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THE IMPACT OF SNAPCHAT MAKEUP INFLUENCERS ON THE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA: THE CASE OF SEPHORA

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ABSTRACT
Social media has a very important role in today's marketing practices, where companies use a variety of social media platforms to build brand awareness, and engage with consumers that also know that social media marketing refers to the process of gaining traffic or attention through social media platforms. The impact of Snapchat on the brands, social media influencers and consumers behavior in the makeup industry cannot underestimate. The purpose of this study is to measure the level of influence a Snapchat makeup influencers has on female college student's consumption decisions/habits in KSA in order to raise awareness of their over-consumption for makeup products. This study has combined qualitative and quantitative data, for a deeper analysis and understanding of this problem. An online questionnaire survey was conducted among the female student from Effat University in Jeddah and Alfaisal University in Riyadh and a total of 112 female students had participated. The results indicated a positive influence of Snapchat influencers on students" consumption behavior.
Keywords: Social media, Snapchat, makeup influencers, makeup products

INTRODUCTION

Social media revolution has altered the lives of many Saudis, since statistics show that there are 11 million active social media accounts in KSA, 10 million are being accessed via mobile phones from the total population 31.85 million (Statics, 2016) and the major driving forces behind the rise of social media in the country are its youthful population who are embracing newer technologies with great enthusiasm. The internet technology was critical in ensuring that word-of-mouth did undergo transformation with the introduction of the online customer review. Evidently, integration of the social media really took this idea to the next level through encouragement of the users to integrate their friend's opinions into the purchasing process (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003).

Nowadays, Snapchat base in the kingdom is growing fast and becoming very popular unlike other social platforms. According to Al-Fawaz (2016), Snapchat use has been on the increase, especially among the Saudis in 2016. There are 70% of Snapchat users in the kingdom are women and around 45% are aged between 18- 24 years old (AL-Ruwaili, 2016). The majority of its users are from millennial generation, this is because it's simple and highly visual interface. Snapchat rapidly gaining widespread popularity has created an incredible opportunity for companies and brands to look for new ways to increase brand awareness, promote merchandise and target younger, engaged consumers, through working with Snapchat content providers, many of whom appeal to the millennial generation. In addition to capturing the attention of younger audiences, brands are partnering with Snapchat influencers to take advantage of the applications high levels of engagement and visibility, meaning when a user opens the app to watch a Snapchatter's story on their smartphone, the picture or video occupies their entire screen.

Snapchat enables business practitioners to send content directly to the individual followers. The approach is essential in offering business entities to have the vital power in sending messages directly to the consumers (Dobies & Nelson, 2016). Moreover, the social networking tool such as Snapchat is vital in encouraging transparency while providing exclusive content for the involvement on the website. Snapchat is valuable in enabling the organizations to enhance their market coverage with reference to the brand at the disposal of the consumers (Zhang & Pennacchiotti, 2013). They tend to achieve that through a collaborating with influencers "snapchatters" and create campaigns.

According to Zaryouni (2015), Sephora has been able to integrate Snapchat in the midst of the influencers in the course of enhancing the awareness of its brand among the target audiences and consumers. Moreover, the institution was able to use word-of-mouth in the course of becoming the go-to make-up place for the consumers (Lee, 2015). This is through enabling consumers to play vital role in shaping their shopping experience.

Furthermore, this makes Snapchat one of the major platforms that have a huge influence with not only brands, but the way these market their products/services to their consumers who use this platform. As a result, Snapchat has influenced and impacted the consumer's behavior, perception, and attitude either positively or negatively. Therefore, this study identifies the effect of Snapchat makeup brand influencers on affecting the consumption decisions/habits of female students in Saudi Arabia.

METHODOLOGY
The primary data of this study is collected through conducted a survey over internet using email due to its faster, cheaper and quicker analysis. The sample size is targeted to be at least 100 female participants who live in Jeddah and Riyadh. Besides that, this study will also contain secondary data was collection from existing sources like journal, articles, internet database and media.

Quantitative method is a demonstration of the study by collecting numerical data, and objectively comparable relationships. In other terms the main purpose of this method that it allows the researcher to generalize the specific sample result to an entire population of interest and assess the various views, considerations and opinions in a given sample. Qualitative method is conducted on literature review.

In this research, quantitative data will be collected via surveys distributed online via Google Forms. This approach is significant because it provides huge and solid base of insights.

This study will be targeting female college students in both Jeddah and Riyadh. The students will be selected randomly from two universities in Jeddah and Riyadh, namely Effat University and Alfaisal University. These two universities were chosen because the students are from diversity in backgrounds and ethnics. In addition, the students are from different social classes and purchasing power. Thus, there are about 112 students have successfully completed the survey.

Designing the Questionnaire
- Questionnaire (12 questions).

Questionnaire is a data-collecting instrument, which provides variety of responses and opinions from the targeted group. Since, this will help in analyzing the collected data. This survey questionnaire was developed for the purpose of collecting information about female college students" and their usage for social media platforms, specifically Snapchat focus on the influence through the use of makeup influencers on these students" purchasing decisions/habits. A total of 12 questionnaire questions are designed for the survey.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The survey was conducted online through emails among female college students from Effat University and Alfaisal University. There are 112 students have completed the survey. Table 1 tabulates the characteristic of the participants. There are 75 participants are from Jeddah and 37 participants are from Riyadh. Majority of the participants about 43.75% are from 22 to 24 years old. There are 35.71% and 20.54% of the participants are from age group of 20 to 21 years old and 18 to 19 years old respectively.

Table 1: Background of the participants

Characteristic	Criteria	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age groups	18 to 19 years old	23	20.53571
	20 to 21 years old	40	35.71429
	22 to 24 years old	49	43.75
Place of study	Jeddah	75	66.96429
	Riyadh	37	33.03571

Fig. 1 shows that majority of the participants about 66% using Snapchat several times per day. There are 13%, 7% and 4 % of the participants reported they only use Snapchat once per day, several times per week and once per week respectively. Only 10% of the participants admit they use Snapchat less than once per week.

Among the 112 participants, there are 72.3% of the participant have follow makeup influencers and about 27.7% of the participants does not follow. Moreover, Fig. 2 shows about 54% of the participants follow one to two makeup influencers, 26% of the participants follow three to four makeup influencers and 20% of the participants follow more than five makeup influencers
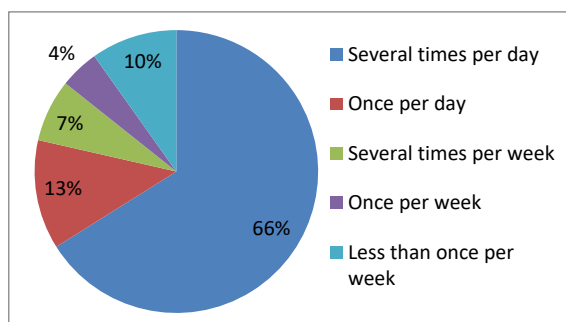

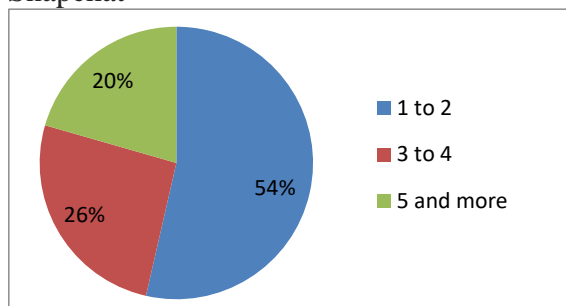Fig. 1. The frequency of the student using Snapchat

Fig. 2. The number of the followed makeup influencers

Fig. 3 outlines several main attributes that let to follow on the Snapchat makeup influencers. The highest percentages of attributes are 59% and 57% which refer to creative content (Such as tutorials) and entertainment respectively. Besides that, the attributes of instant updates (keep up with market and trends), real-life experience, product/ service review and various of information and opinions contribute by 50%, 48%, 46% and 45% respectively. Lastly, the attributes of credibility, transparency and promotions contribute by 16%, 13% and 11% respectively.
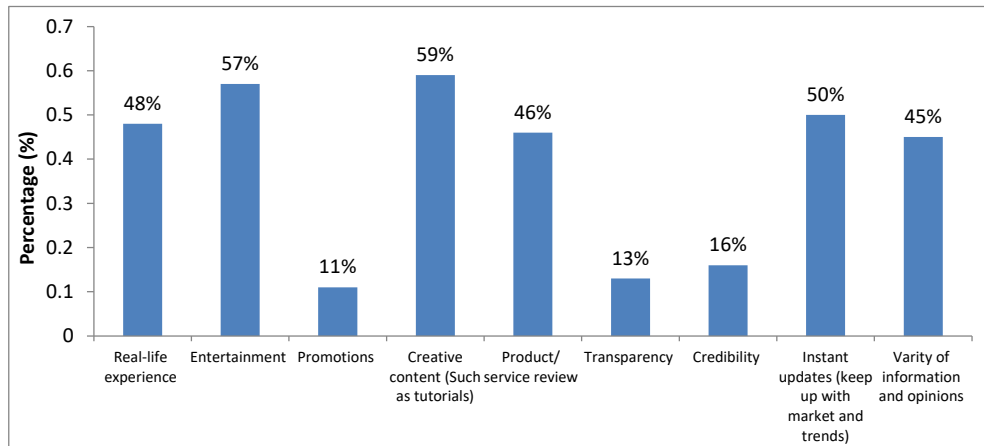
Fig. 3. The main attribute that let to follow the Snapchat makeup influencers

Fig. 4 indicates the participant's response upon their purchase behaviors. There are 37% of the participants agree that they spend too much money on makeup products, while 34% disagreed and about 29% is natural. Next, majority about 50% of the participants love trying/buying new trendy makeup products with high reviews, while 15% of the participants disagreed. Subsequently, about 49% of the participants feel that they end up buying something that doesn't work for them, while 28% of the participants feel that they have buying something that work for them well. Moreover, there are 63% of the participants only buy the makeup products whenever run out of it, while there are 23% disagreed with it.
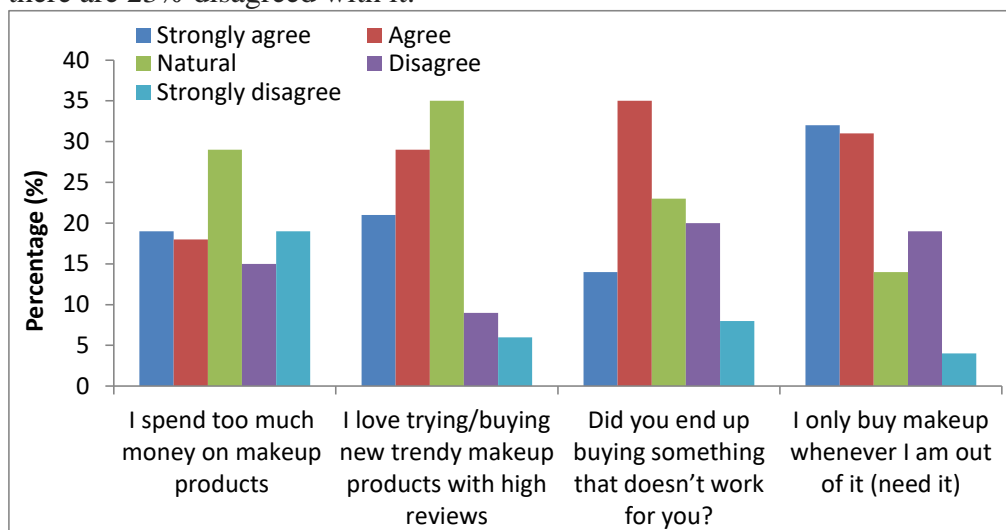

Fig. 4. Participant's response upon their purchase behaviors

Fig. 5 illustrates the intensity of recommendation of the participants to their fiends regarding the Snapchat makeup influences. About 74% of the participant would recommend Snapchat makeup influencers to their friend, while 26% does not.

Fig. 6 shows that about 67% of the participants often purchase what has been recommended by the Snapchat makeup influencers, while 33% of the participants do not trust any recommendation by the influencers.
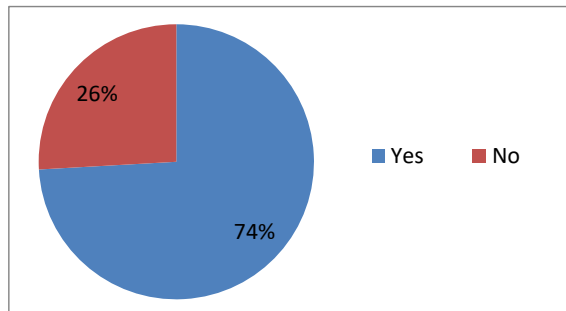
Fig. 5. The intensity of recommendation to fiends regarding the Snapchat makeup influences
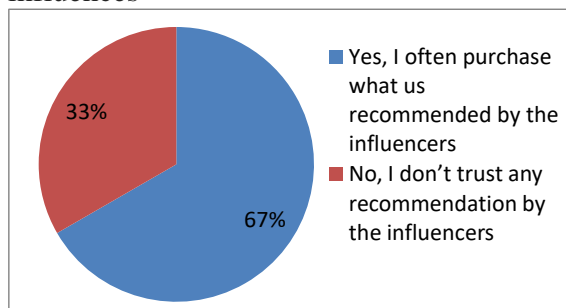

Fig. 6. The impacts of the Snapchat influencer toward the purchasing habits

Fig. 7 shows there are about 66.1% of the participants agreed that Sephora is a shopping destination for their makeup products and 33.9% does not agreed. The reasons of the participant, who thinks Sephora is a good shopping place for their makeup product and accessories are good price, products are reliable, new and best products always available, multi brands in one place, special promotions and gifts for Sephora card holders and also recommended by most of the Snapchat makeup influencers.

The reasons that some of the participants not consider Sephora as a shopping destination for their makeup products, which are high price, certain brand is not available such as "mac" and some exclusive products are always out of stock. Besides that, they also prefer to try different places not just one place or even purchase their preferable product online. Lastly, there are some participant not really pend much on makeup

Fig. 8 shows the occurrence of participants visiting Sephora after watching Snapchat makeup influencers. There are 57% of the participants will visiting Sephora after watching Snapchat makeup influencers for 1 to 5 times in the last 6 months, 29% for 1 to 5 times in the last 3 months and 14% for 1 to 5 times in the last month.
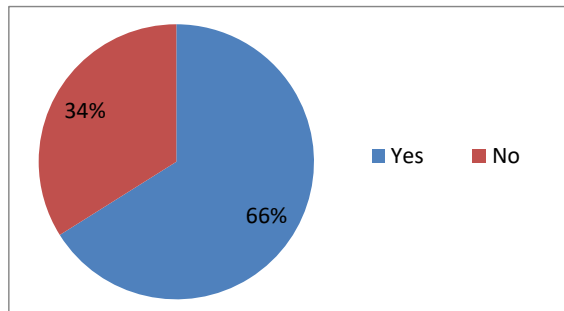
Fig. 7. Participants consider Sephora is a shopping destination for their makeup products
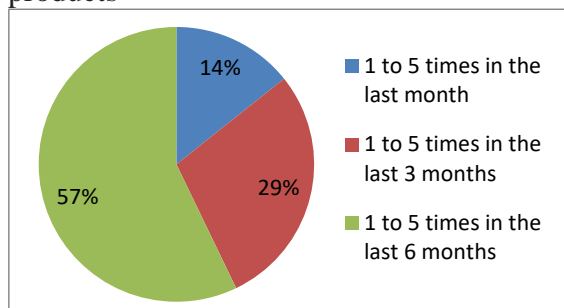

Fig. 8. The occurrence of visiting Sephora after watching Snapchat makeup influencers

The first objective of this study is to understand the relationship between word-of-mouth and influencer marketing. These two concepts are like a connected chain that leads to what is called buzz marketing. Since those influencers are experts in a specific field, brands tend to use them to market their products to their targeted segment through reaching to the influencer's followers who have a strong relationship with the influencer through the medium of social media platforms. Furthermore, this specific audience will start to talk about the product on the influencer's account to their friends and family, thus what they're doing is "word-of-mouth".

The second objective is to also understand the relationship between the influencers and their use of Snapchat as their marketing tool. The results have shown that the main reason is because it's important for those influencers to utilize all of the social media since this will increase their social media presence; this will increase their number of followers. This will also benefit their own business which is their "branded name" that they have built in the market, leading them to be valuable to the brands that would most likely promote with them through Snapchat.

The third objective is the actual impact of Snapchat influencers on international brands. The result is a significant increase of revenues and profits especially in the makeup industry. So, using Snapchat along with known influencers as a marketing strategy is very effective and efficient in terms of cost (Peterson, 2015).

Fourth objective is to investigate why female college students in Jeddah and Riyadh are following these makeup Snapchat influences. The survey results indicated that around 59% of students find that creative content such as tutorials are the most important followed by entertainment. Then 50% agree on instant updates of trends and real-life experience. Lastly, about 46% consider product/service reviews are one of the main attributes. All of these are essential for a Snapchat influencer.

The fifth and last objectives of this study are to determine the effect of Snapchat makeup influencers on the consumption behavior and habits of female college students. The results show that more than half of the respondents are influenced and often purchase what is recommended by the influencers. This can be understood since Saudi women have the tendency to spend more on cosmetics (Brennan & Schafer, 2010). Also survey respondents show that 37% strongly agree and agree that they spend a lot of money on makeup products and love buying new trendy makeup highly reviewed by 50% strongly agree and agree and 35% have neutral standing (sometimes). Additionally, this is also linked to the attributes that make these female students follow those Snapchat makeup influencers. Around 50% of respondents find that product/service reviews and instant updates of trends are important aspects when following a Snapchat makeup influencer.

In overall, about 72.3% of students follow makeup influencers and about54% follow a minimum of one to two influencers on their Snapchat account. Therefore, these influencers will surely impact those students. And about 60.7% are influenced positively, where they tend to buy what is recommended by them. Next, about 37% of the participants indicated that they are aware of their excessive spending on makeup products. But what they are not aware of is that they tend to consume and buy products that they end up not using, and only bought them just because they themselves were influenced by the influencers who promote new/ trendy makeup products. In addition, about 60% of the participants find Sephora as their makeup destination, since it is recommended by the influencers for all the promoted makeup products or attracted by something about Sephora from the makeup influencer account.

Conclusion
Many local and small companies in Saudi Arabia are still not considering Snapchat as a part of their marketing strategies especially considering how cost-efficient it is and has more of an impact on people, and specifically their purchasing behavior. Snapchat is the most leading platform in KSA that has been growing rapidly, practically among female college students, who are usually not easy to attract and engage with. However, brands could reach them through the use of Snapchat influencers. Since, this study has indicated the powerful and positive impact of the influencers on both the business itself and the costumers. It shows with the help of the influencers that the awareness of the brand has increased, along with the sales and revenues.

On the other hand, the influence of Snapchat, specifically in the makeup industry, has negatively affected the consumers buying habit, where they start to over consume makeup products that they end up not using. Therefore, this

study has shown the need to increase the awareness of these female college students in order to avoid being influenced by the Snapchat influencers, who promote products for the sake of increasing their followers' base, their value in the market, and to earn more commissions.

However, brands can prevent this from happening and still make a lot of profits and gain their costumers trust and loyalty that can be done through focusing on their content by making it more creative and appealing to female college students, by including educational and entertaining content such as tutorials and product reviews. Therefore, a marketing campaign in Snapchat must be designed in favor of the consumer rather than in increasing the sales.

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