The Impact of Social Media Influencers on
Consumer Brand Awareness and Consumer Perceived
Quality towards Brand Image

He Shu Kun

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN

FACULTY OF ACCOUNTANCY AND MANAGEMENT

April 2022

The impact of Social Media Influencers on
Consumer Brand Awareness and Consumer Perceived
Quality towards Brand Image

He Shu Kun

A research project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of

Master of Business Administration

Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman

Faculty of Accountancy and Management

April 2022

The impact of Social Media Influencers on Consumer Brand Awareness and Consumer Perceived Quality towards Brand Image

Written by

He Shu Kun

The research is supervised by:

Alexander Tay Guan Meng
Assistant Professor
Department of International Business
Faculty of Accountancy and Management

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

(1)   This Research Project is the end result of my own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the references to all sources of information be they printed, electronic, or personal.

(2)   No portion of this research project has been submitted in support of any application for any other degree or qualification of this or any other university, or other institutes of learning.

(3)   The word count of this research report is 9408 words.

Name of Student: He Shu Kun

Student ID: 21UKM03568

Signature: 何樹坤. HE, SHU-KUN

Date: 25/04/2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

ABSTRACT

In recent years, due to the development of information technology, many social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube have been transformed from the past function of simply providing entertainment to the public into the most effective advertising medium. Due to the high number of Internet users in Malaysia, it is very common for businesses to deliver advertisements through social media. Among them, social media influencer is one of the new occupations that have emerged under this trend. Social media influencers create entertaining content for the masses they follow, as well as creating ad-valued views. In view of this situation, it is very important for brand building to have a deep understanding of how the factors that affect the advertisements delivered by the browsing merchants on social media through the influencer will affect the audience. This study mainly explores how the feelings presented by the personal characteristics of social media influencers in Malaysia affect the audience's perception of advertising products and the effect of brand image building. This study uses quantitative research to investigate the relationship between social media influencers, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand image. The results show that social media influencers have a positive and significant effect on brand awareness and perceived quality; perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on brand image; brand awareness has no significant statistical level on brand image. The perceived quality has a mediating effect between social media influencer and brand image. It is shown that when using social media influencers to advertise products, the perceived quality will be an important factor for the effect of advertising and brand image establishment.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

As the popularization of social media, information technology continues to evolve and innovate at the same time. Unlike traditional media operation mode, social media has a huge different. From major brands to start-ups corporations, using social media establishing fan pages in purpose of selling products or services is a common marketing measure nowadays. Social media is regarded as one of the emerging marketing and communication tool on target customers. It's also a convenient tool and cheapest measure for start-ups or personal brands by creating fan pages to promote their own brand characteristics, shaping their brand image and build up own customer base. While there's such convenient environment, many social influencers also appear since then. Social influencers usually develop a distinctive characteristic compare to the public (Gorry and Westrbrook, 2009). Social media growing mature than ever before, most companies and enterprises have more alternative options on marketing strategies. Consumers nowadays observe their social network, even on other buyer fellows in purpose helping them to make their purchase act. Platform such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube accelerate influencers promote the brand or even destroy the brand, developing social media creates a well environment for influencer marketing.

Social influencers become one of the major public trend. Influencer marketing is a form of marketing means focusing on direct individuals and audiences rather spreading messages to public as informing to everyone. Social influencers change the way on how brands interact towards no matter with public, consumers and other brands, it is a new phenomenon strongly influences every people's lifestyle (Karen, Kristin, Karen G., and Laura, 2010). The main characteristic of social influencers are all independent that shape specific masses attitudes and opinion through Facebook, YouTube and other kinds of social media. Every branded products and services usually have their target consumers, which brand trying to promote interests, characteristic and needs to catch the eyes of them. How brand spokesperson truly effects specific audiences on brand plays an important role to build up well brand image.

While social media influencers have the power effect the public, they truly have the value for the business and marketing. Promoting product and spreading values are jobs brands always do. Each social media influencers have their own audience and might fit to specific brand's consumer. As the situation, social media influencer can create value towards the brand by promoting the brand's either product or values. During the value exchanging between social media influencer and brand, consumer might change the opinion towards brand through social media influencer. Perceived quality of the brand is how the potential consumer expect on brand's product or service. Brand awareness is how quickly comes to mind when one's mention a specific brand. Brand image are brand's characteristic in consumers' mind. Social media influencers provide value to brand by exposing brand to public, and it must change the relationship between consumer and brand. This research based on the front line, discussing how social media influencer effecting brand awareness and consumer perceived quality towards brand image.

1.2 Problem Statement

Many research and literature identified how spokesperson and social influencer affect public, but very little known whether these influencers will have positive or negative effect towards the brand. Several research discovered that enhancing brand awareness and perceived quality of brand will have positive effect towards the brand image

(Abdullah Alhaddad, 2015; Farjam and Hongyi, 2015), but very little research have discussed about the relationship between brand awareness and perceived quality of brand. As today social media influencer has turned into an important role of brand constructing, understanding how they effect on brand is important. This research tends to fill the research gap on relationships between social media influencer effects brands.

1.3 Research Objective

Objectives of the research are about: (1) examining the effect of social media influencers on brand awareness and perceived quality of brand, (2) examining the effect of brand awareness and perceived quality of brand on brand image, and (3) analyzing mediate effect of brand awareness and perceived quality of brand between social media and brand image.

Most researches had discover brand awareness and perceived value both have a positive relationship with brand image, at this research will examine the relationships again to find out if there is other result in different conditions. However, the effect of social media influencer on brand awareness and perceived value has very little research examined. Moreover, whether brand awareness and perceived value will have mediation effect between social media influencer and brand image is worth to find out. In this research, estimated social media influencer will have positive effect on brand awareness and perceived value, and brand awareness and perceived value will have mediation effect between social media influencer and brand image.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What kind of social media influencer characteristic will have the most significant effect on brand perceived quality?
2. What kind of social media influencer characteristic will have the most significant effect on brand awareness?
3. What is the significant relationship of brand perceived quality and brand awareness between social media influencer and brand image?

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H1: Social media influencers has a significant effect on consumers' perceived quality of brands.

H2: Social media influencers has a significant effect on consumers' brand awareness of brands.

H3: Consumers' perceived quality of brands has a significant effect on brand image.

H4: Consumers' brand awareness of brands has a significant positive effect on brand image.

1.6 Significant of Research

The contribution of the study provided the result for marketing manager and self-owned brand designing the marketing strategy. By understanding the effect of social media influencer on brand can organize marketing solutions in order to build better brand image for consumer, in order position the brand itself in more correct place. While building brand image by social media influencer, also concern of brand awareness and perceived quality of brand on how they may effect by social media influencer, prompting to make more comprehensive marketing strategy.

The significance of this study is to understand whether the characteristics of social media influencers affect consumers' expectations for endorsed brands and the establishment of brand images. Previous studies have confirmed that the positive content of advertisements can stimulate consumers' desire to consume (Cialdini 2009; Brinol et al. 2015). Through this research, it can help marketing managers and management decision-makers not only carefully design the content of social media advertisements, but also pay attention to whether their personality traits will affect consumers' perceptions when selecting influencers, as well as the influence of social media influencers themselves. There is vigilance in building good traits. If marketing managers or relevant decision makers are not careful about the selection of community advertising candidates, it may affect consumers' perception of their own brands, and even have a negative impact on brand image. Therefore, this study wants to analyze whether the characteristics of social media influencers do affect the effect

of brand endorsement and the establishment of brand image. The results of this research will help managers of large brick-and-mortar brands or operators of small online brands to better understand the details of advertising production and formulate marketing strategies more carefully. The results of the study can help to understand the path of building consumers' positive perception of the brand and the brand image from more detailed factors.

Academically, there is little emphasis on the impact of social media influencers' personality traits on advertising endorsements, consumer perceptions, and brand image establishment. However, some studies have pointed out (Kardes, Posavac, and Cronley, 2004) that the perception of social media influencers will directly affect consumers' brand attitude. Therefore, this study will focus on more detailed factors, directly set consumers' expected quality and brand awareness as research variables, and explore the influence and path of social media influencers on these two factors in more detail. And then fill in the lack of academic discussion in this regard.

1.7 Chapter Layout

This study consists of the following chapters: Chapter one is a description of the research motivation and the background of the topic. It contains sections such as the research question, the mention of the research hypothesis, and the research focus. And Chapter two corroborates the inferences of this study with the literature of previous scholars' research, as well as the description of the research structure. Chapter three is a description of research methods, including research design, sample collection, and descriptions of data analysis tools. Chapter four explains the results of the analysis of the research sample. Finally, chapter five presents research conclusions and arguments, including the difficulties encountered in the research and suggestions for future research directions.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter include four sections of variable literature review, one section of theoretical framework and one section of hypothesis developments. Variable literature review including social media influencer, brand awareness, perceived quality and brand image total four sections discuss and review about previous research of each variable. Theoretical framework will review the previous research structure that this research based on. The last section is the development of hypothesis of this research based on previous research and evidence.

2.1 Social Influencer for Marketing

Influencing on specific individuals or opinion leaders for triggering brand awareness and purchasing decisions to target consumer is how social influencers effect consumers to brand (Brown and Hayes, 2008). Influencers plays a critic role attracting target consumers in public while they putting own personal characteristics into brand products.

There are 94% of marketers have at least once used influencer marketing and claiming that the strategy has a remarkable result (Ahmad, 2018). In ordinary

situation, social influencers usually have unique personal features, establishing in specific audience, while some brands characteristics are well connected with these influencers. A research showed that consumers tend to observing influencers' act on brand, even trust influencers' opinions on brands while both of them are collaborated (Hall, 2016). New source media platforms are replacing traditional media such as television and newspapers. Social media influencers domain the publics' trends through online media, spreading information in seconds and with no border, while traditional media users are decreasing, there market value evaporate quickly than ever before. Moreover, social media is a dual path that can communicate with any users, during the interaction the virtual communities build up, more information exchanging and spreading (Hair, Clark, and Shapiro 2010). This is the main advantage that traditional media can't compete with. Channels created on social media allowed social media influencers promote their own personal content, spreading value and ideas, while either users, corporations, band managers can be any one of its audience. Therefore, marketing value to brands from social media influencers has been created by developing followers on specific content. Previous research claiming influencer credibility, virtual relationship between consumers and influencers, and consumer trust in influencers are the factors conducing influencer marketing to effectiveness (Colliander and Dahlen 2011; Djafarova and Rushworth 2017).

An in-depth interviews conducted on young female Instagram users shows that these respondents mentioned social media influencers usually offer contents that are more relatable and reliable, even more influential than celebrities (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). When all marketing factors on social media influencers and brands include brand type, product type, and followers features connected, it will become win-win result by create more value for influencers and brands both sides. While developing marketing strategies, without a doubt, influencer marketing is a must to every brand.

2.2 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness is the ability of a potential consumer recalling that a brand is a member of a certain product category as circumscription from Aaker (1992). It can be known as a rank for recognition from consumers to brands and can be recalled at any specific moment (Percy and Rossiter, 1992). During consumers making purchase decisions, the first brand comes to mind has the highest level of brand awareness. The more familiar and more prominent of brand to consumers will have higher level of brand awareness. Literally, the brands that are more aware by consumers are more possible become their choice while purchasing (MacDonald and Sharp, 2000). Brand awareness can cause consumers make a quicker, less risky, and more efficient decision during buying process (Verbeke, Vereir, Pieniak and Brunso, 2005). The choice from consumers most of the time depends on how much information they get and how familiar with the brand. While brand familiarity is related to brand recognition, developing brand recognition can enhance the basic level of brand awareness (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015).

2.3 Perceived quality

Perceived quality is judging from buyer on the stabilization of brand products quality or an examination on value of a products (Bhuian, 1997). It brings value to a brand by producing high quality products giving consumers an intention purchase, and even charge extra prices for the goods (Aaker, 1991). As Aaker (1991) defined "the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose relative to alternatives". Enhancing perceived value, brands can build a tough foundation and bring them advantage through competitors. Perceived quality can present noticeable difference between two brands and products, pointing out special point in consumers' mind (Aaker, 1991). However, the sight from producers and consumers are different from each other and cause the gap between perceived quality with actual quality from brand (Morgan, 1985). What's worse is a brand's negative image form will influence consumer in long term and it's hardly to change the displeasing buying experience, effecting consumers' cognition from bad side (Aaker, 1992). Although a brand's product quality is high, but if the brand cause bad experience to consumer in early time then redeeming consumers' trust is a major difficulty. According to Garvin (1983) perceived quality is set on the consumers'

acknowledgement. Swinker and Hines (2006) had defined perceived quality into several dimensions which are extrinsic, intrinsic, appearance and performance. Furthermore, perceived quality is related to numbers of factors, the conclusion is very subjective from consumers on a brand's or a product's quality. Factors such as shopping experience, education level, purchase risk, situational difference, income status, and personal background from consumers can influence consumers on a brand's or a product's perceived quality (Holbrook and Corfman, 1985). Every evaluations are base on the early memories and experiences.

2.4 Brand Image

Brand image is the positioning of a brand in the consumer's impression, based on what kind of quality, characteristics, and meaning to consumers should have for the brand. Brand image also represents the symbol of the connection between the consumers and the brand. Consumers likes to purchase branded products that styles fits right the same with himself or herself (Iversen and Hem, 2007; BİLGİN, Y., 2018), which contains consumers' opinion and ideas about the brand's features. There will also be different impressions of different products in the same brand. Newman (1957) defines brand image as the brand association in consumers' memory and acknowledgement towards a brand. Consumers have their impression of brands and other accompany thoughts based on all the different experiences of the brand in the past. Keller (1993) put forward brand equity construct by two factors: brand image and brand awareness. In addition, the components of brand image include the characteristics and connection in types of brand associations, features include type, preference, and strength. Every individual consumer has different views on brand, associating through personal background, experience, and perspective, but usually there are some a common view on brand through all consumers. Brand image connect to consumers' individual representation, linked to brand's position and evaluations (Iversen and Hem, 2008).

The improvement of brand image can also increase the communication efficiency between brands and consumers. All image of a brand is related to consumer response. Conveying each of their own appeals and characteristics to consumers, then the brand reputation builds up by degree. Image of a brand from consumers are a form of marketing result, social communication and purchase experience (Riezebos and

Riezebos, 2003). Factors above influence on mindset and attitude of consumers to brand, moreover the interpretation and evaluation from consumers toward brands. Brand image also affects consumers' response to product prices, while product price response is the best interpretation of consumers' brand attitudes. Consumers with a high brand attitude are more willing to pay more for products or services (Starr and Rubinson, 1978). Enhancing brand image can promote consumers' brand attitudes and make consumers more willing to spend premium dollars consuming brands' products. Positive brand image will increase brands' benefits and have more opportunities to increase product pricing.

2.5 Theoretical Framework and Research Framework

2.5.1 Past Theoretical Framework
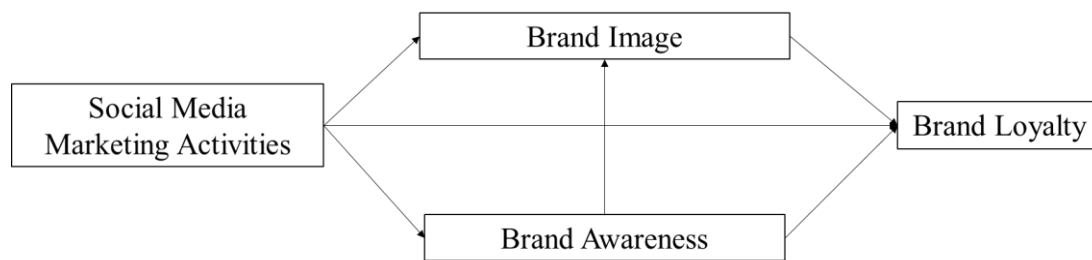
Figure 2.1: Effect of Social Media Marketing Activities on Brand Awareness, Brand Image and Brand Loyalty

Source: BİLGİN (2018)

Figure 2.1 above shows the research on brand image, brand awareness and brand loyalty led by BİLGİN social media marketing activities. In this research framework, a total of social media marketing activities aimed at the elements of brand equity: brand awareness and brand image, and the relationship between brand loyalty. All the hypothesized relationships in this study are positive and significant, but brand awareness has the weakest influence on brand image, which needs to be re-examined in the future. In addition, this study did not further verify the mediating effect of brand image and brand awareness on brand loyalty. The structure and hypotheses of this research are based on this research to increase the credibility of the research and the basis for the argument.

2.5.1 Research Framework

Research framework is designed to test the hypothesis and clarify the relationships of each variable. Social media influencer will be targeted ones in Malaysia; research respondents will be targeted residents in Malaysia; respondents must frequently users of social media and at the age between 20 to 30 according to Statista (2021), for the research purpose. The research framework shows in figure 2.2.
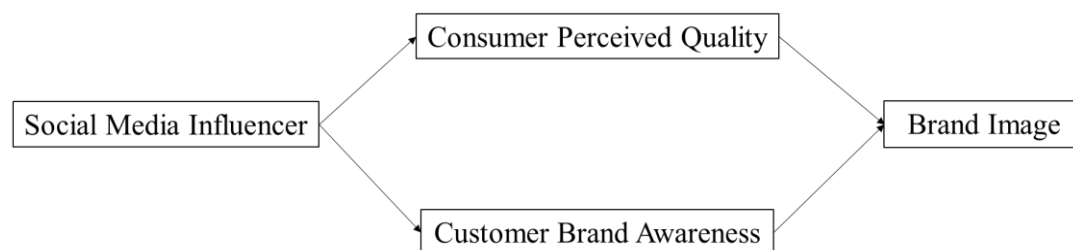
Figure 2.2 Research Framework

Source: Developed from the research

2.6 Hypothesis Developments

Based on the previous research results and literatures develop the following hypothesis:

H1: Social media influencers has a significant effect on consumers' perceived quality of brands.

Several theories have been proposed to explain the influence of social media influencers on brand attitude, including naïve theories in the context of social influence (Cialdini 2009; Brinol et al. 2015), consumer socialization theory (Moschis and Churchill 1978) and market signaling theory (Spence, 1973) and so on. Through these validated theoretical models, it can be understood that social media influencers can positively influence consumers' expected brand attitude and enhance consumers' purchasing motivation. Because consumers usually actively search for brand information and product or service content. In order to make up for the lack of information about brands and products and services, consumers often use all kinds of

one-sidedly captured information to make inferences to fill the gap of cognition before making shopping decisions (Gunasti and Ross 2009). It is one of the fastest channels for users to absorb information. Through the information transmitted by social media influencers, consumers can establish their expected psychology and attitude towards brands and products and services, and then convert them into consumption motivations based on this. This study believes that in addition to previous scholars' verification that the information transmitted by social media influencers will affect consumers' expected psychology and attitude towards brands, it is reasonable to speculate that their personality traits are also important influencing factors. According to the research of Kardes, Posavac, and Cronley (2004), the influence of social media influencers is positively related to the brand attitude of consumers. A large part of the influence of social media influencers is composed of their personality traits, so the first hypothesis of this study is that the personal characteristics of social media influencers will affect consumers' expected quality of their endorsed brands.

H2: Social media influencers has a significant effect on consumers' brand awareness of brands.

The mission of the brand ambassador is to enhance the public's awareness of the brand and attract a new group of target customers, and ultimately to increase sales conversion (Esseveld, 2017) things of concern. Brand awareness is one of the focuses of influencer marketing strategies, and it plays a silent role in consumer shopping behavior. According to the research of Dehghani (2016), YouTube has a profound impact on young consumer groups. If this consumer group receives advertising content on YouTube and the content is considered valuable, it will have a positive impact on the brand awareness in the advertisement. Since social media influencers continue to deliver rich information and preferred content to their followers within a certain period of time, which of course involves the brands and related products and services endorsed by the social media influencer, this relationship will greatly increase followers' interest in being endorsed increased brand awareness and a more positive brand attitude.

Previous research has suggested that the credibility of information sources affects consumer attitudes towards advertising content, including the brand mentioned and the advertisement itself (Lafferty, Goldsmith, and Newell 2002; Lee and Koo 2015), and of course brand equity (Dwivedi, Johnson, and McDonald 2015). However, most studies examine the influence of advertising content on consumers, and few focus on whether the characteristics of social media influencers who endorse brands also influence consumers' brand awareness. Chakraborty and Bhat (2018) confirmed the relationship between the credibility of an information source and brand awareness, indicating that the online platform consumers watch and the quality of the video during the viewing process are the factors that make up brand awareness. This study infers that the advertising content delivered by social media influencers and the use of platforms will affect consumers' brand awareness, and the own characteristics of social media influencer who endorse brands will also deeply affect consumers' brand awareness.

H3: Consumers' perceived quality of brands has a significant effect on brand image.

Previous studies have pointed out that perceived quality has a positive impact on purchase attention (Tsiotsou, 2006), and the main antecedent of brand loyalty is perceived quality (Biedenbach and Marell, 2009). Since the research framework based on this research confirms that social media marketing activities have a significant impact on brand image has a positive and significant effect and brand image has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty (BİLGİN, 2018). In addition, perceived quality is a prerequisite for building brand loyalty, so it is reasonable to infer that perceived quality will have a positive and significant impact on brand image impact. In addition, Ming (2011) and Chen and Tseng (2010) also pointed out that the perceived quality has an effect on the brand image.

H4: Consumers' brand awareness of brands has a significant positive effect on brand image.

Brand awareness is defined as an individual's tool for understanding, familiarity, and remembering a brand (Djakeli and Tshumburidze, 2012; Barreda et al., 2015), and

even initial recognition has the opportunity to trigger an inexplicable sense of intimacy and Bring out ideas and underlying promises associated with the brand (Aaker, 1992). Brand awareness is positively correlated with advertising reach and advertising spending (Gil et al., 2007). In response to this feature, the activities of brands on social platforms will achieve the effect of knowing customers and increasing customer familiarity more quickly, because social platforms shorten the time of information transmission and the limitation of inconvenient space (O'Flynn, 2017). If a brand is tested by the market and meets consumers' expectations and subconsciousness, it will have a strong positive impact on subsequent purchase behavior (Koniewski, 2012). And once consumers are very familiar with the brand, the chance of liking the brand will greatly increase (Macdonald and Sharp, 2003). A high level of brand awareness makes it easier to build a brand image (Chang, 2012). Therefore, based on the previously mentioned research framework and the above literature review, this study infers that consumer brand awareness will have a positive and significant impact on brand image.

CHAPTER 3

METHDOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into six sections, in order Research and Method, Research Sampling, Research Technique, Questionnaire Design, and Conclusion. This chapter will describe the research objects, research methods, variable interpretation, and research analysis tools.

3.1 Research Design and Data Collection

3.1.1 Research Design

According to scholars, the research properties are classified as follows: descriptive study, exploratory study, multiple regression study, and quantitative study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In view of the nature of the variables and the sampling of the variables in the previous studies are based on quantitative data, this research will use quantitative study. Quantitative study operation is to test the research hypothesis with quantitative data (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The beauty of quantitative research is that researchers can digitize abstract concepts into measurable standards and examine

interactions and relationships between variables. The variables of this study, social media influencer, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand image, are well suited for verifying relationships in this way.

3.1.2 Data Collection

The subjects of this study are people with spending power who habitually use any kind of social media in Malaysia. It will be distributed in the form of online questionnaires, and will be distributed randomly through social software Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Email. Subjects must have access to social media and follow any social media influencer regularly. Then, it is necessary to select a product or service endorsed by the influencer they are following on the social media platform, and use this as the basis for the follow-up score. The subjects to be tested fill in the questionnaire and follow-up scoring questions and basic information about the research variables indicate that they have completed the answer. The scores were then digitized to facilitate statistical analysis.

3.2 Research Sampling

In this study, convenient sampling was used to collect research samples, so that researchers could collect samples under the constraints of time and space. The researchers will conduct sampling by distributing online questionnaires through Google form. Whether or not to fill out the research questionnaire is based on the personal wishes of the invitees. Through the convenient sampling of online questionnaires, subjects can answer at any time and place and provide their opinions through the way of researchers contacting the Internet, which greatly increases the sampling efficiency. The Sampling size is set between 30 and 500 people recommended by scholars as the optimal sampling number range, and the sampling target is 200 respondents (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016).

3.3 Research Technique

3.3.1 Data Processing

Data Collecting: The main purpose of this stage is to collect enough data to meet the research needs. In the design of the research questionnaire and the inspection after the completion of the design, the mistakes in the sentence are avoided to ensure that the subjects understand the questions of the questionnaire. In the process of designing the questionnaire, people other than the researcher were also assisted in reading the questions to clarify whether the sentences of the questions were smooth and easy to understand. If there is any content that is not understood by most people who have read the topic in advance, it should be revised immediately to avoid collecting erroneous data during the actual sampling process.

Data Cleaning: To prevent erroneous conclusions from data analysis from leading to business-damaging conclusions, an important part of data collection is to identify and remove duplicate data and outliers that distort analysis results, fill gaps in data, and correct incorrect formatting. Also delete data that is not relevant to the problem you expect to analyze. By running SmartPLS to help researchers find such erroneous data, researchers can immediately correct or delete the data to prevent erroneous data from affecting the credibility of subsequent formal analysis results. In this study, each question is set as a mandatory item through the online questionnaire format, so there will be no missing values or invalid questionnaires.

Data Conversing: At this stage, the collected data is first digitized through data coding, which facilitates subsequent quantitative analysis. For example, coding strongly agree1 in the research questionnaire as 5 represents the highest evaluation and strongly disagree is coded as 1 representing the lowest evaluation. After coding all the data, the data can be imported into SPSS and SmartPLS for data analysis, and the system will automatically analyze the completed data.

3.3.2 Data Analysis

In this study, SPSS statistical software and Smart PLS 3.0 were used for data analysis. As described below:

Descriptive Statistical Analysis: Descriptive statistical analysis and explanation were carried out for the basic data of the subjects in the questionnaire, and the distribution of gender, age, education level, etc. of the respondents was desired. The data to be displayed in this part are the questionnaire recovery situation, such as: frequency, mean, percentage and standard deviation.

Reliability and validity test: The measurement method of reliability and validity test is confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The reliability test can measure the internal consistency and stability of the construct. Therefore, the combined reliability is used as the measurement index, and the coefficient value should be between 0 and 1. less than 0.35 represents low reliability; more than 0.35 and less than 0.7 represents medium reliability; more than 0.7 represents high reliability. The validity test uses "convergent validity" and "discriminant validity".

Structural Equation Model: The SEM can handle multiple independent and explanatory variables simultaneously and can embed properties that are not directly measurable into the analysis. This study uses Structural Equation Modeling of Variance as a statistical method to test hypotheses, allowing to test the explanatory power of dependent variables (whether explaining a causal relationship is significant), and the bootstrapping method to test predictions between independent and explanatory variables to improve the accuracy of the research results.

The main reason why this study chose to use partial least square (PLS) method rather than covariate formal structural equation (CB-SEM) method is that the construct developed in this study is a combination of existing theories. PLS can verify the theory, CB-SEM The theoretical framework cannot be applied to actual phenomena, so the theory cannot be tested.

3.4 Questionnaire Design

This chapter will focus on four constructs, which are social media influencer, brand awareness, perceived quality and brand image in order. The variables are defined through the references, the description of the operational definitions, and the measurement items of the specific constructs are developed.

Table 3.1 Operational Definition

Independent Variables	Definition	Reference
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	Characteristic of social media influencer perceived by consumers	Ohanian (1990), Hall (2016), Djafarova and Rushworth (2017)
BRAND AWARENESS	Rank for recognition from consumers to brands and can be recalled at any specific moment.	Percy and Rossiter (1992), Kim and Hyun (2011)
PERCEIVED QUALITY	The expectations that consumers have when they learn about a product or service.	Aaker (1991), Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and Lee, S. (2000)
BRAND IMAGE	Brand association in consumers' memory and acknowledgement towards a brand.	Newman (1957), Dowling (1986), Kim and Hyun (2011)

Source: Developed from the research

The design of the scale is divided into three steps, which are the social media usage habits of the subjects, the preamble items of the scoring questions, and the construct equalization items (including social media influencer, perceived quality, brand awareness, and brand image, a total of four items). a construct), and the final basic information. The construct scoring items were answered using a five-point Likert scale, from the lowest 1 for "strongly disagree" to the highest for 5 for "strongly agree". The scoring items of this research construct refer to the research items designed by scholars as reference.

Table 3.2 Constructed Scoring Question Item References

Construct	Reference for the Question
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	Ohanian (1990)
BRAND AWARENESS	Kim and Hyun (2011)
PERCEIVED QUALITY	Yoo, B., Donthu, N., and Lee, S. (2000)
BRAND IMAGE	Dowling (1986), Kim and Hyun (2011)

Table 3.3 Construct questionnaire

Independent Variables	Questions
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	1. How attractive __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 2. How well looking __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 3. How honest __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 4. How reliable __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 5. How sincere __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 6. How trustworthy __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 7. How expert __(Social Media Influencer)__ is? 8. How experienced __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?
BRAND AWARENESS	1. I'm always aware of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service. 2. I pay more attention on __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service. 3. I can quickly recall the logo of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service. 4. I can quickly recall the characteristics of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service. 5. I can easily notice the difference of __(Brand)__ from other similar brand after the social influencer promote the product/service.
PERCEIVED QUALITY	1. I trust__(Brand)__ has a high quality after the social influencer promote the product/service. 2. The quality of __(Brand)__ seems extremely high after the social influencer promote the product/service. 3. I trust __(Brand)__ is highly functional after the social influencer promote the product/service. 4. I trust __(Brand)__ is highly reliable after the social influencer promote the product/service. 5. I trust __(Brand)__ must have very good quality after the social influencer promote the product/service.

Dependent Variables	Questions
BRAND IMAGE	I believe __(Brand)__ is a leading company in the industry. 2. I believe __(Brand)__ can represent of the industry. 3. I believe __(Brand)__ is a customer oriented corporation. 4. I believe the price of__(Brand)__fit to its product/service . 5. I believe __(Brand)__ is responsible to its product/service.

3.5 Conclusion

This section describes research tools, implementation methods, and variable descriptions. This study includes quantitative analysis as well as descriptive statistics. It stipulates the method of sample collection and the method of data processing afterwards. The results of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing will be described in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four discuss about the analysis result that were being collected from the respondent in Taiwan. In demographic profile, it would use descriptive and frequency analysis to explain while reliability test, Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis will be explained in this chapter that are relevant to research question objective. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software is used as the major tool in analyzing the data.

4. 1 Descriptive Analysis

This section describes the results of descriptive analysis. Among the 211 survey samples, 43.6% (92 people) used Instagram frequently, second only to YouTube with 90 people. Among the categories of products or services endorsed by social media influencers selected by the respondents, food and drinks were the most popular choices, with a total of 25.1% (53 people) choosing related products. Among them, other product categories include sporting goods, electronic goods, physical-related services, and so on. The majority of women who filled out the questionnaire for this study were 64% (135 people), and most of the respondents who filled out the questionnaire were between 18 and 24 years old, accounting for 51.7% (109 people).

The overall education level of the respondents who filled out the questionnaire was above a bachelor's degree, of which 65.9% (139 people) had a bachelor's degree.

Table 4.1 Descriptive analysis

Demographic information		Number of people	Percentage
Social Media Used	Facebook	20	9.5%
	Instagram	92	43.6%
	Twitter	3	1.4%
	YouTube	90	42.7%
	Other social media	6	2.8%
Chose Product Type	Cosmetic	50	23.7%
	Food and drinks	53	25.1%
	Clothing	33	15.6%
	App	14	6.6%
	Online platform	21	10%
	Other product	40	19%
Gender	Male	76	36%
	Female	135	64%
Age	18~24	109	51.7%
	25~34	82	38.9%
	35~44	12	5.7%
	Above 45	8	3.8%
Education Level	Under high school (include)	7	3.3%
	Bachelor degree	139	65.9%
	Master's degree	60	28.4%
	Doctoral degree	5	2.4%

Source: Developed from the research

4.2 Reliability ad Validity Test Result

4.2.1 Cronbach's α

Experts suggest that Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 is considered to have good reliability, greater than 0.5 is acceptable, and if it is less than 0.35, it is considered low reliability and needs to be rejected (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Table 4.2 is known that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of each construct in this study is within the standard.

Table 4.2 Cronbach's α result

CONSTRUCT	Cronbach's α
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	0.879
BRAND AWARENESS	0.894
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0.935
BRAND IMAGE	0.887

Source: Developed from the research

4.2.2 Composite Reliability

Composite reliability is to test the homogeneity between items, that is, to measure the internal consistency of the constructs in the study. According to expert advice, when the combined reliability is greater than 0.7, the constructs are in good agreement (Bagozzi and Yi., 1988). The combined reliability of each construct in this study is greater than the measure recommended by experts (>.7), indicating that all constructs are consistent, and the results can be seen in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Composite reliability result

CONSTRUCT	COMPOSITE RELIABILITY
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	0.909
BRAND AWARENESS	0.922
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0.951
BRAND IMAGE	0.917

Source: Developed from the research

4.2.3 Outer Loadings

Outer loadings is to test and measure the commonality of each construct indicator. The construct must explain more than 50% of the index variance to have good index reliability, and the standardized factor loading needs to be greater than 0.5 (50%) square root of 0.708 to have good index reliability. Hulland (1999) considered the factor loading greater than 0.5 to be the acceptable standard and suggested that the item must be deleted if the factor loading was less than 0.4. It can be seen from Table 4.4 that the factor loadings all meet the recommended standard values defined by scholars.

Table 4.4 Outer loadings result

	SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	BRAND AWARENESS	BRAND IMAGE	PERCEIVED QUALITY
Q2_1	0.886			
Q2_2	0.833			
Q2_3	0.818			
Q2_4	0.813			
Q2_5	0.701			
Q2_6	0.682			
Q3_1		0.778		
Q3_2		0.842		
Q3_3		0.839		
Q3_4		0.883		
Q3_5		0.848		
Q4_1			0.838	
Q4_2			0.865	
Q4_3			0.877	
Q4_4			0.797	
Q4_5			0.769	
Q5_1				0.880
Q5_2				0.894
Q5_3				0.861
Q5_4				0.900
Q5_5				0.919

Source: Developed from the research

4.2.4 Average Variance Extracted

The average variance extracted is the average value of the explanatory power of the construct to each index, and the commonality between the constructs is tested. Hair et al. (2014) suggested that the average variation extraction amount is greater than 0.5, indicating that each construct explains more than 50% of the index variation, and has good convergent validity.

Table 4.5 shows that the average variance extracted of all constructs in this study mostly exceeds the value suggested by scholars, except that the AVE value of social media participation is 0.433. Although some experts suggest that the average variation extraction amount should be greater than 0.5, all the factor loadings must be greater than 0.7 in order to achieve this condition. Taking into account the practical factors of data collection, the average variation extraction amount greater than 0.36 is the minimum acceptance standard (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 4.5 Average variance extracted result

CONSTRUCT	AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	0.627
BRAND AWARENESS	0.703
PERCEIVED QUALITY	0.794
BRAND IMAGE	0.689

Source: Developed from the research

4.2.5 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Henseler et al. (2015) proposed an indicator to measure discriminant validity to solve the problem of insufficient cross-load sensitivity. Scholars suggest that the HTMT value standard is less than 0.9 to be acceptable (Henseler et al., 2015). Table 4.6 It is known that the HTMT values in this study are in line with the standards recommended by scholars.

Table 4.6 HTMT result

	SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	BRAND AWARENESS	PERCEIVED QUALITY	BRAND IMAGE
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER		0.399	0.468	0.333
BRAND AWARENESS				
PERCEIVED QUALITY		0.810	0.801	
BRAND IMAGE		0.637		

Source: Developed from the research

4.2.6 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

The Fornell-Larcker criterion test method for mean variation extraction requires that the square root of the AVE of a single construct is greater than the correlation coefficient of other constructs. If the square root of the AVE of a single construct is smaller than the correlation coefficient of other constructs, it represents the same construct and cannot be distinguished. Table 4.7 It is known that all constructs in this study meet the discriminant criteria.

Table 4.7 Fornell-Larcker criterion test result

	SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	BRAND AWARENESS	PERCEIVED QUALITY	BRAND IMAGE
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER	**0.792**	0.356	0.430	0.298
BRAND AWARENESS		**0.839**		
PERCEIVED QUALITY		0.741	**0.891**	0.731
BRAND IMAGE		0.576		**0.830**

4.3 Model Fit

SRMR is the matching degree of the test model, and the value is between 0 and 1, and the closer it is to 0, the better the matching degree. Among them, Saturated Model means that the number of paths in the research model is the same as the number of correlations between the constructs in the evaluation model, and Estimated Model is the calculation of the data and paths in the research. When the SRMR of the two models is less than 0.08, the model has a good fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999), and when the SRMR of the two models is less than 0.1, it is an acceptable range (Wang and Wang, 2019). The numerical gap between models should be as small as possible (Henseler, Hubona and Ray, 2016). As shown in Table 4.8, the saturation model is 0.066 as acceptable range, while the estimated model is 0.182. The sample size of this

study is 211, which is acceptable, so it is prone to such fallacies. SRMR will be affected by the number of samples received. The larger the sample size or the more estimated parameters, the smaller the SRMR.

Table 4.8 SRMR result

	SATURATED MODEL	ESTIMATED MODEL
SRMR	0.066	0.182

Source: Developed from the research

4.4 Structural Equation Modeling

This study uses Bootstrapping to test the path coefficients to determine the significance of the hypothesis in this study. The number of random sampling by the boot-pulling method cannot be less than the sampling of effective samples, and in practice, 5,000 random samplings are the most appropriate number of times. Judgment criteria in order: P value less than 0.001 (<.001) is a very high level of significance; P value less than 0.01 (<.01) is a standard significance level; P value less than 0.05 (<.05) is an acceptable level of significance level; P values greater than 0.05 (>.05) were not considered significant (Hair et al., 2011). The results can be seen from Table 4.9, except that "brand awareness" did not reach a significant level for "brand image", the other three paths all reached a significant level.

Table 4.9 Path coefficient result

	ß VALUE	T-VALUE	P-VALUE
BRAND AWARENESS→BRAND IMAGE	0.077	1.054	0.292
PERCEIVED QUALITY→BRAND IMAGE	0.674	10.357	**0.000***
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER→BRAND AWARENESS	0.356	5.525	**0.000***
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER→PERCEIVED QUALITY	0.430	6.773	**0.000***

(*P-value<0.05, **P-value<0.01, ***P-value<0.001)

Source: Developed from the research

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The purpose of this study is to understand whether the characteristics of social media influencers will affect the products they endorse, and will affect consumers' perceptions of products due to their own characteristics and further affect the establishment of brand images. According to the analysis results, the following conclusions can be drawn.

H1: Social media influencers have a positive and significant impact on perceived quality; H2: Social media influencers have a positive and significant impact on brand awareness; H3: Perceived quality has a positive and significant impact on brand image; Brand awareness has a positive and significant impact on brand awareness Brand image has a positive and significant effect.

Table 4.10 Hypothesis testing result

Hypothesis No.	Hypothesis	Result
H1	Social media influencer has a significant effect on consumers' perceived quality of brands.	Supported
H2	Social media influencer has a significant effect on consumers' brand awareness of brands.	Supported
H3	Consumers' perceived quality of brands has a significant effect on brand image.	Supported
H4	Consumers' brand awareness of brands has a significant positive effect on brand image.	Rejected

4.6 Mediation Effect Testing

Although the independent variable has an influence on the dependent variable, part of it affects the dependent variable through the mediating variable. The influence of the mediating variable on the model is called partial mediation. The independent variable does not have a significant effect on the dependent variable, but affects the dependent variable entirely through the mediating variable. The effect of the mediating variable on the model is full mediation. This chapter conducts the mediation effect test for this study, but before the mediation effect test, the path coefficients of indirect effects and direct effects must be significant.

Table 4.11 Direct effects result of social media influencer and band image

	ß VALUE	T-VALUE	P-VALUE
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER→BRAND IMAGE	0.050	6.318	**0.000***

(*P-value<0.05, **P-value<0.01, ***P-value<0.001)

Table 4.12 Mediation effect testing result

	ß VALUE	T-VALUE	P-VALUE
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER → BRAND AWARENESS→ BRAND IMAGE	0.027	1.008	0.313
SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCER → PERCEIVED QUALITY→ BRAND IMAGE	0.050	5.857	**0.000***

(*P-value<0.05, **P-value<0.01, ***P-value<0.001)

Social media influencer has a significant direct impact on brand image, while perceived quality has a mediating effect between social media influencer and brand image, indicating that perceived quality has partial mediation between the two variables.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study and the conclusions of the analysis. The content includes a discussion of the main and other findings of the study, management implications, limitations to the study conditions, and recommendations for future related research.

5.1 Discussions of Major Findings

5.1.1 Discussions of Statistical Analyses

According to the results of the statistical analysis in Chapter 4, most of the subjects were female, aged between 18 and 24 years old. In terms of social media used, most of the respondents in this study use Instagram and YouTube. According to Statista (2022), female Instagram users in Malaysia account for nearly 55%, while YouTube is also the second most used social media in Malaysia, and the high-frequency social media users are 20 to 29 years old, accounting for about 43% of the users. Since the subjects can only choose one social media in the testing stage, the actual situation should be to use a variety of social media. High-frequency use of social media promotes more impulsive consumption (Floh & Madlberger, 2013), and this argument increases the importance of social media influencers with high followings and views to build their own positive image and personality traits.

5.1.2 Social media influencers and consumers' perceived quality of brands

The results of the analysis show that social media influencers have a positive and significant impact on consumers' perceived quality of brand. According to Gunasti and Ross (2009), consumers tend not to take the initiative to learn about product characteristics. In order to compensate for the uncertainty and distrust of products or services, consumers usually need to actively disseminate information from the outside world and passively receive information. The results of this study confirm that the personality characteristics of social media influencers and their public image are positively related to consumers' expectations of products or services. It is verified that the image of social media influencers among consumers will affect the effect of promoting products and services. The better the positive image of social media influencers (based on the research questionnaire), the more helpful it is to raise consumers' expectations for products and services.

5.1.3 Social media influencers and consumers' brand awareness of brands

According to the study by Dehghani et al. (2016), when a brand promotes image advertising on YouTube, the more positive content there is, the more brand awareness it can increase. The study also emphasized that the details of the advertising information delivered will have a profound impact on consumers' brand awareness. The results of this study pointed out that not only the content of advertisements, but also the social media influencer's own moral image and public impression will also have an impact on the brands endorsed by them. When the image of social media influencers is more positive, the results presented are the same as that of Dehghani's research. Not only the content of advertisements, but also social media influencers are the focus of influencing brand awareness.

5.1.4 Consumers' perceived quality and brand image

According to the analysis results of this study, consumers' perceived quality has a positive and significant impact on brand image. And Chen and Tseng (2010) and Biedenbach and Marell (2009) studies show that perceived quality has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty. According to Aaker (1992), brand image is a part

of brand loyalty. This study indirectly confirms that consumers' perceived quality has a substantial impact on brand image, and the perceived quality cannot be ignored for brand image establishment. If the perceived quality of consumers can be improved, it will be a great help for the image of the brand.

5.1.5 Consumers' brand awareness and brand image

According to Baldauf (2003) et al. and Aaker (1992), brand awareness and brand image are the elements that make up brand loyalty. Keller (1993) also stated that brand image and brand awareness together constitute brand equity. In many previous studies, the description and presentation of brand awareness and brand image are horizontal, that is, in the same quadrant, and no studies have confirmed whether the two constructs are contextually related. Therefore, the analysis results of this study also show that there is no significant correlation between brand awareness and brand image, which indirectly proves that previous scholars continue to classify brand awareness and brand image in the same category of brand constructs, unlike brand image and brand image. Brand loyalty has a causal relationship before and after (Dissanayake, 2013).

5.1.6 Mediation effect from customers' perceived quality between social media influencer and brand image

According to the results of the mediation effect test in the previous chapter, customers' perceived quality has a partial mediating effect on social media influencers and brand image. This study infers that when consumers learn about product news through good image or their preferred social media influencers, they will immediately increase their expectations for the product. Consumers will transfer this favorable impression of the product to the brand of the product, which has a positive effect on the brand image. The brand finally forms a connection with the social media influencer who endorses it in the consumer's impression, and establishes a good image of the brand through the expectation of the product. This is one of the main findings of this study.

5.2 Implications of the Study

This study presents whether consumers will influence the image and characteristics of social media influencers on the products and services they endorse. The results of the study provide marketing managers and relevant policy makers with a validated result reference. From the research results, it is known that consumers' perceived quality and brand awareness of brand products and services are affected by the perception of social media influencers. General research studies on the feeling that advertisements bring to consumers will find that the information richness or content composition of advertisements will affect consumers' psychological expectations for brands. This study focuses on the social media influencers who endorse brands themselves, and also demonstrates that their personality traits must also be taken into account when formulating marketing strategies. Nowadays, information is disseminated rapidly on the Internet, and consumers receive limited information every day. Brands use social media influencers to endorse them, which not only allows brands to transmit information more efficiently, but also allows small brands to have more diversified and lower costs for marketing promotion. However, which social media influencers are often selected as brand spokespersons, it is easy to be ignored. In this study, when the personal score of social media influencers is higher (the more positive), the more they can increase the expectations and visibility of brand products in consumers' minds. When choosing relevant online spokespersons, their evaluation and personality traits must be considered whether they will have a good impression on consumers. Even if the content of the advertisement is rich and attractive, if the image of the social media influencer itself is not good, it will greatly reduce consumption. The goodwill of the people may even have the opposite effect.

The brand image in this study is only affected by consumers' perceived quality of the brand. The research results prove that improving consumers' positive impression and cognition of a brand is one of the most important marketing methods for building a brand image. Even on the Internet, the higher the expectations a brand brings to consumers, the easier it is to accumulate public brand images. However, brand awareness was not causally related to brand image in this study. After the definition of these two constructs by previous scholars and other variable relationships in this

study, it is found that the characteristics of social media influencers will also directly and positively affect the brand image, which indirectly confirms that the two constructs are at the same level and There is no causal relationship. Consumers' perceived quality will have a pertial mediating effect between social media influencer and brand image. For decision makers, selecting influencers with positive characteristics to promote on online platforms can not only effectively improve the expectation of consumers' perceived quality, but also enhance the brand's image in the public mind through this concept. It is a great help for accumulating brand equity.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

This paragraph discusses the research problems encountered in this study or the contradictions to be solved, and also provides suggestions for improvement to facilitate the continuous discussion of related research in the future, and hope that the results of future research will be more accurate.

First, the questionnaire in this study is in the form of an online questionnaire. Among the valid samples collected, the age group is unevenly distributed, and the research objects are not comprehensive enough. In addition, it is impossible to accurately grasp the validity of each questionnaire. For example, some people will rush to fill out the questionnaire to save time, or give too similar scores to the grading questions, which will affect the presentation of the research.

Second, there are limitations on questionnaire design. Since each social media influencer is a unique individual, in order to make the questionnaire and test results more credible, this study designed the questionnaire based on the constructs proposed by previous scholars. However, it cannot represent all personality traits and characteristics, and the questionnaire can only be designed based on the key traits suggested by scholars. Therefore, the problem cannot comprehensively cover all the characteristics of social media influencers.

Third, the object of this study is the people in Malaysia, reflecting the impression of social media influencers in Malaysia does not mean that foreign countries will have the same conclusion, so whether cultural differences will affect the results cannot be

reflected in this study. Finally, the total sample size of this study is 211 subjects, which is slightly insufficient, so the effect of using PLS for model validation will be limited. If more samples are collected, the overall study will have stronger explanatory power and credibility.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Summarizing the above content, in order to make future research more accurate and progressive, the following points are suggested for future research directions.

First, this study did not restrict variables such as gender, age, education, and consumer residence. Therefore, in the future, researchers can explore specific consumer groups, such as men, women, students, the elderly, consumers with purchasing experience, etc., so as to have a deeper understanding and explanation of the research situation. In addition, for the brand part, you can select brands in a specific industry to compare differences, such as whether beauty brands and information product brands will affect different levels of brand equity due to different social media influencers.

Second, this study did not select a fixed social media influencer to conduct surveys on the public, but answered the questionnaire with the people selected by the public. In the future, we can conduct research on the candidates of fixed social media influencers, and compare how the differences in the impressions of several fixed social media influencers affect brand equity. Therefore, we can further explore the endorsement effect and influence mechanism of social media influencers.

Third, while increasing the number of samples, face-to-face interviews can be used to collect research data, and qualitative research can be used to obtain results at different levels than quantitative research, and can better explore the innermost thoughts of the public.

5.5 Conclusion

This study aims at the personality characteristics of social media influencers, and explores whether raising consumers' expectations for brand products or services has an impact on shaping brand images. This study examines the influence of consumers on brand image through two aspects of brand awareness and perceived quality. The above hypothesis derivation, data verification, and even the final research results show that consumers' perceived quality is affected by social media influencers, and there is a mediating effect between them and brand image. The results and limitations of this study can provide future related research and marketing strategy makers with an empirical result for reference and comparison.

REFERENCE

Aaker, D. A. (1992). The Value of Brand Equity. *Journal of Business Strategy*, *13*(4), 27-32.

Aaker, D.A. (1991). *Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name*, New York: The Free Press.

Abdullah, A. (2015). Perceived Quality, Brand Image and Brand Trust as Determinants of Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Research in Business and Management*, *3*(4), 1-8.

Ahmad, I. (2018). The Influencer Marketing Revolution. Social Media Today. Retrieved 16 March 2022, from https:// www.socialmediatoday.com/news/the-influencer-marketing

Bagozzi, R. P., and Yi, Y. (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *16*(1), 74-94.

Barreda, A. A., Bilgihan, A., Nusair, K. and Okumus, F. (2015). Generating brand awareness in Online Social Networks. *Computers in Human Behavior, 50*, 600-609.

Bhuian, S. N. (1997). Marketing cues and perceived quality: Perceptions of Saudi consumers toward products of the U.S., Japan, Germany, Italy, U.K. and France. *Journal of Quality Management*, *2*(2), 217-235.

Biedenbach, G. and Marell, A. (2009). The impact of customer experience on brand equity in a business-to-business services setting. *Journal of Brand Management, Vol. 17*(6), 446–458.

BİLGİN, Y. (2018). The effect of social media marketing activities on brand awareness, brand image and brand loyalty. *Business and Management Studies: An International Journal*, *6*(1), 128-148.

Brown, Duncan., and Hayes, Nick. (2008). *Influencer Marketing: Who Really Influences Your Customers?* Oxford, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Briñol, P., D.D. Rucker, and R.E. Petty (2015), Naive theories about persuasion: Implications for information processing and consumer attitude change, *International Journal of Advertising* 34, (1)85–106. doi:10.1080/02650487.2014.997080

Chang, Y.-H. (2012). A study on the marketing performance using social media - Comparison between portal advertisement, blog, and SNS channel characteristics and performance. *Journal of Digital Policy and Management, 8*(10), 119-133.

Chakraborty, U., and Savita B. (2018). The Effects of Credible Online Reviews on Brand Equity Dimensions and Its Consequence on Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Promotion Management, 24* (1), 57–82.

Chen, C. and Tseng, W. (2010), Exploring Customer based Airline Brand Equity: Evidence from Taiwan. National Science Council (NSC), Taiwan, 24-34.

Cialdini, Robert B. (2009) *Influence: Science and Practice*, Boston: Pearson Education.

Colliander, Jonas, and Dahlen, Micael. (2011). Following the Fashionable Friend: The Power of Social Media. *Journal of Advertising Research*, *51*(1), 313–20.

Dehghani, M., Mojtaba K. N., Iman R., and Rasoul S. (2016). Evaluating the Influence of YouTube Advertising for Attraction of Young Customers. *Computers in Human Behavior, 59* (6), 165–72.

Djakeli, K. and Tshumburidze, T. (2012). Brand Awareness Matrix in Political Marketing Area. *Journal of Business, 1*(1), 25-28.

Djafarova, E., and Rushworth, C. (2017). Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. *Computers in human behavior*, *68*, 1-7.

Dwivedi, A., Lester W. J., and Robert E. M. (2015). Celebrity Endorsement, Self-Brand Connection and Consumer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Product and Brand Management, 24*(5), 449–61.

Esseveld, N. (2017). Why Goals Matter to Influencer Marketing Success: Twitter Business. Retrieved 15 March 2022, from https://business.twitter.com/en/blog/Why-goals-matter-toinfluencer-marketing-success.html.

Farjam, S., and Hongyi, X. (2015). Reviewing the Concept of Brand Equity and Evaluating ConsumerBased Brand Equity (CBBE) Models. *International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration*, *1*(8), 14-29.

Floh, A. and Medlberger, M. (2013). The role of atmospheric cues in online- impulse buying behavior. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications, 12* (1), 45-439.

Fornell, C. and Larcker, D. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18* (1), 39-50.

Garvin, D. A. (1983). *Quality on the line. Harvard Business Review*, 61, 65-73.

Gil, R. B., Andres, E. F. and Salinas, E. M. (2007). Family as a source of consumer-based brand equity. *Journal of Product and Brand Management, 16*(3), 188-199.

Gorry, G. A., and Westbrook, R. A. (2009). Winning the internet confidence game. *Corporate Reputation Review*, *12*(3), 195–203.

Gunasti, K. and William T. R. (2009). How Inferences About Missing Attributes Decrease the Tendency to Defer Choice and Increase Purchase Probability. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35(5), 823-37.

Hair, N., Clark, M., and Melanie, S. (2010). Toward a Classification System of Relational Activity in Consumer Electronic Communities: The Moderators' Tale. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, *9*(1), 54–65.

Hair, J. F., Ringle, C. M., and Sarstedt, M. (2011). PLS-SEM: Indeed a silver bullet. *Journal of Marketing theory and Practice*, *19*(2), 139-152.

Hair J., J. F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., and Kuppelwieser, V. G. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM): An emerging tool in business research. *European business review*.

Hall, J. (2016). Build Authentic Audience Experiences through Influencer Marketing. *Forbes*. Retrieved 16 March 2022, from https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhall/2015/12/17/buildauthentic-audience-experiences-through-influencer-marketing/#589d25fa4ff2

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., and Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *43*(1), 115-135.

Henseler, J., Hubona, G., and Ray, P. A. (2016). Using PLS path modeling in new technology research: updated guidelines. *Industrial management and data systems*.

Holbrook, M. B., and Corfman, K. P. (1985). Quality and value in the consumption experience: Phaedrus rides again. In J. Jacoby, and J.C. Olson (Eds.), Perceived Quality: How Consumers View and Merchandise (pp.31-57). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Hulland, J. (1999). Use of partial least squares (PLS) in strategic management research: A review of four recent studies. *Strategic management journal*, *20*(2), 195-204.

Hu, L. T., and Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural equation modeling: a multidisciplinary journal*, *6*(1), 1-55.

Iversen, N. M., and Hem, L. E. (2008). Provenance associations as core values of place umbrella brands. *European Journal of Marketing, 42*(5/6), 603-626.

Kardes, F. R., Steven S. P. and Maria L. C. (2004). Consumer Inference: A Review of Processes, Bases, and Judgement Contexts. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 14(3), 230-56.

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

Karen, F., Kristin, G., Karen, M., and Laura, A. F. (2010). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, *37* (2011), 90-92.

Koniewski, M. (2012). Brand Awareness and Customer Loyalty. Kraków: PMR Research.

Lafferty, B. A., Ronald E. G., and Stephen J. N. (2002). The Dual Credibility Model: The Influence of Corporate and Endorser Credibility on Attitudes and Purchase Intentions. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 10* (3), 1–11.

Lee, Y., and Jakeun K. (2015). Athlete Endorsement, Attitudes, and Purchase Intention: The Interaction Effect between Athlete Endorser-Product

Congruence and Endorser Credibility. *Journal of Sport Management, 29*(5), 523–38.

MacDonald, E. K., and Byron, M. Sharp. (2000). Brand Awareness Effects on Consumer Decision Making for a Common, Repeat Purchase Product: A Replication. *Journal of Business Research*, *48*(1), 5–15.

Macdonald, E. and Sharp, B. (2003). Management perceptions of the importance of brand awareness as an indication of advertising effectiveness. *Marketing Bulletin, 12*(4), 1-15.

Ming, T.T., Ismail, H.B. and Rasiah, D. (2011). Hierarchical Chain of Consumer-Based Brand Equity: Review From The Fast Food Industry. *International Business & Economics Research Journal, 10* (9), 67–80.

Moschis, G. P. and Gilbert A. C., Jr. (1978). Consumer Socialization: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *15* (11), 599-609.

Morgan, Leonard A. (1985). The importance of quality. In J. Jacoby and J. C. Olson (Eds.), Perceived Quality (pp.61-64). Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Newman, J. W. (1957). New insight, new progress, for marketing. *Harvard business review, 35*(6), 95-102.

O'Flynn, A. (2017). Using social media to increase sales and brand awareness. Retrieved 16 March 2022, from https://www.josic.com/using-social-media-to-increase-sales-and-brand-awareness

Riezebos, R., & Riezebos, H. J. (2003). *Brand management: a theoretical and practical approach*. Pearson Education.

Share of respondents who view social media as a trusted news source in Malaysia as of February 2021, by age group. (2021). Retrieved 15 March 2022, from https://www.statista.com/statistics/983048/malaysia-trust-in-social-media-news-by-age/

Sekaran, U., and Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*. John Wiley & Sons.

Spence, Michael (1973), Job Market Signaling, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *87* (3), 355-374.

Tsiotsou, R. (2006). The role of perceived product quality and overall satisfaction on purchase intentions. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 30* (2), 207-217.

Wang, J., and Wang, X. (2019). *Structural equation modeling: Applications using Mplus*. John Wiley and Sons.

APPENDIX

1. Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire is a research project conducted by me, He Shu Kun, as requirements of Master of Business Administration programme of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. The purpose of the research is examining the effect of social media influencer promoting the product/service and the effect of promoting brand image through brand awareness and perceived quality. Feel free to contact me for any questions and more information for my research or for this survey. All data collected from this survey are only for this research purpose. Every responds from you in this survey will definitely keep confidential and secret. Only aggregate data will be published.

2. Questions

SECTION 1:

Social Media Include such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube…etc.

Do you have a habit of using social media? □Yes □No
Which social media is more commonly used?   **□Facebook □Instagram □Twitter □YouTube □Other:___**
Choose a social media influencer, it must have a fan page on the social media that you use frequently and follow them: _____   **Name a product/service that the influencer you choose once advertorial: _____**   **What kind of product/service is it:**   **□Cosmetic □Food □Clothing □App □Online Platform □Other:___**
What social media is your chosen influencer using the most?   **□Facebook □Instagram □Twitter □YouTube □Other:___**

SECTION 2:

<u>PART A</u>

Based on the social media influencer you choose at section 1, rank the flowing

questions in Part A. (1 is the lowest ranking, 5 is the highest ranking)

Social Media Influencer Comparison	1	2	3	4	5
1. How attractive __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
2. How well looking __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
3. How honest __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
4. How reliable __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
5. How sincere __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
6. How trustworthy __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
7. How expert __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					
8. How experienced __(Social Media Influencer)__ is?					

PART B

Based on the product or service that advertorial once by the social media influencer you choose at section 1, answer the following questions in Part B.

(SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NDA = Neither Disagree or Agree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree)

Brand Awareness	SDA	D	NDA	A	SA
1. I'm always aware of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
2. I pay more attention on __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
3. I can quickly recall the logo of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
4. I can quickly recall the characteristics of __(Brand)__ after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
5. I can easily notice the difference of __(Brand)__ from other similar brand after the social influencer promote the product/service.					

(SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NDA = Neither Disagree or Agree, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree)

Perceived Quality	SD	D	NDA	A	SA
1. I trust __(Brand)__ has a high quality after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
2. The quality of __(Brand)__ seems extremely high after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
3. I trust __(Brand)__ is highly functional after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
4. I trust __(Brand)__ is highly reliable after the social influencer promote the product/service.					
5. I trust __(Brand)__ must have very good quality after the social influencer promote the product/service.					

(SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NDA = Neither Disagree or Agree, A =
Agree, SA = Strongly Agree)

Brand Image	SD	D	NDA	A	SA
1. I believe __(Brand)__ is a leading company in the industry.					
2. I believe __(Brand)__ can represent of the industry.					
3. I believe __(Brand)__ is a customer oriented corporation.					
4. I believe the price of__(Brand)__fit to its product/service .					
5. I believe __(Brand)__ is responsible to its product/service.					

SECTION 3:

Personal basic information.

Gender: □Male □Female
Age: □18~24 □25~34 □35~44 □above 45 (include)
Educational level: □Under high school (include) □Bachelor's degree □Master's degree □Doctorate degree