



Understanding the role of influencers' credibility in social media and its impact on consumers' purchase intentions

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Abstract

Digital media and the internet, in particular, have developed into a massive vehicle for consumer-generated communications. In these contexts, consumers are no longer only passive subjects in the marketing exchange process. Else than consuming content, they increasingly create, share and distribute information to other consumers through digital platforms.

The fast growth of social media over the last decades has boosted the adoption of influencer marketing. This type of marketing brought companies new opportunities to expose themselves and strengthen relationships with customers. However, there is some lack of knowledge regarding the drivers that influence the effects of the influencer. In this sense, the current dissertation intends to understand how the characteristics of digital influencers, concerning various dimensions of credibility, affect the consumers' purchase intentions, comparing low and high product involvement. The present study was developed in an exploratory and quantitative way, in which a survey was conducted with 1924 valid responses obtained.

The final results indicate that, for low-involvement products, all the credibility related characteristics, namely expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness and popularity, influence consumers' purchasing intentions. Moreover, it was confirmed that an increase in the influencer's credibility might increase the user's purchase intentions. Contrarily, for high-involvement products, only trustworthiness and attractiveness affect purchase intentions, and increases in the credibility of the influencer might not have such a significant impact on purchase intentions.

Keywords: social media networks, digital influencers, product involvement, purchase intention.

Entender o papel da credibilidade dos influenciadores nas redes sociais e o seu impacto na intenção de compra dos consumidores

por Joana Nascimento

Junho 2019

Resumo

Mídia digital e a internet, em particular, transformaram-se num veículo massivo para as comunicações geradas pelos consumidores. Nestes contextos, os consumidores deixaram de ser apenas agentes passivos no processo de troca no marketing. Mais do que consumir conteúdo, eles cada vez mais criam, partilham e distribuem informações através das plataformas digitais.

O rápido crescimento das redes sociais nas últimas décadas impulsionou a adoção do marketing de influência. Este tipo de marketing trouxe novas oportunidades para as empresas se exporem e fortalecerem relações com os seus clientes. No entanto, existe alguma falta de conhecimento sobre os drivers que influenciam os efeitos dos influenciadores.

Neste sentido, a presente dissertação foi desenvolvida com o intuito de compreender de que forma as características dos influenciadores digitais, no que diz respeito a várias dimensões de credibilidade, afetam as intenções de compra dos consumidores, comparando baixo e alto envolvimento com o produto. O estudo atual foi desenvolvido de forma exploratória e quantitativa, no qual foi realizado um inquérito com 1924 respostas válidas obtidas.

Os resultados finais indicam que, para produtos de baixo envolvimento, todas as características relacionadas com a credibilidade, nomeadamente perícia, fidedignidade, atratividade e popularidade, influenciam as intenções de compra dos consumidores. Além disso, foi confirmado que um aumento na credibilidade do influenciador poderá aumentar as intenções de compra dos consumidores. Pelo contrário, para produtos de alto envolvimento, apenas a fidedignidade e atratividade afetam as intenções de compra, e um aumento da credibilidade do influenciador poderá não ter um impacto significativo nas intenções de compra.

Palavras-chave: redes sociais, influenciadores digitais, intenção de compra, envolvimento de produto.

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List of Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Background.....	1
1.2. Problem statement	2
1.3. Academic and managerial relevance	3
1.4. Dissertation Outline	4
2. Literature review	5
2.1. Social Media Marketing	5
2.1.1. Social media users and Main Social Media Platforms	6
2.1.2. Main SM platforms in Portugal	8
2.1.3. The importance of Social Media - Benefits for Businesses.....	8
2.2. Influencer marketing.....	9
2.2.1. Social media influencers.....	10
2.3. Theories that help explain the interaction between influencers and consumers. 11	
2.3.1. Social Influence Theory.....	11
2.3.2. Social Learning Theory	14
2.3.3. Source Credibility Model	15
2.3.4. Source Attractiveness Model.....	18
2.3.5. Popularity.....	19
2.4. Product Match-Up Proposition	20
2.5. Product involvement.....	21
2.6. Purchase intention.....	22
2.7. Conceptual framework.....	23
3. Research methodology.....	24
3.1. Research objective	24
3.2. Research approach	24
3.3. Pre-test – influencer and product selection.....	25
3.4. Data Collection and Sample	26
3.5. Measurements	26
3.6. Procedure	28
4. Results and findings.....	30

4.1. Data Collection and Data Cleaning	30
4.2. Sample description.....	30
4.3. Measures validation	31
4.4. Principal Component Analysis	32
4.5. Variables added	34
4.6. Normality tests.....	34
4.7. Correlation Analysis	36
4.8. Hypotheses Analysis.....	37
5. Discussion and Conclusions	42
5.1. Theoretical and Managerial implications	44
5.2. Limitations and Future research	46
6. References.....	48
7. Appendices.....	60
Appendix 1. Pre-test analysis.....	60
Appendix 2. Survey	62
Appendix 3. Survey statistics.....	75
Appendix 4. Descriptives and Measurement items statistics.....	77
Appendix 7. Correlation Analysis.....	85
Appendix 8. Multiple Regression Analysis	86

List of Figures

Figure 1. Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions)

Figure 2. Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2019, ranked by number of active users (in millions)

Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

Figure 4. Survey Flow

List of tables

Table 1. Summary of the distinction between the three processes

Table 2. Source Credibility Scale

Table 3. Popularity Scale

Table 4. Willingness to buy Scale

Table 5. Product Involvement Scale

Table 6. Summary construct statistics

Table 7. Reliability analysis – Cronbach’s Alpha test

Table 8. Rotated Component Matrix

Table 9. KOM and Bartlett’s Test

Table 10. Normality tests - Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk

Table 11. Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test – Product involvement

Table 12. Summary of Pearson Correlation’s Analysis

Table 13 a). Multiple linear regression – Low involvement product

Table 13 b). Multiple linear regression – High involvement product

Table 14. Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test – Purchase intention

Table 15. Summary of the findings

Table 16. Pre-test – Influencer Statistic Descriptive

Table 17. Pre-test – Product involvement Statistic Descriptive

Table 18. Pre-test – Demographic statistics: age and gender

Table 19. Demographic statistics: age, gender, school degree and nationality

Table 20. Frequencies: age, gender, school degree and nationality

Table 21. Descriptive statistics: social media

Table 22. Frequencies: social media

Table 23. Construct measures and estimates

Table 24. Total variance explained

Table 25 a). First Factor – Product involvement

Table 25 b). Second Factor – Average Attractiveness

Table 25 c). Third Factor – Average Trustworthiness

Table 25 d). Fourth Factor – Average Expertise

Table 25 e). Fifth Factor – Average Popularity

Table 25 f). Sixth Factor – Purchase intention

Table 26. Pearson Correlation's Analysis

Table 27 a) Multiple linear regression [low involvement] – Model Summary

Table 27 b) Multiple linear regression [low involvement] – ANOVA Table

Table 27 c) Multiple linear regression [low involvement] – Table of Coefficients

Table 28 a) Multiple linear regression [high involvement] – Model Summary

Table 28 b). Multiple linear regression [high involvement] – ANOVA Table

Table 28 c) Multiple linear regression [high involvement] – Table of Coefficients

List of graphics

Graph 1. Histogram

Graph 2. Dispersion

Graph 3. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

List of abbreviations

UCG. User Generated Content

SM. Social Media

IM. Influencer Marketing

SMM. Social Media Marketing

SMI. Social Media Influencers

CGM. Consumer-Generated Media

SIT. Social Influence Theory

SLT. Social Learning Theory

ELM. Elaboration Likelihood Model

PI. Purchase intention

LIP. Low Involvement Product

HIP. High Involvement Product

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

In more recent years, the world saw a growth in the popularity of powerful new tools related with the improved capacity of the internet to handle 2-way interaction, blogs, wikis and social networks (Newman 2009). These new tools can be grouped as Social Media, often associated with Web 2.0 and User Generated Content (UGC).

The 21st century is witnessing a boost of internet-based messages conveyed through social media. Social media became the main factor in leveraging diverse consumer behaviors' elements, information acquisition, comprising awareness, attitudes, opinions, purchase behavior, and post-purchase communication and evaluation (Mangold and Faulds 2009).

Furthermore, SM constitutes an important component of the marketing communication mix of companies once in a traditional sense, it enables communication between businesses and consumers, and in a nontraditional sense it enables consumers to communicate to each other (Maghsoodi, Naami and Vakilineia 2012).

The emergence of social media, that has triggered new ways of connection between brands and consumers, created the boom of influencer marketing. Influencer marketing accentuates the use of influencers to drive a brand's message to reach the target audience (Smart Insights 2017).

Nowadays, many brands are investing in influencer endorsement rather than celebrity endorsement. Now, it is possible to find people representing brands on their social media accounts, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or YouTube.

Alongside with social media, a new type of celebrity was generated. Past research refers to this new type as 'micro-celebrities', who work under the online environment (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2016).

The most popular social media platform where these micro-celebrities are present is Instagram, however, they are also present on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Gageler & Van der Schee, 2016).

Following a Nielsen marketing study, influencer marketing yields "returns on investments" (ROI) 11 times higher as compared to digital marketing, which means that, in these days, investing on social media influencers is truly an important strategy.

Building strong and significative relationships with customers take time and involve interactive conversations (Hoffman and Fodor 2010). Consumers perceive social media as a more trustworthy source of information respecting products and services (Foux, 2006). Also, since consumers tend to perceive friends and influencers they follow more credible than distant

sellers (Nielsen 2013; Jonas 2010), brands are looking for partner alliances with influencers who should fit with the brand's values and the target audience.

Indeed, if social media did not exist, social media influencers would not accomplish the fame they achieved today.

1.2. Problem statement

The problem this thesis strives to understand is the impact of using social media influencers on the consumers' purchase intention.

Additionally, the objective of the study relies on understanding the role of credibility, i.e., the characteristics (trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, and popularity) of the influencer that leads to successfully endorse her/him products.

To add some complexity to the research, it came to the idea of comparing the purchase intentions between products of two different involvement levels. The idea came from the fact that not all the products are the same and consumers do not attach the same level of importance to them.

Then, the research aims to understand if the effects of using influencers differ according to the degree of involvement, high vs low involvement product category.

To commence, it is important to explain the differences between the two product involvement categories. On one hand, low involvement products are products in which the consumer does not need to think hard before buying them. There is no risk associated and consequently, the decision-making process is much faster. On the other hand, high involvement products are products in which the decision-making process and the buying decision are extensive and are influenced by several variables.

In order to acknowledge how the role of the credibility of the influencer influences the consumer's purchase intention, the following research questions (RQ) are put forward:

RQ1: Does the trustworthiness of the influencer have an impact on user's purchase intention regarding the brands that are endorsed?

RQ2: Does the expertise of the influencer have an impact on user's purchase intention regarding the brands that are endorsed?

RQ3: Does the attractiveness of the influencer have an impact on user's purchase intention regarding the brands that are endorsed?

RQ4: Does the popularity of the influencer have an impact on user's purchase intention regarding the brands that are endorsed?

RQ5: What are the effects on the research questions mentioned above when the level of involvement is considered?

1.3. Academic and managerial relevance

The media landscape has been dramatically changed over the last ten years (Mangold and Faulds, 2009), and companies have adopted social media as a way to better connect with their customers (Kumar et al 2016).

The rapid growth of technology and the appearance of the internet brought many advantages for the society and economy as well. It allowed people to be connected with friends and acquaintances, share content (Giannakos et al. 2013) and exposed a new global market where space barriers and time don't exist (Racolta-Paina & Luca, 2010). It is important for firms to update themselves, follow technological trends and be aware that social media networks are dynamic platforms. (Akar & Nasir 2015).

Unlike celebrity endorsements, influencer endorsements have received little attention regarding its potential impact on advertising effectiveness.

To understand the emergence of a new consumer profile, called the "online consumer" (Racolta-Paina & Luca, 2010), companies should explore the role that influencers have on social media and how the interaction between them and customers influence the consumer's purchase intention.

Moreover, this study hopes to provide a complete understanding of measuring social media influencers' efficiency through the use of three concepts: source credibility model (Hovland and Weiss, 1951), source attractiveness model (McGuire 1985), product match-up hypothesis (Forkan 1980; Till and Busler 1998; 2000); Kamins 1989, 1990).

Contrary to the models stated above, the popularity of the influencer was little studied in the past due to the novelty of the topic. As a result, this thesis intends to overfill this gap and contribute with meaningful insights.

In the end, marketers should know which social media influencer to choose to better fit the target audience and which degree of involvement (low vs high) are consumers more willing to follow the influencer and buy the product.

In conclusion and since social media influencers is a hot and recent topic, there is a lack of studies in the past about them. This dissertation aims to provide relevant managerial implications for determining the consumers' behavior towards the use of influencers by brands. Analyzing the impact that influencer marketing has on consumer's brand attitude and purchase intention, it helps marketers and advertisers to understand with whom the brand may associate with.

Thereby, it is fundamental for brands to connect with an influencer who is well-liked by their audience to endorse their products (De Veirman et al 2017). When a company makes a partnership with social media influencers, the image the brand benefits from them helps to build direct relationships with key consumers and enhances brand loyalty.

1.4. Dissertation Outline

The flow of this dissertation is as follow: first, it starts by presenting the introduction, concerning the background, problem statement and academic and managerial relevance. Second, it provides the results of an extensive literature on social media marketing and influencer marketing. Perceived credibility, purchase intention, and product involvement are also mentioned in this chapter. Research questions arise based on this literature review, which respects the purpose to understand the relationship among these constructs.

The third chapter is dedicated to the methodology used to collect data required to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Afterward, primary data is presented, and the results are discussed and analyzed.

Finally, the last chapter concludes with the main findings and conclusions of the study, followed by theoretical and managerial implications, ending up with some limitations that provide recommendations for future research.

2. Literature review

2.1. Social Media Marketing

The emergence of Internet-based social media has been changing the way companies communicate and create bonds with consumers (Hennig-Thurau et al. 2010). It is also facilitating consumer-to-consumer communications (Mangold and Faulds 2009) and especially stimulating communication between unknown people (Duan et al., 2008).

The change from the old-way communication to the interactive two-way communication had allowed brands to work closely with their customers to generate new products, business models, services and values (Kim & Ko 2012).

Social media (SM) can be described as “the space, consisting of a plurality of platforms and implications that enable online interactions between people or people and companies/brands characterized by specific actions and the expression of any type of user-generated content (photos, videos, text, etc)” (Pachitanu 2016).

According to Mangold and Faulds (2009: 358), social media covers “a wide range of online, word-of-mouth forums including blogs, company-sponsored discussion boards and chat rooms, consumer-to-consumer e-mail, consumer product or service ratings websites and forums, Internet discussion boards and forums, moblogs (sites containing digital audio, images, movies, or photographs), and social networking websites.”

SM is a group of online applications with the goal of encouraging interactions, collaborations and sharing of information (Richter & Koch, 2007). This form of media is increasing exponentially and replacing the traditional media (Bruhn, Schoenmueller and Schäfer 2012). It has been adopted not only by social networkers but also by business firms and governmental organizations (Kim & Ko 2012).

Recent business reports have shown that there are 4.02 billion of internet users, 2.62 billion of social media users and the total spending on social media advertising represented 34,5% of digital advertising in 2017 (Hootstuit 2018, Statista 2019).

Social media is a crossbreed component of the promotion mix since it blends attributes of the traditional Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) tools, i.e., companies interacting with consumers, with an extreme form of word-of-mouth, i.e., consumers interacting with each other (Mangold and Faulds, 2009).

Web 2.0 and User-Generated Content

Kaplan & Haelein (2010) stated that SM is a set of online applications that build on the technological and ideological basis of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content (UGC).

Usually, there is a confusion between these two terms, and therefore it is important to clarify them.

Web 2.0 is a term that was first used in 2004 to define a new way in which software developers and end-users started to utilize the 'World Wide Web'. (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). This term allows users to share information and communicate with other people. In theoretical words, Web 2.0 refers to the evolution from fixed *HTML* Web pages to a more organized Web that provides Web applications to users.

User-generated content (UGC), which achieved broad popularity in 2005 (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010) is also recognized as consumer-generated media (CGM) and relates to any material created and uploaded to the internet by non-media professionals (Maghsoodi, Naami and Vakilinia 2012). UGC is changing the way people interact with the internet and the ways advertisers touch those people.

2.1.1. Social media users and Main Social Media Platforms

The statistics represented in Figure 1 show the number of social media users worldwide between 2010 and 2016 with a projection until 2021. In the current year (2019), the number of users is estimated to be around 2.77 billion.

According to Nielsen (2009a), 70% of online users trust the evaluations of other consumers on social media platforms.

The graphic represented in Figure 2 provides information on the most popular networks around the globe, ordered by the number of active users. The market leader is Facebook with 2.27 billion monthly active users. This social media platform enables users to share deeper information (Kotler 2012) and according to Mochon et al (2017), Facebook likes are more effective when adopted by a firm at the beginning of promotional communication.

Followed by Facebook is the video-sharing platform YouTube with 1.90 billion monthly active users.

In the sixth position is the photo-sharing app Instagram, with 1 billion monthly active accounts. Regarding eWOM purposes, this platform fits very well since products and brands can be visually imaged and named in the photo itself.

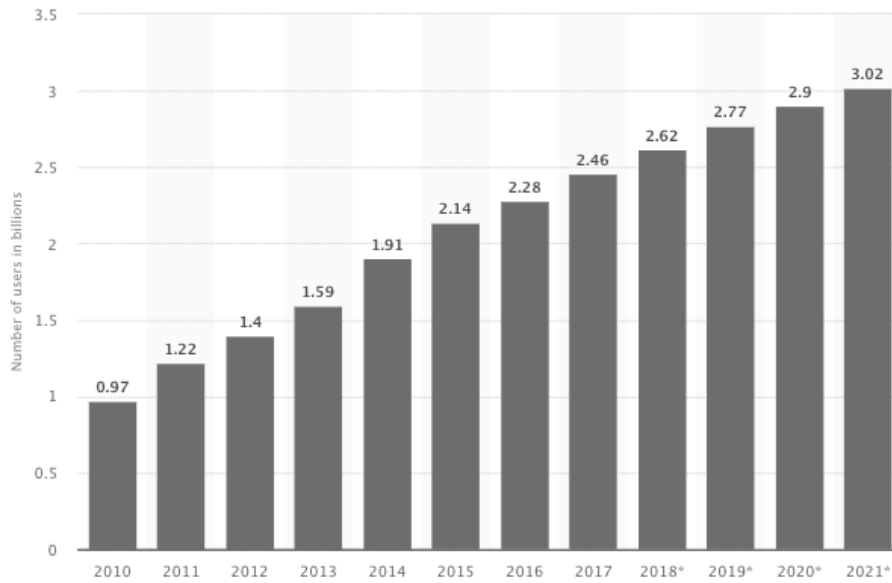


Figure 1. Number of social media users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions)
Source: Statista 2019

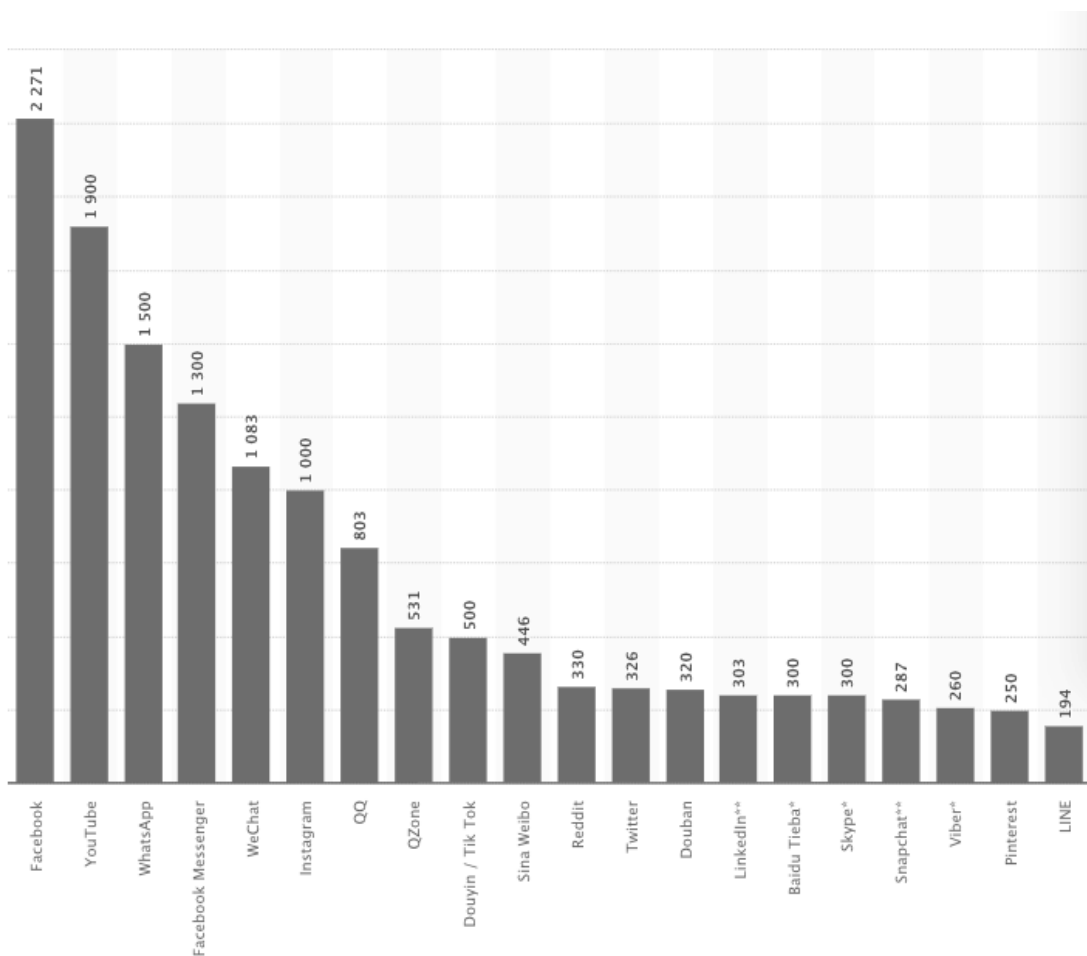


Figure 2. Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2019, ranked by number of active users (in millions)
Source: Statista 2019

2.1.2. Main SM platforms in Portugal

As reported by PORDATA, in 2017, there were around 10.29 million of citizens in Portugal, within which 7.20 million (70% of the population) are internet users and 6.10 million (59% of the population) are active social media users (Adcombo 2017).

The most active social media platforms in Portugal are the market leader, Facebook with 72.93% of active users, followed by Pinterest 9.88%, Instagram 8.81%, Twitter 3.96%, YouTube 2.28%% and Tumblr with 1.35% (StatCounter April 2019).

Focusing on two main SM platforms, Facebook and Instagram. In August 2017, a study reported that there were 5.9 million Facebook users (aged 13+), 51% female and 49% male. It was also possible to notice a concentration of users between 35 and 44 years old, representing 24% of active users. (NapoleonCat.com 2017)

Regarding Instagram, in 2017 it had 2.7 Million active users, 52% female and 48% male. Contrarily to Facebook, the age group with more users were between 18 and 24 years old, representing 31% of active users. (NapoleonCat.com 2017)

2.1.3. The importance of Social Media - Benefits for Businesses

Social media marketing (SMM) is often associated with relationship marketing, as companies no longer “try to sell their product” but instead “try to connect with their customers”. (Gordhamer, 2009).

Initially, firms were a little averse to the use of technology, nevertheless, the rise of social media, which has brought many advantages for both brands and consumers, turned technology into an opportunity rather than a threat (Kim & Ko 2012).

Due to the richness and features of social media, companies have recognized the potential of using social media as an essential marketing tool to attract new customers (Arum & Sung 2018) and reduce injury and misconceptions towards brands (Kim & Ko 2012).

In this context, through social media, firms can gain competitive advantage (Li et al. 2007), by encouraging customers to understand better and involve deeply with the brand (Arum & Sung 2018).

Consequently, the use of this type of marketing requires fewer investment costs (Bruhn et al 2012), is simpler at gathering and accessing consumer-to-consumer communication (Godes and Mayzlin 2004) and demands less effort compared to traditional marketing.

Finally, according to McKee (2010), SMM allows companies to build brand loyalty through conversation, networking, and community building.

2.2. Influencer marketing

The rise of social media has introduced new channels for companies to interact more directly and organically with consumers. Now it is time for companies to use influencer marketing in their communication strategies to better target their audience.

Influencer marketing (IM) has been existing in companies for many years, however incorporating social media is a new phenomenon.

Brown and Hayes (2008) refer to influencer marketing as strategies and activities through individuals who have influence and/or power over the actual or potential target customers. This type of marketing focuses on using influencers to carry a brand's message to reach customers. (Smart Insights 2017).

According to Gretzel and Yoo (2013), when compared to traditional marketing, IM demands consumers being more active and energetic in producing and distributing marketing messages to generate influence.

Influencer marketing using social media has changed the way companies decide their communications strategies (Palmer et al 2014). The fast growth of SM platforms over the last decades led to a reduction of managers and marketer's control of brand management (Berthon et al., 2007). Since consumers have the opportunity to talk and share content with hundreds or even thousands of other consumers, companies are no longer in the control of brand communication (Bruhn et al 2012).

Indeed, it is known that influencer marketing is a powerful method to reach and engage with the target segment and influence their purchase intentions (eMarketer, 2017).

Nowadays, with the increase of social media users, companies each time more are adopting the influencer marketing to promote their products. A recent study made by SocialPubli (2019), with a sample of 150 brands from Spain, Portugal, USA, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, showed that 80% of the brands assume that influencer marketing is important, in some respects as the products' launch (34,2%) and content generation (35,4%).

Additionally, more studies found that, on average, 80% of online marketers confirmed that social media influencers are potential endorsers, boosting their online businesses to large levels (Forbes 2017).

2.2.1. Social media influencers

In recent years, the world has shifted to social media and consumers are looking to other consumers and favorite personalities instead of looking to companies, as they did in the past (Talaverna 2015)

During the last decade, companies have instituted social media influencers as potential endorsers since they generate eWOM (electronic Word-of-Mouth) compared to fellow marketing strategies (e.g., celebrity endorsement) (Forbes 2017; Patel 2016; Talaverna 2015). According to Freberg et al. (2011), social media influencers (SMI) are individuals representing an independent third-party endorser who can shape the audience through the use of social media platforms. These individuals are on the consumers' social graph and can directly or indirectly impact the consumers' behavior (Brown & Hayes, 2008). Due to their ability of persuasion, SMIs are particularly invited to be brand ambassadors, disclosing information about the products and updating online followers about the latest promotions (Liu et al. 2012; Markethub 2016).

Since social media influencers promote brand's products through their personal lives, they tend to be perceived by consumers as more sincere (Tapinfluence 2017), credible (Buyer 2016) and reliable (Talaverna 2015).

Overall, brands use these powerful people to occupy a grey zone between firms and consumers and to deliver in a more efficient and trustworthy way the marketers' messages.

Several benefits of using social media influencers have been highlighted. Brands are giving up traditional marketing and increasingly focusing on influencers to endorse their products (Veirman et al 2017). These endorsements are understood as more credible eWOM (electronic Word-of-Mouth) rather than paid advertising (Abidin 2016). Also, due to their higher credibility and authenticity, these endorsements lead to higher message acceptance from consumers. (de Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang 2012).

Since these personalities have built a considerable social network of followers, they maximize the information diffusion (Weimann 1994; Keller and Berry 2003), influencing an extremely large number of others (Gladwell 2000).

Types of influencers

In the social media context, influencers are recognized based on their type and level of engagement with the brand and their capability to influence others (Gretzel & Yoo, 2013).

According to McQuarrie, Miller, and Phillips (2013), influencers can be distinguished between grassroots influencers (regular people who lack the professional knowledge and experience and

do not hold an institutional position) and designated celebrities (professionals with institutional positions).

Considering the number of followers, SMIs are categorized as micro influencers (up to 10,000 followers) and macro influencers (up to 250,000 followers) (eMarketer, 2017).

2.3. Theories that help explain the interaction between influencers and consumers

Manifold factors influence the purchase decision or intention of customers. The existing literature proposes that influencer endorsement, as well as celebrity endorsement, mainly strengthens the consumer's intention to purchase.

The credibility of an endorsement person has been examined from many perspectives: source expertise (Maddux and Rogers, 1980; Wood and Kallgren, 1988), source attractiveness (Chaiken, 1979; Joseph, 1982; Patzer, 1983; Kahle and Homer, 1985), and celebrity status (Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann, 1983).

In 1953 Carl I. Hovland and his associates first introduced the Source Credibility Model, followed by three additional models: Source Attractiveness Model (McGuire 1985), the Product Match-Up Hypothesis (Forkan 1980; Kamins 1989,1990) and the Meaning Transfer Model (McCracken 1989).

Source Credibility Model and Source Attractiveness model both reflect and inform the research of the Social Influence Theory / Source Effect Theory (Kelman 1961, Meenaghan 1995).

2.3.1. Social Influence Theory

Social influence theory (SIT) explains how the presence and behavior of others influence an individual (Latané 1981).

Since its beginning, experimental social psychology has been focusing on the study of social influence. In this extent, it is possible to categorize three general research traditions:

- (1) "The study of social influences on judgments, stemming from the earlier work on prestige suggestion;
- (2) The study of social influences arising from small-group interaction
- (3) The study of social influences arising from persuasive communications"

(Kelman 1961: 60,61)

In his study, Kelman (1958) argued that an individual engages in different basic processes when adopting an induced behavior. The author distinguished three unique processes of social influence called compliance, identification, and internalization.

Compliance

Kelman (1958;1961) claims that compliance occurs when an individual adopts influence from another person or group because (s)he expects to attain a positive reaction from the other person or group. The individual does not accept the induced behavior because (s)he believes in its content, but because (s)he is interested in achieving particular rewards or approval and in avoiding specific punishments or disapproval from the influencing agent.

Hence, the satisfaction resulting from compliance is a result of the social effect of accepting influence.

Identification

Another process is identification, which, accordingly to Kelman (1958;1961), occurs when an individual accepts influence from another person or group because (s)he wants to adopt the behavior associated with a satisfying self-defining relationship to this person or group.

The author defines a self-defining relationship as a role relationship that creates a part of the self-image of a person. The self-defining relationship that an individual attempts to establish or maintain through identification may take diverse forms. It may take the form of classical identification, in which the individual assumes the control of all or part of the role of the influencing agent. It also may take the form of reciprocal role relationship, in which the individual is involved in a mutual relationship with another agent (e.g. a friendship between two people), or the individual ratifies a social role which is described concerning another (reciprocal) role (e.g. the relationship between patient and doctor).

This process is identical to compliance since the individual does not assume the persuaded behavior because its content is quite irrelevant and inherently satisfying. However, identification diverges from compliance, in that the individual truly believes in the opinions and responses (s)he adopts.

The behavior is approved both privately and publicly, and its exhibition does not depend on the observability by the other, but it depends on the function an individual take at any moment.

Internalization

Lastly, the internalization process. According to Kelman (1958;1961), internalization occurs when an individual approves influence because the induced behavior is consistent with his/her value system, and its content is intrinsically rewarding.

(S)He adopts the behavior since it might be convenient for the solution of a given problem, it might be favorable to his/her orientation or demanded by his/her needs/values.

The behavior adopted through internalization is integrated with the existing values of an individual. It turns to be part of an individual system, and its demonstration relies on neither the activation of the relevant function nor on the observability of the influencing agent, but on the degree to which the values have been made significant by the issues under concern.

Antecedents and consequents of the three processes

It should be highlighted that these three processes are not mutually exclusive, and each process is represented by a distinctive set of antecedents and a distinctive set of consequent conditions, comprising a specific qualitative variation of a broad set of determinants (summarized in table 1).

First, starting with the antecedents of the three processes, it should be addressed that between them no systematic quantitative differences are hypothesized. The probability of accepting influence is determined as a function of three determinants: “the importance of the induction for the individual’s goal achievement, the power of the influencing agent, and the prepotency of the induce response”.

The processes differ according to the qualitative form that the determinants take. As it is possible to see in the table below, they differ in terms of: “the basis for the importance of the induction, the source of the influencing agent’s power, and the manner of achieving prepotency of the induced response”.

Afterward, depending on the nature of the three antecedents, the influence process will take the form of compliance, identification or internalization.

Each process correlates to a distinctive pattern of internal reactions (thoughts and feelings) in which the individual involves as (s)he accepts influence.

Finally, the consequential changes will be different for each of the three processes. They will differ depending on: “the conditions of performance of induced response, conditions of change and extinction of induced response, and type of behavior system in which induced response is embedded”.

Table 1: Summary of the distinction between the three processes

	Compliance	Identification	Internalization
Antecedents			
1. Basis for the importance of the induction	Concern with social effect of behavior	Concern with social anchorage of behavior	Concern with value congruence of behavior
2. Source of the influencing agent's power	Means control	Attractiveness	Credibility
3. Manner of achieving prepotency of the induced response	Limitation of choice behavior	Delineation of role requirements	Reorganization of means-ends framework
Consequents			
1. Conditions of performance of induced response	Surveillance by influencing agent	Salience of relationship to agent	Relevance of values to issue
2. Conditions of change and extinction of induced response	Changed perception of condition for social reward	Changed perception of conditions for satisfying self-defining relationships	Changed perception of conditions for value maximization
3. Type of behavior system in which induced response is embedded.	External demands of a specific setting	Expectations defining a specific role	Person's value system

2.3.2. Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory (SLT), created by Bandura (1963), is studied in this academic research in order to forecast which socialization agents can predict consumer behaviors and perceptions (Bush et al 1999).

According to Moschis and Churchill (1978) and Subramanian and Subramanian (1995), social learning theory explains that an individual exposed to socialization agents (via direct or indirect social interaction) acquires motivation and as a result displays favorable attitude.

This theory has been applied to fields, such as advertising and communication, as a framework to understand consumer consumption behavior influenced by many agents: celebrities, peers or family (Martin & Bush 2000; North & Kotzé 2001; Clark et al 2001).

Additionally, SLT suggests that individuals develop behaviours and attitudes through diverse learning experiences, which usually happen in many different contexts depending on the contact an individual has with a variety of encounters and influencers (King and Multon 1996).

As illustrated by Makgosa (2010), social learning theory demonstrates in a clear way the impact celebrities have on consumers' behaviors. Furthermore, it is proposed that this theory serves as

a foundation for the understanding of social media influencers as they are the new independent third-party endorsers.

In this perspective, SLT illustrates that the consumer's attitude and the social media influencer's effectiveness (source credibility, source attractiveness, product match-up and meaning transfer) are highly influential factors in an individual's purchase intention.

Social learning theory on influencer marketing

In a previous study, Lim et al. (2017) applied the social learning theory to influencer endorsement, aiming to determine if the factors that led to the successful outcome of a celebrity endorsement (credibility, expertise, attractiveness, meaning transfer and product match-up) would be the same for a social media influencer endorsement. Withal, the authors wanted to reveal if the factors stated above were significant to influence consumer's attitudes and purchase intention.

According to the authors, only two factors showed relevant effects on consumer's attitudes and purchase intentions. Firstly, it was found an insignificant relationship between source credibility of social media influencers and consumers' attitudes and purchase intention.

Secondly, consistent with preceding studies (Ohanian 1991; Till and Busler 1998), the source attractiveness model did not have an impact on purchase intentions. However, the attractiveness of SMIs prevailed substantially to generate user's positive attitude.

Thirdly, it was confirmed an important correlation between product match-up and the purchase intention and consumer attitude. Under Kamins and Gupta (1994), product match-up hypothesis demonstrated that product-related messages carried by an endorser should be congruent to accomplish an effective advertising outcome.

Lastly, the research confirmed a positive connection between the meaning transfer of social media influencers and consumer attitudes and purchase intention.

2.3.3. Source Credibility Model

Source credibility is described by Baker and Churchill (1977) and later by Ohanian (1990) as "the believability of a spokesperson or endorser in an ad, their expertise, and trustworthiness". This model explains that the effectiveness of a message depends on the perceived level of expertise, trustworthiness (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Hovland et al., 1953; Ohanian, 1990), attractiveness and familiarity of an influencer (La-Ferle & Choi, 2005; Arai, Ko, & Ross, 2014; Solomon, 2014).

According to Erdogan (1999: 297), the information provided by a credible source can influence beliefs, opinions, attitudes and/or behaviors through a process called *internalization*. This process happens when a receiver accepts the source influence in terms of their attitude and value structures.

Previous research has revealed that in many situations highly credible endorsers are more effective to produce attitude changes toward the position held (Craig and McCann, 1978), gaining attention and enhancing recall (Sternthal, Phillips, and Dholakia, 1978) than less credible sources.

In addition, Goldberg and Hartwick (1990) pointed that there is another type of credibility – the perceived reputation of the company that yields the product. For decades that companies perceive the using of credible sources as an important factor in marketing communication strategies. Nevertheless, a study conducted by Lafferty and Goldsmith (1999) revealed that the credibility of the corporation is significantly more important for the consumer's attitudes toward the brand than the endorser itself.

Thereby, besides investing in choosing the right credible personality, companies should also be concerned with their image and credibility.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness refers to the honesty, integrity, and believability of an endorser depending on the perceptions of the target audience (Erdogan 1999; Arai et al., 2014; Jin & Phua, 2014).

The major determinant of source credibility with likability as its attribute of trust, is trustworthiness (Friedman et al 1978; Arai et al., 2014; Jin & Phua, 2014), which influences beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviors (Ohanian, 1990; Liu & Brock, 2011; Tzoumaka, Tsiotsou, & Siomkos, 2016).

In its turn, Ohanian (1991) verified that the customer's intentions to buy an endorsed product are not influenced by trustworthiness.

Additionally, it was tested by Deshpande and Stayman (1994) that the endorser's ethnic status affects the endorser trustworthiness as well as brand attitudes.

To conclude, McGuire (1969) states that trustworthy sources are more persuasive than sources less trustworthy.

Expertise

Another dimension included in source credibility is expertise, which is defined as “the degree to which the endorser is perceived to have the adequate experience, knowledge, or skills to promote the product ” (Van der Waldt et al., 2009: 104).

More literature suggests that this dimension is “the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions” (Erdogan 1999: 298). Furthermore, Aaker and Myers (1987) found that a celebrity who is perceived as an expert is more persuasive. Controversially, Speck, Schumann, and Thompson (1988) affirmed that the statement above is true, i.e, expert personalities produce high recall of product information than non-expert personalities, however, it is not statistically significant.

According to Ohanian (1991) endorsers’ perceived expertise has a significant impact on subjects’ intention to purchase products, whether they are for personal use or gift giving.

A study conducted by Andrews and Shimp (1990) observed the effects of involvement, source characteristics and argument quality on central and peripheral processing of advertising. They concluded that, for low-involvement participants, a favorable source induced more attitude change than an unfavorable one.

Another study by McGarry and Hendrick (1974) supported that when subjects are highly involved, source credibility does not affect on persuasion, because in these contexts the decision-making passes through the central route, with consumers being attentive to the quality of the argument and not to its peripheral elements.

The understanding mentioned above is not consensual with some authors challenging these findings. Homer and Kahle (1990) examined the effect of source credibility and involvement on persuasion. Under the low involvement scenario, a highly credible source was less influential than a low credible one. Nonetheless, under the high involvement scenario, the high credible source was superior to the low credible one.

Moreover, previous studies did not evaluate the different nuances of credibility and were focused on firm created content (as in traditional advertising), with brands elaborating the arguments, so the source was not as legitimate as in the case of influencers. Thereby, in the current study it is proposed that in the context of influencers, the trustworthiness of the source and its expertise are relevant not only in low involvement contexts but also in high involvement.

Following this rationale, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1: The perceived trustworthiness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on both low involvement products and high involvement products.

H2: The perceived expertise of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on both low involvement products and high involvement products.

2.3.4. Source Attractiveness Model

Other authors have underlined the importance of source attractiveness in determining liking for the endorser and as a result, increasing endorsement effectiveness (Friedman & Friedman 1979).

Attractiveness of the celebrity endorser was found out by Liu et al. (2007) to be more likely to influence the consumer's purchase intentions and can be sub-divided into two elements: likeability and resemblance (Gupta 2017). It comprehends any number of virtuous attributes in a celebrity endorser perceived by consumers, besides meaning only physical appealing (Erdogan 1999).

According to Erdogan (1999), this model affirms how the consumer's opinion on the endorser's physical characteristics can result in a change in the consumer's behavior. For that reason, the basis for choosing the right celebrity endorsers is attractiveness, benefiting then from dual effects: the celebrity status and the physical appeal (Singer 1983).

Moreover, past research has shown that physically communicators are more successful at generating purchase intentions (Friedman et al. 1976; Petty and Cacioppo 1980; Petroschius and Crocker 1989) and changing beliefs (Baker and Churchill 1977; Chaiken 1979; Debevec and Keman 1984) than less unattractive counterparts.

A study presented by Kahle and Homer (1985), which manipulated the likeability and physical attractiveness of a celebrity, and afterwards measured attitude and purchase intentions on the same product, demonstrated that the product was most liked by participants exposed to attractive celebrities than participants exposed to unattractive celebrities. Therewithal, participants exposed to attractive and likeable celebrities were more likely to recall for the brand, while unattractive celebrities had a relevant impact on recognitions measures of the product itself. Also, the results indicated that unlikeable celebrities produce more intentions to buy than likeable celebrities, and attractive celebrities perform better in influencing the consumer to buy than unattractive celebrities.

In sum, it is possible to find a strong correlation between attractive celebrity endorsers and attitudes towards advertising and brands, nevertheless it is ambiguous that those factors can generate purchase intention since many literature is controversy (Petty et al 1983; Debevec and Keman 1984; Kahle and Homer 1985; Patzer 1985; Caballero et al 1989).

There are many confusions in whether physical attractiveness impacts the consumer's purchase intentions, and it was only evaluated the physical attractiveness of celebrity endorsers and not applied to the digital influencers.

Since the decision-making process goes through the central route and the influencer's beauty and attractiveness are not expected to influence the decision-making, in the present study it is proposed that attractiveness is only relevant in low involvement contexts but not in high involvement.

In this sense, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H3: The perceived attractiveness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products but not on high involvement products.

2.3.5. Popularity

Unlike trustworthiness, attractiveness and credibility, the popularity of the influencer had received little attention in the past.

In a social media context, popularity refers to the network size, reflected in the number of followers, an influencer or celebrity has in his/her social media platforms (Veirman et al 2017). According to Jin and Phua (2014), celebrities with a high number of followers are greater perceived to have social influence. In fact, consumers perceive influencers with a large number of followers as more credible sources of information, more physically attractive and trustworthy.

Appropriately, a high number of people following influencers might result in a broad reach of the message, and consequently, leveraging the power of eWOM. It also may lead to higher perceptions of popularity, and therefore greater likeability (Veirman et al 2017).

Moreover, the number of followers influences the consumer's intention to build an online connection with the influencer as well as the consumer's attitudes towards the influencer and the brand. Even though the number of followers is important to influence consumers, some findings show that not always consumers tend to trust in those numbers, since they can be done in dishonest ways, such as paying for it. (Djafarova & Trofimenko 2018).

Finally, according to the ELM perspective (Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann, 1983), celebrity status may play different roles according to the degree of product involvement. When an advertisement concerned a low involvement product, endorser status was a very poor factor determining attitudes, when the ad involved a high involvement product, endorser status did not affect attitudes.

Applying this to social media context and digital influencers, the study proposes that popularity only affects the consumer's purchase intention in low involvement contexts and not in high involvement.

Following this, the following hypothesis is formulated.

H4: The perceived popularity of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products but not on high involvement products.

2.4. Product Match-Up Proposition

For advertising to be effective in reaching the target audience, there should be congruency between an endorser and the product itself.

For instance, the product match-up hypothesis studies the relationship between a celebrity image and the brand image (Forkan 1980; (Kamins, 1990). A successful match-up depends on the degree of perceived fit between the endorser and the product (Misra and Beatty 1990). Thereby, endorsing a spokesperson who has a high product congruent image creates in consumers' mind a greater advertiser and celebrity believability. (Levy 1959; Kamins and Gupta 1994; Kotler 1997).

According to Evans (1988), if influencers do not have a specific and distinct relationship to the product they endorse, the audience tends to remember the influencer but not the product.

Further, the match-up hypothesis emphasizes that attractive celebrities tend to be more effective when endorsing products (Kahle and Homer 1985; Kamins 1990) and proposes that the celebrity's characteristics interact positively with the nature of the product promoted (Friedman and Friedman 1979; Lynch and Schuler 1994).

Two other studies, conducted by Friedman and Friedman (1978) and Atkin and Block (1983), proposed interaction between the type of product endorsed and the type of endorser, and found that celebrity endorsers are more adequate for high psychological and social risk products.

Kapitan and Silvera (2016) indicated that the fit between the product and the endorser plays a dual role in the endorsement process. In one hand, a poor product-endorser fit acts as the main

element that raises the likelihood of deeper processing (by increasing the scepticism). On the other hand, product-endorser fit acts as a communication factor under deeper processing so that some degree of fit increments perceptions of source credibility and therefore the likelihood of internalization.

To conclude, practitioners of advertising suggest that advertising effectiveness can be significantly improved by having a match-up between the characteristics of the social media influencers and the campaign or brand attributes (Cooper, 1984; Forkan, 1980; Marshall, 1987).

2.5. Product involvement

Beyond the choice of a suitable celebrity endorser, marketers should also take into consideration whether the product promoted belongs to a high or low involvement category.

The concept of product involvement has been described as “one of the most important variables in consumer research” (Antil, 1984: 203). Consistent with Miller and Marks (1996) and Gordon et al. (1998), product involvement comprises a continuing engagement by consumers respecting feelings, thoughts, and behavioral responses to a product category.

Product involvement is autonomous of situational stimuli (Rodgers and Schneider, 1993; Miller and Marks, 1996) and it is, in particular, a consumer reply to the product: consumer-defined concept (Martin 1998). Consequently, the simple choice of a brand over another can be explained through the intensity and complexity of consumers’ feelings and attitudes towards brands which they are highly involved. (Martin 1998).

Moreover, Sujana (1985) confirmed that higher involvement consumers are more willing to have more experience with the product, hence, more existing product-related cognitive structure, when compared to lower involvement consumers.

When consumers are highly involved, they tend to apply superior cognitive effort in comprehending advertising, dedicate more attention to ads, focus their attention on product-related information in advertisements and participate in a greater elaboration of product information. (Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann, 1983; Celsi & Olson, 1988).

According to Petty et al (1983), for many consumers, the impact of celebrity endorsers is null when it comes to highly involving products.

Empirical research had confirmed that for high involvement products celebrities who manifest seriousness and experience towards their careers are better perceived by consumers. While for low involvement products consumers also consider product availability (Gupta 2017).

Using the ELM, Elaboration Likelihood Model, which discusses that persuasion varies under low and high involvement conditions, Petty and Cacioppo (1980) manipulated the attractiveness of endorsers using a shampoo advertisement, to better comprise the effectiveness of advertising message types. The results were different under low and high involvement. For high involvement conditions, the quality of the arguments included in a message had a greater impact than for low involvement conditions.

Years later, in 1983 an improvement of the earlier study (1980) made by Petty, Cacioppo, and Schumann proved that under low involvement conditions, unlike behavioral intentions, attitudes towards the product are significantly influenced by the type of endorser. Further, findings suggested that, under low involvement conditions, celebrity exposure increased product category recall whereas for high involvement conditions it didn't affect recall measures. From the ELM perspective, contrasting from less involvement consumers, higher involvement consumers tend to dynamically process advertising communications about the product. In response to the message, these consumers have the motivation and capacity to produce high levels of cognitive elaboration.

2.6. Purchase Intention

Purchase intention (PI) is defined by Kim and Ko (2012) as the “combination of consumers’ interest in and the possibility of buying a product”.

Many studies had shown that purchase intention is positively influenced by diverse factors: perceived value, as a result of perceived price (Chang and Wildt 1994) and perceived quality (Boulding and Kirmani 1993; Dodds et al. 1991; Rao et al. 1999), customer satisfaction (LaBarbera and Mazursky 1983; Yi, 1990), and attitude and preference toward the brand/product (Kim, Kim & Johnson, 2010; Kim & Ko, 2010b; Kim & Lee, 2009; Lloyd & Luk, 2010).

Some research explains that the consumer’s intention to buy a specific product may be driven by utilitarian and hedonic factors. (Arum & Sung 2018).

According to Batra and Ahtola (1991), utilitarian motivation is rational-based and goal-oriented. It is based on needs and on a mission to be accomplished (Babin et al. 1994). Additionally, utilitarian motivation is influenced by distinct factors such as convenience, cost saving, product selection and information availability (To et al. 2007).

Contrarily, hedonic motivation is associated with seeking goods for enjoyment and happiness (Babin et al. 1994) and is stimulated by factors like adventure, authority, and status (To et al. 2007).

Moreover, Tauber (1972) stated that besides the utility of a product or service, other factors are influencing the consumer’s intention to purchase, such as the socialization, own satisfaction and/or simply wasting time. Years later, Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) added a few features that motivate the consumer’s intention such as feelings, aesthetic, enjoyment and emotions.

Past research also studied other features that may impact the consumer’s purchase intention. Caballero and Solomon (1984), evaluated the consumers’ reactions on two types of the product category (low and high involvement products) to an attractive/ unattractive model. Results confirmed that for high involvement products, attractiveness does not increase sales, whereas, under low involvement products, unattractive model had a surprisingly positive effect on sales.

2.7. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for the determinants of purchase intention is presented in Figure 1. We argue that trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness and popularity of the influencer are related to the consumer’s purchase intention

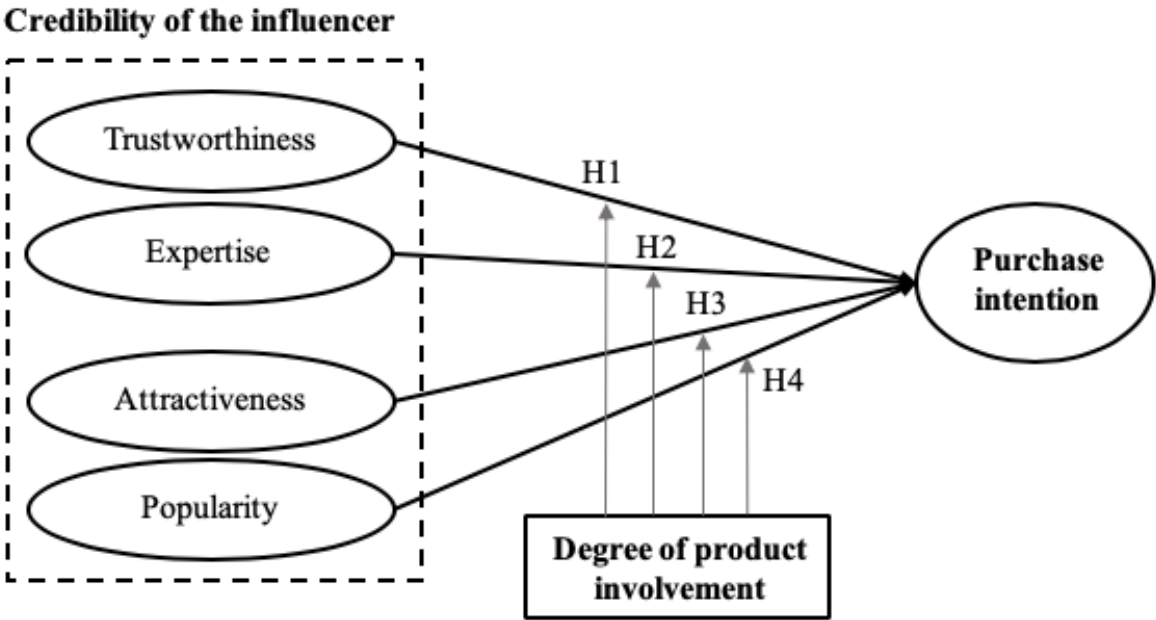


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework

3. Research methodology

3.1. Research objective

From the literature review it can be noticed that, because social media influencers are a recent topic, few authors have studied them. Moreover, when studying the role of the credibility of influencers on consumer's purchase intention, product involvement had received little attention. Hence, this study aims to understand how important the credibility of the influencer is when endorsing the brand's products. For brands to choose the right influencer, it is essential to study if the way consumers perceive influencer is significantly relevant to generate purchase intentions. In addition, this dissertation's goal is to comprehend why the consumer's purchase intention might vary under low or high involvement product categories.

Therefore, to have a deeper knowledge about these topics, constructs such as source credibility, source attractiveness, and popularity are assumed to analyze the impact on purchase intentions.

3.2. Research approach

To accomplish these objectives, theories and concepts were withdrawn from relevant studies, through an electronic search of several index databases of academic journals.

Following Saunders et al (2009) three research approaches can be used: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. In this academic paper, descriptive and exploratory research approaches will be undertaken.

Descriptive research aims to produce a meticulous representation of people, situations or events, based on secondary data gathered through quantitative methods. Before proceeding to the next phase, concepts such as digital influencers, social influence theory, source credibility model and source attractiveness model were examined in-depth to develop a wide knowledge of endorsement practices.

The exploratory research is used when a problem has not yet been studied in-depth and researchers want to investigate it further. In order to identify and broadly express the new problem statement, this method requires the collection and analysis of primary data, commonly assembled through questionnaires, focus groups and interviews.

In this thesis, an online survey was conducted. Due to time and budget constraints (Wright, 2005), i.e., the need to rapidly collect data required and the flexibility provided, embolden the use of this method.

Second, empirical studies show that 72% of college students are internet users and 87% of college students have access to the Internet (Anderson, 2001), therefore, since the majority of the respondents are students, under the ages of 18 to 28 years old, who are familiarized with internet and social media networks, online questionnaires are the best way to reach this audience. Finally, it eliminates geographical barriers (Evans and Mathur, 2005) and reduces the bias of the interviewer (Bronner and Kuijlen, 2007).

3.3. Pre-test – influencer and product selection

Before the main study, a pre-test was made to select the influencer endorsement and the products to be used in the study.

As the main objective was to study the influence of social media influencers, two preliminary questions were first introduced to respondents. The first one related to the use of social media platforms and the second one related to the following of social media influencers.

To reduce the scope, this dissertation focused only on Portuguese influencers and celebrities, and therefore, respondents were asked to name Portuguese influencers and identify which category of products they promote. The influencer that was referred the most was chosen to appear in the main survey.

As the aim of this research was to understand if the impact of the influencer's credibility on consumer's purchase intention differs according with the degree of product involvement, in the pre-survey respondents were presented with a list of diverse products, belonging to low and high involvement categories, and they were asked, for each product, to identify if it belonged to low or high involvement category. The two products that had a significant percentage on each category of involvement were chosen, within the same product category (e.g., technology, beauty and cosmetics, clothes).

Pre-test analysis

The pre-survey was conducted through *Qualtrics* (an online statistics software) and was distributed online via social media platforms. Thirty participants answered the questionnaire. From the analysis of the results (appendix 1), Ana Garcia Martins, better known as “*A Pipoca Mais Doce*”, was the most mentioned influencer, followed by the influencer Mafalda Sampaio. Ana Garcia Martins is a 38 years old blogger and writer. She created her blog called “*A Pipoca Mais Doce*” in 2003, and since then she is recognized as being an influencer, promoting a broad range of products, such as food, clothes, and cosmetics.

Regarding product involvement, *Makeup* was considered 63% of the times as a low involvement product and *Skin Treatment* was considered 82% of the times as being a high involvement product.

This pilot survey helped to understand the most famous influencers and which one to use in the main survey. Also, it helped to better understand the degree of involvement that people have with certain products.

Therefore, considering the information collected, the influencer used in the main survey was *A Pipoca Mais Doce* and the category was Beauty and Cosmetics.

3.4. Data Collection and Sample

The quantitative primary data was collected, and the hypotheses were tested through the conduction of an online survey developed on an online platform, Qualtrics, where respondents were assigned randomly to a low involvement product and a high involvement product.

The link to complete the survey was shared on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, and also was sent individually through message platforms, such as Messenger and WhatsApp. To reach a broad audience and have many answers as possible, a blogger (who's the name remains anonymous) was asked to share the survey with her followers.

The current study used a non-probabilistic convenience sampling. This technique, according to Malhotra (2006), relies on the researcher's ability to select randomly the participants, while being least expensive and least time-consuming.

The study followed an experimental design with results being analyzed in-between subjects 2 groups (degree of product involvement: low and high).

3.5. Measurements

The measures used in the questionnaire were established and adapted from the existing literature. Both scaling formats, 7-Point Differential scale and 7-Point Likert scale, were used to prevent any state-dependence effects from repetitively using the same scale format.

To measure the familiarity with the influencer, participants were asked to rate their familiarity with the chosen influencer from a Seven-Point Likert Scale, with [1] being "Not familiar at all" and [7] being "Very Familiar".

Furthermore, it was important to control if the products chosen to appear in the survey belonged to the low and high involvement category. Thus, respondents were asked to rate in a Seven-Point Likert scale three sentences adapted from Rodgers and Schneider (1993) [Table 2] according to their importance given to the products presented.

To understand the impact that influencer’s credibility has on purchase intention, participants were asked to rate the influencer according to several attributes. To measure the credibility, respondents were presented a Seven-Point semantic scale measured by fifteen items adapted from Ohanian (1990) [Table 3]. The same 7-point semantic differential scale was used to measure the popularity of the influencer, adapted from Graeff (1996) study. [Table 4]

The purchase intention scale was presented in a Seven-Point Likert scale measured using three items adapted from Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991). The chosen items are presented in Table 5.

Table 2. Product involvement

Construct	Measurement Items	Scale
Product involvement	I attach great importance to this product	[1] Extremely unlikely [7] Completely likely
	This product interests me a lot.	
	It gives me pleasure to purchase this product	

Table 3. Source Credibility Scale

Attractiveness	Trustworthiness	Expertise
Unattractive – Attractive	Untrustworthy – Trustworthy	Not expert – Expert
Not Classy – Classy	Undependable – Dependable	Inexperienced – Experienced
Ugly – Beautiful	Dishonest – Honest	Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable
Plain – Elegant	Unreliable – Reliable	Unqualified – Qualified
Not Sexy - Sexy	Insincere - Sincere	Unskilled – Skilled

Table 4. Popularity Scale

Popularity
Unpopular – Popular
Unsuccessful – Successful
Submissive – Dominating
Follower – Leader
Introvert – Extrovert

Table 5. Willingness to buy

Construct	Measurement items	Scale
Purchase intention	I intent to buy the product promoted by the influencer	[1] Extremely disagree to [7] Completely agree
	It is likely that I would consider buying the product promoted by the influencer	
	I am willing to buy the product promoted by the influencer	

3.6. Procedure

Before starting, respondents were presented with a link to enter the survey. The survey was divided into four sections.

Immediately after entering the survey, participants were introduced to the first section. This section contained an introduction with significant information about the study, regarding the name and university of the researcher, the purpose and duration of the questionnaire. At the end of the introduction, there was a button to pursue and participants had to click on, which directly assigned them to the beginning of a new section.

The second section included general questions about the use of social media platforms and which platforms respondents used the most. Since the present research focus on the credibility of influencers who are present on social media platforms, these questions served as a filter to ensure that only social media users respond to this questionnaire.

In the third section, a set of four questions concerning influencers were asked. The first one, asked if respondents followed any influencer on social media platforms. If the answer was Yes, they were asked to say on average how many influencers they followed, in which social media platform and they were also asked to say which product category and type of product the influencer promotes. If the answer was No, they would proceed directly to the next section.

The fourth section started by dividing the respondents into two groups. In order to verify if the perception of the credibility of the influencer and the purchase intention vary under conditions of low vs high involvement product category, respondents were randomly divided into two different groups. The objective was to ensure randomness on the answers and homogeneity of the groups. One group was randomly assigned to a low involvement product, *Makeup*, and the other group was presented a high involvement product, *Skin Treatment*.

For both groups, participants were asked to rate the importance given to the products presented previously and they were shown an introduction about the influencer and some control questions, regarding the familiarity with the influencer.

Secondly, this section comprehended questions related to source credibility dimensions as well as purchase intentions. To avoid causal effects, the influencer presented to participants was the same. In both groups (low and high involvement), participants were presented with a brief introduction about the influencer and asked in a 7-Semantic Scale to rate how they perceived the credibility dimensions and the popularity of the influencer. The purchase intention was measured asking participants to rate in a 7-Likert Scale how they feel about three statement items (being [1] Extremely unlikely and [7] Completely likely).

Finally, the last section of the survey was dedicated to socio-demographic questions, gathering information about gender, age, nationality, country of residence, occupation, and school degree. For more detailed information about the survey, please consult Appendix 2.

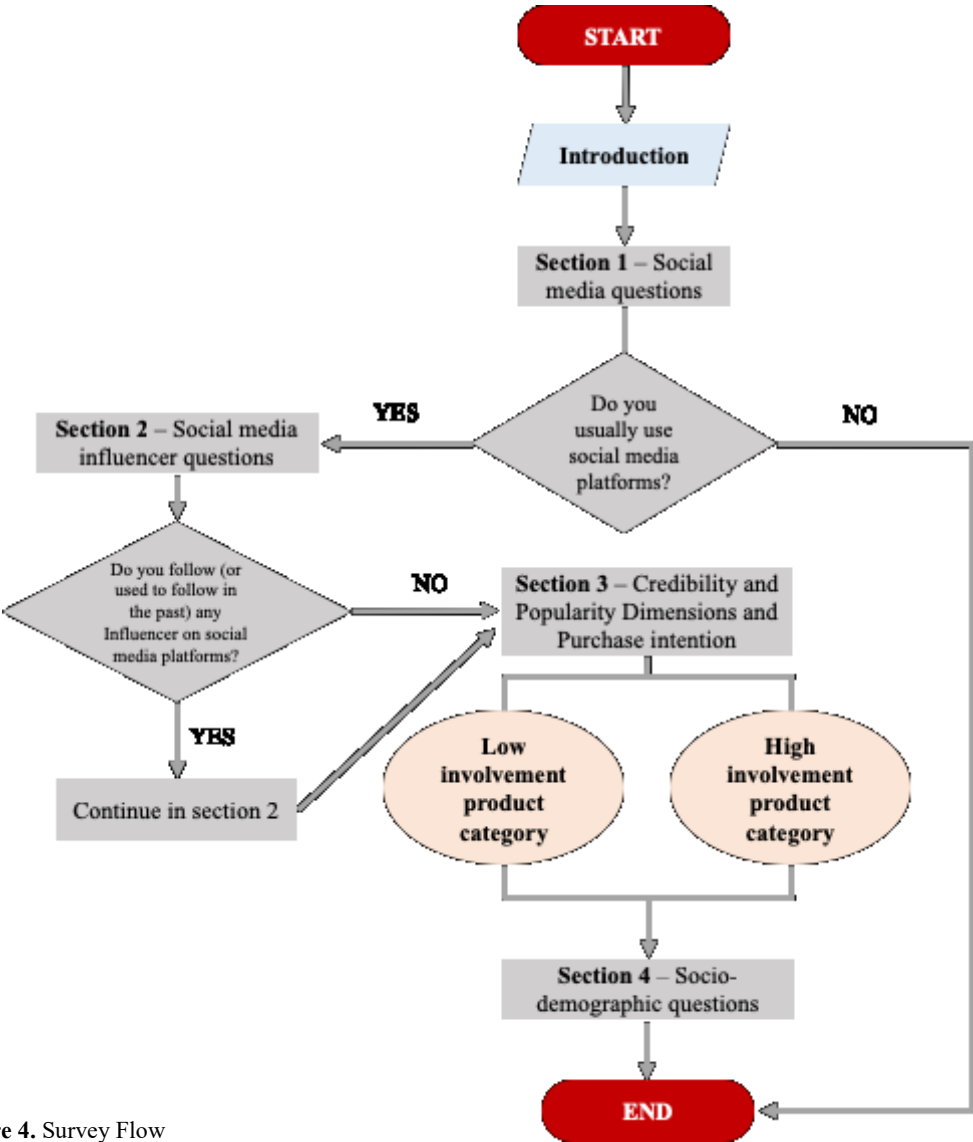


Figure 4. Survey Flow

4. Results and findings

4.1. Data Collection and Data Cleaning

Before starting to analyze the results obtained from the online survey, all the data gathered was subject to data cleaning.

First, 2762 (two thousand, seven hundred and sixty-two) respondents initiated the survey. However, from that total, 828 (eight hundred and twenty-eight) responses were incomplete and therefore eliminated, leaving only 1934 (one thousand, nine hundred and thirty-four) complete answers for analysis.

Secondly, as the main target sample was only social media users, question 1 (“Do you use social media platforms?”) served as a filter question, which means that from the 1934 completed answers, only 1929 (one thousand, nine hundred and twenty-nine) were taken into consideration to the main analysis.

Due to a problem on the online platform where the survey was conducted, four responses had to be eliminated. Thus, the ultimate target sample was 1925 (one thousand, nine hundred and twenty-five) total respondents (N=1925).

To guarantee the homogeneity of responses, the option “evenly present elements” was used, ensuring thus, that, from the total sample, 51% of the answers were randomly allocated to a low involvement product and the other 49% were allocated to a high involvement product.

4.2. Sample description

Demographics

Using the IBM SPSS version 25.0, it was possible to conduct a descriptive analysis (see appendix 3). The sample showed that 98% of the participants were women and only 1.9% were men. Regarding the age, since the survey was distributed among social media platforms and distributed to friends and colleagues from Católica Lisbon School of Business and Economics and other universities, it was expected higher responses from participants with ages between 18 and 24 years (29.4%) and between 25 and 35 years (49.7%). Furthermore, as to the highest education level, 20.9% of the respondents completed a high school degree, 46.1% completed the bachelor’s degree and 28.7% completed the master’s degree. With respect to the respondent’s occupation, 64.3% are currently working and 22.8% are still studying.

Finally, to what concerns the nationality, it was found that the majority of participants were Portuguese (99.3%).

Social media platforms and social media influencers

Respecting the use of social media platforms (appendix 3), Instagram was mentioned as the most used 69,6% of the time, YouTube was mentioned as the second most used 27.3% of the times, and Facebook was mentioned 27.6% of the time as the third most used.

Additionally, 98.4% of the participants answered they follow (or used to follow in the past) any influencer on social media platforms. When asked about how many influencers, on average, they followed, 43.4% answered more than nine influencers.

4.3. Measures validation

In chapter 3, several scales were identified as the most important ones to apply in this study. They were extracted and adapted from previous literature and it was necessary to ensure their reliability.

To test the measurement models, distinct statistics were implemented and showed in Table 6. After being analyzed, it was possible to confirm that all the measurement items are statistically significant, meaning that, all the items could be used for the analysis.

Table 6. Summary construct statistics

Construct	Dimension	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig.
Product involvement		4.762	1.446	144.527	1924	0.000
Credibility	Attractiveness	5.420	1.234	192.296	1924	0.000
	Trustworthiness	5.841	1.380	185.694	1924	0.000
	Expertise	5.660	1.343	184.903	1924	0.000
	Popularity	6.079	1.246	213.982	1924	0.000
Purchase intention		3.634	1.501	106.230	1924	0.000

To test their reliability, a Cronbach's Alpha test was performed. According to diverse authors (Peter 1979; Rivard and Huff 1988; Cortina 1993), the Cronbach's Alpha value should be higher than 0.5 and ideally above 0.7.

In this case, all values are higher than 0.7, which allows confirming that the internal consistency between items of each construct used in the survey is secured (Table 7). Please see in detail in Table 23 – Appendix 4.

Table 7. Reliability analysis - Cronbach's alpha test

Dimensions	N° items	Cronbach's Alpha
Product involvement	3	0.888
	Expertise	0.970
	Trustworthiness	0.969
Credibility	5	0.904
	Attractiveness	0.937
	Popularity	0.883
Purchase intention	3	0.883

4.4. Principal Component Analysis

With the aim of reducing the dimensionality of the data of an extensive number of interrelated variables that account for most of the variation existing in the data set (Jolliffe, 2002), a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was performed.

Before running a factor analysis, there is a wide range of recommendations concerning the sample size (MacCallum et al. 1999). Several authors have different recommendations, however, Comrey and Lee (1992) defined a severe rating scale for adequate sample size in factor analysis. The sample size with $N=100$ is considering poor, $N=200$ is fair, $N=300$ is good, $N=500$ is very good and $N \geq 1000$ is considering excellent.

For the PCA, Hair et al. (2005) suggested a sample size superior to 200 participants, which in this case, since the sample is $N=1925$, it is possible to conclude that the sample size is adequate for the factor analysis.

Through rotation, the factor matrix is transformed into a simple one that is easier to interpret. The rotation method that was applied was the *Varimax Rotation*, which allows minimizing the number of variables with high loadings on a factor.

Using the Kaiser's Eigenvalue criteria, in which only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 are retained, the PCA method extracted six components/factors that explain 82.9% of the total variance. The first factor explains 16.726%; the second factor explains 16.237%; the third factor explains 15.352%, the fourth factor explains 15.174%; the fifth factor explains 9.706% and the sixth factor explains 9.705%. (see in detail in table 24 – appendix 5).

Table 8. Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix						
Variables	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Unattractive - Attractive	0.214	0.188	0.763	0.230	0.150	0.053
Not Classy – Classy	0.267	0.303	0.696	0.234	0.097	0.019
Ugly – Beautiful	0.232	0.240	0.774	0.205	0.035	0.033
Plain – Elegant	0.245	0.268	0.726	0.234	0.075	0.043
Not Sexy - Sexy	0.132	0.151	0.808	0.197	0.084	0.066
Not expert – Expert	0.251	0.310	0.306	0.727	0.116	0.061
Inexperienced – Experienced	0.392	0.291	0.257	0.755	0.040	0.042
Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable	0.351	0.314	0.309	0.757	0.063	0.019
Unqualified – Qualified	0.343	0.310	0.310	0.764	0.063	0.045
Unskilled – Skilled	0.298	0.321	0.273	0.785	0.093	0.049
Untrustworthy – Trustworthy	0.282	0.780	0.323	0.291	0.112	0.048
Undependable – Dependable	0.291	0.795	0.316	0.306	0.121	0.045
Dishonest – Honest	0.364	0.780	0.242	0.294	0.102	0.040
Unreliable – Reliable	0.312	0.800	0.304	0.314	0.118	0.039
Insincere - Sincere	0.333	0.760	0.256	0.316	0.100	0.042
Unpopular – Popular	0.807	0.274	0.206	0.273	0.028	0.042
Unsuccessful – Successful	0.798	0.302	0.218	0.305	0.036	0.053
Submissive – Dominating	0.771	0.191	0.231	0.224	0.048	0.067
Follower – Leader	0.762	0.230	0.278	0.261	0.071	0.083
Introvert – Extrovert	0.752	0.329	0.205	0.247	0.022	0.069
I intent to buy the product promoted by the influencer	0.005	0.086	0.114	0.109	0.829	0.233
It is likely that I would consider buying the product promoted by the influencer	0.060	0.120	0.084	0.048	0.876	0.214
I am willing to buy the product promoted by the influencer	0.056	0.078	0.092	0.040	0.888	0.191
I attach great importance to this product	0.057	0.044	0.018	0.041	0.156	0.899
This product interests me a lot	0.045	0.056	0.053	0.029	0.213	0.907
It gives me pleasure to purchase this product	0.085	0.003	0.069	0.035	0.251	0.840

Concerning the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO), it can assume values between 0 and 1. Kaiser (1974) suggested that KMO values below 0.50 would be unacceptable, between 0.5 and 0.7 are normal, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great and values above 0.9 are marvelous.

The following table (table 9), gives information about KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The results revealed a KMO value of 0.955, which accordingly to the sufficiency index developed by Kaiser is excellent. In addition, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value is statistically significant since the p-value = 0.00 is lower than 0.05.

Table 9. KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.955
	χ^2	53767.598
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	325
	p -value	0.000

4.5. Variables added

In the current study, to better evaluate the results, some new variables were computed and added to the previous ones provided by the questionnaire.

The first variable added was *Product_Type*. This variable was computed as a dummy/binary variable, assuming values of “0” if the respondent belonged to a low involvement group” and “1” if the respondent belonged to the high involvement group.

The constructs evaluated in the survey: the product involvement (including three measurement items), the credibility (which included four dimensions – expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and popularity – each one including five measurement items), and the purchase intention (including also three measurement items), were subject to manipulation. Therefore, six new variables were added, which result by making an average between the measurement items. These variables were namely, respectively, *Average_Product_Involvement*, *Average_Expertise*, *Average_Trustworthiness*, *Average_Attractiveness*, *Average_Popularity*, and *Average_Purchase_Intention*.

4.6. Normality tests

Before proceeding to the analysis of the research hypotheses, it is necessary to check if the population of this study follows a normal distribution, to help us understanding whether to use parametric tests or not.

There are several amounts of normality tests available in the literature. Nevertheless, the most common procedures available in statistical software are the *Kolmogorov-Smirnov test* (KS), the *Shapiro-Wilk test* (SW), *Anderson-Darling test* (AD) and the *Lilliefors test* (LF) (Razali & Wah 2011).

Under some findings from Mendes and Pala (2003) and Keskin (2006), the Shapiro-Wilk test is the most powerful normality test, and therefore, it was used to test if a random sample of n

independent observations come from a population with a normal $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$ distribution. The null and alternative hypotheses are the following:

H_0 : the data is normally distributed

H_1 : the data is not normally distributed

The results presented in Table 10, show that, for a 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected for all of the constructs (p-value < 0.05), meaning that we fail to reject the H_0 : the data is normally distributed.

Hence, it can be confirmed that the population does not follow a normal distribution, and consequently, for the analysis of the hypotheses formulated previously as well as the following sample validation tests, **non-parametric tests** should be used.

Additional information regarding the normality tests is provided in Appendix 6.

Table 10. Normality tests - Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk

Construct		Normality Tests					
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	P-value	Statistic	df	P-value
Product involvement	Low	0.103	982	0.000	0.954	982	0.000
	High	0.092	944	0.000	0.957	944	0.000
Average Attractiveness	Low	0.111	982	0.000	0.910	982	0.000
	High	0.097	944	0.000	0.937	944	0.000
Average Trustworthiness	Low	0.212	982	0.000	0.773	982	0.000
	High	0.157	944	0.000	0.866	944	0.000
Average Expertise	Low	0.161	982	0.000	0.838	982	0.000
	High	0.189	944	0.000	0.821	944	0.000
Average Popularity	Low	0.239	982	0.000	0.683	982	0.000
	High	0.220	944	0.000	0.738	944	0.000
Purchase intention	Low	0.119	982	0.000	0.963	982	0.000
	High	0.095	944	0.000	0.965	944	0.000

a: Lilliefors Significance Correction

4.7. Product involvement

The Independent T-test (table 11) indicates that participants attach different levels of involvement on Makeup and the Skin Treatment.

Consumers had attached the makeup to the low involvement category and skin treatment to a high involvement category. From the table below is possible to analyse that consumers feel

more involved and attach great importance to skin treatment rather than the makeup product. ($M_{ST} = 4.94 > M_M = 4.57$).

Table 11. Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test – Product involvement

Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test						
	Low Involvement		High Involvement		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Product involvement	4.57	1.51	4.94	1.34	-5.251	0.000

4.8. Correlation Analysis

Before starting to analyze whether the credibility dimensions have an impact on purchase intention, a correlation test was calculated.

The objective of using a Pearson Correlation test relied on verifying the possibility of an association between variables and to what extent it was significant. This test was run to explore the correlation between the credibility dimensions (expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and popularity) and the purchase intention.

From the analysis (table 12), it is possible to conclude that all the correlations are, in fact, positive and significant (all p-values below 0.01). Moreover, the strongest correlations with the purchase intention happen with trustworthiness ($r=0.255$) and attractiveness ($r=0.236$). Although all the correlations are positive, according to Taylor (1990), they represent weak values for correlation.

For a detailed information, please consult Appendix 7.

Table 12. Summary of Pearson Correlation's Analysis

Pearson Correlation					
	Expertise	Trustworthiness	Attractiveness	Popularity	Purchase Intention
Expertise	1	0.783**	0.676**	0.730**	0.222**
Trustworthiness	0.783**	1	0.679**	0.731**	0.255**
Attractiveness	0.676**	0.679**	1	0.633**	0.236**
Popularity	0.730**	0.731**	0.633**	1	0.147**
Purchase Intention	0.222**	0.255**	0.236**	0.147**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

4.9. Hypotheses Analysis

In this part of the chapter, the research questions and hypotheses are answered and tested through the computation of adequate tests.

Firstly, the analysis was divided into two main parts. The first part was dedicated to answering to the research questions whether the credibility dimensions impact the user's purchase intention, and the second part was dedicated to knowing in which group (LIP vs HIP) the impact of the credibility dimensions was significant to influence the user's purchase intention.

In order to analyze whether the perceived credibility of an influencer influences the user's purchase intention, a **multiple linear regression analysis** was computed.

Beforehand, it was necessary to test the multiple linear regression assumptions. Considering the assumptions, few tests were performed. All the tests (presented in detail in appendix 8) lead us to proceed to follow the analysis.

From the tables presented below [tables 13a) and 13b)], it can be extracted the Adjusted R^2 which corresponds to 7.4%. (for the low involvement product) and 8.8% %. (for the high involvement product). This value, which is quite low, represents the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables. Thereby, only 7.4% (low involvement product) and 8.8% (high involvement product) of the user's purchase intentions are explained by the credibility dimensions.

In addition, from the ANOVA table (appendix 8), it can be analyzed whether the model has a good fit or not. In this case, the $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ (for both products), which is below 0.05, lead us to reject the null hypothesis ($H_0: \beta_i = 0$) and therefore, indicates that the variables are individually significant. Also, it is possible to confirm that the independent variables are a good predictor of the dependent variable.

Hypothesis 1. The perceived trustworthiness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on both low involvement products and high involvement products.

By looking to *the $p\text{-value}_L = 0.000$* [table 13a)], which is lower than 0.05, it is possible to assess that, for the low involvement product, trustworthiness is statistically significant, for a 5% confidence level, to influence user's purchase intentions. Moreover, analyzing the unstandardized beta ($\beta_{TL} = 0.217$), it can be confirmed that trustworthiness is the one that affects positively the most purchase intention when the product in cause belongs to a low involvement category.

For the high involvement product, trustworthiness has $p\text{-value}_H = 0.000$ [table 13b)], which is below 0.05, and again, for a 5% level of confidence, this dimension is statistically significant to impact the consumer's purchase intentions. Besides, through the unstandardized beta ($\beta_{TH} = 0.244$), it is possible to see that trustworthiness is again the dimension that most affects positively the purchase intention.

In summary, **H1 is accepted.**

Hypothesis 2. The perceived expertise of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on both low involvement products and high involvement products.

From table 13a), we can see the expertise's $p\text{-value}_L = 0.041$, which is below 0.05, meaning that, for a 5% level of significance, this dimension is statistically significant to influence the consumer's purchase intentions, when the product falls within the low involvement category. With concern to the high involvement product [table 13b)], expertise p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p\text{-value}_H = 0.585$), indicating thus, that expertise is not statistically significant to affect purchase intentions.

Considering the unstandardized betas, expertise dimension is the one that has less influence on the consumer's intention to buy ($\beta_{ci} = 0.128$) and ($\beta_{ci} = 0.033$) [table 13a) and 13b) respectively].

Summing up, **H2 is partially accepted.** Expertise only influences purchase intentions when consumers are low involved with the product.

Hypothesis 3. The perceived attractiveness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products but not on high involvement products.

The results from Table 13a) and Table 13b) lead us to reject the null hypothesis, i.e., attractiveness's p-value both on low and high involvement products is lower than 0.05 ($p\text{-value}_L = 0.004$ and $p\text{-value}_H = 0.001$, respectively). This means that, for a 5% level of significance, attractiveness is statistically significant to impact the user's purchase intention in both scenarios (low and high involvement products).

Thus, our findings suggest that **H3 is partially accepted.** It was first hypothesized that attractiveness only affects the user's purchase intention for a low involvement product, nonetheless, it affects the purchase intention for both products.

Hypothesis 4. The perceived popularity of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products but not on high involvement products.

By analyzing the p-values [table 13a) ($p\text{-value}_L = 0.000 < 0.005$) and Table 13b) ($p\text{-value}_H = 0.060 > 0.05$)], it is possible to confirm that, for a 5% level of confidence, popularity only has influence on consumer's purchase intention when the product is from a low involvement category.

Besides, through the unstandardized betas ($\beta_{PL} = -0.244$) and ($\beta_{PH} = -0.112$) [table 13a) and 13b) respectively], it is possible to assess that, unlike all the other dimensions, popularity has a negative effect on consumer's purchase intentions.

In sum, **H4 is accepted.**

Table 13 a) Multiple linear regression – Low involvement product

	Unstandardized β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.433	1110.292	0.000
Expertise	0.128	2.047	0.041
Attractiveness	0.156	2.891	0.004
Trustworthiness	0.217	3.506	0.000
Popularity	-0.244	-4.073	0.000
Adjusted R ²		0.074	
F		20.540	
Sig.		0.000	

a. Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b. Independent variables: expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness and popularity

Table 13 b). Multiple linear regression – High involvement product

	Unstandardized β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.540	6.185	0.000
Expertise	0.033	0.546	0.585
Attractiveness	0.186	3.373	0.001
Trustworthiness	0.244	4.161	0.000
Popularity	-0.112	-1.881	0.060
Adjusted R ²		0.088	
F		23.708	
Sig.		0.000	

a. Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b. Independent variables: expertise, attractiveness, trustworthiness and popularity

Overall, when consumers are exposed to a low involvement product all the credibility dimensions of an influencer have an impact on the user's purchase intention. However, when consumers are exposed to a high involvement product only trustworthiness and attractiveness explain the impact on purchase intentions.

The second part of the analysis is dedicated to checking if the impact of the perceived credibility of the influencer on the purchase intention differs across the two groups (LIP vs HIP).

As mention earlier, the sample population does not follow a normal distribution, therefore, non-parametric tests were applied. The test to compare means across two different groups, regarding the independent variable purchase intention, was the Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U test. For this test, the following hypotheses are assumed:

- H₀: the purchase intention is equal across the groups
- H₁: the purchase intention is not equal across the groups

Table 14. Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test

Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test						
	Low Involvement		High Involvement		F	Sig.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Purchase intention	3.79	1.48	3.47	1.51	-4.845	0.000

In sum, the results showed a p-value equal to 0.000 which is below than 0.05, and subsequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. For the low involvement scenario, purchase intention was higher than for the high involvement scenario (M_L=3.79 and M_H=3.47) [Table 13].

It is proved that the purchase intention differs accordingly to the degree of involvement with the product. Consumers are more sensitive when the product falls within a high involvement category than for a low involvement category.

Moreover, when it comes to a low involvement product, consumers are more susceptible to buy since the risk perceived is lower.

Summing up, our findings support hypotheses 1 and 4 and partially support hypotheses 2 and 3. In the table below is presented a summary of the findings.

Table 15. Summary of the findings

Hypothesis	Results
H1: The perceived trustworthiness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on <u>both</u> low involvement products and high involvement products.	Accepted
H2: The perceived expertise of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on <u>both</u> low involvement products and high involvement products.	Partially accepted
H3: The perceived attractiveness of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products <u>but not</u> on high involvement products.	Partially accepted
H4: The perceived popularity of the influencer has a significant effect on PI on low involvement products <u>but not</u> on high involvement products.	Accepted

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The objective of the research relied on understanding the role of the credibility of social media influencers and how it might influence the consumer's purchase intentions, within two different product involvement categories, regarding the Beauty and Cosmetic Industry, Makeup for low involvement scenario, and Skin Treatment for a high involvement scenario.

The results provided evidence about five main topics regarding the success of the influencer in influencing purchase intentions according to the degree of product involvement.

First, our findings suggested that the trustworthiness of the influencer has effects on consumers purchase intentions for both low and high involvement products. Thus, regardless of the type of product, consumers are influenced by the opinions and attitudes of trustworthy sources. These findings are against what was hypothesized by Ohanian (1991) relatively to the fact that customer's intentions are not influenced by this dimension, but still in line to what was proposed by McGuire (1969) being trustworthy sources more persuasive than less trustworthy sources.

Second, although the expertise of an influencer is considering relevant to persuade consumers as mentioned by Aaker and Myers (1987), it is not sufficient to influence consumers to buy products from both low and high involvement categories. One reason for this outcome could be the fact that the product, which belongs to the beauty and cosmetic industry, is not complex in terms of technology and consequently, the expertise of the influencer is not a relevant factor to the arguments' quality.

Regarding the findings of these two dimensions, trustworthiness and expertise, they agree with the study by McGinnies and Ward (1980), which confirmed that trustworthy sources are more influential than untrustworthy ones, regardless they are experts or not. Meaning then, under high involvement conditions, trustworthiness sources are more impactful than expert sources.

Third, it was hypothesized at the beginning that attractiveness only impacts the user's purchase intention for low involvement products. Therefore, it was expected that, for the high involvement product, consumers would not consider attractiveness as an important source to influence their intention to buy. However, the results demonstrated that this dimension was statistically significant to influence purchase intentions in both products.

These results are in line with the study made by Petty et al. (1983) which confirmed that in both scenarios, attractiveness affects purchase intention. Under low involvement conditions, may serve as persuasive visual evidence for product effectiveness, and under high involvement circumstances, physical attractiveness may serve as a persuasive product-related cue. Moreover, since the products were chosen within the beauty and cosmetics category, the

endorser's physical appearance has constituted an important element to influence purchase intentions.

Fourth, it was possible to verify a negative relationship between popularity and purchase intention. This means that when the popularity of the influencer increases, the intention to buy the product decreases, and vice-versa. This outcome is quite unexpected since according to Jin and Phua (2014) highly popular influencers have more social influence and consequently are perceived as more credible. Beyond that, popularity was found statistically significant to explain purchase intentions for the low involvement product, but not for the high involvement product.

Finally, it was proved that purchase intentions assume different values within the two groups of involvement. When it comes to a low involvement product, consumers are more open to trusting in opinions, beliefs, and attitudes from outside sources. Nevertheless, when it comes to a high involvement product, it involves a more complex decision-making process, with several variables influencing the decision. Hence, consumers are less influenceable since the risk perceived is higher.

5.1. Theoretical and Managerial implications

Theoretical implications

Although there is previous literature dedicated to the perceived credibility of celebrities and endorsers, several studies concerning purchase intention and some researches regarding the relationship between credibility and purchase intention, there are no other studies focusing on this relationship applied to the social media context, in the Portuguese environment and studying the differences within the degree of product involvement.

Our findings provide to this emergent literature, in three main topics, by exploring the capability of an influencer to effectively impact the consumer's buying intention across different levels of product involvement.

Firstly, previous analyses showed many controversies regarding the effect of the credibility of the influencer on purchase intentions. However, the current research proved evidence about the relationship between those variables. In respect to expertise and trustworthiness, contrasting to attractiveness, it was expected to generate higher intentions to buy. Nonetheless, the results showed that the attractiveness dimension also has an impact on purchase intention, regardless of the level of involvement.

Secondly, this research added a new variable into the credibility construct, the popularity, and provided insights about the impact of that dimension on the consumer's purchase intention. Contrarily to the suggestions in previous studies, in the present case, popularity has a negative correlation with the purchase intention.

Thirdly, this academic paper also contributed to understanding the role of product involvement in the consumer's buying intention. In a low involvement product, increases in the perceived credibility of the influencer might increase the purchase intention. In opposition, in high involvement product, an increase in the perceived influencer's credibility might not have a relevant impact on the consumer's purchase intention.

Managerial implications

This empirical research contributes with considerable insights for firms considering the use of social media influencers to increase the firm's sales performance.

A clear knowledge of brand communication through the digital influencers can impulse practitioners' understanding of influencer engagement.

The results showed that if a company understands which characteristics of the influencer consumers value more, they could invest in adequate marketing promotions, associate with the right influencer and consequently save money. Identifying how consumers perceive influencers' credibility and the way it impacts their purchase intentions constitutes an important factor when deciding and carrying out customized marketing strategies.

Additionally, understanding the degree of involvement a consumer has with a certain product, is relevant for companies to decide on which products they can use influencer marketing. From the literature review and research results, it was demonstrated that consumers are more influenceable when presented with low involvement products than for high involvement products.

Finally, this study provides brand managers with tactical guidelines regarding influencer selection criteria. By knowing the consumer's involvement with the products, marketers are able to choose the right influencer for the product's promotion. Having the right influencer endorsing the right product, i.e., having a perfect product-match up proposition, is crucial for achieving a successful brand communication and a strong presence in social media.

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

This research gives important insights concerning the relationship between consumers and their perceived credibility of social media influencers, and its impact on their purchase intention. Still, there are main limitations to discuss that provide future recommendations.

First, although the models used to test the credibility dimensions are appealing and suitable, they have been censored on diverse levels (Bower & Landreth, 2001; Erdogan, 1999). According to Fleck, Korchia, and Le Roy (2012), those models do not appropriately take into consideration the multifunctional features of specified characteristics of the source. Moreover, the measurement scales to study the credibility of the influencer developed by Ohanian (1990) are composed of fifteen items. Although the items were divided into 4 main questions, this method of evaluating the influencer is quite extensive and can lead respondents to randomly answer or quit the survey.

Secondly, many factor-analytic studies have proposed other source credibility dimensions. For instance, Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969), besides trustworthiness, presented also competence and dynamism, Whitehead (1968) added objectivity, and McCroskey (1966) identified authoritativeness and character. In this sense, in the future could be interesting studying other credibility dimensions that might have a significant impact on the consumer's purchase intentions.

Thirdly, the study is based on low and high involvement products – focusing only on the two extremes of product involvement. Yet, in practice, many products might belong somewhere in between (medium involvement). From a practical perspective, in the future could be interesting to explore the impact of the influencer across the three product involvement stages.

Fourthly, purchase intention results could be associated with the chosen products – makeup for low involvement and skin treatment for high involvement, within the Beauty and Cosmetic Industry. The chosen products were not the best, and therefore, the differences between the user's intentions to buy were insignificant. Besides, the product's category was most associated with women preferences and less thought for men. For future research, the choice of the products should be neutral for both gender groups and, if the interest falls in studying the opposites (low vs high) the products should exactly fall within those two involvement categories, to avoid confusion in the purchase intention.

Lastly, the choice of a blogger/influencer to spread the survey with her followers, could have influenced the results obtained. For future research, it is proposed to use another stimulus (e.g. in return of a survey made give a voucher, etc) to get as much participants as possible.

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7. Appendices

Appendix 1. Pre-test analysis

Influencer selection

Table 16. Pre-test – Influencer Statistic Descriptive

Statistic descriptive: Pre-test	
Influencer	N
A pipoca mais doce (Ana Garcia Martins)	4
Casal mistério	1
Mafalda Sampaio	4
Sofia Barbosa	3
Silvester Stallone	1
Inês Rochinha	3
Mia Rose	2
Bárbara Corby	1
Alice Trewinnard	2
Inês Mocho	3
Rita Ferro Alvim	1
Maria Guedes	1
Nuno Markl	1
Helena Coelho	2
Melanie Martins	1
Magda Bolinhas	1
Adriana Silva	1
Wuant	1
Jessica Athayde	1

Product selection

Table 17. Pre-test – Product involvement Statistic Descriptive

Statistic descriptive: Pre-test		
Product	Low involvement	High involvement
Shampoo	93%	7%
Car	17%	83%
Detergent	100%	0%
Trip	7%	93%
House	7%	93%
Toothpaste	93%	7%
Smartphone	20%	80%
Underwear	77%	23%
Makeup	63%	37%
Bags	67%	33%
Shoes	60%	40%
Perfume	57%	43%
Shower gel	93%	7%
Dietetic products	80%	20%
Computer	13%	87%
Beauty cream	57%	43%
Clothes	50%	50%
Jewelry	47%	53%
Beauty Treatments	18%	82%

Demographic statistics

Table 18. Pre-test – Demographic statistics: age and gender

Age	
Younger than 18	0%
18-24	40%
25-35	10%
36-50	27%
Older than 51	23%
Total	100%

Gender	
Male	3%
Female	97%
Other	0%
Total	100%

Appendix 2. Survey

Dear participant,

The survey you will respond next was developed within the scope of the final Dissertation at Católica Lisbon School of Business & Economics.

It is important to mention that there aren't right or wrong answers and all the information gathered will be kept confidential and only will be studied for the Dissertation's development.

This questionnaire has a duration of approximately 5 minutes. Please answer in an honest and correct way.

Thank you for your attention and collaboration in this project! 😊

Section 1 – General Questions

1. Do you usually use social media platforms?

- Yes
- No

If the person answered Yes, followed to the next question. Otherwise, was directly to the end of the survey.

2. Which social media platforms do you use the most? Please rank the list below in terms of your utilization/preference.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- WhatsApp
- YouTube
- Other: _____

Section 2 – Social Media influencers

3. Do you follow (or used to follow in the past) any Influencer on social media platforms?

- Yes
- No

If the person answered Yes, followed to the next question. Otherwise, was directly to the end of the section.

4. On average, how many influencers do you follow?

- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- More than 9

5. In which social media platform do you follow the influencer you mentioned?

6. Which product categories they promote?

- Beauty products (makeup, perfumes, creams, etc...)
- Food products (dietetics, drinks/soft drinks, etc ...)
- Leisure and Hospitality (travel, hotels, restaurants, etc ...)
- Fashion (clothing, footwear)
- Other: _____

Section 3 a) – Low involvement product - Makeup



7. Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 (Extremely disagree) to 7 (Completely agree).

	Extremely Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Completely Agree
I attach great importance to this product	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This product interests me a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It gives me pleasure to purchase this product	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Ana

Garcia Martins is a Portuguese blogger and writer. She created her own blog called “*A Pipoca Mais Doce*” in 2003, and since then she is recognized as being an influencer promoting a broad range of products, such as food, clothes as cosmetics.

8. Have you ever heard about the influencer presented above?

- Yes
- No

If the person answered Yes, followed to the next question. Otherwise, was directly to question 10.

9. Do you follow “A Pipoca Mais Doce” in any social media platform?

- Yes
- No

10. On a scale from 1 (Not familiar at all) to 7 (Very familiar), please rate how familiar are you with this influencer.

	Not familiar at all	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar
How familiar are you with the influencer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source Credibility Dimensions, and Purchase intentions

11. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of attractiveness.

Unattractive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Attractive
Not classy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Classy
Ugly	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Beautiful
Plain	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Elegant
Not Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Sexy

12. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of trustworthiness

Untrustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Trustworthy
Undependable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Dependable
Dishonest	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Honest
Unreliable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Reliable
Insincere	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Sincere

13. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of expertise.

Not expert	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Expert
Inexperienced	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Experienced
Unknowledgeable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledgeable
Unqualified	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Qualified
Unskilled	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Skilled

14. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of popularity

Unpopular	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Popular
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Unsuccessful
 Submissive
 Follower
 Introvert



Successful
 Dominating
 Leader
 Extrovert

In this section of the survey you will be presented with 2 posts of *Pipoca Mais Doce* on Instagram. In the 2 posts, the influencer is promoting beauty products.

Please take a look at the following pictures of the posts and take the necessary time to answer carefully the questions.



(Extremely disagree),
 (Extremely disagree).

on
 to 7

Extremely Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Completely Agree
--------------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------------	----------------	-------	------------------

I definitely intend to buy the product promoted by the influencer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is likely that I would consider buying the product promoted by the influencer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am willing to buy the product promoted by the influencer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3 b) – High involvement product – Skin Treatment



7.

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 (Extremely disagree) to 7 (Completely agree).

	Extremely Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Completely Agree
I attach great importance to this product	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This product interests me a lot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It gives me pleasure to purchase this product	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Ana

Garcia Martins is a Portuguese blogger and writer. She created her own blog called “*A Pipoca Mais Doce*” in 2003, and since then she is recognized as being an influencer promoting a broad range of products, such as food, clothes as cosmetics.

8. Have you ever heard about the influencer presented above?

- Yes
- No

If the person answered Yes, followed to the next question. Otherwise, was directly to question 10.

9. Do you follow “A Pipoca Mais Doce” in any social media platform?

- Yes
- No

10. On a scale from 1 (Not familiar at all) to 7 (Very familiar), please rate how familiar are you with this influencer.

	Not familiar at all	2	3	4	5	6	Very familiar
How familiar are you with the influencer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source Credibility Dimensions and Purchase intentions

11. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of attractiveness.

Unattractive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Attractive
Not classy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Classy
Ugly	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Beautiful
Plain	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Elegant
Not Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Sexy

12. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of trustworthiness

Untrustworthy	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Trustworthy
Undependable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Dependable
Dishonest	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Honest
Unreliable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Reliable
Insincere	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Sincere

13. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of expertise.

Not expert	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Expert
Inexperienced	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Experienced
Unknowledgeable	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledgeable
Unqualified	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Qualified
Unskilled	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Skilled

14. Please rate how do you perceive the influencer mentioned above in terms of popularity

Unpopular	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Popular
Unsuccessful	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Successful
Submissive	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Dominating
Follower	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Leader

Introvert

○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○

Extrovert

In this section of the survey you will be presented with 2 posts of *Pipoca Mais Doce* on Instagram. In the 2 posts, the influencer is promoting a Skin Treatment.

Please take a look at the following pictures of the posts and take the necessary time to answer carefully the questions.



Gostos: 1 965 outras pessoas

apipocamaisdoce Já aqui tinha dito que, entre outras coisas, 2019 vai ser o ano para tratar da pele. A pessoa não vai para nova, a gravidade não perdoa e sinto a minha pele aos gritos todos os dias, tipo "FAZ ALGUMA COISA! Achas que estás a caminhar para nova, achas? Não estás! Já estiveste mais longe de começar a dar no Cogumelo do Tempo". E pronto, resolvi agir. Depois da primeira consulta de diagnóstico no centro de estética da Well's, o veredicto final ditou o tratamento mais adequado para a minha pele, o Hidralight. São seis a nove sessões de 40 minutos e que misturam técnicas tão variadas como a fototerapia, vacuodrenagem, dermoabrasão, microvibração ultrassónica e mesoterapia não invasiva. Logo na primeira sessão senti a pele muito diferente. A desgraçada estava praticamente a morrer à sede e levou um boost de hidratação, ficou logo com outro ar. Se também sentem a vossa pele a pedir socorro, passem num centro de estética da Well's para uma consulta de diagnóstico gratuita e aproveitem o desconto de 25% que tenho para vos oferecer em tratamentos de rosto nos centros de estética Well's. Basta utilizarem o código PIPOCA até 31 de Janeiro. #centroesteticaawells #wells #tratamentosrostowells #hidralight @wells_oficial



Gostos: 2 199 outras pessoas

apipocamaisdoce Eu gostava muito de ser uma daquelas duas pessoas no mundo que acordam com uma pele absolutamente magnífica e resplandecente. Não é o caso. Na verdade, já noto (BASTANTE) os sinais do tempo, por isso é preciso começar a fazer alguma coisa. Fui a uma consulta de avaliação num centro de estética na Well's e confirmei o que já sabia: pele a gritar por hidratação e intervenção urgente. Foi-me recomendado o tratamento Hidralight, que ajuda a hidratar a pele e a repor a luminosidade. Se sentem que também está na hora de tratarem de vocês, aproveitem o desconto de 25% que tenho para vos oferecer em tratamentos de rosto nos centros de estética Well's. Basta utilizarem o código PIPOCA até 15 de Janeiro. Aproveitem! #centroesteticaawells #wells #tratamentosrostowells #hidralight @wells_oficial

Ver todos os 8 comentários
20 DE DEZEMBRO DE 2018

s on a

scale from 1 (Extremely disagree) to 7 (Extremely

disagree).

	Extremely Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Completely Agree
I definitely intend to buy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

the product promoted by the influencer							
It is likely that I would consider buying the product promoted by the influencer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am willing to buy the product promoted by the influencer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 4 – Socio-Demographic Questions

You are at the last section of the survey. Before ending, please answer some demographic questions.

16. Please indicate your gender.

- Male
- Female
- Other

17. Please indicate your age.

- Younger than 18
- 18-24
- 25-35
- 36-50
- Older than 51

18. What is your Nationality? _____

19. In which country do you live right now? _____

20. What is your occupation?

- Student
- Student-Worker

- Worker
- Retired
- Unemployed
- Other: _____

21. Please indicate the maximum level of school degree

- No degree
- Primary degree
- High school degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional's degree
- Doctorate

Thank you for your time!

Appendix 3. Survey statistics

Survey Demographics

Table 19. Demographic statistics: age, gender, school degree and nationality

Statistic	N	Mean	SD	Min	Pctl (25)	Pctl (75)	Max
Gender	1,925	1,98	0.139	1	2	2	3
Age	1,925	2,79	0.793	1	2	3	5
School Degree	1,925	4,16	0,864	2	4	5	8

Table 20. Frequencies: age, gender, school degree and nationality

Age		Nationality	
Younger than 18	4.6%	Angolan	0,1%
18-24	29.4%	Australian	0.05%
25-35	49.7%	Brazilian	0.1%
36-50	15.3%	German	0.1%
Older than 51	1.1%	Luxembourgish	0.05%
Total	100%	Portuguese	99.3%
		North American	0.1%
		Swiss	0.1%
		South African	0.05%
		Spanish	0.05%
		Total	100%

Gender		School Degree	
Male	1.9%	No degree	0%
Female	98%	Primary degree	0.5%
Other	0.1%	High school degree	20.9%
Total	100%	Bachelor's degree	46.1%
		Master's degree	28.7%
		Professional's degree	2.2%
		Doctorate	1.2%
		Other	0.4%
		Total	100%

Occupation	
Student	22.8%
Worker	64.3%
Retired	0.1%
Unemployed	3.1%
Student and Worker	8.6%
Other	1.1%
Total	100%

Social Media Statistics

Table 21. Descriptives

Statistic	N	Mean	S.D	Min	Pctl (25)	Pctl (75)	Max
Do you follow (or used to follow in the past) any influencer on social media platforms?	1,925	1.02	0.126	1	1	1	2
On average, how many influencers do you follow?	1,895	2.90	1.111	1	2	4	4

Table 22. Frequencies

Do you follow (or used to follow in the past) any influencer on social media platforms?					
		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	1894	98.4	98.4	98.4
	No	31	1.6	1.6	100
Missing	System	0	0	0	
Total		1925	100	100	

On average, how many influencers do you follow?					
		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	1-3	247	12.8	13.0	13.0
	4-6	530	27.5	28.0	41.0
	7-9	281	14.6	14.8	55.9
	More than 9	836	43.4	44.1	100
	Total	1894	98.4	100	
Missing	System	31	1.6		
Total		1925	100		

Appendix 4. Descriptives and Measurement items statistics

Table 23. Construct measures and estimates

Construct	Measurement items	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	P-value	Cronbach's Alpha
Product involvement	I attach great importance to this product	4.86	1.561	136.661	1924	0.0000	0.888
	This product interests me a lot	4.89	1.546	138.878	1924	0.0000	
	It gives me pleasure to purchase this product	4.52	1.682	118.090	1924	0.0000	
Credibility	Unattractive - Attractive	5.43	1.417	168.024	1924	0.0000	0.904
	Not Classy – Classy	5.71	1.439	174.078	1924	0.0000	
	Ugly – Beautiful	5.34	1.554	150.383	1924	0.0000	
	Plain – Elegant	5.73	1.367	183.934	1924	0.0000	
	Not Sexy - Sexy	4.89	1.495	143.639	1924	0.0000	
	Untrustworthy – Trustworthy	5.68	1.471	169.409	1924	0.0000	
Undependable – Dependable	5.83	1.431	178.909	1924	0.0000		
Dishonest – Honest	5.82	1.447	176.538	1924	0.0000		
Unreliable – Reliable	5.74	1.475	170.930	1924	0.0000		
Insincere - Sincere	5.74	1.480	170.301	1924	0.0000		
Credibility	Not expert – Expert	5.66	1.415	175.543	1924	0.0000	0.970
	Inexperienced – Experienced	5.80	1.424	178.766	1924	0.0000	
	Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable	5.80	1.413	180.122	1924	0.0000	
	Unqualified – Qualified	5.68	1.460	170.758	1924	0.0000	
	Unskilled – Skilled	5.71	1.455	180.122	1924	0.0000	
	Unpopular – Popular	6.30	1.357	203.575	1924	0.0000	
Unsuccessful – Successful	6.30	1.344	205.689	1924	0.0000		
Submissive – Dominating	5.69	1.507	165.559	1924	0.0000		
Follower – Leader	5.87	1.366	188.539	1924	0.0000		
Introvert – Extrovert	6.23	1.399	195.463	1924	0.0000		
Purchase intention	I intent to buy the product promoted by the influencer	3.35	1.652	88.908	1924	0.0000	0.883
	It is likely that I would consider buying the product promoted by the influencer	3.93	1.708	100.826	1924	0.0000	
	I am willing to buy the product promoted by the influencer	3.63	1.643	96.915	1924	0.0000	

S.D.: standard deviation

Appendix 5. Principal Component Analysis

Table 24. Total variance explained

Component	Total Variance Explained								
	Initial Eighenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of variance	% Cumulative	Total	% of variance	Cumulative	Total	% of variance	% Cumulative
1	13.133	50.510	50.510	13.133	50.510	50.510	4.349	16.726	16.726
2	3.303	12.703	63.213	3.303	12.703	63.213	4.222	16.237	32.963
3	1.617	6.218	69.431	1.617	6.218	69.431	3.992	15.352	48.315
4	1.354	5.208	74.639	1.354	5.208	74.639	3.945	15.174	63.489
5	1.085	4.174	78.813	1.085	4.174	78.813	2.524	9.706	73.196
6	1.063	4.088	82.900	1.063	4.088	82.900	2.523	9.705	82.900
7	0.458	1.763	84.663						
8	0.415	1.597	86.261						
9	0.380	1.462	87.722						
10	0.343	1.320	89.043						
11	0.316	1.214	90.256						
12	0.310	1.192	91.448						
13	0.260	1.001	92.449						
14	0.252	0.967	93.417						
15	0.240	0.924	94.341						
16	0.222	0.853	95.194						
17	0.206	0.974	95.987						
18	0.197	0.757	96.744						
19	0.172	0.662	97.406						
20	0.167	0.644	98.050						
21	0.114	0.437	98.488						
22	0.108	0.415	98.903						
23	0.088	0.340	99.242						
24	0.083	0.320	99.562						
25	0.066	0.252	99.814						
26	0.048	0.186	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Appendix 6. Normality tests

Table 25 a) First Factor – Product involvement

Construct		Descriptives		Statistic	S.E.	
Low involvement		Mean		4.9460	0.04305	
		95% Confidence	Lower Bound	4.8615	-	
		Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.0305	-	
		5% Trimmed Mean		5.0163	-	
		Median		5	-	
		Variance		1.820	-	
		Standard Deviation		1.34918	-	
		Minimum		1	-	
		Maximum		7	-	
		Range		6	-	
		Interquartile range		2	-	
		Skewness		-0.656	0.078	
		Kurtosis		0.181	0.156	
	Product involvement		Mean		4.5664	0.04925
			95% Confidence	Lower Bound	4.4697	-
		Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	4.6630	-	
		5% Trimmed Mean		4.6190	-	
		Median		4.6667	-	
		Variance		2.289	-	
		Standard Deviation		1.51309	-	
		Minimum		1	-	
		Maximum		7	-	
		Range		6	-	
		Interquartile range		2.33	-	
		Skewness		-0.511	0.080	
		Kurtosis		-0.399	0.159	

S.E.: standard error

Table 25 b) Second Factor – Average Attractiveness

		Descriptives		
Construct			Statistic	S.E.
Low involvement	Mean		5.4320	0.03985
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.3538	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.5102	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		4.5399	-
	Median		5.60	-
	Variance		1.559	-
	Standard Deviation		1.24875	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1.40	-
	Skewness		-1.150	0.078
	Kurtosis		1.807	0.156
Attractiveness	Mean		5.4013	0.04012
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.3225	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.4800	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		5.4899	-
	Median		5.6	-
	Variance		1.520	-
	Standard Deviation		1.23281	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1.60	-
	Skewness		-0.846	0.080
	Kurtosis		0.786	0.159

S.E.: standard error

Table 25 c) Third Factor – Average Trustworthiness

		Descriptives		
Construct			Statistic	S.E.
Low involvement	Mean		5.8725	0.04488
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.7844	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.9606	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		6.0577	-
	Median		6.2	-
	Variance		1.978	-
	Standard Deviation		1.40625	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1.60	-
	Skewness		-1.769	0.078
	Kurtosis		3.129	0.156
	Trustworthiness	Mean		5.8015
95% Confidence		Lower Bound	5.7146	-
Interval for Mean		Upper Bound	5.8884	-
5% Trimmed Mean			5.9565	-
Median			6	-
Variance			1.8520	-
Standard Deviation			1.36079	-
Minimum			1	-
Maximum			7	-
Range			6	-
Interquartile range			1.80	-
Skewness			-1.477	0.080
Kurtosis			2.140	0.159

S.E.: standard error

Table 25 d) Fourth Factor – Average Expertise

		Descriptives		
Construct			Statistic	S.E.
Low involvement	Mean		5.6640	0.04313
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.5793	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.7486	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		5.8210	-
	Median		6	-
	Variance		1.827	-
	Standard Deviation		1.35149	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1.80	-
	Skewness		-1.560	0.078
	Kurtosis		2.729	0.156
Expertise	Mean		5.6506	0.04371
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.5649	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	5.7364	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		5.7884	-
	Median		6	-
	Variance		1.803	-
	Standard Deviation		1.34290	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		2	-
	Skewness		-1.283	0.080
	Kurtosis		1.631	0.159

S.E.: standard error

Table 25 e) Fifth Factor – Average Popularity

		Descriptives		
Construct			Statistic	S.E.
Low involvement	Mean		6.1071	0.04014
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	6.0284	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	6.1859	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		6.3066	-
	Median		6.4	-
	Variance		1.582	-
	Standard Deviation		1.25797	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1	-
	Skewness		-2.510	-
	Kurtosis		6.742	-
Popularity	Mean		6.0434	0.04030
	95% Confidence	Lower Bound	5.9643	-
	Interval for Mean	Upper Bound	6.12225	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		6.2218	-
	Median		6.4000	-
	Variance		1.5330	-
	Standard Deviation		1.23825	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		1.20	-
	Skewness		-2.203	0.080
	Kurtosis		5.425	0.159

S.E.: standard error

Table 25 f) Sixth Factor – Purchase intention

Construct		Descriptives		
			Statistic	S.E.
Low involvement	Mean		3.7895	0.04726
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	3.6968	-
		Upper Bound	3.8823	-
	5% Trimmed Mean		3.8070	-
	Median		4	-
	Variance		2.194	-
	Standard Deviation		1.48113	-
	Minimum		1	-
	Maximum		7	-
	Range		6	-
	Interquartile range		2.33	-
	Skewness		-0.286	0.080
	Kurtosis		-0.768	0.156
	Purchase intention	Mean		3.4696
95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Lower Bound	3.3733	-
		Upper Bound	3.5660	-
5% Trimmed Mean			3.4517	-
Median			3.6667	-
Variance			2.275	-
Standard Deviation			1.50840	-
Minimum			1	-
Maximum			7	-
Range			6	-
Interquartile range			2.67	-
Skewness			0.077	0.080
Kurtosis			-0.944	0.159

S.E.: standard error

Appendix 7. Correlation Analysis

Table 26. Pearson Correlation's Analysis

		Pearson Correlation				
		Expertise	Trustworthiness	Attractiveness	Popularity	Purchase Intention
Expertise	Pearson Correlation	1	0.783**	0.676**	0.730**	0.222**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	1925	1925	1925	1925	1925
Trustworthiness	Pearson Correlation	0.783**	1	0.679**	0.731**	0.255**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	-	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	1925	1925	1925	1925	1925
Attractiveness	Pearson Correlation	0.676**	0.679**	1	0.633**	0.236**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	-	0.000	0.000
	N	1925	1925	1925	1925	1925
Popularity	Pearson Correlation	0.730**	0.731**	0.633**	1	0.147**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	-	0.000
	N	1925	1925	1925	1925	1925
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	0.222**	0.255**	0.236**	0.147**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	-
	N	1925	1925	1925	1925	1925

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

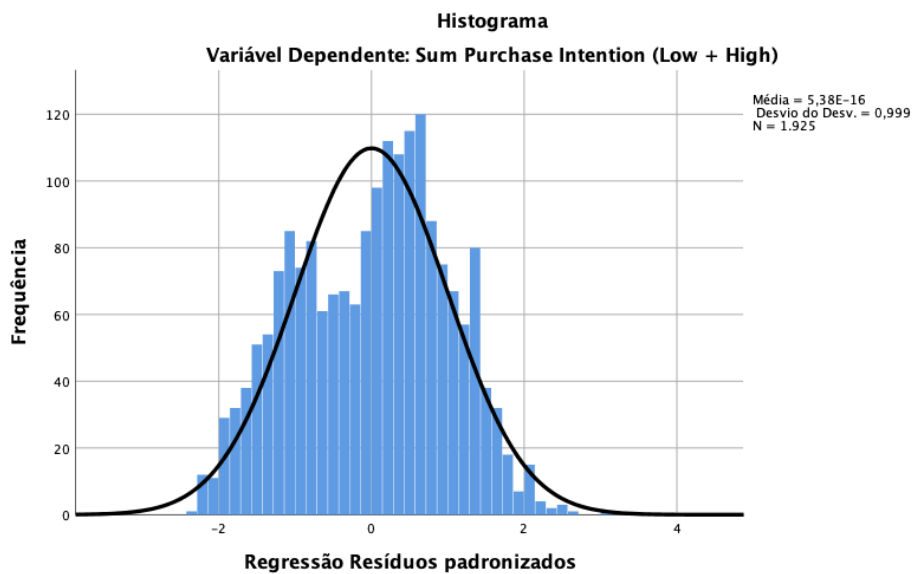
Appendix 8. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression assumptions.

1. The normality assumption states that error term is normally distributed;
2. The mean of error is zero ($E[\{\{\varepsilon_i\}\}] = 0$);
3. The constant variance assumption states that variance of error term is a constant and is independent of the values of X;
4. The independence assumption states that error terms are independent of each other;
5. The values of the independent variable X are fixed (non-stochastic X).

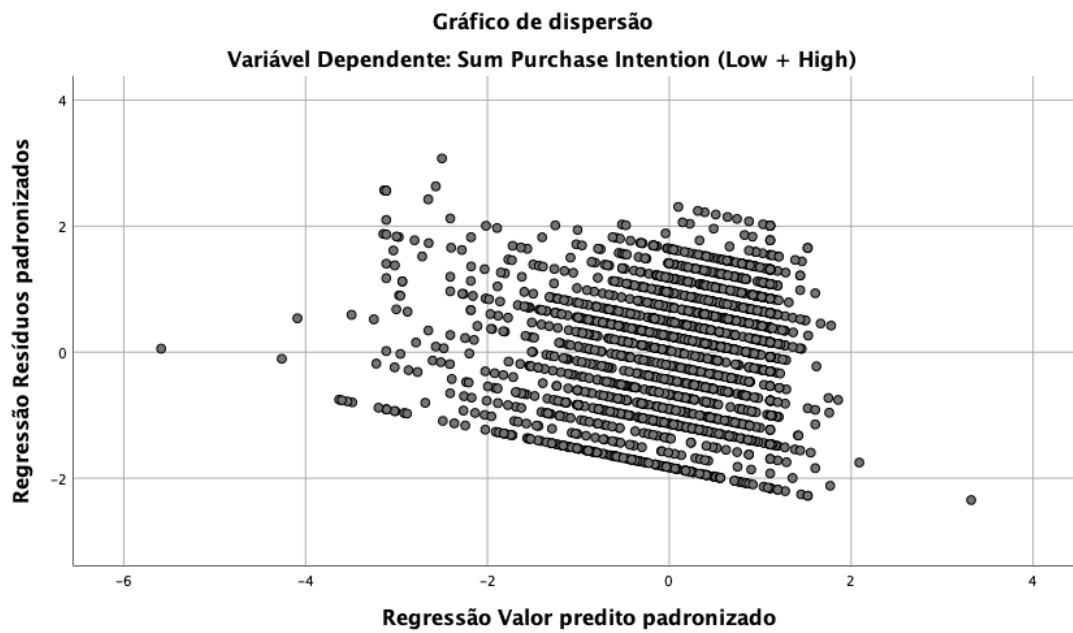
Checking the assumption of error normally distributed

Graph 1. Histogram



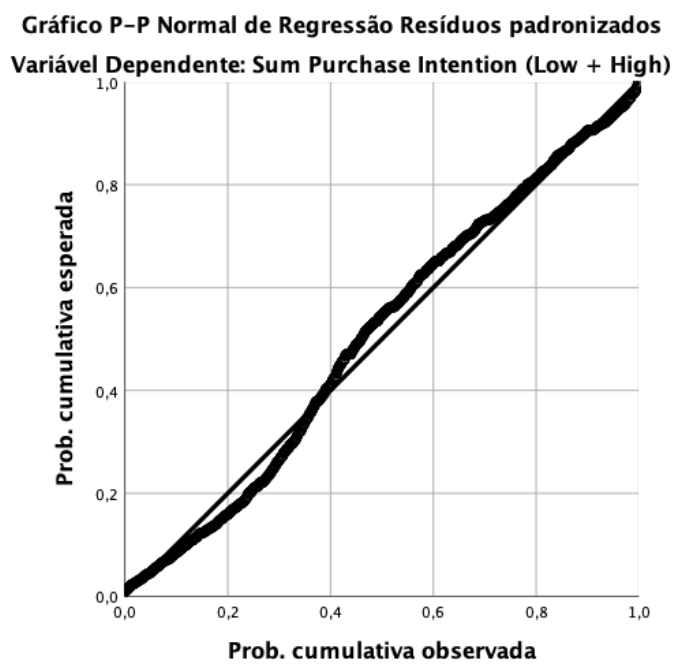
Checking the assumption of constant variance of the error term

Graph 2. Dispersion



Checking the independence assumption

Graph 3. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual



Low involvement product

Table 27 a) Multiple linear regression – Model Summary

Model Summary				
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	S.E. of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
0.279 ^a	0.078	0.074	1.425	1.950

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b: Predictors: (Constant), Popularity, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness

Table 27 b) Multiple linear regression – ANOVA Table

ANOVA^a					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	166.939	4	87.405	20.540	0.000 ^b
Residual	1985.122	977	2.032		
Total	2152.062	981			

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b: Predictors: (Constant), Popularity, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness

Table 27 c) Multiple linear regression – Table of Coefficients

Coefficients^a					
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	S.E.	β		
(Constant)	2.433	0.236	-	10.292	0.000
Expertise	0.128	0.062	0.117	2.047	0.041
Attractiveness	0.156	0.054	0.132	2.891	0.004
Trustworthiness	0.217	0.062	0.206	3.506	0.000
Popularity	-0.244	0.060	-0.207	-4.073	0.000

S.E.: standard error

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention

High involvement product

Table 28 a) Multiple linear regression – Model Summary

Model Summary				
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	S.E. of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
0.303 ^a	0.092	0.088	1.441	1.871

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b: Predictors: (Constant), Popularity, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness

Table 28 b). Multiple linear regression – ANOVA Table

ANOVA^a					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	196.810	4	49.202	23.708	0.000 ^b
Residual	1948.764	939	2.075		
Total	2145.574	943			

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention

b: Predictors: (Constant), Popularity, Attractiveness, Expertise, Trustworthiness

Table 28 c) Multiple linear regression – Table of Coefficients

	Coefficients^a				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	β	S.E.	β		
(Constant)	1.540	0.249	-	6.185	0.000
Expertise	0.033	0.061	0.030	0.546	0.585
Attractiveness	0.186	0.056	0.152	3.373	0.001
Trustworthiness	0.244	0.059	0.220	4.161	0.000
Popularity	-0.112	0.060	-0.092	-1.881	0.060

S.E.: standard error

a: Dependent variable: Purchase intention