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BIG TWO THEORY AND THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL INFLUENCERS ON CONSUMER'S PERCEPTIONS.

Filipa Gomes Lourenço Rodrigues

Dissertation report presented as partial requirement for
obtaining the Master's degree in Information Management
with specialization in Marketing Intelligence.

NOVA Information Management School
Instituto Superior de Estatística e Gestão de Informação
Universidade Nova de Lisboa

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Advisor: Diana Orghian

DEDICATION

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Diana Orghian, who has given her full support and valuable assistance in every stage of this research, without whom it would have been impossible to accomplish this goal. She always tried to answer promptly and never gave up on motivating and challenging me.

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ABSTRACT

Brands and marketing managers are constantly trying to understand what are the consumers' needs and what they like. The Digital World has been developing a massive vehicle for the consumer and generated a lot of communication between customers and brands. In these contexts, it is urgent to define and make adjustments to the type of communication brands establish with their target audiences.

The purpose of this research is to understand the impact of influencers on their followers decisions such as the perception, purchase intention, liking/disliking of the product and others, introducing the theory of the Big Two that describes social perceptions as being driven by two major dimensions – Agentic and Communal, as formulated by (Bakan, 1966). The present study is a confirmatory research based on quantitative data collected by means of an online survey with 266 active Instagram users who follow at least one influencer on the platform.

The main hypotheses tested in this research are:

H1a: Micro-Influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intention and liking than macro-influencers.

H1b: A product sponsored by micro-Influencers is perceived as having a better fit with the followers than by macro-influencers.

H1c: Micro-Influencers have more communal traits and less agentic traits when compared to macro-influencers.

H2: Influencers from the communal category (that is, Lifestyle and Volunteering) are evaluated more positively for communal than agentic traits, whereas agentic influencers (category CEO and Fitness&Gym influencers) are evaluated more positively for agentic than communal traits.

H3: Communal micro-influencers are evaluated more positively than communal macro-influencers, whereas agentic micro-influencers are evaluated worse than agentic macro-influencers.

At the end of the research, the results show a higher involvement of Communal influencers and a significant impact on the followers when compared to Agentic influencers. Also, micro-influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intentions when sponsoring products or services than macro-influencers. The products sponsored by micro-influencers are perceived by their followers as having a better fit with them and the target audience likes the micro-influencers more than macro-influencers.

This dissertation aims to support brands and Marketers on their choice of an influencer that better fits their mission as Brands and that generates more awareness with their target audience and their customers.

KEYWORDS

Social Media; Instagram; Digital Influencers; Big Two Theory; Communal dimension; Agentic dimension

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

NOVA IMS Nova Information Management School

SM Social Media

SMI Social Media Influencer

WOM Word of Mouth

1. INTRODUCTION

The digital era has been changing the way people communicate with each other and express what they feel about anything or anybody. With the constant and massive amount of information that travels every second around the world, it is necessary to understand the trends and what they mean in the different industries and brands.

Consumers are creating, publishing, and sharing information with other consumers through digital platforms. These new tools in which social networks, blogs, wikis, among others, are included can be grouped as Social Media. With the emergence of SM, Social Media Influencers have appeared, that create new connections between brands and consumers, finding different ways to disclosure products or services and enabling new types of marketing campaigns. This new era allows consumers to understand and be more knowledgeable about the products, brands and good practice through the constant communications done by other consumers that include opinions, information acquisition, comprehending prices, purchase and post-purchase behaviour, etc. (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

Many brands are looking for people that can represent them in SM accounts, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube. In this research, Instagram will be used as a setting for the study. Accordingly to Nielsen's study, a social media influencer can bring higher impact when compared with digital marketing, translating in 11 times higher ROI (return on investment) - (Nielsen, 2013). This means that nowadays, a good investment in SM can be a very important strategy for the development of a product or brand. For that, it is necessary to understand the target audience, their needs and preferences, and the type of influencer that can be the best solution to promote and sponsor the products/services of each specific brand.

This dissertation is about studying the impact that different profiles of SMI have on dependent variables such as purchase intention, how much the followers like or dislike an influencer, if the product sponsored by the influencer has fit with the follower or not, which characteristics are more specific to one influencer or the other, etc. For that, the Big Two theory (Bakan, 1966) that defines society into two dimensions will be used: the Communal and the Agentic. Bakan assumes the agentic dimension reflects of the individual's personality through characteristics such as efficiency and intelligence while the communal dimension through characteristics such as warm and honest and has higher weight on the impressions we create about others. Through this clear division it is possible to define different types of profiles in a way to test which of the two dimensions has a larger impact on the consumers. This can help us understand how consumers perceive SMIs and how those perceptions change in different situations (e.g., a bigger or smaller group of people following the influencer).

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The biggest challenge that brands identify is to find the perfect influencer to promote and endorse their products and image. The best choice of an influencer needs to combine the influencer's characteristics with the brand features once the former will convey the image of the brand and endorse it (De Veirman et al., 2017).

The main goal of this research is to explore the impact that the Big Two theory has in different scenarios as micro or macro-influencers, testing if the perception of the influencer and products sponsored change when manipulating the dimension communal or agentic. At the end of this research, a marketing manager will be able to use this study to define an adjusted marketing campaign, allocate the best influencer that represents the brand and achieve more awareness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The World is changing. The way society is communicating today has nothing to do with the time that has gone by in previous societies. The 21st century is characterized by social media interactions where people share, visualize and communicate with others through their smartphones or PCs. Social media became the main factor in leveraging diverse consumer behaviour elements such as information acquisition, comprising awareness, attitudes, opinions, purchase and post-purchase behaviour, always around communication and the evolution of both technology and users. (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

With the new online world, it is necessary to change the mindset and understand what kind of people can generate more awareness and how they do it. Nowadays, people are communicating with different brands in many ways, it is extremely relevant to understand what type of channels seem worthy to invest in and adapt to the respective needs of the desired target group with easy applicability (Grifoni et al., 2012).

2.1. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Social media allows for communication between consumers and companies; it is easier to reach people, to link closer every point of the world (Appel et al., 2020). SM helps to understand what consumers think and how companies and brands can improve to keep them satisfied (Sudha M, 2001). To make the most of this trend, it is important to explore how do people get involved and how do they relate to this or that, what actions change their perception and generate more awareness about a specific brand, product or person.

According to the website *we are social*¹, in 2020 more than 5.19 billion people used the mobile phone, a number that has been growing in the last years. In January 2020, the number of active users of social media increased by 9 per cent when compared to last year that reached 3.80 billion users. Talking about the number of hours that people spend using the internet, the global average is of 6 hours and 43 minutes online per day; assuming 8 hours per day for sleep, at the end of the year this translates into 100 days online during 2020.

Facebook is still on the top of the more used social platforms followed by Youtube, Whatsapp, We Chat and Instagram. Instagram is one of the platforms with the fastest growth in the last years; , 2013

¹ <https://wearesocial.com> (visited on February 2021)

just had 90 million users and last year (2020) Instagram released the information that they had reached one billion active users²

2.1.1. Instagram platform

Instagram's last years show how strong it is and how it impacts society and the economy (brands). In 2016, Brandwatch published some statistic data where it is possible to find interesting numbers around the digital world and that refuted the impact that this application has (Brandwatch, 2016).

In June of 2016, 95 million posts were made every day. Nowadays, this number is likely to be far higher; an important number to refer to is the percentage of users that use the application on a daily basis, that rounded 63%. Instagram is the platform where brands invest more to be present on the SM network; of the top 100 brands in the world, 90% of them have an Instagram account, according to a forecast research to 2017, with an average of 5.6 times a week, it is a recurrency that more than half of the top 50 brands (58%) published a post on the Instagram brand account. Additionally, the engagement generated by Instagram is 10 times higher than Facebook, 54 times higher than Pinterest's and 84 times higher than Twitter's, the average of posts per week/brand has been growing in the last years, in 2016 the number raised 416% compared with the two previous years (SproutSocial.com, 2017).

2.1.2. Instagram for Business

Influencers marketing is not a new trend, it has been existing for years in the company, using popular personalities/celebrities that create different types of contents. Nowadays, a new phenomenon happens every day, through Instagram, on our mobile phone. Last year, 2020, twenty-five million business accounts were active just in the US, with an estimation that 75% of the US business are currently on Instagram. More than two hundred million instagramers (users of Instagram) visit at least one business profile daily and 70% of shopping enthusiasts turn to Instagram for product discovery and product reviews. When companies (in the US) are questioned about the budget allocated to social media, 68% state that they will spend most of their influencer budget on Instagram (Aslam, 2020).

When, a few years ago, the technology boomed, companies and brands were a little averse to open their business and entry into the digital world, nevertheless, the rapid expansion of social media, brought many advantages for consumers and companies, making the technology an opportunity rather than a threat (Kim et al., 2013). In the fourth quarter of 2020, 6.8 million dollars were generated on

² <https://www.statista.com> (visited on February 2021)

the Instagram app, 1/3 of the most viewed stories are from some business and Instagram's potential advertising is about to reach nine hundred and twenty-eight million users (Aslam, 2020).

Linked to the economy around the Instagram platform, the definition of digital marketing is crucial to develop this industry and get the most out of it. Digital marketing is defined as marketing activities/campaigns based on the internet and different platforms through which consumers can reach sellers, ask for details in real-time and get their needs quickly satisfied, based on other consumers experiences and feedbacks. On the other hand, companies have the opportunity to develop their business totally online (if that is the case), developing the products, defining prices and managing the distribution of that. With these actions, a company can reduce costs and choose the best option for the business (Ferina & Agung, 2019).

2.2. THE BIG TWO THEORY

Societies are constantly changing as well as their opinion and the way they communicate and interact with each other. These types of interactions can be resumed based on the Big Two theory which assumes that each person relates more to one of the two dimensions, this being directly connected with the basic perspectives and the personality of each one and resulted in different attitudes, different points of thinking, interactions and discussions with.

Over the years different authors came up with different names for this theory, Big Two (Paulhus & Trapnell, 2008), Universal Dimensions of Social Cognition (Fiske et al., 2007), Dual Perspective Model (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014) and among others.

Why two or dual? The main theory focused on two different perspectives and *Communion* and *Agency* are complex terms. These terms are not new in human life, in 1966 Bakan affirmed and described the meaning of *communion* and *agency* to psychology as the basic modalities of human existence (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014).

"I have adopted the terms 'agency' and 'communion' to characterize two fundamental modalities in the existence of living forms, agency for the existence of an organism as an individual, and communion for the participation of the individual in some larger organism of which the individual is part. Agency manifests itself in the formation of separations; communion in the lack of separation. Agency manifests itself in isolation, alienation and aloneness; communion in contact, openness, and union. Agency manifests itself in the urge to master; communion in non-contractual cooperation. Agency manifests itself in the repression of thought, feeling, and impulse; communion in the lack and removal of repression." (Bakan, 1966)

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Over the years, many studies have been done in different fields of psychology, to define and understand what traits can be adjusted with these two dimensions. Abele & Wojciszke collected different researches carried out during the last 60 years, as it can be seen in *Table 1*, that allows a zoom vision on different areas of psychology; in each research, two sides are identified; the left-hand column refers to agency contents and the right-hand column refers to communion, on the third column being the respective references of the authors that studied these researches or points of view. Different names are associated to different contents and consequently, different researchers as is possible to see on the table, defining different terms, for example *intellectually versus socially, masculinity versus femininity, instrumentality versus expressiveness, competence versus morality, dominance versus submissiveness, warmth versus competence, and trust versus autonomy* (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014).

Agentic content	Communal content	References
Intellectually good–bad Traits having to do with intellectual activities (skilful, determined, foolish, dull).	Socially good–bad Traits having to do with social activities (warm, sociable, cold, unpopular).	Rosenberg, Nelson, and Vivekananthan (1968); multidimensional scaling of trait names.
Masculinity Traits that are ascribed to the male gender role (decisive, dominant, aggressive).	Femininity Traits are ascribed to the female gender role (empathic, emotional, dependent).	Bem (1974), Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1974), Eagly (1987); separate dimensions for gender stereotypes and the self-concept.
Independent self Focus on an individual's. Rights above duties, personal autonomy, and self-fulfilment (independent, unique).	Interdependent self Focus on group membership, sacrifice for the common good; priority given to group obligations (loyal, cooperative).	Hofstede (1983), Markus and Kitayama (1991), Schwartz and Bilsky (1990); separate dimensions describing self-construal.
Initiating structure Leader defines roles, initiates actions, and defines how tasks are accomplished by the group.	Consideration Leader is concerned for the welfare of the members of the group.	Halpin and Winer (1957), Bass (1990); leadership behaviour.
Instrumentality Instrumental behaviour is oriented at goal fulfilment of the group as part of a larger social system.	Expressiveness Expressive behaviour is directed at coherence, solidarity, and harmony within the group.	Parsons and Bales (1955); group functions.
Competence Capabilities , skills, and efficiency in goal attainment (efficient, dull).	Morality Information on how one's goals relate to the well-being of others and moral norms (fair, disloyal).	Reeder and Brewer (1979), Wojciszke (2005a); separate types of traits and behavioural information.

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Dominance versus submissiveness. “Getting ahead”	Warmth Nurturance versus cold-heartedness. “Getting along”.	Wiggins (1979, 1991); interpersonal circumplex; Hogan, 1983; socio analytic theory.
Autonomy versus shame and doubt: can I act on myself?	Trust Versus mistrust: can I trust others?	Erikson, 1950; life tasks

Table 1 - Communal and Agentic perspectives [adapted (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014)]

At the end of those researches, it is possible to focus on three main hypotheses that link the basic perspectives in social interaction with the Dual Perspective Model (Big Two Theory). The first one is related to the primacy of communion, supported in studies of language where cultural groups rated themselves as communal (empathy, generosity admired...), the second one focused on observer perspective and the traits that receive higher weight given to communion when compared with agentic traits, the third and last is based on the actor perspective and the higher weight given to the agency that interprets their behaviour on self-profitable or self-harming terms, oppositely when someone is asked to remember events that had influenced their impressions of others, they appeal to communal behaviour.

In 2017, Imhoff et al., studied the curvilinear relation between agency and communion, as mentioned before, the agency described as how potent, dominant, and influential people are while communion represents as well as how warm, friendly and well-intentioned they are. The same research affirms that society cannot be seen as target groups or individuals with highly agentic and communal characteristics, it is always necessary to analyse the targets separately to reach any result for each dimension. The truth is, groups and individuals targets change their opinion and behaviour when in different situations and exposed to a different type of stimulus. Curvilinear relation brings another perspective, determinate targets of people or societies can be a mix of agentic or communal, not necessarily having to fully correspond to one or the other dimension.

On social media the differences between agentic and communal users are clearly visible. Liu and Campbell studied the relation between social network site use and the Big Two (and the Big Five personality meta-traits) in 2017. Agentic people are directed to new procedures, new creations, new adventures without fear of taking chances, in SM that translates into posting selfies, interacting with new groups and meeting new people. In contrast, communal people are more discreet, choose to keep the relationships they already had, are more tempted to follow new trends and feel engaged with higher personalities people.

2.3. MARKETING AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS

2.3.1. The credibility of the transmitter

Linked to this researches and focused today's society, it is a priority to understand how this theory (Big Two Theory) is connected with the social media process and perception and what changes does it bring when analysed in different situations (a bigger or smaller group of people, influencers of relevant personalities within the public opinion...). To study and explore this idea and face the actual setting (constant changes around the digital world), social influencers are very important by the consumers when talking about a product or brand perception (Childers et al., 2019). These perceptions increase when higher is the credibility of the transmitter. The credibility of the transmitter is a very important aspect that social media influencers are working on, the way that some activity or message is received for followers, how the content can propagate from person to person, account to account are actual study topics (Stephen et al., 2018).

The credibility of a source has a positive influence on the purchase decision or the use of the content (Gunawan & Huarng, 2015). The credibility of the transmitter/ influencers can translate the connections between influencer and audience and the effectiveness of the product perception and purchase intention.

Nicol and Anak published an article in 2017 that studies the *Followers ratio on Instagram affects the products' brand awareness* and concluded the bigger the number of followers, less impact does it have on consumer perception. The study portrays two different influencers, both micro-influencers; the first one (Profile A) has 7112 followers and the other one (Profile B) has 874 followers, correspondingly a public account (any user of Instagram can access the publications, comments, likes and share) and private account (only followers can access the content); although the first profile has more likes and comments the ratio between the interactions and followers are bigger on the profile B. Concerning the purchase, profile A received more orders than profile B (proportionally). This type of numbers can be originated by comments about the products made by followers who already bought the product and comment that they are very satisfied with it. An important aspect that the participant of this study revealed was the impact of a good quality Instagram post, the choice of hashtags that allow the creation of more awareness of the product (Nicol & Anak, 2017).

Many brands assume that micro-influencers are the best option to promote this type of communication; this choice is based on costs for the brand and the higher impact that can be received for the customers or target audience as an authentic influencer (Boyd, 2016). Many studies are done

about this subject-matter, the comparison between micro and macro-influencers becomes important when talking about costs and effectiveness for the brand. A micro-influencer transmits more authentic aspects, revealing the truth about the products whether positive or negative, generating more awareness and people, in this case their followers, have more proximity with influencers; these aspects are visible in interactions (likes, comments, share...). Influencers instead of celebrities are closer to their followers; one reason is the number of followers, of course. It is more realistic to have answered to 300 messages comparing with the 3000 celebrities have.

Following these researches and the rationale, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1a: Micro-Influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intention and liking than macro-influencers.

H1b: A product sponsored by micro-influencers is perceived as having a better fit with the followers than one sponsored by macro-influencers.

Attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness

Wiedmann and Mettenheim analysed the requirements to be an influencer which are attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness validating if these are relevant for an online campaign where brands use influencers to reach their customers. The study relates *expertise* to someone with high levels of knowledge, experience and problem-solving skills, assuming just a small percentage of the population is considered to fall on that category. *Trustworthiness* translates the individual beliefs, referring to influencers; when it comes to the public (followers) it is a matter of looking to them and ask them if their opinion is honest or influenced by third parties. *Attractiveness* is a physical characteristic of the influencer that can be good looking or ugly. In the study, two of these requirements can be related to the Big Two Theory; trustworthiness directly with the term communion and expertise with the term agency. In sum, influencers are connected to a specific product or brand as part of the strategy campaign to promote it and let their followers know what brands they are doing. The combination of these three requirements could positively change influencers persuasiveness; the same happens when we talk about the Big Two theory and their aspects (communion and agency). Basically, If communion and agency change, the way that followers see the influencer, the impact that they have when promoting something, will change too.

Baker and Churchill in 1977 and later Ohanian in 1990, describe and explain the source credibility model, which involves the effectiveness as a message that depends directly on the expertise and trustworthiness; attractiveness depends on how familiar the influencer is. With social media platforms,

the same happens; the higher the trustworthiness and attractiveness, the better the influencer is, the better the message is conveyed and certainly more persuasive than from less trustworthy sources (Dijkstra et al., 1999).

2.3.2. Influencers

In the new digital world, “influencers” is a new term that is used every day on the internet. There are a lot of definitions for it, to define people that share contents and promote trends, brands and products. Some authors characterize them as “microcelebrities”, others defend that influencers are personalities whose reputation is growing through technologies like social media (Khamis et al., 2016) as mentioned before.

Before analysing what characteristics influencers need to have and what impact they have on their followers, it is important to understand what a social influencer actually is. A social media influencer is someone, celebrity or not, that communicates with his/her followers using different social platforms (Childers et al., 2019). Influencers connect people with brands or services they usually trust and are engaged with. Word of mouth (WOM) is another way social media influencers or marketing influencers have of promoting a product and consequently generate more awareness and visibility towards the public, once this form of communication can be the most powerful tool about reputation; WOM translates a higher number of interactions, discussions about products and/or brands and increases the volume of engagement (Romaniuk & Hartnett, 2017).

Influencers instead of celebrities that are recognized and famous outside social media platforms, gain notoriety through social media and the products they advertise. In the beginning, micro-influencers endorse products through posts or stories showing the pros and cons of the products without any sponsorship. After having developed some reputation and notoriety, influencers start doing sponsored ads, focused on pros, showing off brands and different types of products; in these cases, brands pay influencers to disclosure products or just send them free samples (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020). Macro-influencers may have other benefits, brands can set up a contract and for each post or story done by the influencer, there will be a payment. Also, for posting or doing a review about some product or any revelation about the brand... (Sammis et al., n.d.).

Types of influencers

The biggest challenge that brands identify is to find the perfect influencer to promote and endorse their products and image. The best choice of an influencer needs to adjust their characteristics to the brand once they will transmit the image of the brand and endorse it (De Veirman et al., 2017).

When brands are looking for influencers, the first thing they check is the number of followers. Influencers are categorized into two groups: micro-influencers, that have up to 10,000 followers and macro-influencers that have up to 100.000 followers (eMarketer, 1999). De Veirman, Cauberghe and Hudders studied, back in 2017, the impact of the number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude; for that, they carried out two different studies that analysed which Instagram influencers are the best choice when talking about the number of followers and the second study refers to the effects on a brand when examining the role of followers in influencers posts and their advertisement effectiveness. They assume that micro-influencers are nearer to their followers, defending that this type of influencer can transmit better what they are feeling and what they think about the brand or product they sponsored. These type of personalities are directly related to communal traits like a credible and authentic person, someone trustworthy and social. Micro-influencers depend on their videos and creations (Instagram stories), which help to keep them connected to their followers and allow a bigger perception by them. This type of interaction is characterized by authenticity and accessibility. For these reasons, more and more marketing managers are looking to work and make partnerships with micro-influencers. (Campbell & Farrell, 2020)

H1c: Micro-Influencers have more communal traits and less agentic traits when compared with macro-influencers.

Independent of the type of influencer, micro or macro, each one has a specific interest area that is an area the influencer knows better and therefore, promotes the trends, the products, etc. Consequently, each area is more close to one of the parts of the *Big Two Theory*. Areas that are more technical, with a high level of knowledge such as telecommunications, business areas, medical or others, can be considered **agentic** areas, others more social such as lifestyle, where people do not need a high level of expertise but rather some experience and good communication with other people, can be considered as **communal** areas.

Authors like (Imhoff & Koch, 2017), mentioned before that communal people have a more positive evaluation and growth when compared with agentic people whose progress is a lot repetitive and without great innovation (Abele & Bruckmüller, 2011).

When correlating these two important analyses about how human life interacts and reacts to different stimuli and it is exposed to these types of marketing named influencers, with the Big Two Theory that divides society in two big groups (agentic and communal), it is important to develop and study a lot of researches. In the next section, this correlation is better explained.

2.4. CONCLUSIONS

The main goal of this research is to explore the impact that the Big Two theory has in different scenarios as micro or macro-influencers, testing if the perception of the influencer and products sponsored change when manipulating the communal or agentic dimensions. As mentioned earlier, these questions are very important nowadays since more and more brands and big companies are looking to develop this channel to communicate with their customers and personalize their content for each niche of the market. At the end of this study, it is expectable that a marketing manager is able to define an adjusted marketing plan based on his budget and type of content directly to the target audience previously defined.

To test these questions the digital platform that was used was Instagram where it is possible to analyse every variable and reach a higher number of participants.

2.4.1. Investigation Hypotheses

H1a: Micro-Influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intention and liking than macro-influencers.

H1b: A product sponsored by micro-Influencers is perceived as having a better fit with the followers than by macro-influencers.

H1c: Micro-Influencers have more communal traits and less agentic traits when compared to macro-influencers.

H2: Influencers within the communal category (that is, Lifestyle and Volunteering) are evaluated more positively for communal than agentic traits, whereas agentic influencers (category CEO and Fitness&Gym influencers) are evaluated more positively for agentic than communal traits.

H3: Communal micro-influencers are evaluated more positively than communal macro-influencers, whereas agentic micro-influencers are evaluated worse than agentic macro-influencers.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH APPROACH

After a deep research through an electronic search of several index databases of academic journals, scientific articles and others, some important hypotheses were built to accomplish the objectives of this study. According to Saunders et al. (2009), three types of approaches can be applied when conducting research namely: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory.

The descriptive research focuses on providing a detailed point of view based on secondary data gathered through quantitative methods, that has been analysed already in the past and where it is possible to do empirical generalizations of the relationship between variables. Opposedly, exploratory research is used to analyse in-depth a problem that has not yet been studied by other authors, to develop this type of research, the identification of a new problem statement is accompanied by the collection and analysis of primary data, frequently collected through questionnaires, focus groups and individual interviews (Saunders et al., 2009). The third approach, explanatory research, aims to establish a causal relationship between variables focused on the existing theoretical insights and where the hypotheses are formulated and tested through quantitative research and primary data collection.

This dissertation aims to explore how the *Big Two Theory*, the Communal and Agentic dimensions, can manipulate the way followers see determinate influencers, brands, products and whether it changes the purchase intention or not. To achieve that, all constructs involved are firstly researched and described, based on secondary data coming from existing researches. After that, the following step was the construction of the questionnaire to collect primary data; in the following section, it is explained how and why it was done.

In this academic paper, the three approaches are used, exploratory research since the impact of social media influencers on Instagram users has not been studied in-depth, descriptive research once it is based on quantitative research and explanatory research since is based on theoretical insights, the *Two Big Theory*.

3.2. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The methodological design includes an experimental study that collects quantitative data. For that, the creation of the questionnaire, developed on *Qualtrics* (www.qualtrics.com) was testing different profiles with different products or services. This type of study allows the analysis of how the participant

reacts to the different variables in different scenarios (Micro or Macro influencers, gender and dimension that represents, communal or agentic traits and dimensions). As it is possible to analyze in the research conducted by Kay et al. (2020) an experiment has been done to study the attitude of the participant when faced with the exposed scenario. In this scientific paper, the situation is the same with a different topic of discussion.

The first step consisted in understanding which categories of profiles are more popular on Instagram, to define which categories are better fit for testing the pre-formulated hypothesis. Based on “Influencer Marketing Hub”³ and “Top Hashtags”⁴ four types of more usual categories were defined, Lifestyle, Fitness & Gym, Volunteering and Business People (CEO), which represent the two big dimensions, Fitness&Gym and Business People for Agentic and Volunteering and Lifestyle for Communal.

For the creation of the profiles it was important to split the different variables to define which characteristics are attributed to each profile. Sixteen profiles were created, four for each influencer category as it can be observed below (Figure 3) with the Lifestyle category example. It is important to refer that each category holds four different people, micro and macro profiles of influencers with one woman and one man for each type. The images of the profiles are real and actually exist in Belgium and the decision was taken not to use unpopular influencers in Portugal to avoid manipulations of whatever the participants think about them. For the creation of these profiles, the profile pictures were used and one or two pictures of the feed that have been manipulated to introduce the products/services sponsored.

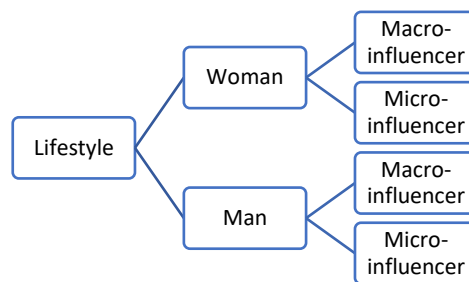


Figure 2 - Example of group profiles created

The second step was to identify what type of products or services are sponsored by influencers on social media, after an exhausting research over the most famous influencers profiles to find out what

³ <https://influencermarketinghub.com/top-instagram-influencers/>

⁴ <https://top-hashtags.com/instagram/>

they promote more and define the following products/services, Hotel and Resorts, gymnasiums, Backpacks and Banking Institutions (financial products) that correspond respectively to the products sponsored on Lifestyle, Fitness & Gym, Volunteering and Business People (CEO) categories. Figure 4 represents, as an example, one of the profiles and the respective product sponsored that the participants looked at and analysed to answer the survey; the remaining profiles can be consulted in Appendix A.

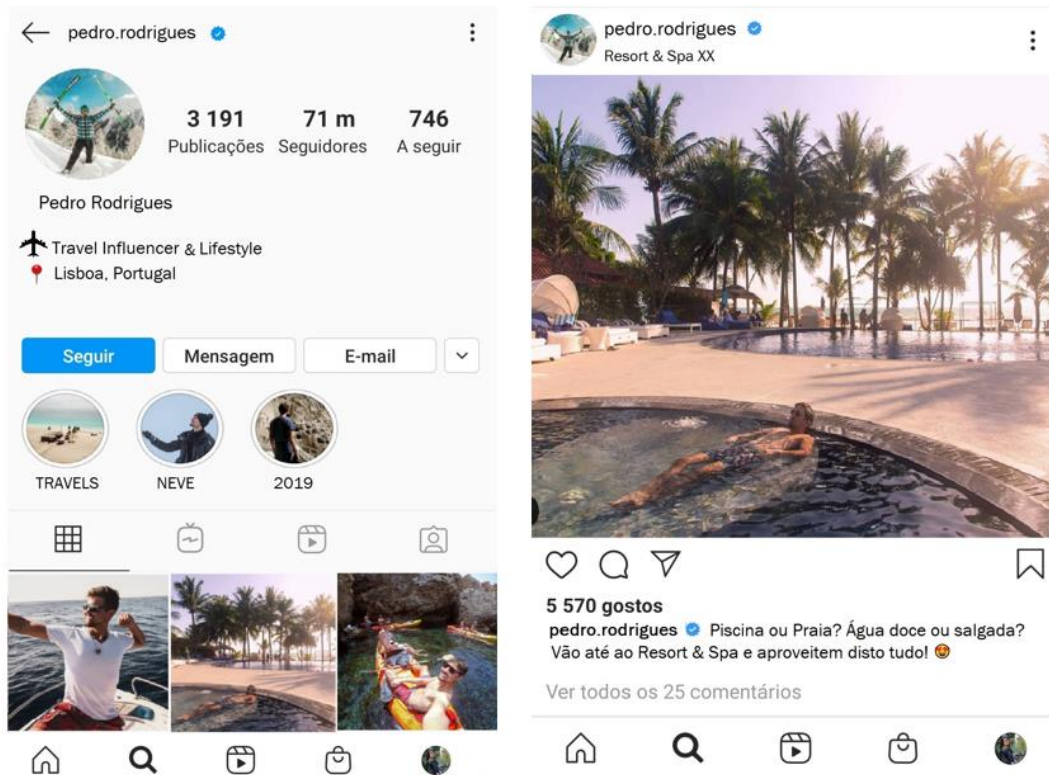


Figure 3 - Cat Lifestyle (Comm), male macro inf.; Product endorsement – Hotel

With sixteen profiles created, it was time to split them by surveys with eight profiles each, where the differences were in the dependent variables. Basically, for each participant, there were 8 Profiles displayed randomly (two for each category, with different genders), the profiles showing up with no specific order from person to person.

The respondents were asked to rate each influencers' attributes, behaviours and sponsored product/service using a 7 point Likert Scale where 1 stands for "nothing" or "extremely disagree" and 7 stands for a "lot" or "completely agree". The Likert Scale was the most used when it is necessary to observe and classify the positions of the respondents for each question (Malhotra et al., 2006). Through this scale, respondents indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

In sum, this type of manipulation stimuli (De Veirman et al., 2017) allows the identification of how the participants react to a different stimulus and to manipulations. Fictitious influencers, female or male, specific bio description with Name/Age/Country/Type of category (fashion, travel, health, food), pick some real photos of other Instagram influencers to portrait their lifestyle. Manipulating the number of followers and followees one gets to understand if the product perception grows or decreases and whether the influencer affects consumer's perceptions of brands or not.

3.3. PROCEDURE

All respondents received the link to access the questionnaire, which was divided into three sections, before each section, there was an explanation about the next questions. The first section contains an introduction with information about the study, the master degree and the university, following general questions about the use of social media platforms and Social media influencers, the type of Influencers respondents are currently following, the most used platform, etc.; The full questionnaire may be found in Appendix B.

The second section is the bigger part of the questionnaire. There are 4 sub-sections, each with two profiles. The participant will be asked to look at the profile pictures and to answer a few questions about that. Each b-section is about one of the areas of interest defined earlier. In the last section, the participant answers five socio-demographic questions, gathering more information about gender, age, nationality, occupation and school level. For more detailed information please consult the Survey Flow in Appendix C.

3.4. POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Population, as defined by Malhotra et al., 2006, is the collection of elements or objects that contain information sought by the researcher, and about which inferences are to be made.

3.4.1. Demographics

The collection of the data (questionnaire), was shared online in different channels (like Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn or WhatsApp) and distributed among colleagues from the university, friends and family to generate answers from different age groups.

If the participant is not familiar with Instagram or social media, this person is automatically out of this study; this restriction limited the number of valid answers and the sample that was analysed. Although some participants (44) answered that they do not follow influencers, these answers were considered valid once they use the Instagram application daily and they have enough know-how on the functionalities of the platform.

BOOK SPINE

Using Jasp 0.14.1.0 application, it was possible to conduct a descriptive analysis of the sample. Concerning gender (figure 5), 68% of the participants were women and 31% were men.

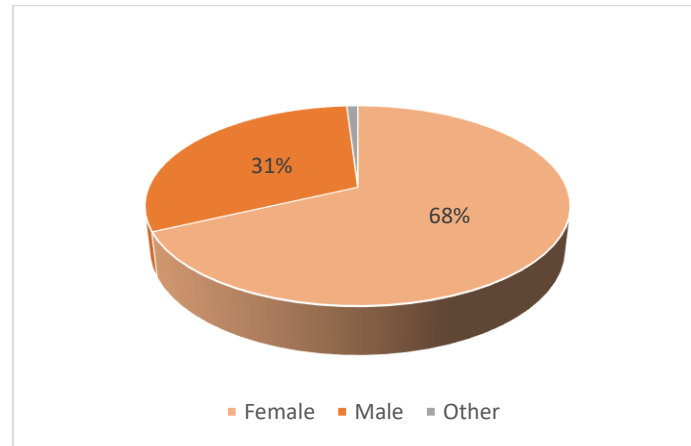


Figure 4- Gender distribution

Concerning age, the survey was shared between the university students and consequently, the average age was 21, with 79% of the participants between 18 and 24 years and 13% between 25 and 35 years. Regarding the education level, 51% had completed high school, 26%, a bachelor's degree and 20% have a master's degree. Furthermore, 17% of the respondents are working at the same time, 59% are just students and 23% are an employed (Figure 6). Finally, to what concerns nationality, 94% of the participants are Portuguese.

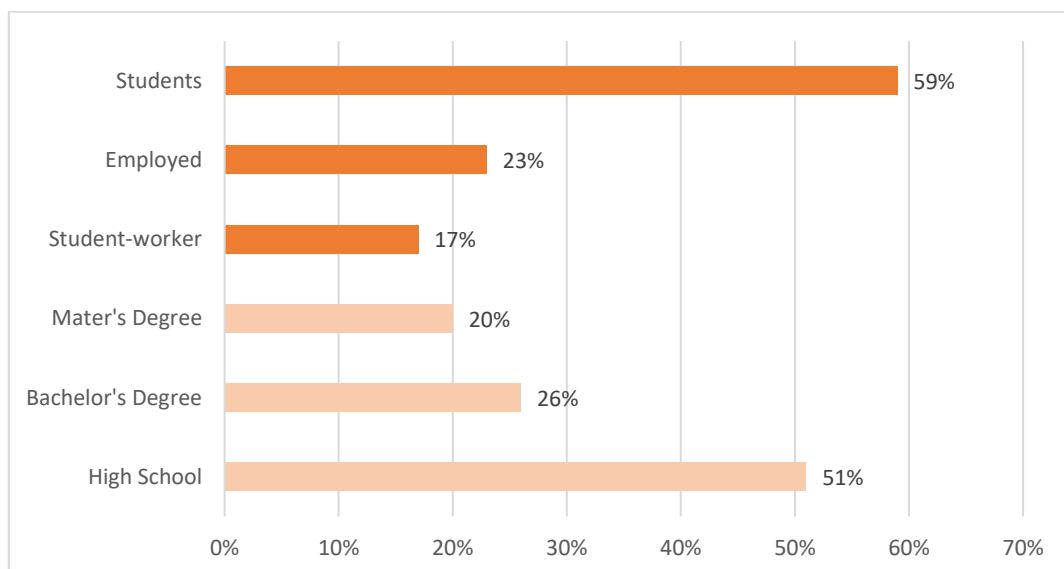


Figure 5- Occupation distribution and Education level

3.4.2. Social media Influencers and social media platforms

The sample showed that 100% of the participants use platforms frequently. Instagram, with 69% of the answers is the most used platform, followed by YouTube with 17%. When asked if they are currently following (or used to follow in the past) any type of influencers, 78% said “yes”. Additionally, 24% state they are following on average more than nine influencers, 23% follow between four and six and 20% follow just between one and three influencers (Figure 7). Concerning the areas of interest, there are 52% who follow influencers that promote or sponsor beauty products/makeup, 15% have an interest in profiles that relate to food and a healthy lifestyle and 12% follow travel/tourism and leisure sponsors/promoters.

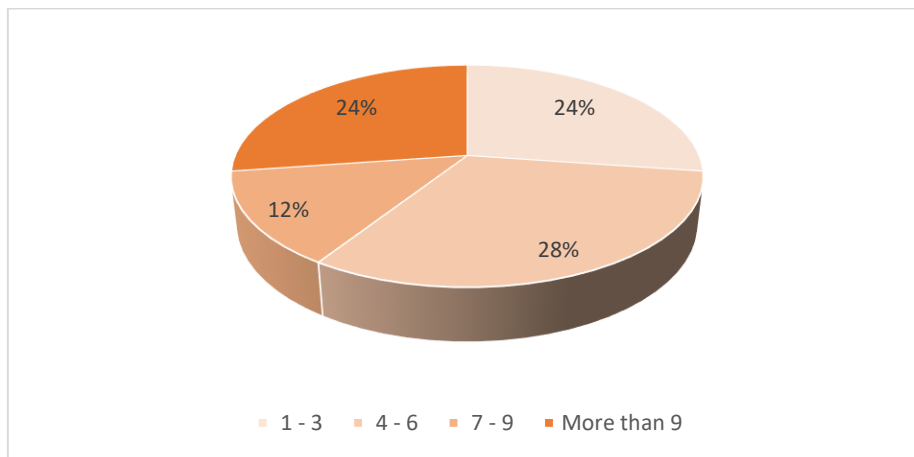


Figure 6- Number of Influencers Followed

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before starting the analysis, we cleaned the data. As longer the survey is, more difficult it is to collect valid and complete data: from a total of 410 participants that started the survey, 288 concluded 100% of the survey and of those 266 were valid when filtering by their answers regarding follow or not influencers and Instagram daily usage.

To analyse the data, the average between different questions and subquestions was calculated (see more in Appendix B). As an example, for the variable “dependent Agentic traits”, the value used is correspondent to the mean of the different traits ratings (such as Expertise, Sociable, Intellectual and others), the same happens for the variable “purchase intention” where the value used is a mean of three questions (XIV, XV, XVI – If the intention to buy the product exist, if exist interects to buy the product or if the person has interect but is looking for more information). After this merge, and to simplify the analyses, the average was calculated for the two genders and for the the two categories inside the communal and agentic dimensions. Based on these merge and means, we ended up with four “general” profiles: micro or macro influencers either with Communal or Agentic attributes.

It was conducted 7 different repeated measured ANOVA’S, one per each dependent variable (Agentic traits scale, communal traits scale, Like/dislike, a match between product and influencer, product attitude in terms utility, product attitude if fit with the participant and purchase intention). We opted for repeated measures ANOVA’S because all participants saw profiles from of all the conditions in our experimental design (that is: communal micro, communal macro, agentic micro, agentic macro). Respect with independents variables are two, Type (Micro and Macro influencer) and category this is Communal dimension represented by Voluntary and lifestyle profiles and Agentic dimension by CEO and Fitness profiles).

For the analyses, the statistically significant value assumed was $p < 0.05$, accordingly to Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity.

From here on, when talking about the Agentic Dimension, it’s about the CEO and Fitness & Gym categories whilst Communal Dimensions refers to the Lifestyle and Volunteering categories.

4.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

In the following table, it is possible to see the mean and standard deviation to the three dependent variables related to influencers and their characteristics. In the variable “Agentic traits” scale, agentic macro-influencers have a high mean (4.81) while communal micro-influencers have a low mean (4.26).

For the Communal traits scale, with the higher mean (4.87) come the communal micro-influencers and agentic micro-influencers with the lowest mean (4.61). Last comes the variable related to how the participants like the influencer where macro communal influencers have a higher mean (4.72) and agentic micro-influencers have a lower one (4.04).

Table 2 - Dependent variables of the influencer. Mean (SD-standard deviation)

Dimension	TYPE	agentic scale	communal scale	like/dislike
Agentic	macro	4.81 (1.35)	4.67 (1.29)	4.09 (1.20)
CEO + FITNESS&GYM	micro	4.61 (1.42)	4.61 (1.32)	4.04 (1.11)
Communal	macro	4.30 (1.27)	4.86 (1.31)	4.72 (1.25)
VOLUNTEERING + LIFESTYLE	micro	4.26 (1.27)	4.87 (1.31)	4.60 (1.34)

Table 3, shows other variables, these more focused on product characteristics. The first, match between the product disclosure and influencer does not have a significant impact on the mean when looking from different profiles. The product utility has a higher mean (4.89) corresponding to agentic micro-influencers and the lower (4.56) to communal macro-influencers. The variable "Fit" directly relates to how the participant fits to the product, comes up with a higher mean (4.16) in communal micro-influencers and a lower value (2.96) in agentic macro-influencers. Regarding the variable "purchase intention", communal micro-influencers have a higher average (3.02) and macro-influencers come up with a lower value (2.10).

Table 3 - Dependent variables of the products sponsored, Mean (standard deviation).

Dimension	TYPE	match product »	product attitude		purchase intention
		influencer	utility	fit w/me	
Agentic	macro	5.33 (1.37)	4.83 (1.34)	2.96 (1.56)	2.08 (1.39)
	micro	5.33 (1.33)	4.89 (1.15)	3.40 (1.58)	2.18 (1.38)
Communal	macro	5.32 (1.30)	4.56 (1.26)	3.78 (1.77)	2.95 (1.70)
	micro	5.34 (1.30)	4.72 (1.31)	4.16 (1.57)	3.02 (1.72)

4.2. INFERENCE STATISTICS

4.2.1. Preliminary analyses

On the different variables, effects related to the category were found. The main effect of the category of the influencer on the agentic traits ratings was observed, [$F(1, 181) = 49.81, p < .001$], the

same effect being present in the variable “communal traits” ratings, [$F(1, 181) = 13.93, p < .001$] and the variable “like/dislike” , [$F(1, 181) = 60.52, p < .001$].

With higher agentic traits ratings for the category Agentic - CEO and Fitness ($M = 4.71, SE = .09$) than for the Communal - Voluntary and Lifestyle ($M = 4.28, SE = .09$). To communal traits ratings the higher Communal ($M = 4.87, SE = .09$) that for Agentic ($M = 4.65, SE = .09$). With higher like/dislike ratings for Communal ($M = 4.66, SE = .077$) than for the Agentic category ($M = 4.07, SE = .077$). The means and the standard deviations in the different conditions of our experimental design are being presented in Table 4. No other effects were significant.

Table 4 - Influencers Variable differences (Agentic Trait, Communal Trait, Like/Dislike) in function of Category (Agentic, Communal).

Dependent Variables	Agentic		Communal		<i>F</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	Influencers		Influencers			
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Agentic Traits	4.71	0.09	4.28	0.09	49.81	< .001
Communal Traits	4.66	0.09	4.87	0.09	13.93	< .001
Like /Dislike	4.066	0.08	4.66	0.08	60.52	< .001

There was no significant effect of the type of the influencer (micro and macro influencer) on the three dependent variables described above.

From the analyses (Table 5) it is possible to conclude that all the variables are significant. The main effect of a category on “product attitude” – utility, [$F(1, 178) = 8.96, p = .003$] was observed, the product attitude of the respondents identify to the product, [$F(1, 179) = 52.02, p < .001$] and for the variable “purchase intention”, the main effect of the category was detected [$F(1, 110) = 57.35, p < .001$].

With higher utility Agentic category ($M = 4.86, SE = .082$) than for Communal category ($M = 4.64, SE = .082$). The variable “product attitude fit with me” has higher values for the Communal category ($M = 3.97, SE = .097$) than for the Agentic category ($M = 3.18, SE = .097$). The variable “purchase intention” has higher values for the Communal category ($M = 2.99, SE = .13$) than for the Agentic category ($M = 2.13, SE = .13$). The means and the standard deviations in the different conditions of our experimental design are shown in Table 5. No other effects were significant.

Table 5 - Product variable differences (Match product & influencer, Utility, Fit w/me, Purchase intention) in function Category (Agentic. Communal).

Dependent Variables	Agentic		Communal		<i>F</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Match product & Influencer	3.18	0.10	3.97	0.10	52.91	< .001
Product attitude - utility	4.86	0.08	4.64	0.08	8.96	.003
Product attitude – Fit w/me	3.18	0.10	3.97	0.10	52.91	< .001
Purchase intention	2.13	0.13	2.99	0.13	57.35	< .001

The main effect type was not verified (Match, Utility and Purchase intention) with the exception of the variable “Fit”, [$F(1,179)=14.41, p < .001$], shown on table 6, with a higher value for the communal category ($M = 3.97, SE = .10$) than for the Agentic ($M = 3.18, SE = .10$).

No interaction effect between the influencer category (Agentic or Communal) and type (micro or macro influencer) was verified on the dependent variables’ match between product and influencer.

4.2.2. Hypotheses testing

H1a: Micro-Influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intention and liking than macro-influencers.

Table 6 – Purchase intention and Like/Dislike in function Type of influencer

	Macro	Micro	<i>t</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>

Dependent Variables	Macro		Micro		<i>F</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Purchase intention	2.60	0.09	2.75	0.10	2.34	.020
Like/ Dislike	4.42	0.06	4.40	0.07	.41	.680

The purchase intention is higher for micro-influencers ($M = 2.75$, $SE = .10$) than for macro-influencers ($M = 2.60$, $SE = .09$), $t(246) = 2.340$, $p = .020$, supporting the first part of the hypothesis. As for the "Like/Dislike" dependent variable, no difference is observed between macro-influencers ($M = 4.42$, $SE = .06$) and micro-influencers ($M = 4.40$, $SE = .07$), $t(246) = 0.413$, $p = .680$, the second part of the hypothesis is not supported, concluding that this first hypothesis is partially supported.

H1b: The product sponsored by micro-influencers is perceived as having a better fit with the followers than macro-influencers.

Table 7 - Product attitude fit with me Differences in function of the Type of influencer

Dependent Variables	Macro		Micro		<i>F</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Fit with the product	3.37	0.10	3.78	0.10	14.41	< .001

Participants perceive the product sponsored by micro-influencers ($M = 3.78$, $SE = .10$) as having a better fit with themselves than a product sponsored by macro-influencers ($M = 3.37$, $SE = .10$), $F(1,179) = 14.41$, $p < .001$, meaning this hypothesis is **supported**.

H1c: Micro-Influencers have more communal traits and less agentic traits when compared to macro-influencers.

Table 8 - Agentic and Communal Traits in function of the Type of Inf. (Macro, Micro)

Dependent Variables	Macro		Micro		<i>t</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Agentic Traits	4.57	0.07	4.50	0.08	1.23	.220
Communal Traits	4.81	0.07	4.79	0.08	0.40	.693

This hypothesis was **not supported**, since no differences were observed between macro and micro-influencers for the agentic and communal traits.

H2: Influencers from the communal category (that is, Lifestyle and Volunteering) are evaluated more positively for communal than for agentic traits, whereas agentic influencers (category CEO and Fitness&Gym of influencers) are evaluated more positively for agentic than for communal traits.

Table 9 – Communal Traits and Agentic Traits in function of the Influencer Dimension

Dependent Variables	Communal Traits		Agentic Traits		<i>t</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Agentic Category	4.70	0.08	4.74	0.08	1.63	.105
Communal Category	4.92	0.07	4.33	0.07	14.06	< .001

Influencers from the communal category have more communal traits than agentic traits, whereas for the agentic category no difference is observed when compared to the communal and agentic traits, meaning that this hypothesis is **partially supported**.

H3: Communal micro-influencers are evaluated more positively than communal macro-influencers, whereas agentic micro-influencers are evaluated worse than agentic macro-influencers.

The 3rd hypothesis, the last one, compared micro and macro-influencers into two dimensions, “Communal” and “Agentic”; the five dependent variables were analysed, as shown on tables 10 and 11. The hypothesis was divided in two parts; the first compared communal micro-influencers with macro-influencers, Like/ Dislike dimension [$t(227) = 0.790, p = .430$], Match product & Influencer [$t(227) = 0.390, p = .697$], Product attitude - Utility [$t(226) = 1.372, p = .171$], Product attitude – Fit with me [$t(227) = 2.374, p = .019$], Purchase Intention [$t(227) = 0.575, p = .566$]. The Second part referred to the comparison between agentic micro-influencers and agentic macro-influencers, Like/Dislike [$t(225) = 0.062, p = .951$], Match product & Influencer, [$t(224) = 0.312, p = .755$], Product attitude - Utility [$t(224) = 0.774, p = .440$], Product attitude – Fit with me [$t(224) = 3.823, p < .001$], Purchase Intention [$t(227) = 0.932, p = .353$].

Table 10 – Micro and Macro-influencers Communal in function of the five dimensions.

Dependent Variables	Communal Micro		Communal Macro		<i>t</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Like/ Dislike	4.64	0.09	4.72	0.08	0.79	.430
Match product & Influencer	5.28	0.09	5.30	0.08	0.39	.697
Product attitude - utility	4.75	0.08	4.59	0.08	1.37	.171
Product attitude – Fit w/me	4.14	0.10	3.85	0.12	2.37	.019
Purchase intention	2.96	0.11	3.01	0.11	0.58	.57

Table 11 - Micro and Macro-influencers Agentic in function of the five dimensions.

Dependent Variables	Agentic Micro		Agentic Macro		<i>t</i>	<i>sig (p)</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>		
Like/ Dislike	4.10	0.07	4.10	0.07	0.06	.951
Match product & Influencer	5.30	0.09	5.34	0.09	0.31	.755
Product attitude - utility	4.94	0.09	4.87	0.09	0.77	.440
Product attitude – Fit w/me	3.49	0.11	3.07	0.11	3.82	<.001
Purchase intention	2.28	0.12	2.17	0.09	0.93	.353

This hypothesis was **not supported**, since no differences are observed in the variables between macro and micro-influencers with exception of the variable Product attitude – fit with the followers where the type of influencer changes the perception that the product has on the person that sees it or is impacted by the product.

5. DISCUSSION

In this section, the goal is to compare the results with the previous literature review and investigate if the results found in this research are in agreement with it or not. A big challenge that marketing managers face nowadays is to find the best influencer to represent their brand and products. Choosing the right influencer can decide a successful campaign and consequently, a larger profit. For this reason, it is important to find out what characteristics (example: the number of followers, the area of interest they are better at promoting and each dimension they fit better, “communal” or “agentic”) leads to a better endorsement effectiveness.

The first hypothesis that was subdivided into three sub-hypothesis is focused on micro-influencers, trendy people that do not have more than 10k followers (eMarketer, 1999).

***H1a:** Micro-Influencers have a more positive impact on purchase intention and liking than macro-influencers.*

This hypothesis was based on Boyd (2016), who claims that micro-influencers are more likely to positively improve the perception of the customer and raise the purchase intention, once they can achieve a closer communication with their followers and bring reduction of costs when compared with macro-influencers , who charge more per post or story (on the Instagram platform).

The results (Table 6) did show that micro-influencers generate a higher purchase intention in their followers compared with macro-influencers. It is possible to observe that the communal dimension creates higher values for this dependent variable; these facts can be refuted by the traits that communal micro-influencers have and the type of stimulus that they relay to their followers. Therefore, the results were consistent with hypothesis H1a, and so the hypothesis is **supported**.

***H1b:** The product sponsored by micro-Influencers is perceived as having a better fit with the followers than one sponsored by macro-influencers.*

A new type of endorsement named “Influencers” has more and more weight with the emergence of social media that consequently impact influencer marketing. The type of influencer (micro or macro) itself seems to be an essential choice, has more attributes that link the followers/ consumers to the influencer’s attributes, the endorsement can have a better impact on the effectiveness of the advertisement and the perception of the target audience that grows significantly (Wymer & Drollinger, 2014).

This hypothesis tested whether a product sponsored by micro-influencers can generate a better perception of the followers as having a better fit with them. As referred before, micro-influencers can engage more with their followers; this happens as a consequence of their attributes and the way they stay close and maintain a close relationship.

The results (Table 7) did show that micro-influencers create a higher value when asked to sponsor products as those products are perceived by the followers as a better fit to the self. Moreover, communal micro-influencers have a significantly higher mean in terms of fit when compared with agentic micro-influencers; these different numbers are a consequence of the traits that each type of influencer has and how they impact followers. This means that the results were consistent with H1b, it so being that the hypothesis is **supported**.

H1c: Micro-Influencers have more communal traits and less agentic traits when compared with macro-influencers.

In connection with the previous hypothesis, the need arises to understand what traits are more evident in each type of influencer, for that, H1c was formulated. Imhoff & Koch, 2017, describe, as traits of personality for the agentic dimension, expertise, dominant, leader and intellectual person and to communal dimension people with a high level of credibility, trustworthiness, credibility and social. These characteristics were used to test which profiles are more representative of communal or agentic traits.

Table 8 shows the values that provide the answers to this hypothesis. Divided into two blocks, one for Agentic influencers, micro-influencers have fewer communal and agentic traits compared to macro-influencers. The second block focused on communal influencers, micro-influencers have more communal traits and fewer agentic traits compared to macro-influencers. In both blocks, the hypothesis in the test was **not supported**.

The fact that the hypothesis is not verified, can be justified by the choice done for each category chosen, to the Agentic dimension, the category CEO can be an area of no interest for the majority of the respondents to the survey, once the average age was 21 years old; on the other hand, the extended survey can translate into high levels of distraction during its course, making it impossible to extract and define exact results for the research.

Notwithstanding, for the communal dimension, the analyses of the results have shown a clear impact in the differences dimension, a fact that could be used for testing in-depth in other researches to better

define the way and which impact it brings to the sponsored activity and which type of traits can manipulate the perception that a given influencer passed along to their followers.

Herewith, the results were not consistent with H1c, so it is **not supported**.

H2: Communal influencers (that is from category Lifestyle and Volunteering) are evaluated more positively for communal than agentic traits, whereas agentic influencers (category CEO and Fitness&Gym of influencers) are evaluated more positively for agentic than communal traits.

The Communal dimension includes Volunteering and Lifestyle as a category, where the communal traits scale is higher comparing with the agentic traits scale. The opposite did not happen when we talk about the Agentic dimension, where the category CEO and Fitness&Gym is included, the values of agentic traits scale are not significant when compared with Communal traits scale.

This hypothesis, once again, defined the strong position that the Communal dimension has in this type of activity and sponsorships. It is possible to define which type of influencers are a better fit with a specific brand or product when we refer to this dimension as a strategy. The results were in part consistent with hypothesis 2, making it partially **supported**.

H3: Communal micro-influencers are evaluated more positively than communal macro influencers, whereas agentic micro-influencers are evaluated worse than agentic macro-influencers.

For the last hypothesis, the intention was to understand the implications of the type of influencer when deciding what type of campaign will be created and with whom. Communal traits receive heavier impressions about others, are more warm and honest than Agentic traits that are considered more efficient and intelligent (Abele & Wojciszke, 2014). This hypothesis tested the Big Two theory and the influence of the type of influencer (micro and macro).

The results shown in tables 10 and 11, were not consistent with hypothesis 2, which did **not make it supported**. With that, it is possible to conclude that the number of followers and the type of influencer, do not manipulate any variable and characteristic inside the dimension. Such a thing can be defended, once again, by the extension of the survey, which makes it impossible to analyse whether the results are consistent with the reality or if the size of the survey was unfeasible.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Every hour new things are discovered, new ideas are generated, new trends come up and others disappear. Marketing is a constant area of study not only due to all of the changes that happen during a day, week or month, but also to the needs created by the population that in one month wants something and the next, changes it's view on someone or some brand. In addition to all the variables, it is important to refer that Social Media Influencers are a fairly new marketing strategy and it is already clear that it is one that will be a trend to persist in this digital world.

Companies are constantly concerned about understanding what the consumers want and which are the best strategies to get to them and investigate how they react to this stimulus and campaigns. For this purpose, an online experimental study was conducted using as independent variables, the effects of the type of influencer and the communal or agentic dimensions (based on The Big Two Theory) that the influencer transmits to their followers and testing the dependent variables, Agentic traits Scale, Communal traits Scale, Like /Dislike of the influencer, the match between product sponsored and the influencer, the utility of the product sponsored, how the respondent considers the product sponsored and the purchase intention.

The findings of this survey suggest that the influencers that create contents directly related to the Communal dimension (areas of contents used in this research were Lifestyle and Volunteering), have more communal traits than agentic traits. On communal traits it is possible to achieve characteristics such as warm, honest, sociable, who receive stronger impressions about others. Furthermore, the study shows that the communal dimension has a significant impact on the followers when compared to agentic influencers. This type of information can be a decisive factor when the marketing manager needs to define what type of influencers will be used for each campaign. In this regard, the influencer still seems to be one of the most important choices Marketers have to make, in which the choice of the type influencer appears to be an important selection criteria.

When studying the type of influencer - micro or macro-influencer (the difference is the number of followers; a micro-influencer is someone that has up to 10k followers and a macro-influencer has more than 10k and less than 100k followers), another interesting finding was concluded: since micro-influencers when sponsoring some product or service have a more positive impact on purchase intention. The products sponsored by micro-influencers are perceived by their followers as having a better fit with them and the target audience likes the micro-influencers more when compared to macro-influencers. Note to the fact that the survey served to test all hypotheses per respondent, that is, the same category for a different type of influencer allowed to achieve these types of findings.

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At the same time, when we look at the type of influencer inside in each dimension, these factors become irrelevant, the number of followers does not change the perspective that the target audience gets with their publications.

These findings give a small contribution to this area, a lot of studies are necessary to achieve standard good practices, always taking the fast changes that the digital world is undergoing into account.

7. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORKS

This study provides important insights concerning the connection between the types/dimension of social media influencers and the impact that they have on consumers. Aligned with it, different types of dependent variables were tested such as the impact on purchase intention and the product attitude depending on the type of profile shown. The communal or agentic dimension of the influencer changes the way followers see them and how they perceive the products endorsed by those influencers.

However, there are important limitations to mention and recommendations for future studies in this research area.

It would be important to replicate these results with real behaviour besides self-reports and without relying on an extensive survey. In long surveys, people get distracted, bored, or provide biased answers. Another limitation is the reduced sample collected; for more robust results it is necessary to extend the survey to more people. Regarding the more specific details of the study, the fact that the profiles presented are not real can interfere with the decision of the respondents when asked to judge the influencer. On the other hand, the fact that the respondent does not know who the influencer is, as he/she does not have a pre-formulation impression about them, makes the respondent to think more about the characteristics presented, which might not represent the common processing of this kind of informations in a more naturalist setting.

In future research about the two dimensions, it is important to define what type of influencers can be considered more communal or agentic and which characteristics are expected to be perceived in each. A lot of the papers as example (Büssing et al., 2019), written about this psychology theory mentions volunteering, and claims it relies on an independent third dimension outside the communal or agentic dimensions, which is about caring about the vulnerable. From the analyses in this dissertation, volunteer influencers (relatable with humanitarian missions or social) do in fact generate more awareness, purchase intention, among others, compared to other influencers without this type of content.

Nowadays, the opinion of third parties is taken into much consideration, for future researches, it is important to define if the opinion of the influencer makes the need to acquire products for Instagram users grow or not.

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9. APPENDIX

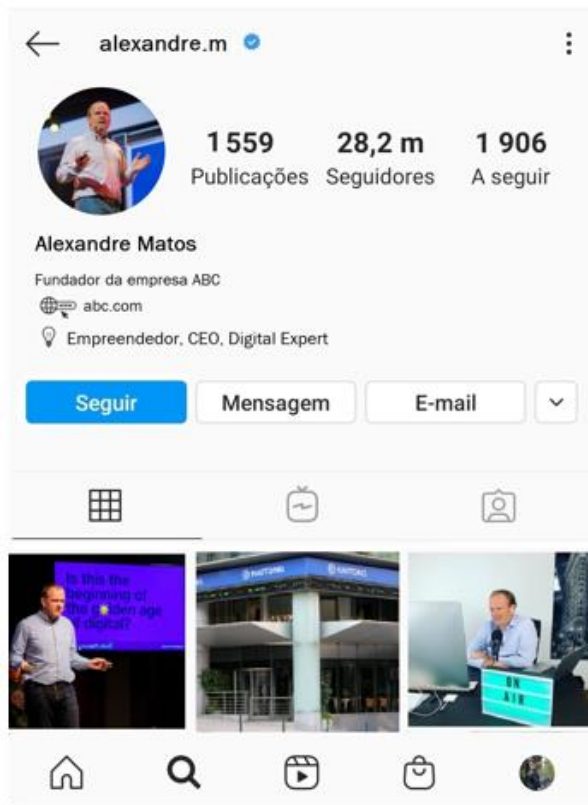
9.1. APPENDIX A – PROFILES AND PRODUCT/SERVICE

9.1.1. Business People (CEO) – Agentic Dimension

1) Profile Macro-Influencer Female



2) Profile Macro-Influencer Male



3) Profile Micro-Influencer Female



4) Profile Micro-Influencer Male

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9.1.2. Lifestyle – Communal Dimension

1) Profile Macro-Influencer Female



1) Profile Macro-Influencer Male

Instagram profile of Pedro Rodrigues. The profile shows a circular profile picture of a man with his arms raised in a snowy landscape. The bio identifies him as a Travel Influencer & Lifestyle based in Lisboa, Portugal. The statistics are 3,191 publications, 71 million followers, and 746 accounts he follows. The navigation bar includes buttons for 'Seguir', 'Mensagem', and 'E-mail'. Below the bio are three featured posts: 'TRAVELS', 'NEVE', and '2019'. The main grid shows three posts: a man on a boat, a resort pool, and people kayaking.

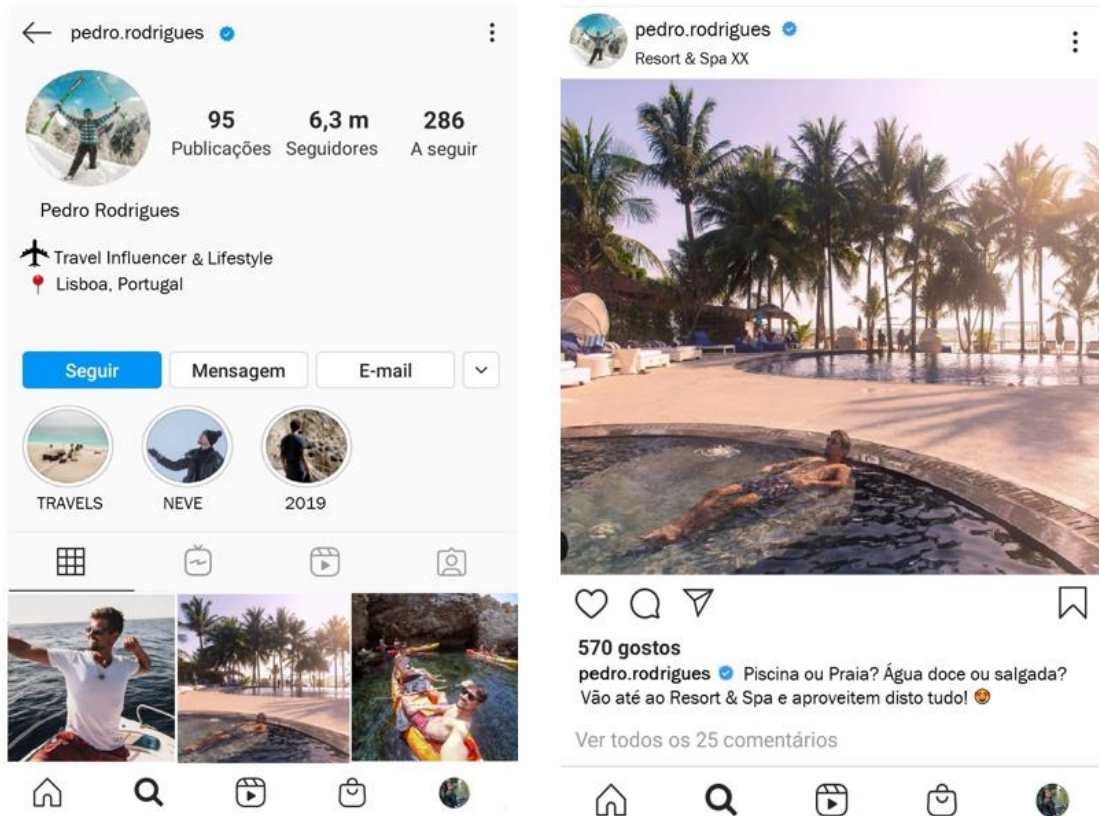
Instagram post by Pedro Rodrigues. The image shows a man relaxing in a large outdoor swimming pool at a resort, surrounded by palm trees. The caption reads: "Piscina ou Praia? Água doce ou salgada? Vão até ao Resort & Spa e aproveitem disto tudo! 🤗". The post has 5,570 likes and 25 comments. The bottom navigation bar is visible.

2) Profile Micro-influencer Female

Instagram profile of Mafalda Rodrigues. The profile picture shows a woman and a child. The bio identifies her as a Travel Influencer based in Lisboa, Portugal, with interests in Lifestyle, culture, people, and food. The statistics are 95 publications, 6.3 million followers, and 286 accounts she follows. The navigation bar includes buttons for 'Seguir', 'Mensagem', and 'E-mail'. Below the bio are five featured posts: 'TRAVELS', 'BLOOPERS', 'FOOD', 'STUFF', and 'NAILSP'. The main grid shows three posts: a group of people in front of the Eiffel Tower, a woman on a bed, and a woman eating.

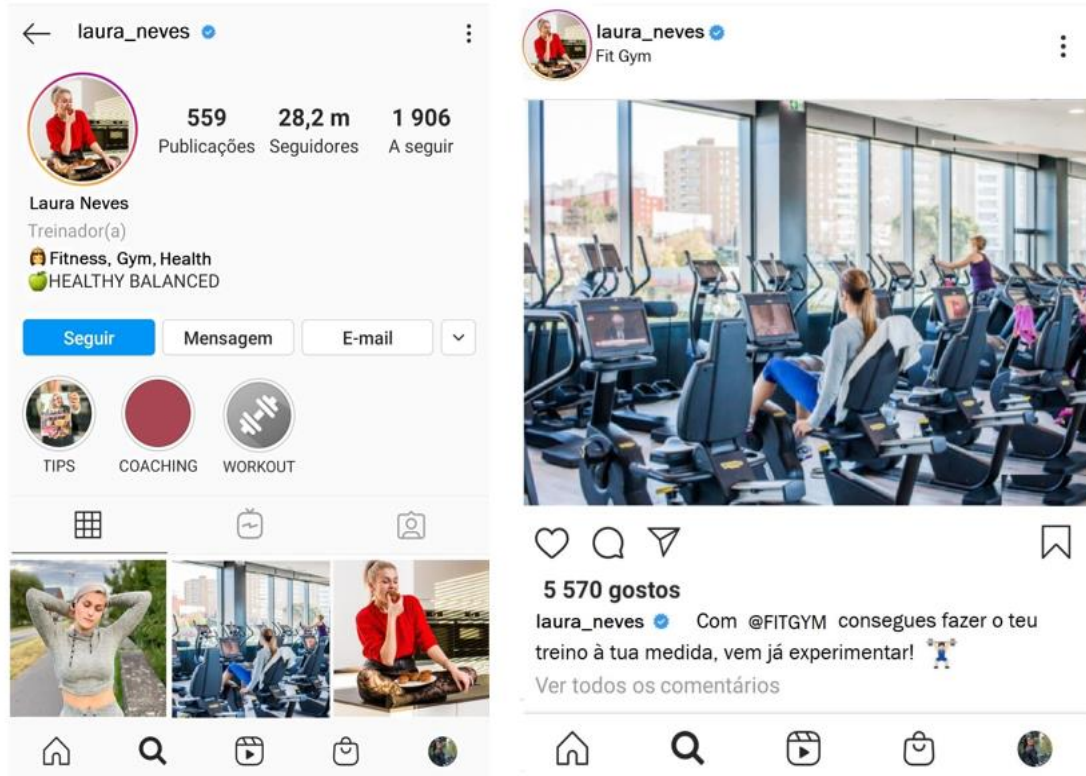
Instagram post by Mafalda Rodrigues. The image shows a woman and a child sitting on a bed in a room with a vaulted wooden ceiling. The caption reads: "Uma estadia a repetir!! ❤️ Aconselho a todos a visitar este @AguaMar onde a natureza e o conforto são um.". The post has 570 likes and 25 comments. The bottom navigation bar is visible.

3) Profile Micro-Influencer Male



9.1.3. Fitness & Gym – Agentic Dimension

1) Profile Macro-Influencer Female



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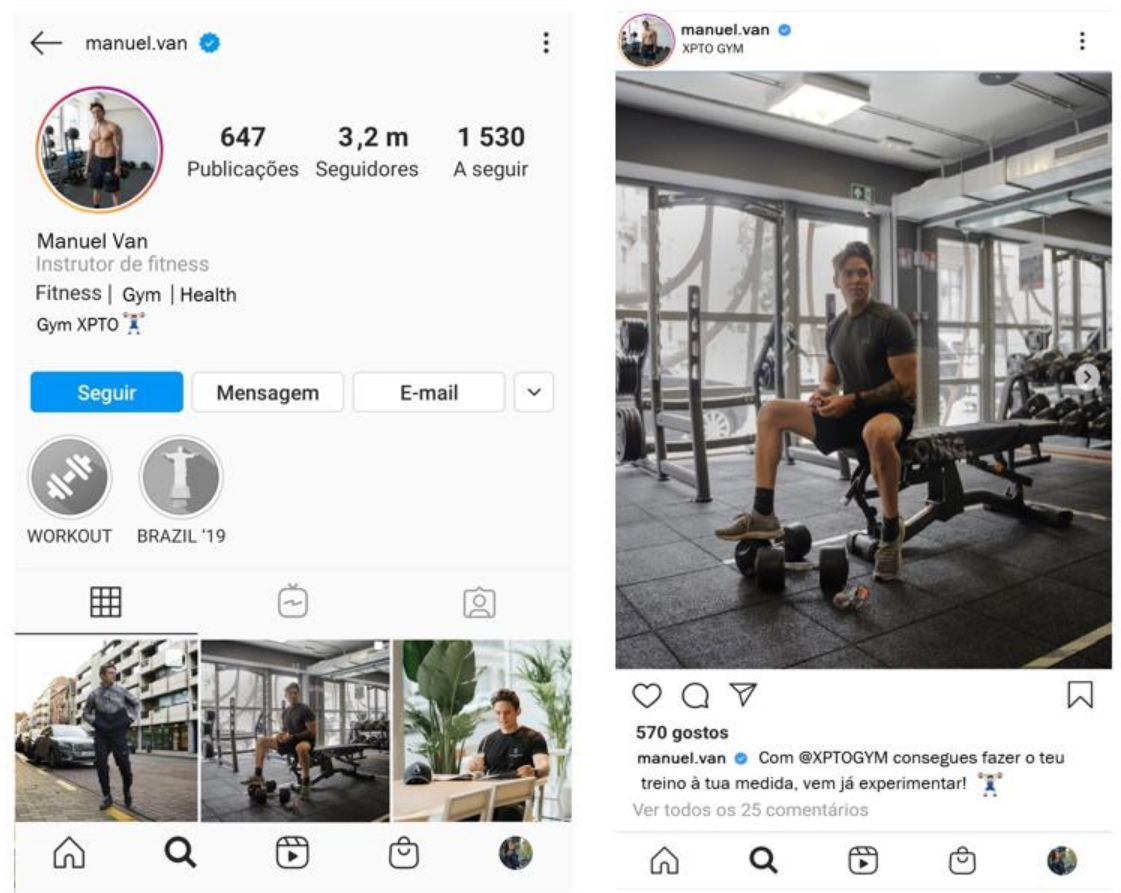
2) Profile Macro-Influencer Male

The image shows two screenshots from an Instagram profile. The left screenshot is the profile page for 'manuel.van', a verified account for 'XPTO GYM'. It features a circular profile picture of a man in a gym, 647 posts, 31.2 million followers, and 1,530 accounts he follows. His bio identifies him as a fitness instructor and lists 'Fitness | Gym | Health' and 'Gym XPTO'. Below the bio are buttons for 'Seguir', 'Mensagem', and 'E-mail', along with two category icons: 'WORKOUT' and 'BRAZIL '19'. The right screenshot is a post from the same profile, showing a man sitting on a gym machine. The post has 5,570 likes and a caption in Portuguese: 'Com @XPTOGYM consegues fazer o teu treino à tua medida, vem já experimentar!'. The bottom of both screenshots shows the standard Instagram navigation bar.

3) Profile Micro-Influencer Female

The image shows two screenshots from an Instagram profile. The left screenshot is the profile page for 'laura_neves', a verified account for 'Fit Gym'. It features a circular profile picture of a woman in a red top, 559 posts, 8.2 million followers, and 1,906 accounts she follows. Her bio identifies her as a trainer and lists 'Fitness, Gym, Health' and 'HEALTHY BALANCED'. Below the bio are buttons for 'Seguir', 'Mensagem', and 'E-mail', along with three category icons: 'TIPS', 'COACHING', and 'WORKOUT'. The right screenshot is a post from the same profile, showing a wide view of a modern gym with many treadmills. The post has 570 likes and a caption in Portuguese: 'Com @FITGYM consegues fazer o teu treino à tua medida, vem já experimentar!'. The bottom of both screenshots shows the standard Instagram navigation bar.

4) Profile Micro-Influencer Male



9.1.4. Volunteering– Agentic Dimension

1) Profile Macro-Influencer Female

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2) Profile Macro-Influencer Male



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Grid of 3 images: a group of people, a person with a backpack on a path, and a group of people in a room.

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Ver todos os comentários

4) Profile Micro-Influencer Male

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Seguir Mensagem E-mail

Grid of 3 images: a group of people, a person in a boat on a lake, and a person with a backpack.

goncalo.pires KIT Mochilas

570 gostos

goncalo.pires @KitMochilas o melhor companheiro nestas aventuras, onde posso guardar tudo e vou sempre confortável.

Ver todos os 25 comentários

9.2. APPENDIX B - SURVEY

The following survey was shown to each participant, with 8 profiles of the sixteen presented before (Appendix A). Important to refer that group X and X are asked to all profiles after the picture of the profile or product/service sponsored by the influencer.

Introduction

Este estudo insere-se no âmbito de uma dissertação de Mestrado em Gestão de Informação com especialização em Marketing Intelligence. O estudo é sobre o impacto que os influencers das redes sociais têm na perceção sobre produtos e pessoas. Agradeço desde já a sua participação.

O questionário dura aproximadamente entre 10 a 15 minutos e destina-se a pessoas maiores de idade que utilizam as redes sociais.

Todas as respostas são anónimas e os dados recolhidos destinam-se a fins meramente académicos e serão tratados de forma totalmente confidencial, respeitando as indicações do RGPD. A qualquer momento poderá desistir do questionário, contudo apenas questionários completos serão analisados.

Leia com atenção todas as questões e responda de forma mais honesta e com base na sua intuição. A sua participação é muito importante!

Para qualquer esclarecimento, contactar: m20190655@novaims.unl.pt

Obrigada!

Group 1 – General Questions

I. Usa regularmente plataformas sociais?

- Sim
- Não

If the respondent clicks on “Não” the survey must end.

II. Quais são as plataformas sociais que utiliza? (Selecione todas as opções que acha relevantes)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- Linkedin
- Snapchat
- Whatsapp
- Youtube
- Outro:

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If the respondent doesn't select "Instagram", the following question comes up.

II.I Tem conta no Instagram?

- Sim
- Não
-

If the respondent clicks on "Não" the survey must end.

III. Qual a plataforma social que mais usa?

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- Tumblr
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Snapchat
- Youtube
- Outro:

Instructions

Tenha em consideração a seguinte definição.

Influencers: pessoas com mais ou menos seguidores que ganharam reputação nas redes sociais devido ao seu conhecimento ou expertise sobre algum tópico ou tendência específica. Estes partilham conteúdos de forma bastante ativa nas suas redes sociais.

Group 2 – Social Media Influencers Questions

IV. Segue (ou costumava seguir) algum influencer no Instagram?

- Sim
- Não

If the respondent clicks on "Não", the survey continues directly to the next group of questions.

V. Em média, quantos influencers segue?

- 1-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- Mais de 9

VI. Quais as áreas de influência que promovem no perfil dos influencers que segue?

- Produtos de beleza (maquiagem, perfumes, cremes, etc...)
- Food & Health (dietética, bebidas/soft drinks, etc...)
- Lazer & Turismo (viagens, hotéis, restaurantes, etc...)
- Moda (Roupa, acessórios, etc...)
- Cultura (música, filmes, espetáculos, series, etc...)
- Desporto (comentadores, futebol, outras modalidades, etc...)
- Tecnologia (PC's, Smartphones, software)
- Outro:

Instructions

De seguida será apresentado um conjunto de perfis de influencer do Instagram. Para cada perfil irá ser-lhe feito um conjunto de perguntas.

*Por favor preste atenção ao **perfil** que aparece de seguida. Analise com cuidado. Leve o tempo que precisar, mas não demore mais de um minuto.*

(One profile comes up)

Group 3 – Testing the profiles

VII. Como caracteriza o influencer apresentado? (1- Nada; 7- Muito)

Expertise (1) (7)

Credível (1) (7)

Líder (1) (7)

Autêntico (1) (7)

Confiável (1) (7)

Dominante (1) (7)

Social (1) (7)

Intellectual (1) (7)

VIII. **Quanto é que gosta no geral deste influencer com base nas informações apresentadas no perfil?**

Para responder utilize a escala que vai de 1- não gosto nada a 7- gosto muito. Se não tiver informação suficiente pra responder utilize a sua intuição.

1- Não gosto nada	2	3	4- Nem gosto nem desgosto	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Instructions

Veja com atenção os **produtos/serviços** partilhados pelo influencer e pontue de acordo com a sua opinião cada uma das afirmações que se seguem.

Para responder utilize a escala entre "1- não concordo nada" a "7- concordo plenamente".

Por favor preste atenção ao produto/serviço que aparece em baixo. Analise com cuidado.

Leve o tempo que precisar, mas não demore mais de um minuto por perfil.

(the product associated to the previous profile comes up)

IX. Considero que o influencer é apropriado para este tipo de produtos/serviços.

1- Não concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

X. Considero que o influencer se enquadra bem neste produto.

1- Não concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XI. O produto/serviço é útil.

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XII. O produto/serviço satisfaz uma necessidade

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XIII. O produto/serviço combina (fit) comigo.

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XIV. Tenho a intenção de adquirir o produto/serviço.

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XV. Tenho interesse em adquirir o produto/serviço.

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

XVI. Estou interessado no produto/serviço, vou procurar mais informação.

BOOK SPINE

1- Não Concordo nada	2	3	4- Nem discordo nem concordo	5	6	7- Gosto muito
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(After the first profile has been analysed, another with the same questions follows. This happens for the whole sequence of 8 profiles.)

Instructions

Para finalizar, precisamos só de saber algumas informações demográficas sobre si!

XVII. Por favor indique o seu género

- Feminino
- Masculino
- Outro

XVIII. Por favor indique a sua idade.

XIX. Qual é a sua nacionalidade?

- Portuguesa
- Outra: __

XX. Qual é a sua ocupação profissional?

- Estudante
- Trabalhador – Estudante
- Trabalhador
- Desempregado
- Outro: __

XXI. Qual o seu nível de escolaridade?

- Ensino básico ou menos
- Secundário
- Curso Profissional
- Licenciatura
- Mestrado
- Outro: __

Instructions

*Agradecemos a sua participação neste inquérito.
A sua resposta foi registada.*

9.3. APPENDIX C – SURVEY FLOW

