirmed no significant differences between males and females regarding their social media behaviour.

On the other hand, looking at the association between age and Saudi consumers' social media behaviour, the data confirmed that there is no relationship between these factors and visiting influencers' accounts, viewing visual restaurant-related content and trying restaurants based on visual content. However, this research confirmed a significant association between age and consumers' motivation to try restaurants based on influencers' visual content. This finding, which was confirmed by different authors, including Nysveen and Pedersen (2014) and Venkatesh et al. (2003), who proposed that young people are more willing to use technology compared to other age groups. Based on the research findings, influential content did motivate them to consider restaurants; however, when it came to actually trying the restaurants, the data did not indicate a high number in this area, which raises questions about this discrepancy. There are various possible answers presented by the results of this research.

Many of the sampled consumers were of the younger generation and therefore may not have restaurant choices that align with the content they are shown by influencers. Also, Saudi consumers admitted a high preference for fast-food restaurants, which are not usually promoted by social media influencers. Another possible reason is that the Saudi consumer's average spend at a restaurant is between 100-300 RS (26\$-80\$), and most Saudis prefer to dine with their family and friends; this average spend is most suited for fast-food restaurants than fine/casual dining.

A further investigation matter of this study is targeted toward the associations between education, income and marital status on visiting influencers' accounts, viewing visual restaurant-related content, motivation to try restaurants, and actually trying them. The results confirm no associations in these areas. However, there is an association between consumers' income and them trying the restaurants. This is an understandable link, as consumers' purchase behaviour varies based on their income; this association has been confirmed by other researchers such as Zhang et al. (2009), Chen (2010), Correa et al. (2010) and Ahmed et al. (2016).

8.2.2 Social media behaviour

In this research, Instagram and Snapchat have been chosen as the main applications for study, which was justified by their high popularity and usage among Saudi consumers. The study results confirmed that 77% of the respondents use Instagram and 89% use Snapchat, so selecting Instagram and Snapchat as the two primary applications seemed reasonable. These numbers showing a high percentage of usage have been corroborated by other sources such as Global Media Insight (2021), which showed that over 76% of Saudis are active users on Instagram and over 53% use Snapchat. Moreover, looking at these numbers not only highlight the popularity of these applications but also confirm the shift in consumers' behaviour regarding the type of social media applications which they find more appealing.

Applications that deal primarily with sharing visual content between social media members are most used and preferred by the younger generation of Saudi consumers. Therefore, the visual features of these applications should be further employed by businesses as they aim to garner the attention of Saudi consumers on social media. Moreover, the research results indicated that the use of social media is, in fact, wide spreading among Saudi people.

Nevertheless, they seem more connected to applications that primarily serve the visual aspect of sharing content. A point which seems logical considering how Saudi people are connected and open to what is happening around the world, so they are familiar with the latest applications as well as the latest trends. A perspective can easily be observed through the way they travel, contact, and eat as they follow famous influencers all over the world, so whatever is happening around the world, they are familiar with because of their high usage of the latest and most popular social media applications Instagram and Snapchat.

8.2.3 Restaurant behaviour

The third aspect of the first phase of this study is focused on consumers' restaurant behaviours. The findings reveal that quite a high percentage of Saudi consumers go to restaurants: 57% of the sample consumers confirmed eating at restaurants at least once a week. This high percentage is in line with the findings of the study by Assad (2008), as Saudi Arabia is considered one of the highest consumer-oriented countries worldwide. Moreover, it is ranked as the fourth most consuming country as restaurants and hotels are among the top destinations for Saudi consumers (Al-madina, 2014). 90% of Saudi consumers preferred to go to restaurants with their family and friends; this number seems expected, taking into consideration how close Saudi people generally are with their family members, as confirmed earlier by other sources such as Kabasakal and Bodur (2002).

This research also explored the sources of restaurant-related information and examined how Saudi consumers become aware of restaurants' content.

Specifically, 79% of the sample consumers learned about restaurants from their family and friends (face-to-face), 66% learned about such content through social media, 48% became aware via restaurants' social media accounts, and 39% from social media influencers. These numbers could be predicted, due to Saudis' closeness with their family members, and they emphasise the importance of relationships between Saudi consumers and their families.

The findings also show that consumers use different social media applications where they are being exposed to a variety of visual content on restaurants, as 87% of Saudi consumers admitted finding restaurants' visual content on Snapchat and 81% on Instagram; this further supports the earlier discussion of the high usage of these two applications among Saudis, which adds further justification to choosing these applications as study subjects.

Furthermore, the visual features of Instagram and Snapchat are the most crucial cause for such a high number of restaurant-related content on these two modern applications. So, for business to choose these two applications as their marketing strategy to inform current and potential consumers are reasonable, as the data confirmed that Saudi consumers are, in fact, becoming aware of such restaurants' content from these visually based applications.

Based on the literature review of this study, and with an agreement to the responses to high usage of social media application, more precisely Instagram and Snapchat, regarding restaurants related visual content, the importance of the visual content itself become essential. Moreover, as Saudi consumers are exposed to millions of restaurant-related content visually almost all the time, the point of what these visual content present, the way and the sources of the content are rising.

In detail, in regards to the research findings indicated that the quality of visual content shared by social media influencers on Instagram and Snapchat received the least level of influence on consumers' purchase intentions. This a point which should be considered in depth, especially nowadays with the enhancements of picture applications and so many features included within almost every social media application in order to present the shared pictures in the perfect way possible. Nevertheless, the quality of shared content seems less influential than we thought, which raises the question of other factors besides the quality of visual content.

This a valid wonder, especially if we consider that the expertise of the source of visual content on Instagram and Snapchat has received the highest level of impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Hence, when viewing visual content regarding restaurants, Saudi consumers consider other factors than just the quality of the shared visual content.

8.2.4 Social media influencers

After discussing the findings on Saudi Arabia's demographic character, social media usage, and restaurant behaviour, a further and primary finding of this study was introduced to provide a complete picture of Saudi consumers and the impact of social media influencers. Based on the findings of this research, it stated that 65% of the sample of Saudi consumers confirmed visiting influencers' Snapchat/Instagram pages daily. This has also been highlighted by other sources, such as Global Media Insight (2021), which showed that Saudi people spent over 3 hours per day on social media applications. Furthermore, 53% said they viewed restaurant-related content on these accounts almost daily/a few times a day. This was an interesting finding that was somewhat expected, as it was confirmed by Bouznif (2018), who demonstrated the new trend for restaurants to use social media influencers to raise awareness of their restaurants on social media. Despite this high percentage of the viewings of influencers' social media accounts by Saudi consumers, and although the findings of this study confirmed that Saudis view influencers' accounts daily and even a few times a day, where they are exposed to a vast amount of visual content on restaurants, the findings indicated that 52% said influencers' visual content did not play a role in motivating them to try the restaurants. Furthermore, 60% confirmed that they had never visited restaurants or had only visited them once or twice because of influencers' visual recommendations.

This fascinating relationship between social media influencers and consumers' restaurant behaviour was addressed by Alqadi et al. (2020). However, their study disagreed with the findings of this research, as they confirmed a strong relationship between influencers' visual content on restaurants and restaurant choices.

There are many potential reasons for this discrepancy, including the fact that Alqadi et al.'s study was conducted in Riyadh, which is the capital city of Saudi and has a

population of over 7 million, which is quite different from the East region where this research was carried out. Another explanation is that the study by Alqadi et al. (2020) was carried out and targeted only Riyadh Season, which is a festival with one of the highest visiting rates in the gulf area. According to the Chairman of the General Entertainment Authority, Turki Al-Sheikh, the Riyadh 2020 Season had over 7 million visitors in a month (Arabnews, 2020).

Another possible reason for the different results is that their study focused on a short period, only a few months (Riyadh Season), which means it is not directly comparable with this research, which was focused on influencers' visual content in general. Finally, the study by Alqadi et al. (2020) was concentrated on the Riyadh season festival, meaning most of the people sampled were visitors from all over the country, the gulf area and even international locations. Therefore, their restaurant behaviour is not the same as ordinary people living their daily lives. There is no doubt that people on vacations or people visiting other cities will eat at restaurants more often, so they will be seeking restaurant-related content from different sources, which plays a significant role in their reliance on social media influencers' content to fill the gap of knowledge regarding restaurants in a city that is new to them. Unlike consumers from the East region, who are able to be informed about restaurants' content from family and friends either face to face (WOM communication) or via social media applications (eWOM communication), which they were determined to be a more reliable source of restaurant' related content.

8.3 Discussion of Results Found in the Second Phase

After addressing the first discussion of the results found in this study, which aimed toward exploring different general aspects related to social media usage among Saudi consumers, the second part of this research aimed to introduce more detail on the impact of visual content characteristics, influencer characteristics and consumers' attitudes regarding consumers' purchase intentions; this aimed to provide a comprehensive picture of the visual content shared by influencers on social media applications, particularly Instagram and Snapchat. Therefore, this section addresses the impact of this content on consumers' purchase intentions from three angles: the content, the source of the content (social media influencers) and consumers' attitudes.

The impact of different aspects of online activities on consumers' purchase intentions has long been acknowledged by academics (Cho Vincent, 2010; Chi et al., 2011; Chan et al., 2013; Mansour and Diab, 2016; Attia, 2017; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017; Lim et al., 2017; Gayathri and Anwar, 2019; Chin, 2019). However, this study aims to investigate the three angles aforementioned: content, source and attitude. While addressing the impact of influencers' visual content on Saudis and their purchase intentions, this study further investigated other factors as moderators, including consumer confusion, age and gender. Based on the research model, all hypotheses were found to be significant. However, during the model fit analysis, information usefulness and need for information were eliminated due to not being suited for CFA.

8.3.1 Visual eWOM quality and purchase intention

This research has proposed that the quality of influencers' visual eWOM on Instagram and Snapchat is positively related to consumers' purchase intentions (H1). The findings of this study support the direct link between these factors; therefore, H1 is accepted. This finding is not surprising, as prior academics have confirmed it in a similar context (Lee and Shin, 2014; Park et al., 2007). In detail, if the quality of influencers' visual eWOM on social media applications is determined to be high, it will positively impact consumers' purchase intentions.

However, even though consumers found the quality of social media content a factor in their purchase decisions, the continuous media enhancement features of these applications may lead consumers to believe the quality of visual content is accurate. This point should be considered during the evaluation of restaurant choices based on visual content on social media applications. Therefore, as important as it appears, the quality of visual content should not be the only factor that determines and justifies the intention to prefer a particular restaurant. Such a point which the results of this study emphasised as the findings of this research indicated that the quality of visual content shared by social media influencers on Instagram and Snapchat regarding restaurants, received the most minor level of influence on consumers' purchase intentions. A possible reason for such a low impact of quality on purchase intentions is primarily due to the fact that nowadays, there are so many media enhancements applications, and even Instagram and Snapchat have their own media enhancements features, so almost all visual content they share and view will have high quality, which makes them consider other factors besides the visual content itself to determine their changing of behaviour.

8.3.2 Visual eWOM source credibility and purchase intention

Another assumption proposed by this study looks to investigate the link between the source of visual eWOM, which in our research case is social media influencers, and purchase intention (H2). The data of this study support this relationship, as the credibility of social media influencers positively influences consumers' purchase intentions. The link between these factors has been confirmed by other studies such as; (Wathen and Burkell, 2002; Senecal and Nantel, 2004; Cheung, Lee and Rabjohn, 2008; Heriyati and Siek, 2011; Fan and Miao, 2012), whom all confirmed the credibility of the information sources' impact and influence on consumers' purchase intentions.

However, it should be taken into consideration that it is difficult for the source of information (influencers) to be considered credible, as it takes time to build credibility with followers.

Moreover, with the advanced features of social media and its popularity worldwide, social media influencers must take into account any misleading or inaccurate content they share and how content with low credibility may give them a negative reputation, as information on social media spreads quickly and cannot be controlled. The same perspective should be considered by restaurants intending to depend on social media influencers as a marketing strategy. As the negative credibility of visual content shared by influencers on social media applications may cause a massive and negative reputation for the restaurants.

8.3.3 Visual eWOM source expertise and purchase intention

This study proposed an additional source-related assumption, as it assumed that the expertise of the producer of the visual eWOM source has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intentions (H3). Such a primary significance of the content source was earlier proposed as a limitation of the IACM. Therefore, this study aimed to include such crucial factor. Based on the findings of this research, this link has been supported, as consumers' purchase intentions are influenced by the experience level of social media influencers. The relationship between source expertise and purchase intention has been under consideration for quite some time, as previous academics, including (Maddux and Rogers, 1980; Ohanian, 1991; Wilson and Sherrell, 1993; Cheung et al., 2008; Cheung et al., 2009; Zhang and Watts, 2008; and Lerrthairaku et al., 2014) have all confirmed the importance of expertise for influencing consumers' purchase behaviour.

However, the same issue facing source credibility may apply to source expertise, as it takes time to gain experience and get recognised by followers. Moreover, it is easier for an influencer to demonstrate expertise if they are known in their field. For example, when they share restaurant-related content, former chefs may be considered more valuable than everyday influencers (lifestyle bloggers). The same applies to influencers who are well known in only one particular category, such as makeup artists or sports players; when they promote content in their particular field, they are viewed as more valuable because of their experience in these areas.

Nevertheless, in recent years, influencers of various categories promote similar content, such as restaurant-related content in this case, so it has become more complicated to distinguish and evaluate their expertise.

However, in some cases, if the restaurant's primary strategy is to increase awareness, they may focus on influencers in their geographical area who have large numbers of followers, regardless of their relevance in terms of category or experience level.

In agreement, the point of exploring the relationship between source expertise and consumers' purchase intentions has been empirically tested as well as suggested by prior academics. In the case of Saudi consumers, more precisely based on this research finding, source expertise was determined to have the most substantial level of influence on consumers' purchase intentions. Such a fascinating finding agrees with the earlier proposal to present source expertise as a separate factor and not included within source credibility. The reason behind such a high level of impact from influencers (source of visual content) on consumers' purchase intentions does not appear to be a coincidence. In detail, taking into account the vast amount of visual content Saudi consumers are being exposed to every day, they become aware of each influencer; not only that, but they become familiar with the stuff they like and dislike, which field they are more experience in. So the more they know them, the more they become familiar with their lifestyle. Therefore, when they view restaurants' visual content shared by influencers on Instagram and Snapchat from whom they know and are familiar with their personality and which field they are experienced in, such familiarity would positively increase the level of influence they have on consumers.

8.3.4 Consumers' adoption of visual eWOM and purchase intention

As previously discussed, consumers are exposed to a vast amount of content on social media applications. Not all of this content can have the same level of impact on consumers' actions. With this in mind, this study proposed that when consumers adopt social media content, they will eventually have a purchase intention towards this content (H4). Based on the findings of this study, the data confirm the impact of the adoption of visual eWOM on purchase intentions.

Moreover, if consumers adopt the restaurants' visual content shared by social media influencers, it will positively impact their purchase intentions. The link between these factors has been suggested by prior studies such as (Cheung and Thadani, 2012; Cheung et al., 2009; Erkan and Evans 2016).

8.3.5 Consumers' attitude toward visual eWOM and purchase intention

As previously addressed, one of the contributions of this study is the consideration not only of the content and source of social media content but also consumers' attitudes toward such online visual content. Therefore, this study proposed the link between consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. The empirical findings of this research confirm the direct positive impact of attitude on consumers' purchase intentions (H5).

In detail, consumers who are exposed to a vast amount of social media content, more precisely visual eWOM by influencers, are more likely to have a positive purchase intention if they have a positive attitude towards such content. This confirmed relationship seems predictable since it has been previously proposed by prior theories including TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), TPB (Ajzen, 1985, 1991), TAM (Bagozzi et al., 1992; Davis, 1989) and most recently by Erkan and Evans (2016) IACM, whom they all addressed the link between attitude and consumers' intentions.

8.3.6 Visual eWOM quantity and purchase intention

The quantity of visual content is a factor that this study proposed and determined to be vital, as it was confirmed as a limitation of the IACM. Moreover, as the quantity of visual eWOM on social media applications plays a positive part in impacting consumers' purchase intentions (H6). Based on the results of this study, the findings confirm a positive relationship between the quantity of visual eWOM on social media and consumers' purchase intentions. Consumers feel more comfortable with their purchase decisions if they believe that a decent number of consumers have chosen or considered the same purchasing choices.

The link between these factors is not new or unexpected, as it has been examined by academics previously, including the work of (Hahn et al., 1992; Helgeson and Ursic, 1993; Jacoby, Speller and Kohn, 1974; Keller and Staelin, 1987; Malhotra, 1982; Wilkie, 1974; Lee, 2009). Therefore, whenever consumers are exposed to a vast amount of restaurants' related content via social media influencers, the more they become likely to have intentions toward such restaurants.

Regarding this study's findings and the previously addressed literature review, the relationship between the quantity of visual content and consumers' purchase intentions has not only been confirmed. Nevertheless, it has been determined to be among the factors with the highest level of impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Such a fascinating but not surprising result can be somehow assumed if we take into account the vast amount of influencers' visual content Saudi consumers are being exposed to all the time, and with consideration to the heavy usage of social media among Saudis, such high influence of visual content on consumers' purchase intentions appears logical.

8.3.7 Subjective norms and purchase intention

Another factor in the attitude domain is known as subjective norms, which this study proposed had an influence on consumers' purchase intentions (H7). The reason behind such including of subjective norms in this research, is primarily due to the importance of family members to Saudi consumers. As previously confirmed, Saudi people are considered very close with their family members, and they cherish their views and opinions. According to the findings of this study, the relationship between subjective norms and consumers' purchase intentions is found to be supported. This relationship has been proposed by a range of studies, including TRA (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975), Venkatesh and Davis (2000) and Salloum et al. (2019). The significance of subjective norms becomes vital for consumers, as they consider their actions and reactions based on how important people in their society view these actions and whether they approve. In this study's case, Saudi Arabia's subjective norms might be more vital than other societies', considering how close the Saudi people are with their family members and how much they value their family's views on their actions.

The finding of this research statistically confirmed such a strong connection between Saudi consumers and their family members. As the result of this study, they indicated that subjective norms are among the top factors which have the highest level of influence on consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, this fact can be considered more critical for those societies with close relationships between their members than other societies, where family members' approvals might not be as valuable as theirs to Saudi consumers.

8.3.8 The moderating role of consumer confusion

The previous sections have discussed the findings of this research, more precisely, the direct factors which have influenced consumers' purchase intentions. This section, subsequently, will shed more light on the indirect relationships between different factors and purchase intentions. Firstly, we will consider consumers' confusion, which is considered an interesting area of study that has received a reasonable amount of interest over the years, primarily because contemporary consumers are spoilt for choice, according to Malhotra (1984); consumers are exposed to a vast amount of brand-related information which can cause confusion during the decision-making process. However, the idea of consumers' confusion on social media has not been so deeply considered.

This study addresses how consumer confusion may negatively impact the relationship between the quantity of visual eWOM and consumers' purchasing intentions, and the data herein confirm this negative correlation. This link has previously been noted by Walsh et al., 2007, whose study confirmed the negative impact of information overload on the consumers' purchasing process. Moreover, brands may consider themselves to be succeeding when they fill social media applications with brand-related content; however, they may dismiss the confusion factor, which may be brought about by this very same content.

From this perspective, choosing the right influencers to promote brands with a reasonable amount of content may be a more cost-effective method and lead to more potential purchases. It is not always the quantity of information that catches consumers' attention but the quality of the information.

Hence, an interesting contribution of this study is that it addresses the confusion of visual content on social media shared by influencers; this area deserves more recognition.

8.3.9 The moderating role of gender

A further indirect relationship this study proposed is the influence of gender on the quantity of visual eWOM and source expertise. This assumption was made based on the well-known Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) and the work of other academics such as (Venkatesh et al., 2003; Minton and Schneider, 1985; Nysveen and Pedersen, 2014). The reason behind such including of gender and age is attributed to the fact that Saudi Arabia and more precisely, developing countries have unique characteristics compared to other nations; therefore, it becomes more intriguing to explore such differences in order to obtain as much information as needed on consumers from these nations.

The findings of this research on both assumptions regarding the influence of gender on the link between quantity, source expertise and purchase intention were not confirmed. Therefore, Saudi consumers show no differences in the level of impact influencers' visual eWOM quantity and source expertise have on them based on gender. Therefore, it becomes easier for brands looking to expose their visual content to Saudi consumers, as the target consumers are very similar (male and female). The greater the difference between the target consumers, the harder it becomes to reach them effectively. However, when they have similar demographic characteristics, the marketing strategy becomes more accessible and more cost-effective.

8.3.10 The moderating role of age

Much like gender, age is another moderating factor proposed by this research and has been emphasised by UTAUT and other studies, including (Beatty and Smith, 1987; Klippel and Sweeny, 1974).

According to the findings of this study regarding the impact of age on the relationship between the quantity of visual eWOM and source expertise regarding consumers' purchase intentions, the data reveals that age differences did not significantly impact the relationship between source expertise and purchase intentions. However, regarding the quantity of visual eWOM, the findings identified that age had an impact on the link between quantity and purchase intention. Therefore, the level of influence may be different based on the age of Saudi consumers.

This is an interesting point, as older consumers who are less likely to take risks would be more comfortable in their purchase choices if they were to see many people talking about or sharing restaurants' content. The younger generation, who are considered greater risk-takers, do not view the quantity of content as a significant factor in their purchase choices. In a country like Saudi Arabia, where almost half the population is under the age of 31, a factor like this should be considered in more depth.

8.4 Summary of the Chapter

The discussion of the findings of this research was built on the foundation of two main sections. The first section addressed the general overall view of the impact of social media visual content shared by influencers on Snapchat and Instagram on consumers' purchase intentions. Discussing the Saudi consumers, their demographics, social media usage and restaurant behaviour was a path to address the discussion of the level of the impact social media influencers have on Saudi consumers' restaurant behaviour. The discussion in the first section confirmed the high usage of social media by Saudi consumers and their frequent viewing of influencers' visual content. Despite such promising high usage, the level of impact of such visual content on consumers' purchasing actions is surprisingly low and needs more investigation.

The second section of this discussion chapter mainly looked at the findings of visual content on social media shared by influencers by focusing on three main areas, the content, the source and consumers' attitudes toward visual eWOM on Snapchat and Instagram.

The discussion in the second section emphasised the acceptance of all the proposed hypotheses except a few moderators. Finally, this chapter discussed the impact of three moderators: gender, age and consumer confusion. Discussion of these moderators introduced a fascinating finding of their level of impact on consumers' purchase intentions. Gender was found to have no impact on the link between quantity, source expertise and purchase intention.

In contrast, age was determined to be significant for the link between visual eWOM quantity and purchase intentions. Finally, consumer confusion was found to negatively impact the association between the quantity of visual eWOM on social media and consumers' purchase intentions.

CHAPTER NINE
CONCLUSION

9 Chapter Nine: Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the research thesis and highlights an overall picture of the study. This section revisits the aims and objectives of this research and reviews to what extent each one has been achieved. After that discussion, this chapter reviews the primary findings of this thesis and then addresses the theoretical and practical contributions of the study. Finally, the chapter concludes by presenting limitations and future research opportunities.

9.2 Meeting the Research Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this research was to explore the impact of social media on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions. To achieve this aim, the research objectives were introduced. Table 9.1 below presents where each objective was achieved.

- **Objective 1:** To provide more understanding of Saudi consumers and their social media usage.
- **Objective 2:** To explore the concept of social media influencers and Saudi consumers.
- **Objective 3:** To determine the influence of cultural factors on Saudi consumers.
- **Objective 4:** To develop a theoretical model that helps gather more understanding regarding social media content and consumer purchase intention.
- **Objective 5:** To draw theoretical contributions for academics regarding the impact of influencers' visual eWOM in social media on consumers' purchase intentions.

Table 9.1: Chapters where objectives have been achieved.

OBJECTIVES	CHAPTERS
OBJECTIVE 1	Chapter 2 and Chapter 8
OBJECTIVE 2	Chapter 3 and Chapter 8
OBJECTIVE 3	Chapter 5 and Chapter 8
OBJECTIVE 4	Chapter 4
OBJECTIVE 5	Chapter 9

A. Objective 1

The first objective of this study was to provide a greater understanding of Saudi consumers and their social media usage. To achieve this objective, a review of literature on social media was presented in Chapter 2. It started by outlining the evolution of social media as a concept and discussing the definitions and terms used to distinguish this modern technology. The chapter provided a brief discussion of different social media applications, with a focus on Instagram and Snapchat, as well as the reason behind choosing these applications as the primary focus for this research study. After establishing the foundation of this research within social media and more precisely Instagram and Snapchat, Chapter 8 presented the discussion of the usage of these applications amongst Saudi consumers.

B. Objective 2

The second objective of this research was to explore the concept of social media influencers and Saudi consumers. In order to meet this objective, Chapter 3 presented the concept of social media influencers by providing an in-depth discussion of the matter and related areas, starting with an overall analysis of the content on social media in the form of visual eWOM, highlighting the evolution of the concept of WOM, eWOM and visual eWOM, and establishing the link between social media content and purchase intention. After discussing social media content, the chapter then shed more light on content creators. The chapter discussed the literature on different perspectives on content creators for social media, as well as the well-known and recently acknowledged concept of social media influencers.

The chapter concluded by providing the link between influencers and different aspects of consumers' purchase behaviour.

Therefore, after laying the foundation for the discussion of influencers and purchase intentions, Chapter 8 examined the impact of social media influencers on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions.

C. Objective 3

The third objective of this study was to determine the influence of cultural factors on Saudi consumers. As the thesis research was carried out in Saudi Arabia, it seemed only logical to address the cultural background of Saudi consumers in order to provide a complete picture of any differences they may have to consumers from other countries.

To achieve this, Chapter 5 provided a short and general view of Saudi Arabia as a country, presenting the key character of the country and highlighting the cultural perspective of those consumers. After providing a general view of Saudi people, Chapter 8 then discussed the link between different cultural perspectives of Saudi consumers and social media.

D. Objective 4

The next objective of this study was to develop a theoretical model that helps gather more understanding regarding social media content and consumer purchase intention. To meet this objective, Chapter 4 was split into two main phases. The first phase presented the developments and discussion of different theories that were used in studies related to social media, in order to establish the flow of theories and reach the final theory used in this study, which is IACM. After introducing the main theory of this research, the chapter's second phase presented a discussion of the attributes used in social media studies, in order to provide a complete picture of different factors used in the literature to study the impact of social media.

The chapter then concluded by introducing the main research model, which was based on IACM and other elements that this study determined to be vital for examining the influence of visual content in social media on consumers' purchase intentions.

E. Objective 5

The last objective of this study was to draw theoretical contributions for academics regarding the impact of influencers' visual eWOM in social media on consumers' purchase intentions. Chapter 9 introduces the theoretical and practical implications of the research, as well as recommendations for future research.

9.3 Summary of Research Findings

This study was constructed based on two research questions. The first question is 'What is the level of impact social media influencers have on consumers' purchase intentions regarding restaurants?'

The first phase of this study was answered through a survey of 512 Saudi consumers, and the main findings of this question are as follows:

- Regarding the usage of social media among Saudi consumers, the findings of this research indicated extremely high usage of social media applications.
- Considering the demographic aspect of Saudi consumers, the findings of this study reflected that the young Saudi consumers are the ones who use social media applications at a very high rate. However, the findings did not indicate any significant differences between Saudi consumers and their social media usage, influencer viewing, and restaurant behaviour based on gender, age, income, education and marital status.
- In terms of the most used applications, the findings revealed that Instagram and Snapchat are the two social media applications used most frequently by Saudi consumers and that they are where they find the most visual restaurant content. This is likely because these applications are primarily formulated to serve the purpose of sharing visual content on social media.

- Speaking of influencers, the finding of this study showed an intriguing result regarding the viewing of influencers' accounts. Moreover, the survey revealed that Saudi consumers visit influencers' social media pages at an extremely high viewing rate.
- Therefore, when it comes to restaurant content shared by social media influencers, the findings of this study reflected a very high viewing rate of restaurants' visual content. However, when compared to other sources such as family, friends, and official restaurant social media accounts, the findings revealed that consumers do in fact view influencers' visual content on a daily basis, yet they rely more on other sources like family and friends when they have an intention to pursue a restaurant purchasing behaviour.
- In terms of restaurant content, the findings of this research indicated frequent viewing of visual content about restaurants shared on social media applications by influencers. Yet, when it comes to the actual benefits of such high numbers of views, the research revealed a low motivation rate from Saudi consumers to consider the restaurants. This misleading relationship raised more questions regarding the actual benefits of employing influencers as a marketing strategy for SMEs restaurants in Saudi Arabia. These queries were carried over into the second question of this research, considering a more in-depth analysis of influencers' content, the source of the content and consumers' attitudes toward visual content about restaurants shared by influencers on Instagram and Snapchat.

The first question aimed to gather as much information as possible regarding Saudi consumers and the impact they might experience from influencers' visual content about restaurants on Instagram and Snapchat.

The second question, consequently, was based on nine determinants designed to examine the content, the source and consumers' attitudes in order to have a full and complete picture of the relationship between influencers' visual content and the impact on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions. Based on the second question, the primary findings are as follows:

- Regarding the visual content shared by influencers on Instagram and Snapchat on restaurant SMEs in Saudi Arabia, the findings revealed that the quality, quantity and adoption of visual content are all influential on consumers' purchase intentions.
- In terms of the source of visual content, which in our research is social media influencers, the findings showed that source credibility and source expertise are both influential on consumers' purchase intentions.
- Regarding the behavioural aspect, the study findings indicated that consumers' attitudes and subjective norms are also influential on consumers' purchase intentions.
- Finally, this study explored the moderating impact of factors such as consumers' confusion, gender and age. The findings indicated an impact of consumers' confusion on the relationship between the quantity of content and consumers' purchase intentions, as consumers become confused due to a large amount of visual content they were being exposed to on Instagram and Snapchat. Moreover, the study confirmed the impact of age on the link between information quantity and purchase intention.

9.4 Research Contributions

The aim of this research was to explore the impact of social media on Saudi consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, the contributions of this study can be presented at theoretical and practical levels.

A. Theoretical level

The primary contribution of this study is that it developed a comprehensive theoretical model exploring the determinants of influencers' visual content in social media on consumers' purchase intentions. The model was formulated based on the early work of the IACM model (Erkan and Evans, 2016), a relevantly modern model which was created based on the integration of IAM and TAM. The new model was created to expand on the early work of IACM, in order to provide a wider range of components and include not only the content on social media but also the source of the content as well as consumers' attitudes. The reason for including three phases was to improve understanding of the change in consumers' intentions based on the visual content they received from influencers on Instagram and Snapchat. The new model contributes to the theory by introducing a new approach to information adoption, as it introduces new insights to researchers who are interested in areas related to social media studies. Furthermore, the study contributes to future research by empirically testing the components of visual content characters, sources of content and consumer behaviour elements.

The expanded research model contributes to theory by including further factors, including source expertise and information quantity; the IACM further suggested both factors. Furthermore, the new model integrated subjective norms into its factors, based on the significance of such an element to this study, more precisely if we consider that the study was targeted to Saudi consumers and such a factor was determined crucial for this type of society. Finally, the introduced model included consumer confusion, gender and age as moderators. All of which are determined to be vital in the social media context. In detail, due to the vast amount of social media content, the rising concept of consumer confusion is viewed to be crucial.

At the same time, gender and age were primarily considered to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of the demographic characteristic of Saudi consumers.

This research also contributes to the literature on visual eWOM, an area of interest that can be considered new, both in its modernity and its continuous evolution.

Furthermore, this study adds an exploratory aspect to the literature on social media influencers, which is a modern area of study in need of more exploration. Moreover, this study expands the literature on Instagram and Snapchat, which are two social media applications that are both relatively new and expanding tremendously while making continuous improvements. These two applications are not only the most used in Saudi Arabia but are widely used all over the world for visual content sharing.

Regarding the contribution to the literature on Saudi consumers, this study provides new and interesting findings on Saudi consumers' social media usage. Moreover, this study provides a wide range of information on Saudi consumers in various areas, including social media usage, Instagram and Snapchat usage, influencers in Saudi Arabia, restaurant SMEs in Saudi Arabia and cultural perspectives of Saudi consumers. Such a breadth of information will serve tremendously for future researchers studying Saudi consumers.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature on social media by exploring the influence of consumers' confusion of social media content. This is an area of interest that would be pertinent for researchers examining social media content and consumer behaviour.

B. Practical Levels

From a practical viewpoint, this research introduces a wide range of information that may be extremely helpful. This study contributes to knowledge from a range of perspectives: it may be useful for marketers wanting to understand Saudi consumers' behaviour since it has presented in-depth knowledge regarding Saudi consumers and their characteristics; it also introduces a recent set of data on Saudi social media usage and preferred applications.

This study also highlights the use of influencers as a marketing strategy and examines the level of impact they might have on changing consumers' purchase behaviour. This research has expanded knowledge about restaurant SMEs in Saudi Arabia by introducing recent data on these businesses. Marketers and new business owners could use this data to their advantage to employ the best strategy for targeting their current and potential consumers.

From a marketing perspective, this research presented rich data related to Saudi consumers in many different categories. It introduces valuable information on consumers and their social media usage, the applications they prefer, the types of social media content they find most related, the types of social media influencers they follow and the types of visual content on Instagram/Snapchat which influence them most. So, for marketers, SMEs, restaurants owners, investors or people who are interested in entering the restaurant-related business or any business in a similar category, this research provides a complete piece of information on almost every aspect related to SMEs restaurants in Saudi Arabia, social media marketing in general, Instagram/ Snapchat, Saudi consumers' purchase behaviour, Saudi consumer restaurants behaviour, Saudi influencers, visual content on social media, changing in Saudi consumers' behaviour and so many other associated topics.

9.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has introduced a significant number of theoretical and practical contributions; therefore, the following limitations can be acknowledged for future research. This research was conducted by examining two social media applications, Instagram and Snapchat. Although these are the two most widely used applications in Saudi Arabia for exchanging visual content, the continued improvements to these applications' features should be considered in future research to confirm that the data is current. Moreover, this research only employed two social media applications; nowadays, new applications for exchanging visual content might be worth considering, such as TikTok.

Even though this study employed Instagram and Snapchat due to their similarity and the primary purpose of these applications, which is visual content sharing, yet there are few variations between them; therefore, future research may consider targeting only one application or even draw a comparison between them in order to provide a complete yet a comparison view of visual content on social media applications.

For this study, we used convenience sampling as our non-probability sampling technique to gather data on Saudi consumers who use social media applications. However, it's important to note that the age group of our sample may not represent the entire population accurately, even though they make up the majority of social media users. It is essential to keep in mind that the results obtained from a small sample size may not be applicable to a large population due to the limitations of convenience sampling.

In the conducting of convenience sampling technique, this study assembled data from social media users living in the East Region of Saudi Arabia. This limited sampling approach may not provide an accurate representation of the overall population of consumers in Saudi Arabia and their perspectives and comprehension of social media usage. As a result, a more comprehensive sampling design is necessary for future studies to ensure increased reliability and validity of the data and findings.

Another related limitation of the convenience sampling conducted in this study is that it solely focuses on the behaviour of consumers residing in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it might not accurately portray the consumer behaviour of the whole country. To enhance the comprehensiveness of future research, it would be advantageous to incorporate other regions of Saudi Arabia as well. This would provide a more extensive and in-depth understanding of the Saudi consumer behaviour on social media. Moreover, researchers could potentially compare the gathered data from this study with data from other countries to obtain further valuable insights.

A final drawback of convenience sampling is its exclusive reliance on only two social media platforms, namely Snapchat and Instagram. This approach may potentially limit the generalisability of the obtained results to the broader population of social media users.

This research employed quantitative approaches. Future research should take into account both quantitative and qualitative approaches, which would give a more complete picture of influencers in Saudi Arabia. The knowledge gained about influencers in this study is of use, but further data could be gathered through interviews, that would give a more complete view of the topic.

This research targeted SMEs in the restaurant sector in Saudi Arabia. This study provides a decent amount of data on the SMEs, but it covers only this sector; such a narrow focus could be viewed as a limitation. Other researchers interested in studying restaurants in Saudi Arabia should consider other sectors in order to have a broader view of the sector in context. They could also draw comparisons between the various sectors of restaurants and their differences regarding their marketing strategies.

Another noticeable limitation of this study can be attributed to the consideration of culture. Even though this study has considered the cultural perspective of Saudi consumers, future studies might allow for a deeper understanding of Saudi consumers' culture by exploring the impact of different cultural characteristics and having a full picture of culture, social media and Saudi consumer behaviour.

Finally, this study has focused on three phases of visual content on social media: the content, the source of the content and consumer attitudes. Although considering each of these areas has provided an understanding of visual content shared by influencers on social media, nevertheless, it would be worth considering other factors in future research to delve further into this modern and widely spread phenomenon known as social media influencers.

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APPENDICES



Consent Form for conducting an online survey

1. Research Project Title

The influence of visual content in social media on consumer purchase intention

2. Opening text:

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey on social media influencers. You have been invited to participate because you are sample of Saudi consumers over the age of 18 who use Instagram and Snapchat. This survey is part of a research project being conducted by Mohammed Alomair a research postgraduate at the University of Stirling. It should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You will be given some questions to answer.

Please read through these terms before agreeing to participate below.

3. Background, aims of project

As we are in a world of constant technological evolution, we have become witnesses of the latest communication methods known as social media. A communication tool which reaches almost every part of everything we do. From what to wear to where to eat, social media is there to inform us of the best and most popular options. An idea like that doesn't seem entirely new, as the term Bloggers appears to exist for quite some time. However, social media and its improving features, have turned the well-dated concept of Bloggers to a new dimension known as social media influencers. Online users with a decent number of followers share visually where they eat, drink, live, wear and so many other aspects of their daily lives. Just as same as Bloggers, influencers, on the other hand, have been under marketing considerations. As brands in different categories recognise influencers as a communication bridge between them and their target consumers and try to effectively and heavily employ them. Dependency on social media influencers has raised the question of the actual benefits and impacts those influencers have on consumer purchase behaviour; a wonder which this study aims to address. More precisely, how influencers visual content on Instagram and Snapchat regarding SMEs restaurants, have influenced the purchase intention of Saudi consumer.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty by pressing the 'Exit' button / closing the browser.

You are free to decline to answer any particular question for any reason – we have included a 'prefer not to say' option.

5. Are there any potential risks in taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this.

6. Legal basis for processing personal data

As part of the project we will be recording personal data relating to you. This will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Under GDPR the legal basis for processing your personal data will be public interest/the official authority of the University

7. What happens to the data I provide?

Your answers will be completely anonymous, and we will use all reasonable endeavours to keep them confidential. Your data will be stored in a password-protected file and may be used in academic publications. Your IP address will not be stored. Your personal data will be kept 12 months after the viva on Research Drive – a secure data centre on the Stirling campus and then will be lodged in DataSTORRE.

8. Will the research be published?

The research may be published in academic publishers. The University of Stirling is committed to making the outputs of research publically accessible and supports this commitment through our online open access repository STORRE. Unless funder/publisher requirements prevent us this research will be publicly disseminated through our open access repository.

9. Who is organising and funding the research?

Saudi Arabia Cultural Mission is sponsoring this research.

10. Who has reviewed this research project?

The ethical approaches of this project have been approved via The University of Stirling General University Ethics Panel.

11. Your rights

You have the right to request to see a copy of the information we hold about you and to request corrections or deletions of the information that is no longer required.

You have the right to withdraw from this project at any time without giving reasons and without consequences to you. You also have the right to object to us processing relevant personal data however, please note that once the data are being analysed and/or results published it may not be possible to remove your data from the study.

12. Whom do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?

If you would like to discuss the research with someone please contact the main researcher Mohammed Alomair Email: m.a.alomair1@stir.ac.uk.

Researcher's Supervisor and Head of Marketing and Retail Division.

Professor Paul Freathy Email: j.p.freathy@stir.ac.uk.

Dean of Management School.

Professor Kevin Grant. Email: Kevin.Grant@stir.ac.uk.

You have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>). The University's Data Protection Officer is Joanna Morrow, Deputy Secretary. If you have any questions relating to data protection these can be addressed to data.protection@stir.ac.uk in the first instance.

Thank you for your participation, and for any inquiries or further information regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mohammed Alomair

Marketing and Retail Division, University of Stirling, Stirling, UK

Email: m.a.alomair1@stir.ac.uk

13. Electronic Consent

Please select your choice below. Clicking on the "Agree" button indicates that:

- You have read and understood the above information
- You are 18 years of age or older
- You voluntarily agree to participate

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION ONE: Please answer the following questions.

1. Do you use social media platforms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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2. Do you use Snapchat or Instagram?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
------------------------------	-----------------------------

3. Do you follow any social media influencers?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
------------------------------	-----------------------------

If all answers in 1,2 and 3 are Yes please complete the following questions, otherwise **THANK YOU** but your participation is not required.

SECTION TWO: REASTAURANTS.

4. How often do you eat at restaurants?

<input type="checkbox"/> Daily	<input type="checkbox"/> Few times a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a week
<input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a month	<input type="checkbox"/> Very rare	<input type="checkbox"/> Never

5. What type of restaurants do you usually prefer?

<input type="checkbox"/> Fast-food restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/> Fine Dining
<input type="checkbox"/> Casual Dining	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

6. How do you most often eat at restaurants?

<input type="checkbox"/> Alone	<input type="checkbox"/> With Friends	<input type="checkbox"/> With Family Member
<input type="checkbox"/> With Colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)	

7. On average, how much do you spend on restaurants per visit?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 100 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 100 – 199 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 200 – 299 SR
<input type="checkbox"/> 300 – 399 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 – 499 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 500 – 599 SR
<input type="checkbox"/> 600 – or more		

**8. From the table below, please rank the THREE most important source of
How do you usually find recommendations about restaurants?**

1 = Most recommendation I find, 2 = Second Most recommendation I find, 3 = Third Most recommendation I find.

Source	Rank	Source	Rank
WOM (Verbal Recommendations from friends/family/ Colleagues)		Tv Advertisements	
EWOM (Electronic Recommendations from friends/family) via text message or WhatsApp.		Newspaper Advertisements	
The restaurant social media page		Radio Advertisements	
Social media influencers		Internet Advertisements	
Other (please specify)			

SECTION THREE: SOCIAL MEDIA

9. How long have you been using social media platforms?

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than a year	<input type="checkbox"/> From 1 to 3 years
<input type="checkbox"/> From 4 to 6 year	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 years

10. How often do you use social media?

<input type="checkbox"/> Daily	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 5 days per week
<input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Very rare

11. From the table below, please rank the THREE most social media applications you use the most.

1 = Most use, 2 = Second Most use, 3 = Third Most use.

	Rank
Facebook	
Twitter	
Instagram	
Snapchat	
Other (please specify)	

12. From the table below, please rank the THREE social media applications where you most see restaurants content.

1 = Most see, 2 = Second Most see, 3 = Third Most see.

	Rank
Facebook	
Twitter	
Instagram	
Snapchat	
Other (please specify)	

SECTION FOUR: SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUNCERS

13. Which category of influencers do you follow the most?

<input type="checkbox"/> Sport	<input type="checkbox"/> Make up / Beauty	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooking
<input type="checkbox"/> Actor/ Actress	<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)

14. How often do you visit influencers social media accounts?

<input type="checkbox"/> Few times a day	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a day	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 5 days per week
<input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a week	

15. How often do you see visual content about restaurants in influencers social media accounts?

Visual content means: any Pictures or videos on Snapchat/Instagram about restaurants.

<input type="checkbox"/> Few times a day	<input type="checkbox"/> Once a day	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 5 days per week
<input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice a week	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than once a week	

16. 16. To what extent watching the visual content (photos / videos / snapshots) about restaurants in influencers social media accounts, motivate you to try the restaurant.

<input type="checkbox"/> High motivationn	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium motivation	<input type="checkbox"/> Low motivation
<input type="checkbox"/> No motivation		

17. How many times have tried a restaurant because of influencer’s visual content about the restaurant?

<input type="checkbox"/> Always	<input type="checkbox"/> Most of the times	<input type="checkbox"/> Few times
<input type="checkbox"/> Once or twice	<input type="checkbox"/> Never	

SECTION FIVE: -

Instructions: -

18. Please consider **SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS** posts about restaurants on Snapchat/Instagram. Then give your answers. Please fill ✓ in the blank spaces that indicates your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

The visual content (VeWOM) on Snapchat/ Instagram about restaurants which are posted by INFLUENCERS...	Agree Strongly	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. I think influencers visual content are great source of restaurants information and supply relevant restaurants information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I think influencers visual content provide convincing restaurants information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I think influencers visual content provide clear visual content about restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I believe they provided complete information about the restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I believe influencers visual content provided up-to-date information about restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. In general, I think the quality of influencers visual content are high.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I think the influencers who provide the visual content are credible.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I think the influencers who provide the visual content are accurate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I think the influencers who provide the visual content are knowledgeable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I think the influencers who provide the visual content are reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I believe influencers visual content are generally useful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I think they are generally informative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I think they are effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I think influencers visual content increase my effectiveness when I choose a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I like to apply influencers visual content when I consider new restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. If I have little experience with a restaurant, I often use influencers visual content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I usually consult influencers visual content to choose the best restaurant for me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I frequently gather influencers visual content before making a restaurant decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I always read influencers visual content when I choose a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I think influencers' visual content is a great source for restaurant information and contributes relevant restaurant information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I think Influencers visual content motivates me to make a purchase decision					
22. Influencers visual content makes it easier for me to make a purchase decision					
23. Influencers visual content enhances my effectiveness in making a purchase decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. If I do not watch influencers visual content when I choose a restaurant, I worry about my decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Influencers visual content impose a burden on me when I choose a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Influencers visual content irritate me when I choose a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. The amount of influencers visual content about restaurants indicates they are great.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. The high number of influencers visual content, indicates the restaurants popularity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. The more influencers visual content on a restaurant is mentioned, the more I'm aware of it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. The amount of influencers visual content motivate me to choose a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. I depends more on an influencer who I believe is experience.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. I depends more on an influencer who I think is knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. Influencers provide different restaurants content than other sources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. I think influencers have the ability to judge restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Influencers provide different restaurants information I had not considered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. If I have little experience with an influencer's visual content, I often ask my friends about it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. It is important that my family and friends like the influencers I relay on in choosing a restaurant.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. I usually gather information from my family and friends about an influencer's content before I make a restaurant choosing decision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. Influencers visual content on restaurants indicate so many options, so it's hard to know which restaurants meet my needs best.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. Influencers visual content on restaurants are very similar, and it is, therefore, hard to distinguish between them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. Influencers visual content on restaurants indicate so many options, that I sometimes feel confused.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Due to the high level of similarity between influencers visual content, it sometimes becomes hard to detect the new restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. I felt confused because of influencers constantly updating restaurants visual content.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. After considering influencers visual content on restaurants, it is very likely that I will try the restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. After considering influencers visual content on restaurants, I will definitely try the restaurants.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. After considering influencers visual content on restaurants, I will recommend the restaurants to my friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION SIX: PROFIL.

Please tell us about yourself

19. Gender

<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
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20. Age

<input type="checkbox"/> 18 - 25 years old	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 35 years old	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 45 years old
<input type="checkbox"/> 46 - 55 years old	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 56 years old	

21. Family status

<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Married with no children	<input type="checkbox"/> Married with children
<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/ separated / widowed		

22. Education

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than high school	<input type="checkbox"/> High school	<input type="checkbox"/> Two-year college degree
<input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree	

23. Occupation

<input type="checkbox"/> Government / Public Sector worker	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Sector Employee	<input type="checkbox"/> Business Owner/ Self-employed
<input type="checkbox"/> Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Housewife / Homemaker	<input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed
<input type="checkbox"/> Retired	<input type="checkbox"/> Others (Please specify)	

24. Income per month

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 5,000 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 - 10,000 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 - 15,000 SR
<input type="checkbox"/> 15,001 – 20,000 SR	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 20,001 SR	



1- عنوان البحث:

دراسة تأثير المحتوى المرئي في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي على سلوك المستهلك الشرائي.

2- انت مدعو للمشاركة في هذه الاستبانة الإلكترونية عن المؤثرين في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي. وتمت دعوتك للمشاركة كونك تشكل عينة من المجتمع السعودي فوق ال 18 ويستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي بالتحديد انستاجرام وسناب شات. هذه الاستبانة تعتبر جزء من بحث الدكتوراه للباحث محمد بن أحمد العمير، طالب الدكتوراه في جامعة ستيرلنج بالمملكة المتحدة. الإجابة على أسئلة الاستبانة لن تستغرق أكثر من 10 دقائق. الرجاء قراءة الشروط قبل الموافقة على المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة.

3- نبذة عن موضوع الدراسة:

تعتبر مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي جزءاً لا يتجزأ من حياة معظم أفراد المجتمع السعودي، وبغض النظر عن درجة متابعة هذه المواقع، إلا أننا نكاد نجزم بتأثيرها بدرجات مختلفة على معظم قراراتنا الشرائية. ومع التطور المستمر لهذه المواقع ومحتوياتها نشأ مفهوم مؤثرين (مشاهير) مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي. أشخاص ذوي اهتمامات مختلفة في عدة مجالات ولهم وجهات نظر تُتبع من فئة ليست بالقليلة من المتابعين. علاقة ثقة نشأت بين المؤثرين ومتابعيهم أغرت الكثير من الشركات وبالتحديد الصغيرة والمتوسطة منها للاستعانة بهؤلاء المشاهير للترويج لمنتجاتهم. علاقة تحيط بها الكثير من التساؤلات عن مستوى التأثير الحقيقي لهؤلاء المشاهير على قرارات المستهلك الشرائية. أسئلة تحاول هذه الدراسة الإجابة عليها من خلال استطلاع آراء المستهلكين عن مدى تأثير مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي على قراراتهم الشرائية فيما يخص قطاع المطاعم.

4- هل أنا ملزم على المشاركة في هذا الاستطلاع:

بالتأكيد لا. مشاركتك في هذه الاستبانة تطوعي ولك كامل الحرية في الامتناع عن المشاركة أو الانسحاب في أي مرحلة من مراحل الاستبانة.

5- هل يوجد أي مخاطر للمشاركة في هذه الاستبانة:

لا يوجد أي مخاطر للمشاركة في الاستبانة.

6- بياناتك الشخصية:

كجزء من هذه الاستبانة سيتم سؤالك عن بعض المعلومات الشخصية العامة كالعمر، الجنس، الدخل والدرجة العلمية. وجميع هذه المعلومات سيتم التعامل معها وتحليلها حسب اللوائح العامة لحماية البيانات لجامعة ستيرلنج.

7- ماذا يحدث للبيانات التي أقدمها؟

ستكون إجاباتك مجهولة تماماً، وسوف نبذل جميع المساعي للحفاظ على سريتها. وسيتم تخزين بياناتك في ملف محمي بكلمة مرور ويمكن استخدامها في المنشورات الأكاديمية. ولن يتم تخزين عنوان IP الخاص بك. وسيتم الاحتفاظ ببياناتك الشخصية بعد 12 شهراً من viva على - Research Drive وهو مركز بيانات آمن في جامعة ستيرلنج ومن ثم سيتم إيداعه في DataSTORRE.

8- هل سيتم نشر البحث؟

يمكن نشر البحث في ناشرين أكاديميين. تلتزم جامعة "ستيرلنج" بجعل مخرجات البحث متاحة للجامعة وتدعم هذا الالتزام من خلال مستودع الوصول المفتوح عبر الإنترنت STORRE. ما لم تمنعنا متطلبات الممول / الناشر، سيتم نشر هذا البحث للجمهور من خلال مستودع الوصول المفتوح الخاص بنا.

9- من يقوم بتنظيم وتمويل البحث؟

ترعى الملحقية الثقافية السعودية هذا البحث.

10- من قام بمراجعة هذا المشروع البحثي؟

تمت الموافقة على النهج الأخلاقية لهذا المشروع من خلال لجنة الأخلاقيات بجامعة ستيرلنج العامة.

11- حقوقك:-

يحق لك طلب الاطلاع على نسخة من المعلومات التي نحفظ بها عنك وطلب تصحيحات أو حذف المعلومات التي لم تعد مطلوبة. يحق لك الانسحاب من هذا المشروع في أي وقت دون إبداء الأسباب ودون عواقب عليك. لديك أيضًا الحق في الاعتراض على معالجتنا للبيانات الشخصية ذات الصلة ، ومع ذلك ، يرجى ملاحظة أنه بمجرد تحليل البيانات و / أو نشر النتائج ، قد لا يكون من الممكن إزالة بياناتك من الدراسة.

12- بمن أتصل إذا كانت لدي مخاوف أو استفسارات بشأن هذه الدراسة أو كنت أرغب في تقديم شكوى:-

إذا كانت لديك الرغبة في مناقشة هذه الاستبانة مع شخص ما. يمكنك التواصل مباشرة مع الباحث الرئيسي محمد العمير على الإيميل التالي (m.a.alomair1@stir.ac.uk)

مشرف الباحث ورئيس قسم التسويق والتجزئة.

البروفيسور Paul Freathy بريد الكتروني: j.p.freathy@stir.ac.uk.

عميد كلية الإدارة البروفيسور Kevin Grant بريد إلكتروني: Kevin.Grant@stir.ac.uk

لديك الحق في تقديم شكوى ضد الجامعة فيما يتعلق بقضايا حماية البيانات إلى مكتب مفوض المعلومات (<https://ico.org.uk/concerns>).

مسؤولة حماية البيانات بالجامعة هي Joanna Morrow ، نائبة السكرتير.

إذا كان لديك أي أسئلة تتعلق بحماية البيانات ، فيمكن توجيهها إلى data.protection@stir.ac.uk.

شكراً لتقبلكم المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة مع خالص التحية والتقدير

الباحث: محمد بن أحمد العمير

قسم التسويق بجامعة ستيرلنج في المملكة المتحدة

13- الرجاء اختيار موافق: -

- إذا قمت بقراءة الشروط السابقة
- إذا كنت تبلغ من العمر 18 أو أكثر.
- إذا كنت توافق على المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة.

موافق	<input type="checkbox"/>
غير موافق	<input type="checkbox"/>

الجزء الأول الرجاء الإجابة على الأسئلة التالية: -

1. هل تستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي
نعم " لا "

2. هل تستخدم انستاجرام أو سناب شات
نعم " لا "

3. هل تتابع مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي
نعم " لا "

إذا كانت اجاباتك على الأسئلة السابقة جميعها بنعم. الرجاء الانتقال للجزء التالي من الاستبانة. اما إذا كانت اجابتك على أي من الأسئلة السابقة ب لا. فنشكرك على مشاركتك ونكتفي بهذا القدر من الإجابات.

الجزء الثاني: قطاع المطاعم: -

4. ما هو متوسط زيارتك للمطاعم
يومية " عدة مرات في الأسبوع " مرة واحدة بالأسبوع " مرة أو مرتين بالشهر " نادر جداً "

5. ما هو متوسط إنفاقك على المطاعم في الزيارة الواحدة
اقل من 100 " 100 الى 300 " 301 الى 500 " أكثر من 700 "

6. من خلال الجدول التالي يرجى اختيار نوع المطاعم المفضلة بالنسبة لك
الرجاء اختيار 1 = أكثر نوع مفضل من المطاعم. والرقم 2 = ثاني أكثر نوع مفضل من المطاعم

المطاعم الفاخرة	Fast Food(المطاعم السريعة)	
Casual Dining(المطاعم متوسطة الفخامة)	الكافيهات	
	أخرى (يرجى التحديد)

7. من خلال الجدول التالي كيف تصف زيارتك للمطاعم
الرجاء اختيار 1 = أكثر زيارتك للمطاعم تكون..... 2 = ثاني أكثر زيارتك للمطاعم تكون.....

مع العائلة	مع الأصدقاء	
وحدك	مع زملاء العمل أو الدراسة	
	أخرى (يرجى التحديد)

8. في وقتنا الحالي تعددت مصادر الحصول على معلومات ونصائح عن المطاعم. من خلال الجدول التالي يرجى ترتيب أهم ثلاث مصادر تعتمد عليها للحصول على معلومات ونصائح عن المطاعم.
- 1 = أكثر مصدر تحصل منه على معلومات. 2 = ثاني مصدر تحصل منه على معلومات
3 = ثالث مصدر تحصل منه على معلومات

الترتيبي	المصدر	الترتيبي	المصدر
	نصائح مباشرة من الأصدقاء أو الأهل (عن طريق واتساب أو أي من وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي)		نصائح مباشرة من الأصدقاء أو الأهل (وجهاً لوجه)
	حساب المطاعم في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي		عن طريق مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.
	إعلانات بالتلفزيون		إعلانات عن طريق الراديو
	إعلانات بالمجلات أو الجرائد		إعلانات بالإنترنت
	أخرى (يرجى التحديد).....		

الجزء الثالث: مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي: -

9. منذ متى تستخدم مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.
- “ أقل من سنة ” “ من سنة الى ثلاث سنوات ” “ من أربع الى ست سنوات ”
أكثر
من ست سنوات
10. ما هو متوسط استخدامك لمواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.
- “ يوماً ” “ 4-5 مرات في الأسبوع ” “ مرة أو مرتين بالأسبوع ”
نادر جداً

11. من خلال الجدول التالي يرجى ترتيب أكثر برنامجين من برامج التواصل الاجتماعي تستخدمهما.
- 1 = أكثر استخداماً. 2 = ثاني أكثر استخداماً

الترتيب	البرنامج	الترتيب	البرنامج
	Facebook		Twitter
	Instagram		Snapchat
	WhatsApp		Pinterest
	أخرى (يرجى التحديد).....		

12. من خلال الجدول التالي يرجى ترتيب أكثر برنامجين من برامج التواصل الاجتماعي تجد فيها محتوى مرئي (صور وفيديوهات) عن المطاعم.

1 = أكثر برنامج تجد فيه محتوى مرئي عن المطاعم 2 = ثاني أكثر برنامج تجد فيه محتوى مرئي عن المطاعم

الترتيب	البرنامج	الترتيب	البرنامج
	Facebook		Twitter
	Instagram		Snapchat
	WhatsApp		Pinterest
	أخرى (يرجى التحديد)		

الجزء الرابع: مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي: -

13. من خلال الجدول التالي أي فئة من مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي تتابعها بصفة دائمة
1 = أكثر فئة تتابعها. 2 = ثاني فئة تتابعها. 3 = ثالث فئة تتابعها.

الممثلين والممثلات	الرياضة		
الصحة	الطبخ		
مدونين اجتماعيين	Make up (الجمال)		
أخرى (يرجى التحديد)			

14. ما هو متوسط تصفحك لحسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي

- “ عدة مرات في اليوم ”
- “ 4-5 مرات في الأسبوع ”
- “ مرة واحدة في اليوم ”
- “ مرة او مرتين في الأسبوع ”
- “ أقل من مرة في الأسبوع ”

15. الى أي مدى تشاهد محتوى مرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) عن المطاعم في حسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.

- “ عدة مرات في اليوم ”
- “ 4-5 مرات في الأسبوع ”
- “ مرة واحدة في اليوم ”
- “ مرة او مرتين في الأسبوع ”
- “ أقل من مرة في الأسبوع ”

16. الى أي مدى مشاهدتك للمحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) عن المطاعم في حسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي يشجعك على تجربة المطعم.

- “ يشجعني جداً ”
- “ يشجعني بنسبة قليلة ”
- “ يشجعني بنسبة متوسطة ”
- “ لا يشجعني أبداً ”

17. هل سبق وقمت بتجربة مطعم معين بسبب مشاهدتك للمحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي.

- دائماً ..
 عدة مرات ..
 في اغلب الاوقات ..
 مرة او مرتين ..
 مُطلقاً ..

الجزء الخامس: المحتوى المرئي: -

18. تعليمات: الرجاء الأخذ في الاعتبار المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) عن المطاعم في حسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي ومن ثم اختيار العبارة التي تمثل مستوى موافقتك او عدم موافقتك على العبارات التالية: -

غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	موافق الى حد ما	موافق	موافق بشدة	المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) عن المطاعم في حسابات مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي
					1. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يعتبر مصدرًا مهمًا للمعلومات عن المطاعم.
					2. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يوفر معلومات مُشجعة لتجربة المطاعم.
					3. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يوفر محتوى مرئي واضح عن المطاعم.
					4. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يوفر معلومات شاملة عن المطاعم.
					5. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يوفر معلومات حديثة عن المطاعم.
					6. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير يقدم محتوى مرئي عن المطاعم بجودة عالية.
					7. أعتقد أن المحتوى المرئي للمؤثرين هو مصدر رائع عن المطاعم ويساهم بمعلومات ذات الصلة
					8. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي في حسابات المشاهير يجعل اختياري للمطاعم أكثر كفاءة
					9. عندما لا تكون لدي معلومات عن مطعم معين، عادةً اعتمد على المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير.
					10. أحرص على متابعة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير قبل تجربتي لأي مطعم.
					11. عدم مشاهدتي للمحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين، يجعلني غير واثق من اختياري.
					12. متابعتي للمحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يُشكل ضغط في اختيار المطعم المناسب.
					13. اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يسبب تشتيت في اختيار المطعم المناسب.

	14. كثرة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين يعكس جودة المطعم.
	15. كثرة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين يعكس شهرة المطعم.
	16. كلما زاد المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين، كلما أصبحت أكثر دراية ومعرفة بالمطعم.
	17. كثرة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين يشجعني على تجربة المطعم.
	18. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم مساعد في الاختيار.
	19. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم مصدر مهم .
	20. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم مصدر فعال
	21. بشكل عام اعتقد ان المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يزيد من فعالية عملية اختيار المطعم
	22. بشكل عام أحرص على متابعة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير قبل تجربتي لمطعم جديد
	23. بشكل عام أحرص على متابعة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير قبل تجربتي لمطعم ليست لدي معلومات وافرة عنه.
	24. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يساعد في عملية اختيار المطعم المناسب
	25. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يحتوي على الكثير من الخيارات (المطاعم) مما يجعل اختيار المطعم المناسب بالنسبة لي صعباً.
	26. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يحتوي على الكثير من الخيارات (المطاعم) مما يجعل من الصعب التفرقة بينهم.
	27. المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم يحتوي على الكثير من الخيارات (المطاعم) مما يسبب التشويش في عملية اختيار المطعم.
	28. بشكل عام أحرص على متابعة المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير قبل تجربتي لاي مطعم
	29. بسبب التشابه الكبير بين المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديوهات/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن المطاعم أصبح من الصعب معرفة المطاعم الجديدة.

	30. غالباً أجد نفسي مشتت بسبب ان المشاهير يحدثون المحتوى المرئي (صور/ فيديو/ سنابات) عن المطاعم بشكل مبالغ فيه (يومياً).
	31. المشاهير مقتنعين في المعلومات التي يُفرونها عن المطاعم.
	32. المشاهير صادقين في المعلومات التي يُفرونها عن المطاعم.
	33. المشاهير الذين يقدمون المحتوى المرئي عن المطاعم يعتبرون مصدر ثقة.
	34. المشاهير يوفرون محتوى مرئي مفيد عن المطاعم.
	35. عادة اعتمد في اختياري للمطاعم على المشاهير أصحاب الخبرة في المطاعم.
	36. عادة اعتمد في اختياري للمطاعم على المشاهير الذين لديهم معلومات وافرة عن المطاعم.
	37. مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي يقدمون معلومات عن المطاعم تختلف عن بقية المواقع.
	38. مشاهير التواصل الاجتماعي يقدمون معلومات عن المطاعم تعتبر جديدة بالنسبة لي.
	39. اعتقد ان مشاهير مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي لديهم القدرة على الحكم على جودة المطاعم.
	40. غالباً اجمع معلومات من أصدقائي والمقربين مني تجاه المحتوى المرئي لأحد المشاهير قبل اختيار مطعم معين.
	41. عادة استشير أصدقائي والمقربين مني في حالة مشاهدتي لمحتوى مرئي لأحد المشاهير الذين لم يسبق لي معرفتهم.
	42. نادراً ما أثق في توصيات أحد المشاهير للمطاعم إلا بعد التأكد ان أصدقائي والمقربين مني لديهم انطباع إيجابي تجاه الشخص المشهور.
	43. من المهم بالنسبة لي ان أصدقائي والمقربين مني لديهم انطباع إيجابي عن المشاهير الذين اثق في توصياتهم للمطاعم.
	44. بعد مشاهدتي للمحتوى المرئي الإيجابي (صور/ فيديو/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين، بالتأكيد سأقوم بتجربة المطعم.
	45. بعد مشاهدتي للمحتوى المرئي الإيجابي (صور/ فيديو/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين، سأصح زملائي والمقربين مني بتجربة المطعم.
	46. بعد مشاهدتي للمحتوى المرئي الإيجابي (صور/ فيديو/ سنابات) في حسابات المشاهير عن مطعم معين، من المحتمل جداً تجربة المطعم.

الجزء السادس: معلوماتك الشخصية: -

19. الجنس

أنثى " ذكر "

20. العمر

35-26 " 25-18
55-46 " 45-36
أكثر من 56 "

21. الحالة الاجتماعية

متزوج ولديك اطفال " أعزب "
مطلق/منفصل/أرمل " متزوج بدون اطفال "

22. المستوى التعليمي

ثانوي " دون الثانوي "
بكالوريوس " دبلوم "
ماجستير/دكتورا "

23. الوظيفة

موظف قطاع خاص " موظف قطاع حكومي "
طالب " صاحب العمل "
غير موظف " رب أو ربة منزل "
أخرى (يرجى التحديد) " متقاعد "

24. الدخل الشهري

أقل من 5.000 " لا يوجد "
15.000 – 10.001 " 10.000 – 5.001 "
أكثر من 20.001 " 20.000 – 15.001 "