



THE USE OF INSTAGRAM AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL IN THE DURBAN FASHION INDUSTRY

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, Thandeka Ngcobo, hereby declare that this dissertation is the product of my own work and has not been previously submitted to any other tertiary institution. Any sources that were utilised were acknowledged and indicated by means of referencing.

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21/08/2023.....

Signed:

Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to the almighty God, the one who strengthens me and continues to give me assurance in challenging times. I also dedicate this project to my father, Mandla Ngcobo who has been extremely supportive. I doubt I would be where I am in my journey if it was not for his endless support and wisdom. I also dedicate this project to my mother, Thandekile Mkhize, who has been encouraging me. I also dedicate this project to my beautiful sisters, Gugu Ngcobo and Minenhle Ngcobo, who have been dropping me at school and picking me up with no complaints, I appreciate their efforts. Lastly, I dedicate this project to my daughter, who has been my greatest motivation.

Zobuhle

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ABSTRACT

Over the years, social media has become an imperative platform in the fashion industry for testing new marketing strategies and monitoring trends. There are thousands of luxury and high street fashion brands around the world that are present online. Despite the fact that fashion brands have unilaterally set their polished brand images through traditional media such as television channels and magazines, social media serves as a very powerful tool for promoting and sharing fashion information to both industry and people (Ha, Kwon, Cha and Joo 2017:418). Undeniably, Instagram is not only used as any other social media platform, but also as a marketing tool for local fashion brands. There are numerous phenomena of Instagram marketing. However, there is still a lack of clarification as to why these phenomena occurred.

The aim of this study was to determine the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. The primary objective of the research was to examine the influence of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. The study followed a quantitative research method in order to accomplish the set objectives. Non-probability sampling was used in recruiting participants. Purposive sampling technique was utilised to generate the sample population. Fashion brand owners in Durban who use Instagram as a communication tool were the population targeted by this study. The researcher was able to get a 91.5% response rate as 119 questionnaires out of 130 were collected. The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 for Windows to analyse the data. The study revealed that Instagram is an effective communication tool that fashion business owners can benefit from, if used strategically. Furthermore, the findings revealed that Instagram is giving fashion business owners a platform to showcase their best offerings; communicate with their target audience; and increase brand awareness. One of the recommendations was that fashion businesses who are not using Instagram as a communication tool to start using this social media platform. Communication through the use of pictures and videos seems to be a new strategy for marketing. The study also recommended that it is important for fashion owners to prioritise engagement with their target audience on Instagram in order to build friendly relationships and increase the number of followers.

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CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study and provides the background to the study, problem statement, aim and objectives, as well as the rationale and delimitations. The theoretical background of the study is briefly discussed and the methodology that was followed in the study is highlighted. This chapter outlines the structure of the study (organisation of chapters).

1.2 Background to the study

The South African Fashion industry has evolved into a highly competitive industry over the last two years (Moatti and Moedas 2018). This competition has resulted in competitors using traditional as well as contemporary marketing tools, such as digital marketing tools, in promoting products or brands (Ting, Ming, Run and Choo 2015). According to Bryant and Sheldon (2017:8), social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter and Facebook in recent times are fast transforming the Fashion industry, wherein fashion designers alongside stakeholders within the Fashion industry can interact and engage with their potential clients. Ganesh (2010:39) states that fashion designers from Durban and South Africa have been making their mark in the Fashion industry not just locally, but abroad as well. Local Durban designers such as the Holmes Brothers, Leigh Schubert and Paul Botha are enjoying global success. The prominence of the clothing industry in South Africa has a social and an economic part to contribute in the country. The Clothing and Textile sector is an important industrial sector within the eThekweni area. It is described as a sector that is labour-intensive and is a contributor to the creation of jobs within the region for many years, commonly providing work to low-skilled female workers. The textile industry is said to be the oldest in the world and is made up of a number of establishments involved in the turning of natural and man-made fibres which are then transformed into fabrics (Economic Development and Growth in eThekweni 2014). The Clothing industry provides more different products and comprises several product lines, motivated by trends and seasonality. Within eThekweni region, manufacturing firms in the Clothing

and Textile industry are mostly grouped within the central region, followed by Hammarsdale in the west, the northern region and also in Mobeni Jacobs in the south (Economic Development and Growth in eThekweni 2014).

According to Motion, Heath and Leitch (2016:3), one of the most significant expansions to date has been social media, and it has opened up new possibilities. Latiff and Safiee (2015:14) allege that the utilisation of digital devices has over the years evolved to a new magnitude, which has led to several innovations. Wally and Koshy (2014:2) also affirm that technology is evolving at a very fast pace because of recent technological advancements. This has resulted in a shift amongst businesses to market their products and services in a more cost-effective manner through social media platforms. Justification for this action is the sudden influence on social media platforms. DeMers (2017:1) states that the appearance of Instagram has created a new outlook for the digital space and social media is viewed as an imperative marketing space that has enabled effective commercial transactions to occur online.

Marison (2018) alludes that global brands have utilised this platform, while taking advantage of its capabilities and features of exposure. Thus, companies are able to transform the social media platform from a socialising medium to an effective marketing tool. Marison (2018) agrees that social media is seen as a new-age practice that has shifted the dynamics of interacting. Ting, Ming, Run and Choo (2015) explain that Instagram has proven to be a proficient communication and marketing tool to present products with pictorial descriptions (Chen 2017). In consonance, several business entities in Durban such as Woolworths and Edgars have been utilising this marketing tool to promote their brands (Kiman 2016). Instagram offers a distinctive space for companies to use this platform for engaging with consumers, marketing and the exchange of users into customers. With 10 times the engagement of Facebook and 84 times that of Twitter, Instagram has the highest conversion rate from browser to shopper. Despite this, only 33% of marketers consider Instagram to be their top priority. The under-utilisation is perhaps due the lack of sufficient understanding of how to translate Instagram features to increase brand value. Adegbola (2018:234) posit that Instagram is one of the platforms that is consistently growing in brand usage. Instagram offers tools to help brands in connecting with their audiences on the traditional user account. For example, account insights permit brands to get a better comprehension of their brand awareness through various performance indicators such

as audience information, reach and number of impressions. Additionally, Instagram offers information that is useful for businesses such as suggested best practices to assist businesses to grow interactivity with users (Adegbola 2018:234)

1.3 Research problem

The Fashion industry in South Africa plays an integral role as it provides employment opportunities, attracts investments and also contributes to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Bhorat 2018:10). The industry has however not reached its full potential as it has not been optimally marketed locally and internationally (Bhorat 2018:12). The usefulness of social media platforms amongst fashion businesses within the South African fashion industry cannot be overemphasised as many of these businesses struggle to develop and grow their brands in a highly competitive fashion environment (Oshinowo, Lebura, Ibidunni and Jevwegaga 2018:73).

One of the main reasons why the fashion industry has been hesitant to adapt to e-commerce is the difficulties in transferring the in-store experience to the online environment. (Caristo and Robertson 2019). Blazques (2012:99) explains that social media platforms and digital marketing tools may possibly propel this industry to a much greater height. According to Barrie, Casidy, Valos, Hayi and Maplestone (2016:2), this marketing missed opportunity could be attributed to the lack of computer literacy; lack of knowledge about digital marketing tools; and being reluctant to adapt to new media. Thus, this suggests a missed opportunity amongst some business owners within the fashion industry who do not use such tools to promote their products (Chuan 2013:32). Social media analysts have often criticised social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter. Such criticism is based on the occasional misinterpretation or exaggeration emanating from their social media platforms when fashion brands advertise products (Percy and Elliott 2016:24). The need for this study is based on the scarcity of studies conducted within the South African Fashion industry relating to this social media platform (Smith 2018:9).

1.4 Research aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry.

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify the opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing communication tool within the Durban Fashion industry;
- To examine how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses within the Durban Fashion industry; and
- To determine the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry.

1.5 Research questions

- What are the opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing tool within the Fashion industry?
- How can Instagram be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses?
- How effective is Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry?

1.6 Rationale for the study

Social media marketing has become an important aspect for businesses, organisations or brands to communicate effectively with their target audiences (Chen 2017). Considering the fact that several businesses within the South African Fashion industry struggle to grow their businesses in a highly competitive industry, exploring the usage of Instagram as a communication tool may inform a strategy for growing fashion businesses within this industry. Furthermore, this study is important as the findings are likely to be beneficial to businesses within the Fashion industry by unearthing important insights into promoting their business through the use of Instagram.

1.7 Theoretical background

The study aims to determine the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. According to Ntobaki (2018), social media is not intended for advertising. Nonetheless, it can also be utilised as a tool for brands or businesses to interact with their consumers. On the other hand, social media provides consumers and potential consumers an opportunity to communicate directly with marketers and brand managers. Ponnusamy, Iranmanesh, Foroughi and Hyun (2019) state that for the past decades, the usage of social networking sites such as Instagram has progressed quickly. The number of people present on Instagram around the globe has reached one billion and this site has over 500 million users. Instagram is one of the social networks that is growing fast. Moreover, the app is mostly used by young adults as more than 59% of Instagram's users are aged 18 and 29 years old. Over a period of time, technological developments have permitted social networking sites to become more visual-centric. Instagram was released mainly for people to share photos and videos. With Instagram being mainly a photo and video sharing application, it has surpassed as an effective marketing and communication tool to present products with visual descriptions. Moreover, people utilise Instagram to show other members their coolness and creativity, document their life, share what interest them and search for information about other people (Ponnusamy *et al.*, 2019).

Instagram is regarded as the best platform for fashion businesses. With its innovative design, photo filters and distinctiveness, it is not a surprise that Instagram is ranked number one app for sharing photos on both Android and Apple devices. Instagram is said to have a very high user engagement rate, as compared to its contemporary social network rivals Twitter and Facebook. A surprising 93% of well-known brands have a presence on Instagram and include it comprehensively in their marketing strategies (Varma, Dhakane and Pawar (2020:550). The fundamental function of Instagram photo and video sharing supports the goal of connecting brands to their respective audiences. The app also comprises of a feature for communicating with customers; re-direction to respective sites of companies using one-click; and several ad positions. The best feature introduced by Instagram for assisting everyone including small businesses, was Instagram Direct or Instagram Messaging. Instagram has a feature of uploading a video length for 1 minute and uploading a 10-photo post. This is truly an assistive advantage for businesses (Varma *et al.*, 2020:550).

The fashion industry is a worldwide business of 1.3 trillion US Dollars, which provides employment to over 300 million people globally and signifies an important economic force and a significant contributor to international GDP. This industry is operating in a very competitive market that is largely dominated by international brands. Lately, regardless of the financial crisis of the previous years, the fashion industry has conquered rapid growth and has experienced enormous transformation. As stated by Gazzola, Pavione, Pezzetti and Grechi (2020:3), the fashion industry is becoming increasingly digitally connected. With the advancement of e-commerce, which allows businesses to engage with customers through computer-generated channels, digital marketing methods and digital platforms are becoming more dominant in the fashion sector, as well as the emergence of several new brands. As of late, digital promotions and marketing has further improved relationships with consumers, rather than growth through geographic channels and store network expansion. A number of fashion directors see investments in Information and Communications Technology and the digitalisation of the value-chain as big opportunities for the Fashion industry. Investing in technology has turned into a strategy as the fashion market experiences an increase in fashion trends (Gazzola *et al.*, 2020:3).

The continuous growth in the fashion industry has given rise in the application of inventive approaches to increase profitability and market share. Instagram has appeared to be a trustworthy and effective platform for marketing fashion products. Moreover, Instagram is an effective social media site that utilises multimedia content and other visual features to enable communication. Many academics agree that the number of fashion brands who use Instagram for branding is steadily increasing, resulting in an increase in business-to-business consumer relationships through social media. The social-cultural shift in the manner in which fashion brands cooperate with existing customers and potential customers is revealed in the behavioural changes amongst consumers utilising Instagram and has resulted in the increased competence of word-of-mouth marketing (Falah and Aseri 2020:268). Social word-of-mouth marketing is gradually increasing and exceeding traditional strategies that were utilised by companies, which include mass media advertising, of which had been the main strategic method utilised by fashion brands to influence customers buying choices. This evolution has transformed marketing strategies characterised by social media practice has resulted to the growth of an Instagram Economy. In this

perspective, the Instagram Economy refers to the appearance of an income stream between Instagram users and fashion brands persuasive abilities of the platform as a marketing and sales tool (Falah and Aseri 2020:268). The presence of fashion brands on Instagram has become imperative in persuading customers and influencing their buying choices. Consequently, there is a necessity for fashion brands to efficiently comprehend culture of consumers and employ strategic methods that are considered evidence-based or are best-practice for effective online marketing initiatives (Falah and Aseri 2020:268).

1. 8 Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive and cross-sectional quantitative research method to investigate the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion Industry. The target population of this study included businesses operating in the fashion industry in Durban, in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. Businesses that use Instagram as a communication tool in Durban were included in this study. A non-probability sampling method and purposive sampling technique were employed in recruiting the participants. The projected sample size was 130 fashion businesses. A structured questionnaire consisting of 41 questions was administered in order to obtain primary data, and participation in the study was entirely voluntarily. The questionnaires were distributed through email to fashion brands that are present on Instagram. The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to present and analyse data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 for Windows was also used to analyse data.

1.9 Scope of the study

The scope of this study is confined to fashion businesses operating in Durban that utilise Instagram as their communication tool. Moreover, the scope extends itself to individuals in fashion businesses who use Instagram to promote their brands.

1.10 Delimitations

The study is mainly focused on fashion businesses in Durban. Those businesses operating within the boundaries of Durban were considered for this study. Moreover, their business activities involved the promotion of fashion brands.

1.11 Limitations

Due to the high financial resources involved in sampling a larger population, the study focused on a small sample of the population that uses Instagram as their communication tool. Given that the respondents will be drawn from fashion business owners around Durban, the sample size becomes a limiting factor as other cities within the province were not included. The researcher did not include other provinces therefore; thoughtfulness needs to be exercised when generalising the results of this study to the entire population of South Africa.

1. 12 Outline of the dissertation chapters

This research study is divided into 6 chapters. The following is an overview of each chapter:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter includes the introduction and background to this study. It presents the problem statement, aim and objectives, rationale for the study, scope of the study, delimitations and limitations of the study. A brief theoretical background and a summary of the research methodology are also covered in this chapter.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3: Literature Review and Theoretical Frameworks. The literature review is broken down into two chapters. Both these chapters discuss existing literature relevant to the theoretical background of the study, with emphasis on the South African fashion industry, marketing fashion using Instagram strategies and promoting fashion brands on social media platforms such as Instagram. The chapters also present the theoretical frameworks and theories relevant to the use of Instagram as a communication tool.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology. The fourth chapter describes the type of research methodology adopted by this study. The research design, research

approach, target population, sample size, sampling technique, questionnaires and the procedures for data collection and analysis are elucidated.

Chapter 5: Research findings. The fifth chapter presents and analyses the results of this study using various statistical techniques.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations: The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions and recommendations drawn from this study. Areas that need further investigation on the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry are also highlighted.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter presented an introduction to the study and discussed the research problem. The aim, objectives and the rationale that motivated this study were also provided. Additionally, the framework of the research chapters and brief details were presented. The following chapter will present a review of relevant existing literature and theories that can explain the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry.

CHAPTER 2: MARKETING IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY

2.1 Introduction

Fashion is progressively understood as a worldwide phenomenon that is based on the alterations in the organisation of clothing production across the globe, as well as the huge economic importance of clothing production in world trade. Worldwide cosmopolitan cities like New York, Paris, Milan, Tokyo and London have a long history of having a flourishing Fashion industry which has contributed meaningfully to urban development (Kovacevic 2019).

Two chapters in this study (Chapter 2 and Chapter 3) are dedicated to presenting the literature underpinning the study. This chapter presents existing literature on fashion and clothing, the South African Fashion industry, the marketing of fashion, defining communication, challenges of communication, theories and models of communication. This chapter concludes by emphasizing the importance of marketing fashion through utilising the internet and appropriate communication tools, such as Instagram.

2.2 Fashion and clothing

A fashionable trend or style of a chosen lifestyle is referred to as fashion. As a result, fashion encompasses more than just clothing; it also encompasses food, style, jewellery, or furniture (Smal 2016:16). However, this study focuses on fashion brands. Fashion is a collective noun that refers to a fashion style that is recognised by a large group of people at a certain time (Smal 2016:16). The phrase 'fashion' and its connection to clothing is well-known, and the term 'clothing' is also used as a collective noun for describing clothes. In order to comprehend the connection between clothing and fashion, the views of two authors in fashion are argued. The first view is from Moatti and Moedas (2018) who maintain that fashion, an irrelevant item, is not only associated with clothes, which are material items, nonetheless is moreover a system of beliefs which is evident through clothes. Fashion is shaped by everyone who is involved in its development, not just one person. A specific style or trend will become popular once people relate to the style or a huge number of people in society accept it, Moatti and Moedas (2018) aver that any material object must be identified as fashion before reaching the consumption phase. This acceptance, to be specific fashion,

implies much more than clothing it is a socially fictional concept. The second view is from Kimani (2016), who contends that fashion is a compulsory character for social cogency that is debated in society. In addition, the need to dress in a certain style is a personal decision. Clothes are manufactured through a design process and are converted to products, which are recognised and become fashion. Clothing is introduced to the customer in many forms of 'performance'. These can be fashion photography or fashion shows, in so doing, making fashion to be more than just an ordinary appearance as it turns out to be meaningful and functional. Hence, through the imitation of consumers, icons or influencers, fashion is shaped and through this imitation, approved by people in society that fashion "will always be ready to present a more or less uniform image" (Kimani 2016). Kimani (2016) suggests that fashion style is defined by individuals who observe fashion as a societal system that is constructed on communication, clothes develop fashion through socially negotiated approval. Tshabalala (2014) argues that the concepts of fashion and clothing are distinct, but the word 'fashion' is normally acknowledged when mentioning a style of clothing that follows trends that are popular. As a result, in this research, the term 'fashion' is utilised and since the researcher focuses on clothes that are ready to be worn and not fashion that is bespoke, the term 'fashion' consists of all clothes that are produced in bulk. The term "fashion industry" will refer to the design, manufacture, and sale of clothing in this study, as suggested by (Tshabalala 2014).

The phrase 'fashion trend' alludes to the popularity as well as acceptance of a fashion style, and is utilised by analysts to create the path for the latest fashion (Smal 2017). Smal (2017) contends that a trend is characterised as a consciousness and increase in popularity of a style among customers. Style approval is largely dependent on consumers, and this occurrence is usually denoted as 'fashion cycle'. A fashion cycle may be of various lengths, with a shorter cycle being known as a 'fashion fad'. A fashion fad can be described as the approval of an extremely well-known style for a short-length, afterward it is abandoned. A fashion cycle that is deemed longer, which is one that stretches over a number of seasons or years and may be measured as never ending, is normally measured to be a classic cycle. In addition to the two fashion trends stated above, as the influencer market changes, a "mega-trend" develops over time, motivated by economic, political, social, and transformation in technology (Smal 2017). The phrase 'fashion industry' comprises the retail sector, textile and

manufacturing that form a part of the fashion structure. The fashion system incorporates the evolving of fibres that are subsequently woven, bonded or knitted into fabric, utilising the fabric to design and manufacture clothes or textile-related products, and then the sale of final products to customers. Fashion must be thought of as a multifaceted worldwide structure comprising of design, distribution, production, consumption and adoption that are all equivalent in value. Therefore, fashion exists as an abstract concept in social life, as a material object, as a system, as a social phenomenon, as an attitude or as a cultural value.

2.3 The South African Fashion Industry

In South Africa, the expansion of design houses and black houses can be understood as comparable to discussions around black economic empowerment combined with re-building local clothing industry trends (Dlodlo 2014:191). Fashion is part of an imperative industry in South Africa, one which is greatly promoted by fiscal authorities as part of their economic development programmes. The local fashion industry's revenue was assessed at roughly R50 billion for every year. The sector's policy overview of clothing plays a crucial role in ensuring the enhancement of competition in the Fashion industry. Substantial emphasis ought to be placed on the necessity to develop "Proudly South African" designer labels (Makholwa 2010). According to Makgopa (2018:134), the South African clothing retail industry is an exceptionally dissimilar and developed sector with a significant role as an employer in the country. The Retail Clothing sector in South Africa contributes approximately 8% to the gross domestic product (GDP) (Statistics South Africa 2016) and is described as one of the furthestmost labour-intensive sectors in South Africa, with over 5 million employees (Makgopa 2018:135). According to Statistics South Africa (2013), "the Clothing sector has demonstrated note-worthy progress over the past years and reached a peak of R12.7 billion in 2005, then declining significantly in 2006 to R11.2 billion. Subsequently, between 2007 and 2012, the market seems to have stabilised at between R11.7 billion and R11.8 billion". The development spurt of 2013, reaching R13.5 billion, could be credited to government's responsibility to fortify the business and forcefully promote clothing retail stores, whilst in 2014 there was an additional development of 3.5% (Makgopa 2018: 134). The popular clothing retail stores in South Africa include Foschini, Edgars, Mr Price, PEP, Truworths, Miladys, Ackermans,

Markhams. Woolworths the major players in sportswear retailing are Totalsports and Sport-Scene.

2.3.1 The South African Fashion industry today – changes and challenges

The Clothing and Textile sector in South Africa was around 14% of creating employment, in 2013, and is viewed as one of South Africa's biggest sources of tax returns. Despite the fact that the fashion industry contributes 8% to South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP), the fashion industry has in previous years lost around 50% of jobs in this sector alone. As indicated by an article on the important economic sectors of the country, despite the fact that the South African Clothing and Textile is a small industry, the industry is considered as a global supplier and ought to contribute significantly in creating jobs. South Africa's local textile mills are presently mainly manufacturing artificial fibres, also the textile industry produces fibres that are natural in order to manufacture knitted textiles and woven. "Textile manufacturing is anticipated to rise with the re-signing of the United States African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), with textile manufacturers projected to profit the most" (Smal 2016:16).

The South African Fashion industry and Textile continues to be exposed to imports that are cheaper, mostly from Asian countries. The government of South Africa's rescue plan, delineated in 2009, is to support the industry in mending some of the great losses of jobs experienced after 2002. Clothing manufacturers in South Africa were to profit from retailers' increasing demands for goods produced locally. The researcher contends that right now, about a third of locally retailed clothing products are locally manufactured. Moreover, a focal point of local manufacturing is that it would also let retailers get hold of the latest trends that are accessible way faster than using an off-shore manufacturer. This will allow for point-of-sale trends and consequently an increase in higher profit and stock turn-over for the retailer a term denoted as 'quick response'. "Michael Lawrence, executive director of the National Clothing Retail Federation of South Africa, considers South Africa amongst the countries that have the highest import duties on fabrics and clothing in the world" (Smal 2016:16). Despite rising labour costs in the East, which allowed for local production to expand, the textile

industry in South Africa has been steadily decreasing. High input prices continue to be a major concern for the South African textile industry, preventing South African suppliers from producing cost-competitive and comparable textiles. To help the Fashion and Textile industry of South Africa, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) established an enterprise, specifically the Clothing and Textile Competitive Programme (CTCP), to allow the sector to develop international competitiveness. On the 23rd June 2014, the DTI was funded with R200 million for the development of a cluster in order to “kick-start” the local industry’s competitiveness ability in worldwide supportable textile and apparel manufacturing. A portion of this enterprise aims to manage and establish shared resources; grow and develop maintainable products; grow local raw materials; and set up a National Sector Body that signifies the whole industry value-chain.

2.3.2 The Durban Fashion Industry

The eThekweni Municipality Business Support, Tourism and Markets Unit is committed to the development and support of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in the region. Considering this, it created a fashion development programme aimed to capacitate and empower local designers and facilitate market and network opportunities to ensure the sustainability and growth of their businesses. The main vision of the program was to recognise talent in the region and reinstate Durban as a fashion destination in South Africa (The Mercury 2010). The South African fashion industry forms an extremely significant sector for local economic development, and Durban has plenty of design talent that contributes to these important industries. A portion of the country's best fashion designers were born and bred in Durban, and throughout the last decade, the city started to build up as a location for emerging fashion designers to showcase their ranges and launch their careers in this highly competitive arena. Nonetheless, the demise of Durban's Fashion Week has formed a dreadful void as there are no longer features on the national circuit of Fashion Week events, and the city's aspiring designers are now obliged to travel to either Gauteng or Cape Town to promote their labels (The Mercury 2010). Many promising Durban-based fashion design graduates are relocating elsewhere within the country as they see very little scope and barely any business opportunities. The Durban Fashion Council continues its consultative work concerning the establishment of a viable forum

for Durban designers to network and collaborate on projects. Without the advantage of major monetary funding injected by connected industry bodies and private sponsors as enjoyed in other centres, these efforts are generally reliant on government help. The competition for developmental priorities for funding sources makes the process long and complicated. However, other designers have continued to find alternative means to present their collections, with outlets such as the Fashion Lounge branches in Umhlanga and Florida Road, as well as the Max Institute of Fashion Art offering local fashion followers access to Durban-grown style innovation. Furthermore, the Vodacom Durban July Fashion Experience establishes an enduring and prestigious platform for both emerging and established designers to partake in a fashion contest that earmarks Durban as a choice destination in the national fashion calendar. Back in 2009, 20 KwaZulu-Natal-based designers were selected for the semi-final round of this competition. This group demonstrated its abilities, gained substantial media exposure and learnt valuable lessons about the commercial aspects of fashion. Durban continues to play an important role in South Africa's textile and apparel production, contributing nearly 40% of total employment (The Mercury 2010).

2.4 Fashion marketing

Basically, fashion is a commercial business producing and selling clothes. The continuous change in fashion includes the exercise of creative design skills, which results in products ranging from basic to rare products. Marketing can assist in providing additional knowledge and the skills needed in order to ensure that the creative component is utilised to its best advantage, allowing businesses to succeed and grow. In this "marketing of fashion" context, the "customer product" is the garment that has been developed by a designer with reference to marketing information. The fashion product permits a range of marketing methods to be utilised and because it is very diverse with customer needs, different lifestyles and uses, fashion marketers must make a number of informed decisions. These decisions begin with the creation of products (Dickson 2017). Fashion marketing is a field which needs a good eye for style and a mind for business. Professionals who are working in fashion marketing and merchandising observe the latest trends in fashion, make sure that retailers stock popular product lines, promote goods and manage sales. Thriving fashion marketing professionals surpass at providing an instinctive, customer experience and superior

level of customer service. According to Dickson (2017), these professionals excel at working with people and thrive in an environment that allows them to put their communication abilities to good use. Although fashion marketers do not design clothes, as merchandising and marketing professionals, it is their responsibility to assist designers in ensuring that their lines sell. Successful marketers usually have a mixture of business skills and textile awareness, along with the ability to recognise consumer behaviour and desires. "Fashion marketing is the process of managing the flow of merchandise from the initial selection of designs to be produced to the presentation of products to retail customers, with the goal of maximizing a company's sales and profitability". Successful fashion marketing requires an understanding of consumer desires and responding with relevant materials, messages, and marketing campaigns (Dickson 2017).

Fashion Marketing is the whole process of research, planning, promoting and disseminating the raw materials, clothing and accessories that consumers want to purchase (Jama, Maqbool and Misra:2014). Marketing is the force behind the product development, production, distribution, retailing and promotion. Fashion starts and ends with the customer (Jama *et al.*, 2014). The business market is developing rapidly and is increasingly more competitive as there are numerous comparative items and services conveyed in the same market (Wahab, Hassan, Shahid and Moan 2016). Along with the rapid development of the latest entrants in the business market, a switch in behaviour between customers was gradually increasing and fashion brands have to increase efforts in order to their keep customers (Wahab *et al.*, 2016). Social media has become one of the major industrial marketing channels for companies. (According to Hsia, Wang and Daniel (2019:2), the utilisation of social media and the capability of personalities to be their own brands has altered how fashion is displayed, detailed and consumed. More interestingly, Hsia *et al.* (2019:2) state that social media has altered the manner in which fashion is designed. Considering this unique marketing ability, individual fashion designers form their own private labels and become owners of fashion brands (Hsia *et al.*, 2019:2). Although social media can offer opportunities for fashion brands to be seen through various channels, the increase in marketing and communication channels has also strengthened the competition amongst private and national brands. Precisely, social media has increased the rapid growth of private brands in the fashion industry, whereby private fashion brands are recognised by

stakeholders, buyers, retailers and investors, and are given more power to compete with established national brands (Hsia *et al.*, 2019:2).

2.5 Marketing communication strategies

Communication strategies are implemented by organisations to assist in driving engagement and cultivating associations with people on social media. These messages differ by messenger. For example, organisations and people can decide to comment on content and interrelate over the message (e.g. asking for feedback) and (e.g. text, video and image). Several organisations have implemented a Brand Journalism or Content Marketing strategy to direct their content creation on social media (Brubaker and Wilson 2018). This method depends on the impression that an organisation's one-way communication output needs to acquire sufficient importance and value for people such that they will want to engage with them. Furthermore, it drives organisations to develop relations through a route of social listening and responding that includes brand observing of peoples' engagement with content on social media and thereafter replying to their comments by engaging openly in a chat or by creating content that is relevant, which results in higher engagement. Brand engagement with people can take place on numerous structures, ranging from one-way communication to complete message control. For instance, disseminating, broadcasting and informing to collaboration and two-way communication, for example participation, conversing and collaborating (Brubaker and Wilson 2018). With having an organisation putting effort into interacting with people, it is not unusual for brands to implement engagement strategies intended at simplifying collaboration. On Facebook, commenting on people's ideas and utilising crowdsourcing practices are part of an organisation's effort to shift beyond one-way information distribution. For instance, crowdsourcing is a Brand Engagement strategy utilised to diligently lobby involvement and request responses from the publics at large. Crowdsourcing practices encourage two-way communication and the outcome is most likely to result in comments, as opposed to getting likes and shares. Visual communication is influential. Content that is visual, whether in the form of video or image, can provoke instinctual responses and stimulate emotions, eventually inducing attitudes and impacting behaviours. Brubaker and Wilson (2018) states that visual information is more likely to be processed and entails little thinking effort. Visual information, which can raise

numerous senses and intensify emotions, is maybe easier to apprehend and draw interpretations from because it is more likely to be processed, mostly by social media users who scroll through a flood of content speedily.

2.5.1 Defining Communication

Communication can be described as the process of sharing or creating meaning (Mentoor 2015:4). It comprises a two-way common understanding in which member's give-and-take information and create as well as share meanings of ideas and words. Communication can be defined as a multifaceted process that consist of all methods of transmitting any kind of feeling or thought between individuals. It is likewise a process where feelings and ideas are shared successfully and properly by those communicating, contingent upon the relationship amongst people involved in the process. To comprehend the nature and function of speech, one should look at the manner of communication, of which speech is a sign (Mentoor 2015:4). 'Communication' has a long and illustrious history. Communication has always been a component of man's natural nature from the dawn of time. The endurance of humanity is because of their capacity to communicate (Schulz and Cobley 2013). The human race has communicated through various methods and techniques; namely the utilisation of images, sounds, gestures, sign languages and drawings, which are a few techniques of communication utilised by early man (Daniel 2013:8). Archaeological proof indicates that early men were good artists. Furthermore, individuals have communicated effectively through their visual sense, sound reception, reproduction, or transmission, and the analysis of bodily motions. With the advancement of technology, communication has improved (Daniel 2013:9). Henceforth, it is clear that communication has presumed an enormous significance in modern times. Even though a transmitted message might be classified as "communication," it obtains that status only by virtue of being transmitted. Communication is "successful" to the extent that the content is not lost or slanted in the transmission process. The message that is received must be equal to the message sent (Orzeata 2018). From a transmission opinion, it therefore makes impeccable sense to say that two parties are communicating effectively if they decode each other's messages accurately, despite the fact that they continue to disagree (Daniel 2013:10).

In every communication model, there are three significant components that consist of the sender, the message and the receiver. These elements are crucial in any communication. If these three components are absent, there will be a communication breakdown and if the communication is proficient, it will be very narrow. Evidently, there are different components in creating useful and accurate communication. In communication, attitudes and the manner in which the sender communicates a message in order to make the audience comprehend his message properly is imperative and has a lot of influence (Abazari and Brojeni 2017). In the event that the sender of the message miscarries his message in the procedure of accurate and proper symbols to others, the flow of communication will be lost. The sender might have the required information concerning the message, but the sender does not have adequate ability to handover the message to the receiver. A sender who is interested in communicating with others sends his message to others, this message cannot be conveyed without it being conveyed to the receiver in the procedure of accurate signs and symbols or, in other words, in a communicable means. The sender is too engaged in the diffusion of the message and is not in impassive mode (Abazari and Brojeni 2017). The receiver does not just accept any message that is being received, but chooses the wanted message. The trends and information, skills, attitudes and social cultural characteristics of the message received must not be disregarded. The listeners receiving the message has grown-up in several families and cultural categories and each individual is interested in a specific message. The utmost significant measure to identify the outcome of communication, is feedback. Feedback is described as the reaction that the individual shows after the message is received, and they compare and send it back to the sender in message form. Feedback can either be positive or negative. In any case, feedback plays an effective part in communication (Abazari and Brojeni 2017).

2.5.2 Social media engagement theory

The social media engagement theory (SME) was originally built as a model of interaction between a user and an organisation, this model focuses on the social interactions among users that are supported by the social media platform provided by an organisation. The SME theoretical model outlines differences that separate the factors that form the user experience, user engagement, and usage. First, SME theory takes into account how technology serves as the foundational platform required to

enable social interactions among users who are globally and temporally dispersed. Clearly, the rise of social media comes in large part from the evolution of technology to provide a unique user experience that enables users to connect in new ways that were never possible. The user experience in social media is made up of two essential components: the experience derived from social interactions and the experience derived from technological features, where experience is defined as a noun, referring to the content deriving from direct participation. Social interactions are characterised as the communication among users through social media. Social interactions help users develop personalised relationships with one another, by serving as a transparent means of communication, by providing access to social resources including friends, acquaintances, and family members, and define the potential advantages and disadvantages of using social media. Technical features are defined as the perceived capabilities of technology. Technical features provide users with the tools to enable interactions, and to impact the direction, magnitude and scope of benefits for individual users and the organisation. Technical features comprise: the extent to which users can save information and engage, the flexibility to utilise features for numerous purposes, the ability to integrate content, and the expansion of the features to meet users' specific needs as they become more proficient with the platform. When organisations support the creation of the user experience to meet user's needs, higher user engagement occurs (Gangi and Wasko 2016:3).

2.5.3 Components of the Communication Process

According to Lunenburg (2010), communication comprises some elements functioning collectively for a purpose. Communication components consist of: source/sender, message, channel, decoder/receiver, feedback and noise. **The Source/Sender** is the one who begins the communication process. He produces the message through research, perception, feelings, previous experiences and opinions, and he is just as responsible for the encoding process (Umeozor 2020).

Message: A message comprises feelings and ideas which the sender needs to share. In order for effective communication, the source needs to attempt to encode the message in a manner that the receiver comprehends to enable him to decode (interpret) the message correctly (Nordquist 2020).

Channel: Is described as a process which a message is conveyed. Umeozor (2020) characterised as a channel that connects the source and the receiver. The sender will examine the fitting medium through which the message will reach the selected listeners. The medium can be an oral premise, electronic media, public address system, show sheets, video conferencing, etc. The sender of the message needs to study the audience and their circumstance before picking an appropriate channel, which will result in effective communication (Umeozor 2020).

Decoder/Receiver: Is the receiver of the message. The message is decoded in order to be acknowledged. The demonstration of understanding the message for knowledge is termed decoding. The fundamental idea in the decoding and receiving course is the capability to construe and apprehend the message. The receiver decodes the message dependent on past encounters, perceptions, thoughts and feelings (Nordquist 2020).

Feedback: Receivers choose how to react to a message in any situation. In a communication process, individuals send and receive messages and subsequently, it is a two-way process. "The two-way models of communication were postulated by Schramm, based on the Shannon-Weaver one-way model" (Westly, MacLean and Fedaghi 2012). Receivers decode messages and encode a reply back to the sender subject upon the state and the presence of nosiness. This return procedure is termed feedback. Feedback from the sender tells the receiver how his message was decoded. Feedback is an imperative element in the communication process since messages are changed for transparency as well as understanding (Westly *et al.*, 2012).

Noise: Any difficulties, hindrances or impedance in communication that alters or prevents the message from fulfilling its purpose may be alluded as noise. One of the components in the communication process can emit noise. It could begin with the sender, the message, the channel, or the receiver. (Umeozor 2020). The information source may be incomplete or ambiguous, the message may be poorly encoded, or the message may be encoded in a language that the receiver does not understand. The receiver might not be able to understand the message and can be unsuccessful in sending feedback to the sender for clarity. There are numerous sorts of noise, faulty interpretation of messages, including linguistic interference and inferiority low level of training. (Umeozor 2020).

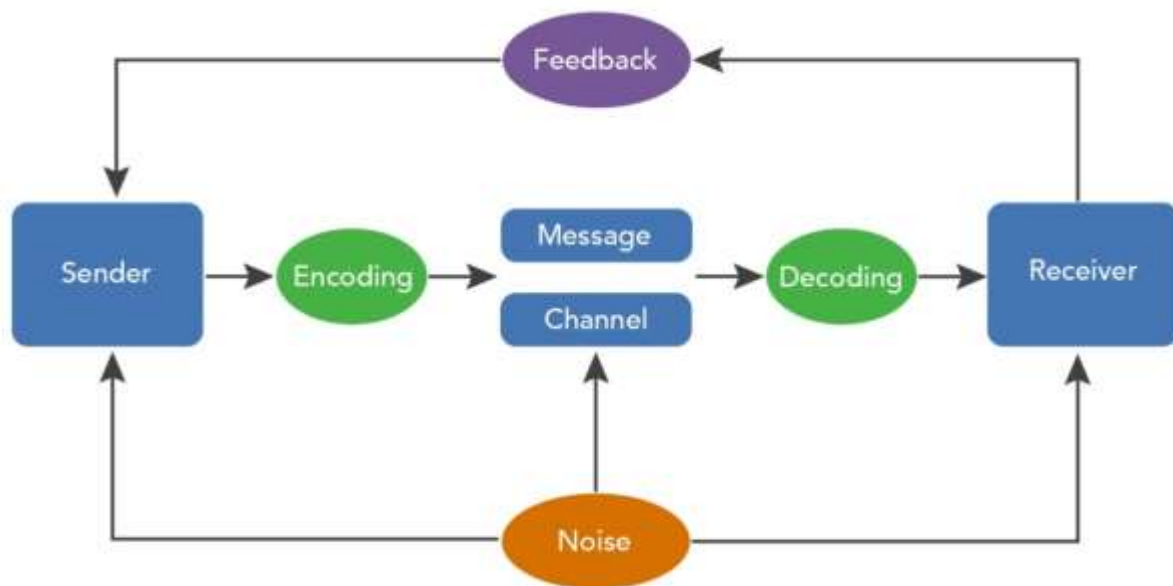


Figure 2. 1: Communication process

Source: Umeozor (2020)

2.6 Theories and Models of Communication

Theories issue a theoretical understanding of a process. Theories are ideas of how something occurs. Moreover, theories are an effort to elucidate or signify an experience. Eadie and Goret (2011) state that Theories are fundamental outlines of how the world operates, and consequently guide how to function in the world. Any ideas or thoughts about how things function in the world or in one's life are personal theories. The term Communication Theory may discuss a single theory or a complete set of theories that are connected with communication. Communication theories are not just things to be recited and learned as they are continuously developing works. 'Model' refers to the representation of the original. A model is therefore a graphic explanation of a system theory or phenomenon that accounts for its known or inferred properties and may be utilised for further study of its characteristics (Lanigan 2013: 64). Communication models show the nature and method of communication. The first models were easy to understand and the models became more complex by researchers conducting numerous studies. All models have three fundamental components: the sender who communicates a message for a specific purpose; a message that started with an aim and conveys an idea in its content; and the receiver

of the message is successful when he/she has a comprehensive understanding of the message from the sender. In direct models, the narrator encodes the message and sends it to the receiver, and the receiver of the message decodes it (Abazari and Brojeni 2017). The communication is one-way, in this model. Some examples of linear models include the Aristotle model, the Laswell model and the Shannon model.

2.6.1 The Honeycomb model of Social Interaction

According to Khan and Jan (2015:13), the Honeycomb model is a means of representing the most significant forces at work in the social media ecosystem, which all social media marketers, users, and platforms operate inside. Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy and Silvestre (2011) established a honeycomb system that recognises seven functional building blocks of social media: identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation and groups. As indicated by Khan and Jan (2015:13), each block consents one to unpack and observe a particular feature of using social media and its significances for businesses. It is not important to incorporate all the building blocks in any given social media action. These are concepts that permit one to comprehend the various levels of social media usefulness (Silva, Feitosa, Duarte and Vasconcelos 2020). Below is a description of how the blocks look in their honeycomb formation:

2.6.1.1 Identity

The element of identity regards the extent to which individuals or companies make their identity public by unveiling company or private information (for example name, gender, age, profession, location) on social media. Individuals likewise are persuaded to disclose other information intentionally or unintentionally concerning themselves that represents them in a certain manner through self-disclosure of subjective information such as beliefs, likes and dislikes (Khan and Jan 2015:13).

2.6.1.2 Conversations

The "conversations" block of the structure speaks to a degree of communication on a social media platform with different users, which might be the consistency of the number of posts (Machado, Azar, Vacas de Carvalho and Mender 2016:153). Social

media, enables consumers to discover more about a specific brand through the information and expertise of different clients. Through comments, customers can likewise add to brand-related content (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

2.6.1.3 Sharing

Sharing alludes to the content that is sent and received among users on the similar social media platforms. By interrelating with a brand on social media, users can feel a relational social interaction (Hudson, Huang, Roth and Madden 2016). The "sharing" square of the honeycomb has two ramifications for companies with a desire to take part in social media. Firstly, organisations need to comprehend "what objects of sociality their users have in common, or to identify new items that can intercede their shared interest" (Silva *et al.*, 2020). Secondly, organisations need to assess "the degree to which the content can or should be disseminated" (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

2.6.1.4 Presence

Presence alludes to the capability of knowing if the other user is available. This results in being aware of where users are in virtual and in real life. In the virtual world, one can regulate this "through status lines like 'available' or 'hidden'". Users can use a chat button on Facebook, to signal if they are online and available, or whether they do not want to connect with other users (Silva *et al.*, 2020). A firm may likewise need to explore if users have an aspiration for discerning presences, where a user can be visible to certain individuals while staying hidden to other people. Another consequence of "presence" is that it is identified with other functional squares in the honeycomb system, for example, "discussions" and "relationships". For instance, organisations ought to perceive that "social media presence is influenced by the intimacy and immediacy of the relationship medium, and that more significant levels of social presence are probably going to make discussions more influential" (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

2.6.1.5 Relationships

According to (Machado, Azar, Vacas de Carvalho and Mender 2016) relationships discuss how the general public is connected on social media. In social networking platforms, customers utilise brands to create a personal-identity and when they "like"

a brand through social media networks, they make an impression on others and increase their social involvement (Machado *et al.*, 2016). At the point when users are "relating" to one another on social media, it implies that they have a form of association that drives them to "converse, share objects of sociality, get together or simply show each other as a friend or fan". At the point when a specific social media site or organisation wants to connect with its followers, it must discover how it can keep up as well as build relationships. When an organisation responds to comments, resolving issues and inviting them to participate, followers see a higher level of relationship quality and create a sense of belonging (Silva *et al.*, 2020).

2.6.1.6 Reputation

Reputation alludes to the capability of users to recognise where they fit within a social media platform. For instance, Instagram users can "like" specific content and comment on it. Online reputation is a significant component for the success of an organisation. Online presence permits organisations to comprehend their customers' sentiments regarding the brand and it may possibly be a chance to avoid negative thoughts (Baxi, Panda and Karani 2016). Online Reputation Management is significant for online community marketers. One negative remark about an organisation on social media can have an undesirable impression in the minds of people. To reduce the negative impression, quick replies to negative comments are compulsory. Negative word-of-mouth publicity has a greater effect than positive word-of-mouth publicity (Baxi *et al.*, 2016).

2.6.1.7 Groups

Groups mention the limit of users to "form communities and sub-communities". At the point when users "like" a similar brand, they form a community (Silva *et al.*, 2020). Social interaction is significant for creating user-generated content because by making content, customers can experience a feeling of community, connect with others, and feel significant. Furthermore, consumers can feel a sense of intimacy and interpersonal engagement by interacting with a business on social media. (Silva *et al.*, 2020). Customer interaction with a brand or organisation is critical to the success of a fan page on any social media platform. To accomplish this, it is essential to have a

good plan in the web and networks as a whole, which should be carried out competently (Baxi *et al.*, 2016).

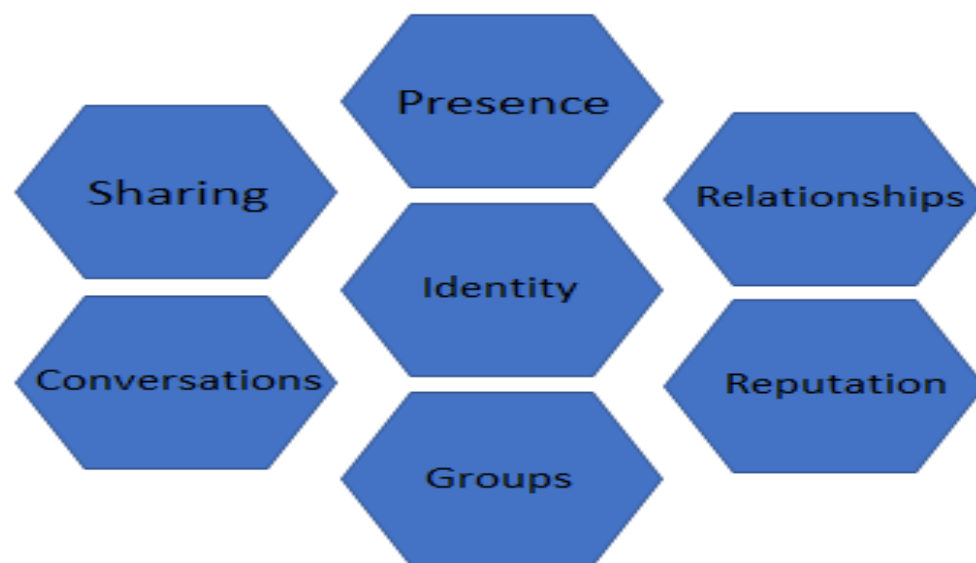


Figure 2 2: Building blocks of social media

Source: Silva, Feitosa, Duarte and Vasconcelos (2020)

2.7.2 The Social Cognitive Theory

In the 1960s, Albert Bandura developed the Social Learning Theory (SLT), which later became known as Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). It evolved into the SCT in 1986 and asserts that learning takes place in a social setting with a dynamic interaction between the individual, environment, and behaviour (Wayne 2019). When analysing and figuring out how representative communication affects human thought, development, and the acquisition of a behavioural pattern, this theory is seen as an incredibly potent conceptual framework. Basically, this theory holds that people can pick up new behaviours by imitating the patterns of behaviour displayed by others and the consequences of such of the observed behaviours (Rambarun 2018). The author also claimed that socially mediated pathway and direct pathway are the two routes through which communication systems operate. In the socially mediated pathway, individuals are convinced and behaviours are shaped due to individual variables, as opposed to the direct pathway, where changes are spurred by information, inspiration, and

guidance. Personal cognition, literature, music, television, and/or the internet are some of the things that are thought to affect how people think. This further supports an ideal transformation and motivates people to embrace a particular behavioural pattern, including the social media channels through which they are propagated and reinforced. People can broaden their grasp of the information being presented and also affect their adoption of certain behaviours by using observational learning to gain knowledge from what others have experienced. According to Social Cognitive Theory, people are capable of understanding their surroundings and planning events that relate to most aspects of their lives around these circumstances (Rambarun 2018). As a result, people are able to choose which environmental factors will be observed, the meaning that will be connected to them, the impacts they may have on their emotions, and the valuable knowledge presented that will be advantageous for future purposes. External influences have an impact on behavioural patterns through cognitive methods. These pictures provide fleeting experiences a kind of consistency and significance that helps people make decisions and/or take action. Practically all cognitive, behavioural, and emotional learning from first-hand experiences can be achieved through observing other people's behaviours and the outcomes thereof (Usher and Schunk 2018). Although widespread information concerning values of people, thinking methods and behavioural patterns can be attained from the extensive adoption of activities and results, social and emotional gain from direct encounters can be accomplished.

When thinking about the structures of social networks, it is critical to take note of the different virtual communities of relationships that individuals belong to. These include family, friendships, work relationships and acquaintanceships. Furthermore, ground-breaking concepts, innovations and other appropriate messages are spread through multi-linked relationships that overlap across platforms. Additionally, people share knowledge and communicate meaning through feedback concerning the exchanged knowledge and thereby gain an awareness of other perspectives, which in turn may influence each other (Usher and Schunk 2018). Instagram posts' popularity is determined by how responsive individuals are, as evidenced by the amount of likes and comments they receive. According to the researcher, Instagram followers can see what other users are saying about these postings, which could have either a positive or negative effect. In retrospect, users are said to engage in self-gratifying activities

and reject those that they find objectionable. An image showcasing a new product, for instance, can receive a lot of user comments and likes. Before buying the product, other users may be interested in this feedback, and as a result, their comments may have a good or bad impact on other users' purchasing decisions. Therefore, this knowledge may be crucial for brands using Instagram (Usher and Schunk 2018).

2.8 Conclusion

This study's literature review focused on the Fashion and Clothing industry of Durban and South Africa at large, fashion systems, marketing communication strategies, the communication process and the theories anchoring the study. As highlighted in the chapter, communication is the key to a successful fashion brand, brands are to ensure that they are updated with the latest fashion trends and that the information they send out is relevant to the customer. Chapter Three provides an overview of the role of Instagram in promoting fashion.

CHAPTER 3: ROLE OF INSTAGRAM IN PROMOTING FASHION

3.1 Introduction

Social media is a rapidly developing phenomena that has completely changed how businesses conduct themselves. Additionally, businesses have changed their marketing strategies significantly, which has changed how messages are delivered to customers. One of the most recent platforms to appear in the digital sphere is Instagram. Instagram is also available on computers and mobile devices, and it is expanding rapidly. Through imaginative visual content, it provides users with a way of interaction and self-expression (Rambarun 2018). Despite its popularity, less research has been done on how businesses could effectively market their brands on Instagram than on platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

To contribute to this direction, this chapter investigates the evolution of social media, what is Instagram, Instagram in South Africa, the rise of the Instagram Economy, Instagram as a marketing tool and brand awareness. The previous chapter presented the definitions of fashion, the nature of the Fashion industry in Durban, marketing strategies, communication processes and theories that provided lenses to approaching this study. This chapter seeks to highlight the role of Instagram in promoting fashion business activities.

3.2 Social media platforms

The world has become a global village and with the introduction of information technology, the customs of communication and work have been totally reformed (Ahmad, Salamn and Ashiq 2015:1). The advent of social media has changed the world and the manner it functions by bringing the world and its entire people closer (Ahmad *et al.*, 2015:1). In the course of the most recent years, social media has developed as a marketing tool that is effective. Not only has it shaped a new element of marketing, but also has created opportunities for marketers to create brand awareness amongst consumers. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2015:1), it is presently measured as the most transparent communicating and engaging form of public relations. Social media has become a significant presence in life, not just personally

but also professionally, as businesses are also utilising social media as a promotional tool (Jones and Harvey 2019:1). Judie (2015:1) it has been proposed that social media has become an essential tool for promoting products, attributable to its capability of reaching numerous individuals as well as being cost effective. Social media has had an effect on how businesses interact with their clients and how they market their products and services (Jones and Harvey 2019:5). Moron (2015:4) defines social media as 'the creation and exchange of user-generated material that is made easier through web-based applications that use Web 2.0 principles and technologies. Social media has developed to be the world's latest marketing genius. Mostert (2013) states that social media plays an important role in the marketing efforts of businesses in the services sector. In this technology-driven world, social media platforms have developed to be a path whereby retailers can spread their marketing campaigns to a broader range of customers (Paquette 2013:1). According to Paquette (2017:1) Social Media Marketing can be well-defined as "connections between brands and consumers". The approaches and tools of interacting with consumers have transformed impressively with the development of social media and along these lines, businesses need to be educated about social media in order to use the platform in a manner that is in line with their business plans (Paquette 2017:1). This is particularly valid for businesses that strive to gain a competitive advantage. Social media's widespread use has given businesses looking for new ways to market their brands a new platform to use as a competitive advantage. Businesses have been able to find novel ways to achieve goals including raising brand awareness, building a reputation, retaining and attracting customers, engaging with them, encouraging repeat purchases and improving customer service (Paquette 2013:2). There are various social platforms. In this chapter, the main platforms that will be discussed are Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

3.2.1 Facebook

According to Julius (2019:6), Facebook is one of the most popular sites in South Africa amongst various social media platforms. It is estimated that Facebook has over 14 million users in South Africa. Facebook was established in 2004 as a private network for Harvard students. Following its underlying achievement, it rapidly extended to other students (Julius 2019:6). Facebook is the world's biggest social networking site, having over 1.32 billion users who are active. Users of this platform create personal

profiles, add other users as friends, share pictures, upload videos, exchange messages, and update status. Companies and brands create pages and Facebook users can “like” these pages. Julius (2019:7) states that Facebook is not only popular amongst users as companies use it more often to connect with their targeted customers. Presently, Facebook has become an exceptional platform for companies. Companies like to advertise their products and services, which brought a new inventive and progressive area of digital marketing communication, which is called Facebook advertising (Kabir 2017:12). Over the most recent decade, Facebook has changed the essence of mass advertising. Facebook is unrivalled and has constantly shaken the marketing, advertising and the media professional world, imposing a noteworthy change in how brands utilise social media to advance themselves (Young 2010).

3.2.2 Twitter

As stated by Julius (2019:8), Twitter was release in 2006. Twitter has set itself up as the main microblogging platform in many parts of the world. Twitter was created by three distinct people, Jack Dorsey, Biz Stone and Evan Williams. Since its establishment, Twitter has advanced into a massive social media and microblogging platform, with having millions of users and millions of users downloading the app all over the world (Love:9). Ever since its rise to fame, Twitter has developed into one of the most popular social media platforms for companies and individuals to advertise on, companies like McDonald's, The Home and Depot (Love:10). Twitter can be utilised to inform customers about products or to advertise a new promotion (Kallier 2016:10). Retailers similarly use their own Twitter records to refresh clients about items; give private limits to those clients following the retailer; and to keep up to date with shopper patterns (Kallier 2016:10). Twitter utilises promoted tweets, promoted trending topics and promoted accounts. Promoted tweets are tweets that are bought by an advertiser and shared with a specific audience; promoted trending topics allude to trends that are endorsed by advertisers; whilst promoted accounts are part of ‘who to follow’ on individuals’ Twitter accounts, which recommends accounts that individuals may be keen on following (Kallier 2016:13). Many people utilise Twitter as well as mass media institutions as a news feed website for important announcements. In addition, it is important to mention that Twitter’s dramatic growth has slowed down, although it is still growing strong, by 20% in the past year to 6.6 million users (Julius 2019:9). Twitter is

acclaimed for its interactive consumer base that is able to react in real-time to present events occurring all over the world. Twitter is known for its networking reviews, abilities, consumer reactions, company interactions, celebrity interactions and real-time tweets (Love 2014:9).

3.2.3 YouTube

The evolution of YouTube since 2005, the online video site is a platform and personal space that allows individuals to express oneself. YouTube users are allowed to share any content that is user-generated onto the platform, together with homemade comical shorts, personal thoughts on anything imaginable or memorable moments in life (Wu 2016:2). Kallier (2016:71) shares the same perception in stating that YouTube is a video-sharing website that consents to individuals uploading, sharing videos, searching and watching videos. YouTube is viewed as the second biggest search engine after Google; YouTube is the world's third-most-visited website, as well as the world's largest creator website and video content sharing platform in the globe. YouTube is free as far as membership, viewing content and uploading, which implies that this digital platform attracts an immense number of people (Duffett, Petrosanu, Negricea and Edu 2019:4). It is evaluated that more than 1.5 billion individuals visit YouTube every month and two-thirds of the users are aged 18–44 years old. Every minute more than 400 hours of content is uploaded to YouTube; 1 billion hours of video content are viewed regularly; and more than 50% of YouTube uploaded videos are viewed through mobile devices (Duffett *et al.*, 2019:4).

In South Africa, there are 7.2 million dynamic YouTube users, and the top 200 frequently viewed accounts have an estimated total of more than 1.5 million views (Kallier 2016:72). Around 58% of businesses in South Africa utilise YouTube in their businesses for marketing and advertising. The top brand on YouTube in South Africa is Hyundai with more than 12 000 subscribers and 23 227 298 uploaded video views. A great deal of YouTube content creators (“YouTubers”) became famous through growing follower/subscriber base. Businesses saw an opportunity by increasing viewership and explored marketing prospects with YouTubers (at times known as ‘stealth marketing’ and ‘native advertisement’) (Wu 2016:3). YouTube enables individuals, brands or companies to create a YouTube channel where they can customise their homepage, upload videos, share videos or like and comment on other

videos (Kallier 2016:73). YouTube offers businesses an exceptional chance to demonstrate their brand personality, their products and services; communicate with potential customers; and generate brand awareness (Duffett *et al.*, 2019). YouTube offers numerous marketing opportunities for businesses, such as in-video advertising and pre-video advertising, whereby the business pays for these advertisements. In-video advertising alludes to advertisements that show up on a video while it is being viewed, whilst Pre-video advertisements show up before a video is seen and can be skipped after five seconds (Kallier 2016: 74). A business can likewise achieve free exposure on YouTube when customers like or share their videos. YouTube permits users to be interactive by commenting on the videos, and the business can utilise this to interact with and respond to customers' comments and accumulate customer feedback (Kallier 2016: 74).

3.2.4 Instagram

The number of global social network (Instagram) users reached was 2.22 billion in 2016 (Kleintjes 2017:18). Established in 2010 by Mike Krieger and Kevin Systrom, Instagram is an app that permits the latest modes of sharing, editing, storing, scrolling and uploading pictures and videos. Liebhart and Bernhardt (2017:17) concur with Kleintjes (2017:18) in stating that the Instagram app permits users to filter images and videos and to circulate them on Instagram as well as other platforms. Instagram allows users to follow each other, search, like or comment on other users' photos (Liebhart and Bernhardt 2017:17). Instagram, which was acquired by Facebook in August 2012, has continued to improve with new features such as the photo card tool, which categorise Instagram pictures by place of origin; the incorporation of stories, which assents for the formation of photo or video arrangements that are visible for 24 hours; and the introduction of face filters of late (Liebhart and Bernhardt 2017:17). Nowadays, the Instagram user community operates in a media-saturated environment, conveying the technical telecommunication framework to make everyday living easier (Chen 2017). In 2015, Instagram users were around 300 million and had shared over 30 billion photos (Chen 2017). Instagram has an additional of 600 million users, with more than 300 million who are active on the app on a monthly basis and 95 million using it on a daily basis (Kleintjes 2017:18). To date, Instagram users share 30 billion photos every day at a rate of 70 million per day, and they like 2.5 billion posts every day (Kleintjes 2017:18). Instagram is as of now one of the social networks that is

growing fast, and is number seven with regards to active users as of September 2017 (Liebhart and Bernhardt 2017:17). Instagram is more popular among young people, with 41% of Instagram users being between the ages of 16 and 24. Instagram made a profit of \$600 million in 2014, and this figure is expected to rise as more brands join the platform. Instagram was used by 86% of big global brands in 2015 (Kleintjes 2017:18). Trad and Dabbagh (2020) denote that social media has become a influential tool for marketing and advertising. With over 500 million monthly users, Instagram has become the most popular site for sharing images. Instagram has reached 1 billion monthly active users. Entrepreneurs found that Instagram is user-friendly and inexpensive, and also provided high publicity for their products. Instagram provides a popular place for sharing content among people and communicating, whereby consumers are given an opportunity to communicate more effectively. Instagram offers consumers an opportunity to look for other people's experience with products. Instagram affords customers to recommend certain products and share their experiences. Nevertheless, the growing promptness of the latest trends and the demand for change has forced a majority of fashion brands to adopt Instagram as a marketing channel. As a result, Instagram has become the shopping center for both fashion brands and consumers all over the world. The power of Instagram for the Fashion industry is undeniable. Instagram, which has exploded in popularity in recent years, making the fashion industry to be accessible to the general public (Trad and Dabbagh 2020).

3.3 What is Instagram?

Instagram is described as an online mobile photo and a sharing site that permits its users to take photos and videos. Users of the app are allowed to share on other social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook. Instagram's feature that is unique is that it confines pictures to a square shape similar to Polaroid images and applies filters digitally (Scissions, Vo and Sim 2014). Instagram is also a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions. Millions of people around the world utilise Instagram to find amazing imagery, creative outlet and as a source of inspiration. Brands will experience no difficulties in reaching out to individuals who are open to new perceptions. This can be attributed to Instagram's simple design always putting visuals at the centre stage. Pictures and videos fill the screen, there is no disorder to the

experience. Users are attracted to Instagram for the reason that it is a beautiful space filled with inspiring and captivating content (Scissions *et al.*, 2014).

Figure 3.1 below shows the Instagram logo.

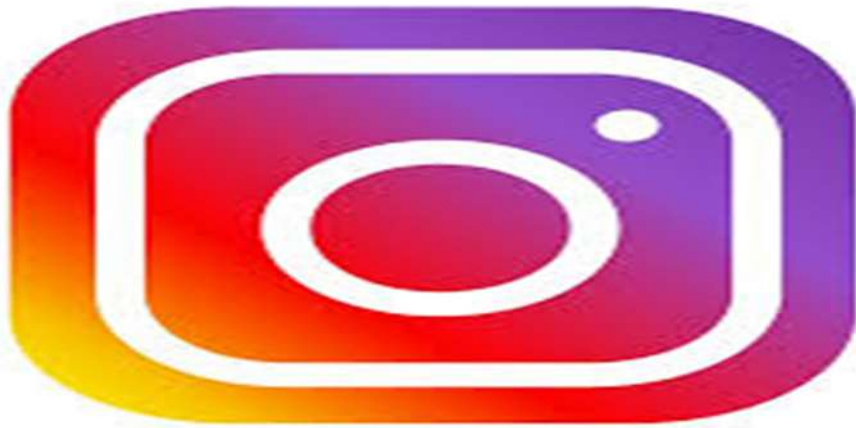


Figure 3. 1: Instagram logo

Source: Scissions, Vo and Sim (2014)

People can like and make comments on posts on Instagram. This appears as shown in Figure 3.2 below.

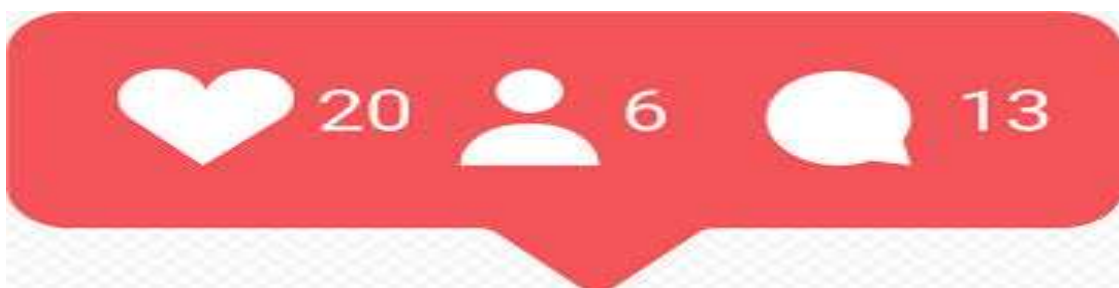


Figure 3. 2: Instagram likes and comments

Source: Scissions, Vo and Sim (2014)

Brands are at present utilising this social portal to increase their influence. Fashion is viewed as a visual industry. In spite of the fact that Snapchat is largely a visual

medium, Instagram has a larger audience, and as a result, many brands have an Instagram presence. A company that is owned by Amazon that offers analytics and commercial web traffic data, Instagram is said to be ranked 18th in terms of web global traffic (Dunn 2018:2). As indicated by Instagram's website, "Instagram is a community of over 800 million who capture and share the world's moments". The website also states that it is "the "home of visual storytelling for everyone from celebrities, newsrooms and brands to teens, musicians and anyone with a creative passion" (Dunn 2018:2). Instagram is also portrayed as a "mobile photo-sharing application and service that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly or privately on the service". Furthermore, videos provide a means for those in the fashion industry to communicate a certain component of their work. Some argue that clothing is designed to be seen in motion. Instagram video posts offers a platform for demonstrating fashion in motion (Dunn 2018:2).

3.4 Instagram use in South Africa

As indicated by the South African Social Media Landscape report of 2016, Instagram has displayed the highest first-time use by brands. Moreover, Instagram has been one of the social networks in South African that has been growing fast, logging a 133% growth from 1,1 million to 2,68 million users (Kleintjes 2017:30). Instagram was also classified as the social network that a majority of sampled brands plan on using. With Instagram's exponential implementation speed, the platform is reaching a mass audience, celebrities are presently leading in terms of followers. Additionally, 42 % of local brands currently are on Instagram, with Mercedes Benz and Mr Price producing the highest levels of engagement for each post. Furthermore, 71% of South African brands see social media as an important part of their marketing strategy, and 53% plan to include influencer marketing in their marketing campaigns. Jarrar, Awobamise and Aderibigbe (2020:40) who state that nowadays, social media influencer marketing is becoming a significant marketing tool for brands around the globe. Social Media Influencer Marketing was encouraged by the acceptance of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, which allowed normal individuals to become social media influencers. As the internet becomes more abundant, influencer marketing will not merely survive but may perhaps become a beneficial alternative to traditional advertisements and even traditional social media or internet advertising.

Instagram is said to be the fourth most downloaded app in the country (Kleintjes 2017:30). Rivani (2018:43) concurs with Kleintjes (2017) that the Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words. Fashion retailers are now moving towards the Instagram platform for marketing purposes, as it should be, as Instagram has doubled its user base in South Africa over the past years. Statistics show that within two months of the launch in 2010, Instagram assimilated 1 million users (Rivani 2018:43). South African Instagram users were expected to be around 200 000 and in 2012, this number reached 5.5 million in 2016. There are over 150 million Instagram users worldwide, more than 16 billion pictures shared, with over 1.2 billion likes daily, and 55 million pictures uploaded every day. Instagram's success has most undoubtedly caught the attention of many South African businesses (Rivani 2018:43).

3.5 The rise of the Instagram Economy

As companies learn how to leverage social media platforms, the e-commerce model has improved and been applied to social media. Before, social media was viewed as a link to connect with customers and generating brand awareness similar to traditional media. Nevertheless, social media has acquired the skill to enable commerce, either directly as a direct sales channel or indirectly through communications campaigns and brand recognition on these websites. (Kleintjes 2017:26). Instagram users are 60% more persuaded to purchase online, and approximately 50% of Instagram users utilise the site as a means for collecting market information in order to search for a product or a brand. Instagram specifically has been extremely beneficial for social media. Because of the site's visual nature, network hierarchy of influence and huge numbers of users, it has converted to being a key source of income for brands and users. Despite the fact that several brands use social media strategies across a variety of channels, Instagram is proving to be a great tool for reaching consumers and influencing their purchasing decisions (Kleintjes 2017:26). Despite the fact that social media sites like Twitter and Facebook have been around longer and have a larger user base than Instagram, they lack the network capacities to persuade the enormous mass consuming culture and consumer influence models that Instagram has. The 'Instagram Economy' is driven by the ability of brands and Influential Instagrammers to generate revenue.

The 'Instagram Economy' is pushed by the revenue generating prospects from brands and influential Instagrammers. The possibility of earning on Instagram has exceeded that of other more well-known social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook (Kleintjes 2017:26). The advancement of consumers' socio-cultural practices on social media have in some way prompted brands to work in partnership with well-known Instagram users, regarded as influencers. The new marketing communication medium is connected to progressively easy purchasing decisions, also the customs of a digital culture. The new standard of influence on Instagram has given influencers the opportunity to earn an income from collaborating with brands to promote their products on Instagram. When brands pay influencers for product promotion on Instagram, it is beneficial for the brand because influencers can influence the purchase decision of many followers in their networks. While a number of researchers focus on which influencer consumers find to be more trustworthy, more research is required on the precise possibility of influence and how promoted brand postings on Instagram effect consumers' purchasing decisions (Kleintjes 2017:26).

3.6 Instagram strategies

The business Instagram account should have a profile with detailed description, an appropriate profile picture and a link to the website. If other social media forums are used, the account should have updated contact information and maybe links to them. Sharing posts is essential for the company in order to get spreading and continuity (Buinac and Lundberg 2016). Creating brand awareness is vital and it is necessary to be active on all the channels that the company utilises. For the sake of creating the biggest conceivable engagement for followers, it is vital to be present and active. There are two ways to be present and active, it can either be on the business's account when content is posted or on other accounts by commenting and liking. When one does this, it shows thankfulness, which can result to loyal followers. When a company decides to post pictures or videos on Instagram, it is significant to find an artistic mix of diverse pictures (Buinac and Lundberg 2016). Below are five types of pictures that drive engagement:

3.6.1 Customer-centric photos

A business should share content that is customer-centric. When a business post on Instagram, it is significant to think about: how can a post be relevant to its followers? how do they benefit? why would they be interested? does this add to the customers' life? It is important to consider the service/product in terms of advantages for the consumers and emphasis the marketing content on those advantages. The best pictures are the ones that demonstrate the product being used, which is free advertising, with assistance from the follower who posted it. This will keep users interested in visiting a company's page to see if their picture gets selected, or to see if their friend's photo will be selected. It can also be a re-post from a customer that shows the purchased product (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

3.6.2 Employee-centric photos

Instagram revolves around improving the brand by presenting a brand personality. Placing a face to a name is significant, as it is not ideal to engage with a faceless business. Moreover, it is the greatest way to connect with followers. Businesses that take good care of their workers are far more desirable. Why is it that most clothing stores ask workers to dress in their products? For the reason that it could add trustworthiness to the brand (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

3.6.3 Instagram contest photos

Contests photos drive engagement. Instagram, makes getting involved in contest easy for followers and to stay involved with contest updates (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

3.6.4 Photos with bloggers

Before Instagram emerged, the concentration was on displaying consumers and employees as the "star" in order to represent brand personality. It is now time to pay attention to people who serve as brand ambassadors. Influencers and bloggers add great integrity to the product/service as a form of celebrity recommendation. Creating a photo that reproduces the brand and doing well-thought-out pictures that do not feel too 'selling and pushing' is required for all picture styles. Individuality and dissimilarity are also important to keep followers' interest. (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

3.6.5 Best time to post

The optimum time for posting content on social media is on Fridays at 7 p.m., according to a study based on 17.5 million social media postings from 17 737 brands. (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

3.6.6 Density of pictures

According to (Buinac and Lundberg 2016) brands post pictures on Instagram on an average of 1.5 times daily and a majority of brands post one to three images a day. There's also brands who publish more than 100 posts monthly, and at times even 10 times daily. There is no connection of a high number of content posted with receiving less engagement. On the contrary, individuals following these brands frequently display more engagement on the posts that are beyond average.

3.7 Effectiveness of Instagram marketing

The number of people utilising social media globally is increasing each year. Social media has developed to be an important part of everyday life for communicating and disseminating information and has changed the manner consumers behave, which is an improvement that businesses must respond to. Customers are receiving progressively dynamic roles in co-creating marketing content with businesses and their brands (Virtanen, Bjork and Sjostrom 2017). Social media marketing has grown to be the latest form of marketing and advertising for companies. The portable social platform, Instagram, has grown into an important tool for marketing. Around two-thirds of established companies are at present utilising Instagram to their benefit. There are no rules that should be followed when companies advertise on Instagram, however Ha (2015:3) states that there are patterns. Instagram allows businesses to communicate with their consumers by endorsing them (i.e. liking, follow back, and leaving comments on posts) and receiving a reply in the form of getting endorsements in return. At the point when a business is not well known to users, endorsing potential consumers on Instagram might be one of several marketing strategies for increasing and creating brand awareness, and gain followers that engage (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017).

Instagram has grown into a marketing tool that is popular among businesses, not only because of its growing user base, but because of its features that highlight the trend

of visual content in social media marketing. Instead of merely providing textual content, Instagram helps businesses to enhance their visual storytelling (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017). Investing in Instagram might be beneficial if the marketing aims are to co-create with customers and improve their brand involvement. With regard to marketing, Instagram has a more significant amount of utilisation for communication, engagement and co-creation compared with other platforms. Marketers appear to have observed this, since the utilisation of Instagram as a Social Media Marketing tool is growing. A study of consumers' usage of social media platforms found that Instagram was the most frequently used platform to follow brands (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017). Instagram's unique effortlessness with which users can upload and circulate content makes it a very time-efficient and user-friendly social media platform for business. Pictures can be easily and quickly uploaded directly from photo gallery, folders on devices or taken utilising the camera function on Instagram itself. Instagram's photo filter is its most distinctive feature, in which a digital layer is added to an original photo, giving the photo a professional appearance, as if taken by a professional photographer (Kleintjes 2017:19). Instagram has shown to be a reliable and effective tool for promoting fashion products. Instagram is a powerful platform that enables improved communication in the fashion industry by utilising visual features and other multimedia information, where these visual features are more effective than verbal or written story-telling. The presence of fashion brands on Instagram has become imperative in engaging customers and persuading their buying decisions.

3.7.1 How Instagram contributes to Social Network Marketing

Numerous brands are frequently utilising Instagram for the promotion of their brands and to maintain friendly relationships with their customers. A number of businesses have started to integrate their businesses with the Instagram experience. A great number of well-established brands around the globe are utilising Instagram for their marketing strategies. Instagram can assist a brand to promote its services or products (Lim and Yazdanifard 2014). The main point that makes Instagram not quite the same as other social media platforms is that Instagram is using a visual-based strategy. Everything about Instagram is related to photographs. It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words, using Instagram as a marketing tool is an excellent way to market a product. Moreover, Instagram can assist a brand in saving costs for brand designing.

Each picture that is taken can be edited and filtered using the Instagram functions. Instagram has a function identified as “hash tags” (#) for the suitability of representing the relevant pictures and videos of a business. Users can view photos and videos related to the hash tag by clicking on the hash tag (Lim and Yazdanifard 2014). Hence, many fashion brands are now present on Instagram to advertise their services and products. Additionally, Instagram assist marketers to understand their customers. Instagram allows for users to leave comments and receive comments on the photo post, and the company can get more feedback from customers regarding their products. Followers are typically interested in seeing how the company and its users communicate, so paying attention to the comment section can help improve the relationship with customers. In addition, Instagram has integrated a function known as ‘direct messaging’. This function can offer the VIP (very important people) customers another way to interact and communicate with the brand. The Direct Message function lets the user send messages that can only be viewed by the receiver and each message can be sent out to 15 users at a time (Lim and Yazdanifard 2014).

3.7.2 Instagram as a marketing tool

Instagram has the ability of enhancing a company’s visual storytelling rather than only offering written content. The Instagram app is constructed on the notion of sharing content to prompt action (Alkhowaiter 2018). For example, when a business shares content and users react to the post either by liking it, commenting on it or by following the company. Companies are advised to expand their Instagram followers to a number that can be considered credible. On Instagram, 1000 followers are claimed to be the minimal requirement for a small business to be recognised as trustworthy. People have a tendency of following popular brands more enthusiastically than unpopular ones (Alkhowaiter 2018). Amongst Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram was established as the most effective tool for marketing a business and reaching customers (Alkhowaiter 2018). Kleintjes (2017:6) asserts that Instagram has developed to a significant tool for communication. Moreover, the expanding implementation rate of this platform by consumers implies that brands are acknowledging the significance of utilising Instagram to communicate their brand identity, influence consumers’ purchase choices, interact with consumers and

maintain their brand image, (Kleintjes 2017:6). Instagram advertising assists brands that have been attempting to effectively expand its audience on the channel, an opportunity that is cost-effective to break into a well-known social platform and connect with its audience. Instagram is image-centred by nature, fashion brands are gradually taking advantage of this platform as its popularity increases (Kleintjes 2017:18). Furthermore, this encourages individuals to discover things they care about, such as content from their favourite brands and other important messages (Rambarun 2018:24).

The percentage of business profiles on Instagram increased from 11.5% in 2013 to 32.3% in 2015. Additionally, more than 2 million advertisers around the world asserted that they utilised Instagram to communicate their stories and achieve their business objectives (Rambarun 2018:24). One out of three of the most viewed Instagram stories were from brand profiles, with more than 200 million users affirming that they visited at least one business profile daily. In addition, 60% of users claimed that they found new products and/or services via this social platform (Rambarun 2018:24). The great usage of social networking sites has improved opportunities for fashion brands to enter the market and interact with customers to a greater extent. Fashion brands also use social media platforms to engage with their consumers more interpersonally (Salmaa and Purwanegara 2015:653). The rapid growth in Instagram users has given marketers the option to leverage the platform as a marketing tool. In fact, an article in December 2014 revealed that brands obtain approximately 50 times more engagement on Instagram than Twitter. Engagement is estimated by features on both platforms, such as re-tweets, replies, hashtags and likes. Despite the fact that Instagram has less users when compared to Facebook or Twitter, its growth makes Instagram have high potential to be utilised as a marketing channel. As a result, Instagram has the potential to become a multi-purpose platform for both fashion brands and fashion bloggers to influence people's fashion choices, while also increasing purchasing intention (Salmaa and Purwanegara 2015:653). Agam (2017) states that Instagram has become a platform for companies to promote and increase sales of their products. It has become a medium to reach potential customers. Moreover, Instagram has turned out to be one of the most viewed social media platforms. Furthermore, the main aim of being present on Instagram by fashion brands is to create brand awareness, which in turn gives the potential to grow businesses and

to have access to customers, thus contributing towards increasing sales. The greater the brand's and consumer's communication strength, the greater the consumer's brand loyalty and preference (Bilgin 2018:129).

3.7.3 Tools of an Instagram marketing strategy

3.7.3.1 Content scheduling

Content scheduling on Instagram means to make a schedule that states the exact day and at what time of the day a post will be posted on the Instagram account. This is a significant tool in getting many customers and potential customers to see the posts of a business on Instagram, and has become somewhat significant with the modification in the system of Instagram. When Instagram was presented, the users were only able to view Instagram posts of the people they follow, in reverse consecutive order. These days, there are three dissimilar characteristics that effect the type of content seen first when the user logs on Instagram. Individuals will mostly see posts on their feed that Instagram calculates one may like, in view of the amount of relations with several related accounts or posts (Alkhowaiter 2018). For instance, if an individual likes and comments quite frequently on posts that are connected to fashion, then it is most likely that fashion-related posts will appear on the timeline of the user. Moreover, the latest posts uploaded when logging in on the app will appear first as to keep the user up-to-date. The third principle of what posts will likely to appear first is one's association with an account one follows. Posts of accounts that the user is not following, yet regularly intermingles with in the form of liking, commenting and tagging them, are most likely to be displayed when the user login on Instagram. Factors that affect the functioning style of the Instagram system are significant for brands to study when planning their content in order to get the customers and potential consumers to see the content. This suggests that businesses need to strengthen the relations of Instagram users with the business's posts in order to be viewed as content that users are interested in. This is in accordance with discovering the perfect time to post. If the company chooses to post when consumers and potential consumers are most likely to be online on Instagram, the possibility of users seeing the post is higher and the likelihood of them interacting with the post (Alkhowaiter 2018).

3.7.3.2 Give-aways

Give-aways on Instagram are very simple to manage as there are almost no rules on them compared to Facebook. The main requirement on Instagram is to issue out a statement of release below the promotion of the give-away. The statement should be something like this: this promotion is not sponsored or linked with Instagram, Inc., as per Instagram standards. If you wish to enter, you must affirm that you are at least 13 years old, release Instagram from liability, and agree to Instagram's terms and conditions. (Worfel 2019). Once the legal issues have been considered, the plan for a give-away needs to be set. The company must have a purpose for the give-away: for example, does the company want to inspire consumers to create their own content, have more interaction on the content or increase the number of followers. With regards to the different goals, the guidelines must be set differently. In general, give-aways assist the previously explained usage of the Instagram system. Give-aways result to more interaction on an account, which again results to higher visibility of the company's posts (Worfel 2019).

3.7.3.3 Instagram ads

Instagram ads can assist to create awareness of the brand or a product, as well as provide more information concerning those products to customers. Furthermore, the rise of website visits, rise in sales or new offline customers can be accomplished when utilising Instagram ads. Instagram ads offer dissimilar opportunities to reach the goals of the business. Instagram has numerous types of promotions. One of these promotions include promoting content through carousel ads, story ads, video ads or photo ads. Instagram ads can be easily created within the Instagram app, which is referred to as 'quick creation'. A business can indicate where the ad should lead individuals who see the advertisement: to its profile, its direct messages or to the website. The quick creation is a step-by-step tool which is easy to utilise, without any directions being required (Worfel 2019).

3.7.3.4 Storytelling

In 2016, Instagram introduced the feature of Instagram stories. It is a feature that permits users to upload a video, picture or a boomerang that disappears after 24 hours. Only the individual who uploaded the story is the one who can see the number

of people who have viewed the story, however after 24 hours, the story will be automatically deleted, the story will only be seen by the publisher in their archive. Instagram allows users to react to a story through a private message or swiping up for a quick reaction using emoji's. The Instagram story itself has several features that can be utilised (Alkhowaiter 2018). Location, texts, polls, drawings and the temperature can be added to the Instagram story. By using these features, the story can be viewed by other users who are captivated by the location that has been tagged in the story, but who are not necessarily followers of the account. A good Instagram story is characterised by its assortment and genuineness. Utilising location and Hashtag stickers is advantageous for the discoverability of the business's page. Instagram users can search for the tagged location and are able to view stories that have been tagged with the location they searched for. The process is similar for hashtag stickers used in stories. This suggests that the stickers that are used in stories enables, Instagram users who do not follow the company's page to view the story of a company and as a result may discover the page (Alkhowaiter 2018).

3.7.4 Instagram marketing strategy and brand building on Instagram

Instagram is said to be the best social media platform for building a brand as the business can compete effectively with other brands on Instagram by leveraging the brand qualities. In order for a brand to be managed successfully on Instagram, the business has to successfully manage it off Instagram. A brand is defined as the sum of emotions and thoughts that people have about a product or brand (Nummila 2015:14). If a brand is well managed and designed, it has influence to increase sales. The brands influence is aligned with a mixture of visible and invisible facets and the prospect's experienced with the brand. The key to successful branding on Instagram is to use a combination of words and pictures to create an interesting story about the business (Nummila 2015:14). People have a tendency of liking pictures that connect with them emotionally. Pictures that raise emotion are, for instance, vacation destinations, sunset, dresses, and beautiful faces. The pictures on Instagram incite the feelings and thoughts of consumers, which is the foundation for purchasing decisions. There are many emotional causes that marketers have revealed. Twelve triggers seem to be predominantly noticeable in Instagram marketing efforts, namely: desire, justifying the purchase, greed, instant gratification, urgency, storytelling, desire to belong, involvement of ownership, love, curiosity, and exclusivity (Nummila

2015:14). Having raging fans as followers is the best approach to create passionate reactions to the utilisation of emotional purchasing triggers. Setting up time to work on the follower strategy and recognising the common buying prompts results in followers feeling passionate and upbeat towards the brand. In addition, Instagram is not conversationally concentrated, yet at the same time it involves social actions (Nummila 2015:14). Utilising Instagram for the purpose of marketing is relatively common as the site is one of the most influential one currently. Particularly, companies now ought to utilise this platform as the generation that is utilising Instagram is escaping the use of traditional forms of advertisement and are moving to social media platforms such as Instagram. Instagram marketing is about acquiring the amount of success due to its visual concept. Individuals absorb and reminisce about pictures fairly often, more than anything else, which results to more interactions with customers and potential consumers (Worfel 2019). Instagram marketing depends on inspiring, consistent content and authenticity. Instagram marketing is tied in with sharing a story to the users that resonates and includes them in order to build a powerful brand. There are four significant features when constructing a persuasive story on Instagram for the potential customer. The first part is to be genuine, Instagram users want content that is relatable and that appears real for them. Another viewpoint to recall is to utilise the senses of the user. Making connections on Instagram through Instagram user's mind is important. This can be achieved through their sense; touch, taste, sound and smell can be aroused through Instagram (Worfel 2019). The third part of making a story is utilising models that can be found in the Social Media Brand Voice model. Models define the nature and the attractiveness of a brand. Lastly, is to utilise stereotypes. In the case of a brand not in agreement with certain stereotypes, they have a tendency on having a greater impact on the follower. For purposes of branding on Instagram, not just the right appearances and story are key to success. Specifics such as the name of the page must be well thought. The name of the Instagram page must be short and simple. It can incorporate, for instance, the target area of the business. Additionally, the profile picture should be carefully thought about, a business's brand logo can be used. The content should be unique and appealing on the eye because that is what Instagram is all about. Brands are successful if they deliver content that is consistent and high quality (Worfel 2019).

3.7.4.1 Brand awareness

Recently, customers' increased awareness has compelled them to buy products and services from well-known brands. In order to remain competitive, businesses must ensure that their offers are pertinent. Brand awareness refers to the ability to recall or recognise a company's or business's identity in any situation (Rambarun 2018). Brand-depth and brand-width are two distinct classifications that can be used to understand brand awareness. While brand-width suggests that people think about a specific brand when choosing which product to buy, brand-depth provides consumers a direction in recalling or readily identifying a brand. All things considered, there is a higher brand awareness connected with that specific product. Additionally, if a product or service has a significant level of brand awareness, brands are seen as having a good reputation, thereby increasing consumer preferences (Rambarun 2018). Social media platforms have established themselves as an essential tool for increasing brand awareness and have deepened interactions between customers and companies across a variety of channels. The likelihood of Facebook user engagement on a company's profile was examined for 98 global brands to determine what characteristics enhanced or lowered that likelihood (Foroudi 2019). The study's goals included identifying the various sorts of content that, when compared to other platforms, produced significant amounts of brand awareness and engagement on Facebook. The findings of their study helped the researchers to gain a thorough grasp of how different brand posts had affected the number of likes, comments, and shares that these posts received from Facebook users. Consumers' recall of a brand, confidence in a brand, and loyalty to a particular brand all play a major role in their intents to purchase the product or service. In this sense, consumers must be given comprehensive information that enables them to recognise their needs, weigh their options, and ultimately purchase the product or a service. Similar to how brand awareness expansions and solid client relationships are thought to increase sales and reduce marketing expenses. Therefore, making higher profits than those of less favoured brands (Foroudi 2019).

3.7.4.2 Brand Identity and Brand Image: the importance of convergence

In order for a company to achieve success, it is fundamental to communicate about the brand to customers, because it is through communication that they promote and

explain the value intention they have to offer. Communication entails the individual who is sending the message, the individual receiving the message. The sender of the message signifies the business that converses a brand identity, and the receiver signifies the consumer who is receiving the business's message and forms a brand image. Customarily, branding literature is described as the important and distinctive awareness of the brand. It makes up everything for the brand to be distinctive and meaningful, a distinctive set of brand relations that companies aim to create or maintain to establish a relationship amongst the customer and the brand (Scorrano, Fait, Maizza and Vrontis 2019). Brand Identity is a multi-dimensional idea that incorporates a company's culture and values, also the basic promise and personality of the brand. Brand Image is defined as the customer's observation of a brand as reflected by the brand relations held in the consumer's memory. It is likewise observed as an opinion of a brand that is moulded during the process of decoding the facets of brand identity. Brand identity and brand image are interrelated. A solid brand can merely be shaped and sustained by strengthening the connection between image and identity.

The Brand Identity structure includes part of the Brand Image (for example self-image), which is in this manner both the interpretation and result of Brand Identity (Scorrano *et al.*, 2019). Significantly, the merging between the communicated message (identity) and its opinion by customers (image) assists to foresee unexpected crises of brand reputation and foresee potential problems; avoid arrogance with respect to companies concerning their brand values and their capability to distinguish themselves by utilising unique selling propositions and market positioning; and combine the dimensions by explaining both concepts in order for the business to follow a good communications strategy. On the off-chance that the sender and the receiver do not comprehend the meaning of the message, the dialogue will not happen and businesses will not prosper in persuading consumers' behaviour, attitudes and knowledge. Lastly, observing the merging between the required position by the management as well as the perception of the consumer is a desirable goal for a lot of firms. By evaluating the gaps between brand reputation and brand identity, managers will be able to identify strategies to minimise inconsistency and grow more powerful brands (Scorrano *et al.*, 2019).

3.7.5 Instagram's importance for brands

Instagram offers a distinctive communicating ecosystem for brands and their customers. Hence, Instagram is a highly visual platform as it allows for marketers to deliver their brand story in a different way. As a result of using pictures and videos, brands are given the chance to interact with their consumers through media that is less withdrawn by language barriers. This alludes that content that is branded on Instagram relates with customers in a manner that words alone cannot by appealing to an emotional level (Later and HubSpot 2018). This change concerning the approval of high usage of mobile devices and a visual approach in marketing confirms Instagram's important place within a brand's social strategy. People are progressively developing an image-based comprehension of the world. Therefore, it is not surprising that 83% of all human knowledge is acquired through visual processes. Visuals are highly memorable to viewers. As individuals are continuously spending more of their time online, sensory experiences also become that much more powerful. Later and Hubspot (2018) aver that the utilisation of pictures can communicate better information in a shorter amount of time. As 44% of users have a tendency of following brands that utilise images than those who do not, brands can create a powerful emotional tie with users through effective visuals. In a generation that is fast-paced, where customers' attention can be lost easily lost, an image may be worth much more than words alone. When posting content on a channel that already has captivated consumers offers additional opportunities for engagement. The multichannel alignment, mobile screen and social-media integration are all considerable motives for brands to have a presence on Instagram (Later and Hubspot 2018). Content produced through Instagram campaigns are both extremely effective and affordable at supplementing traditional and digital media. Moreover, the nature of Instagram images increases engagement and conversion over traditional photography by 25%. Since 93% of the users are second-screener and grip content fast, customers can use any combination of smartphone, tablet, TV or computer when engaging with content (Scissions *et al.*, 2014). Users interrelate with so much content on a daily basis and it has become a challenge to identify the secondary screen, as Instagram might be the user's primary source of content consumption. This digital space is promising for brands since Instagram users are eager consumers of branded content on a range of devices (Scissions *et al.*, 2014)

3.8 Examples of successful brands on Instagram

3.8.1 Nike

Nike is an American global company founded and headquartered in Beaverton. Nike is well known for being one of “the world largest suppliers of athletic shoes and apparel” and is in fact a major manufacturer and producer of sports gear. Nike had developed itself into a leading brand in the United State. Moreover, Nike made use of many marketing communication means to reach the consumer and to make them mindful about products (Bhutto, Brohi, Prithiani, Khubchandani, Kumar and Abbas 2016:2). Nike’s content focus is mainly on positivity and motivation to create feeling and emotion for their followers. Furthermore, Nike uses celebrity endorsement in order to increase their engagement rate. Nike is also known for posting images of athletes or celebrities and teams using the Nike brand and tagging them in a post. Such approaches have result upon Nike’s successful use of Instagram-based marketing. In addition, celebrities post images of themselves wearing Nike outfits or Nike shoes and engage either by tagging them in their post or by hashtagging (Kors 2016). Consumers want to feel like they are also part of the engagement too. When customers have the Nike outfit or shoes on, they also engage using hashtags and brand tagging. Nike has many ongoing campaigns that inspire their followers to either interact by commenting, liking and sharing or by posting their own images and hashtagging one of their numerous unique campaigns, including their trademark hashtag #JustDolt (Kors 2016). Nike is a well-known consumer brand that has a presence on Instagram. Nike is a well-known brand in the international sportswear industry, with a market share of 17.2% in 2015. Throughout the years 2010–2015, the brand consistently ranked first (Balan 2017:1).

3.8.2 Mr Price

Stuart Cohen and Laurie Chiappini are the founders of the Mr Price Group in 1986. From that point forward, the brand has developed into a fast-growing, successful South African fashion value retailer, including several popular retail trademarks selling apparel, sportswear and homeware. Lately, European visual merchandisers Pow and Dalziel rebranded the fashion retailer to make it more youthful and relevant to a younger target group that is trend-conscious. The business is developing rapidly in South Africa as well as globally, with Mr Price's online store accessible around the

world and their global extension to other African countries. A major part of the brand's growth amongst consumers is through its social media strategy. Mr Price joined Instagram on 27th September 2012 (Kleintjes 2017:60). Until now, Mr Price's Instagram account @mrpfashion has more than 240 000 followers and 2854 posts. Mr Price's Instagram page has furthermore received a total of over 1.5 million likes and more than 41 000 comments. Mr Price has the highest number of followers amongst fashion brands in South Africa. Mr Price acknowledges the potential of Instagram to share its brand values and create brand awareness with its target consumers (Kleintjes 2017:60).

3.9 Attractive Instagram profile

Like most social networks, a business that is present on Instagram may create a profile with simple information regarding the business. The profile of the business should demonstrate the values of the brand in order for a business to acquire the greatest value. The Instagram profile must have all the basic information and moreover, supplemental information that makes the profile appealing to the eye. Uploading relevant pictures to the Instagram page is very significant however if the necessary information on the page profile is not appropriately put up, it can significantly decrease the number of followers and the number of visitors. There are also some limits, including the limited characters to utilise for headlines and a limited number of people that one can follow (Nummila 2015:7). Keeping in mind the restrictions, being aware of the limits that are put in place and understanding what is acceptable are a couple of things to think about when creating one's page. The profile picture of the company ought to support the business values, vision and mission. Moreover, it should be easy for customers to recognise these values on the profile page.

Nummila (2015:7) advises that the profile picture for the page ought to be a logo or a professional photo of the business to truthfully signify the brand. The page name should be easily recognised and it must include the brand name. Notifications permits followers to discover sites from anywhere and lets them to get information when new pictures are being shared to the company's Instagram page or something new is posted. The site URL of the company leading to the web page must be clearly visible. If visitors struggle to find the business outside Instagram, the connection between growing the business and marketing on Instagram by increasing the number of new

visitors to the web page will breakdown. The business must include necessary information that a customer may need to have, if it happens that the customer wants to contact the business. This consists of a business phone number, email address, location and URL to the web page. In conclusion, the business must make sure that its profile is not private as it is a public profile. Making a profile private is allowed on Instagram. However, this is not recommended for businesses. For a business to get many followers and engagement as possible, the account page should be public. (Nummila 2015:7)

3.10 The visually dominated Instagram app

A tendency in Instagram marketing is the increase in public's preferences for pictures and visual content online, as people's brains can absorb, process and comprehend more information quicker through pictures than through a written message. Pictures and visual content are an approach to break through the chaos. Pictures and content that is visual can be successful in increasing traffic, creating awareness and discussion. Businesses and brands need to recognise and include this tendency into their Social Media Marketing strategies if the goal is for messages to increase a viral spread (Virtanen, Bjork and Sjostrom 2017). Marketing a brand on Instagram has a greater level of co-creation, engagement and usage for interaction when compared to other platforms. Marketers are acknowledging this, since the utilisation of Instagram as a Social Media Marketing Tool is growing and Instagram is often utilised to search and follow brands. Then again, businesses must leave the "one-size-fits-all" approach when deciding on the suitable platform to use. Because Instagram is a visually dominant platform, hedonic-related posts are suitable, while platforms that permit written messages, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, might be suitable for utilitarian posts that contain more information (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017).

3.11 Instagram activity and metrics

It is recommended for businesses to be active and take the lead in order to increase and create awareness of their products and services. This entails being social and communicating with followers, not just by posting content on the company's social media platforms, but also by interacting in the feeds of potential consumers on

different platforms. The goal is to figure out what kinds of things customers like to see and hear, as well as what they find entertaining, valuable, and intriguing. The friendliness and warmth of a brand, not its proficiency, lessen the effort that a business requires to exercise to get customers' endorsement. Social Media Marketing is predominately influential in supporting new product launches. If users are familiar of the business on social media, it is unlikely for users to find it by chance. Other than posting interesting content and tagging, purposefully following users, liking and commenting on their photos will help a business stand out on Instagram (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017). The number of followers, likes and comments are examples of metrics that may be utilised when the aim is to increase as well as create brand awareness. As such, on Instagram, users are more likely to follow and like content, whereas commenting happens less often. On Instagram, the number of followers a brand has is a sign of approval. Followers are not just a metric of reach and awareness, but also a metric of engagement. Instagram followers can be thought of as highly engaged opinion leaders and brand ambassadors who spread the word across a community. In order to avoid the impression of being an annoyance, it is important for a company to have a balance as to how often it can engage with users on feeds. A business that follows numerous users on Instagram might be perceived as a spammer. It is suggested that a business should maintain the balance among their followers and those they follow. An approach to deal with this is to un-follow followers who do not follow the business back. Liking and commenting on images is not viewed as spamming. In any case, cautious consideration is necessary. "For companies, the praxis when liking and commenting is to be more neutral and not too personal" (Virtanen *et al.*, 2017).

3.12 Campaigns and Contests

Instagram is said to be a suitable channel for hosting a brand's social media contests and campaigns. Instagram makes it simple for users to participate as it enables users to engage quickly through hashtags. Campaigns may be customised and they can be more engaging through the utilisation of Instagram's API (application programming interface), posing more opportunities. Content that is user-generated can be collected in masses and presented effectively and quickly. Contest pricing ought to be measured in accordance to the level of user commitment. Contests that require more effort and

commitment must have suitable prizes to increase the quantity and quality of entries (Denter 2020). Contests are a decent way to drive user-generated content. “Like and comment” is one of the most straightforward and easily executable contests to utilise. Users can like and comment on a picture or video that has been posted and subsequently enter the contest within a chosen submission period.

Using Instagram API can assist with tracking the entries (Denter 2020). Winners of contests are contacted using Instagram or external methods. Straightforward accompaniments may be made to this context, users can be asked to take a photo and add a particular hashtag. When depending on content that is user-generated, brands need to create distinctive and clear hashtags to analyse and curate submissions. A brand that engages with the audience and validate work in the means of getting likes and comments personalises the relationship between the brand and customer. Accrediting pictures or videos to the original maker further increases a brand’s reach. It is imperative to have any required consent from the original maker of the content for its use. By ending contests with a post that covers the winning submissions also reinforces upcoming contests and campaigns by inviting users who might have missed the submission date. It is important for brands to create a curation process for user-generated content and acquire the required rights and legal consents for use in order to avoid infringement (Denter 2020).

Action Items:

- Setting goals for campaign/contest;
- Build the campaign/contest;
- Setting legal procedures for rights management;
- Setting procedures for submissions;
- Consider the pricing;
- Contact winners; and
- Do a follow up with winners.

3.13 Hash tags (#)

Hashtags serve numerous purposes for Instagram content. Hashtags assist in grouping posts in different classifications. They are utilised to organise posts and may be used in different ways. Brands must set up hashtags that are connected with the

brand. Firstly, a brand ought to limit the brand's hashtags to six or fewer. These hashtags must be relevant to the brand and its values, it can be a slogan, the brand name, or a new product line (Denter 2020). Hashtags can be utilised in support of events, campaigns or contest that aims to drive awareness by involving users. Brands must find a balance in how they use hashtags, as too many hashtags can become awkward and possibly distance users. Brands can use third-party sites to register hashtags to stake claim to them. When a hashtag is registered, it does not give rights of the hashtag, however it enhances the brand to a directory of hashtags to add clout in the social media site (Denter 2020).

Action Items:

- Setup hashtags;
- Create hashtags for regular use;
- Use hashtags in support of campaigns/contests;
- Do not spam hashtags; and
- Register hashtags.

3.14 How Brands used Instagram stories during the New York Fashion week

Instagram stories are the present darling in the fashion world, or so it seemed in New York, as designers utilised the Instagram platform to showcase their runway shows. Fashion week has been a dominant part of the Social Media Strategy for businesses, a developed chance to capture what is being showcased to the world along with new collections and build noise among brands. Instagram provides a “first look” or a step “behind the scenes” (Arthur 2017). Instagram stories have however provided a chance to do all of that at a fast pace. Instagram is described as a platform that can produce large numbers of 700 million users globally, with 250 million viewing the story feature every day. It is interesting to see brands take things a step further and play around with content in this environment (Arthur 2017). One of the highlights from Instagram stories is shown below.



Figure 3. 3: Fashion week

Source: Solarz (2014)

Brands have an understanding about fashion week and that Fashion Week is not just about what happens on the runway, as followers want to see interaction. During New York Fashion Week 9 out of the top 10 photos that were shared, were taken off the runway, which shows that active followers enjoy feeling like insiders. During Fashion Week, more than 5 461 photos with the hashtag #NYFW were shared each day. Fashion Week social media marketers recognise the influence of a post and a trending hashtag. #NYFW was able to gather nearly 4 million, showing that instinctive, short hashtags are always a good strategy to apply (Solarz 2014). Brands were prepared for New York Fashion Week, with a record of over 38 000 interactions on each photo. Over Fashion Week, fans were kept engaged with a consistent appealing and charming behind the scenes snaps (Solarz 2014).

3.15 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the literature relevant to the study. The chapter focused on Instagram as a marketing communication tool in the Durban fashion industry. Different areas such as Instagram in South Africa, Instagram strategies, brand awareness, hashtags, customer engagement, the evolution of social media, social media platforms have been discussed comprehensively. This chapter focused mainly on Instagram and the influence it has in the fashion industry. Instagram is an app that is continuously evolving, and fashion brands are required to keep up

with these changes in order for them to adjust their marketing strategies. Chapter Four will present a review of research methods and data collection tools that were used to gather data.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the literature review in detail. This chapter describes the methodology employed to collect, interpret and analyse data. Research methodology is defined as a general approach that is employed to carry out a study, along with the tools utilised for data collection (Flick 2018:124). This chapter discusses the research design, target population, sampling method, data collection, as well as ethical considerations.

4.2 Research design

O'leary (2014:120) defines research design as the main goal to select a plan that will permit a researcher to either answer well-articulated research question, or to examine skilfully constructed hypothesis. Research design is defined by Bakre (2015:143) as a strategy that outlines the manner in which information will be collected for a valuation that consist of acknowledging the data collection approaches; the type of research instruments to be utilised; the manner in which the instruments will be managed; as well as how the information will be sorted out and examined. There are four types of research design: exploratory, explanatory, experimental and descriptive (Akhtar 2016:75). The discussion of Instagram as a communication tool provided the researcher with a suitable research design. It was concluded that the most appropriate approach to finding data that is relevant, whilst achieving aim and objectives of the study, was to use descriptive research. Descriptive research is statistical research that defines phenomena that exist. It is utilised to detect and acquire information on the characteristics of a specific subject and a group of people (Akhtar 2016:75). Furthermore, this study is cross-sectional in nature in that data was collected at a specific point in time.

4.3 Research approach

Research approaches can be described as procedures and plans for research that outlines the steps from general expectations to comprehensive approaches of data

collection, analysis and interpretation. The three research approaches are quantitative, qualitative and mixed method (Creswell 2014). Incorrect data collection can have an effect on the outcomes of a study and eventually lead to invalid results.

4.3.1 Quantitative research

Quantitative research includes the collection of data that is analysed numerically. O'Leary (2014:121) states that quantitative research is represented through gathering numerical data and generalising it across a group of people using statistics. Quantitative research has a defined research questionnaire which entails objective answers that are required and can be utilised to predict future results. It is often considered to be an impartial positivist search for remarkable truths that depend on variables and hypotheses (O'Leary 2014:121). Quantitative research is the experimental assessment of the research objectives and does not necessitate much interpretation (O'Leary 2014:121). A quantitative research method is appropriate for this study because the findings are to be widespread to a whole population or a sub-population. It comprises of a larger sample of which is selected randomly for a survey that was conducted in Durban. Furthermore, data analysis consumes less time as it utilises the statistical software such as SPSS (Rahman 2017:106).

4.4 Target population

Vonk (2017) defines a population as a well-defined collection of objects, units, elements or people who possess identical and specific characteristics. According to Veitch (2017), 800 clothing companies were reported countrywide. The target population of this study includes the businesses operating in the Fashion industry in Durban, in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa.

4.5 Sampling method

According to Mcleod (2014), a sampling method is described as the process of selecting a representative group from the population and utilising a statistical investigation in which a scheduled number of observations are taken from an outsized group. Probability and non-probability techniques are the two sorts of sampling methods. This study utilised a non-probability sampling method. The sampling-

method has a number of benefits: it saves time, it saves money and it assists in collecting richer data.

4.5.1 Non-probability sampling

The non-probability sampling method was used in this study. In non-probability sampling method, the components of the population do not stand the same chance of being selected (Bakre 2015:144). Mcleod (2014) contends that non-probability sampling methods offer appropriate, reliable, and realistic options which are responsible to offer answers to an investigator's inquiry. Non-probability sampling is a method based on the selection discretion of a researcher (Landreneau 2005). Receiving answers utilising non-probability sampling is faster and is also cost-effective. Additionally, non-probability sampling provides an opportunity to create a sample that represent the population. The following are the non-probability methods: quota sampling; convenience sampling; snowball sampling; purposive sampling; and self-selection sampling. The researcher used 'purposive sampling' in selecting fashion business owners within the Fashion industry. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010) contend that purposive sampling lets the researcher be selective and judgemental in their sampling of research participants. Creswell (2017:32) defines the purposive sampling method as a discretionary approach wherein a researcher chooses suitable participants who fit into a study. On the other hand, probability sampling is more time-consuming and is usually more expensive, and was not followed in this study.

4.6 Sample size

Sample size denotes to the number of participants included in a study. Any practical study in which the goal is to make suggestions about a population from a sample must have a sample size (Taherdoost 2017:237). Sekaran and Bougie (2010:296) state that an acceptable sample size must be between 30 and 500 respondents. A sample size of 130 businesses that operate within the Fashion industry was purposively selected. The main criteria were that the business should be operating in the Fashion industry in Durban.

4.7 Measuring instrument

Measuring instruments are tools used in collecting data or information. Measuring instruments are inclusive of tools such as scales, indexes, surveys, informal observations, questionnaires and interviews (Christof 2017:10). The measuring instrument used was an online questionnaire. A questionnaire is a set of printed or written questions with a choice of answers that are designed for use in a survey or statistical investigation (Christof 2017:10).

4.8 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is described as means of communication between a researcher and participants of a study. A questionnaire is usually written and utilised for collecting information that is relevant to the study (Bakre 2015:148). Questionnaires are appropriate research instruments and they are known to be cost-effective they also serve as a simple technique of collecting data from a wide group of people. Additionally, a questionnaire that is well-structured must have simple wordings; the questionnaire should have variables and themes that are well structured; and it must also have a good appearance. Kallier (2016:110) concurs with Bakre's interpretation that questionnaires are appropriate for discovering opinions of a widespread large group or population. A questionnaire has numerous benefits, including affordability as compared to interviews. Moreover, questionnaires are a consistent and quick way to collect data. Questionnaires also offer confidentiality and anonymity. They normally do not involve face-to-face communication among the researcher and participant. The method of utilising questionnaires has confirmed to be accommodating when handling sensitive questions. On the contrary, there is a possibility that the participants of a study may disregard the researcher by choosing not to answer the questionnaires. The outcome of this might be a poor response rate. Moreover, there may be some situations where participants may provide information that is biased. Both the biased information and poor responses will unquestionably affect the credibility and reliability of such research (Kallier 2016:111).

4.8.1 Questionnaire design and format

The researcher designed the questionnaire that was used in this study. The appearance and sequencing of a questionnaire is significant. A poorly structured

questionnaire might have a negative impact on the credibility and reliability of the data collected (Kallier 2016:112). The questionnaire that was used included 4 sections, it consisted of open-ended and closed-ended questions. Each section was grouped in accordance to themes. The first theme entailed the details of the company, the second theme had questions related to the company's social media presence and how the companies utilise Instagram to their advantages. The third and concluding themes dealt with the company's marketing on Instagram, building a brand and using Instagram as a digital marketing tool. The questions were structured in a manner that provides the answers to the aim and objectives of the study. These questions were structured in English.

4.8.2 Online questionnaire

The technique applied was a self-managed online questionnaire. Information was assembled by sending out and gathering surveys by means of sending emails. Using this research instrument has the advantage of making it simple to collect data because the survey can be sent quickly online, leading to higher response rates. It also has a flexible and user-friendly design, making it a cost-effective data collection tool (Rambarun 2018:41). Additionally, disadvantages of this approach include accessibility problems, such as difficulties opening the survey link, which are thought to cause discomfort and ultimately discourage survey participation. Questionnaire fraud is one of the most severe disadvantages, where participants receive an incentive or answer surveys generically. In addition, respondents might be one-sided in their responses by signifying what they think may be a correct answer as opposed to what they believe in reality (Rambarun:41).

4.9 Validity and Reliability

4.9.1 Validity

Validity ensures that the research accurately measures what it was planned to measure, or how trustworthy the research results are (Golafshani 2003:597). The researcher ensured validity by asking a series of questions that are in line with the study's aim and objectives. Participants filled in their opinions without any interference or bias, other researchers' theoretically solid results and research literature about the

role of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. Lastly, the researcher ensured validity by approaching fashion business owners who use Instagram as communication tool to participate in the study in order to receive sound answers to the questions that were asked.

4.9.2 Reliability

Reliability denotes to whether or not the study can be duplicated. Reliability is defined by Madondo (2016:58) as the capability of data collection techniques to collect consistent and accurate results. Each question that was asked was fundamentally accomplishing a precise objective, and all the questions were made easy and short in order to accommodate all different levels of intellectual capabilities amongst the participants. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal reliability that shows how a set of items is closely associated as a whole. Cronbach's Alpha tests were performed to assess the reliability of a composite when the composite score variance and the covariance's are known (amongst all its components). The recommended Cronbach's alpha value of 0.60 was surpassed by the reliability score of all sections that constituted the questionnaire.

4.10 Data collection

Data collection is defined as the systematic procedure of collecting and quantifying data on variables of interest in order to reply to comprehensive research questions, assess results, and test hypotheses (Kabir 2016). The data collection phase of research is common to all fields of study, including the business, physical, social sciences, humanities etc. Although different disciplines have different ways to collect data, the importance on assuring honest and accurate data collection remains the same. The primary goal of data collection is to acquire high-quality, accurate data that can be analysed in depth and used to construct a meaningful and trustworthy response to the questions posed. Irrespective of the subject of study or preferred method of data description (quantitative, qualitative and mix method), accurate data collection is critical to maintaining research integrity (Kabir 2016). Questionnaires were circulated amongst business operators within the Fashion industry, operating in Durban. The researcher used the E-mail platform to communicate with participants and to distribute questionnaires. A low response rate will lessen the study's statistical strength, as it will

limit the sample size's effectiveness (Bakre 2015:144). As such, the researcher aimed for a higher response rate by sending reminder emails and phone calls. Bakre (2015:144) emphasises the significance of a response rate that is high in survey research by maintaining that a response rate that is low threatens the source of information and the theoretical usefulness of the collected data. A survey was conducted and this alludes to the evaluating of tools utilised to assemble information and to evaluate the thoughts and opinions of the target population (Kallier 2016:21). The participants were required to complete the questionnaires sent to them electronically and return the responses through the e-mail method. The responses were printed and the hardcopies were used in capturing the data. Respondents were given three weeks to complete the questionnaires. In the second week after sending the questionnaires, a reminder email was sent to those who had not responded by then. The period of 3 weeks was further extended to cater for those who had not responded. Therefore, the data collection method was through an online questionnaire.

4.11 Ethical consideration

Coldwell and Herbst (2004: 18) define ethics in research as principles of behaviour guiding moral selection between the researcher and the participant of a study. According to Fouka and Mantzorou (2011: 3), research ethics includes the non-disclosure of participants' identities. Bakre (2015:151) additionally defines ethics as a researcher's ability to conduct superior study while adhering to professional guidelines. The researcher ensured ethical consideration by seeking informed consent and making sure that the participant was participating voluntarily. Consent letters were given to participants, with a clear explanation of the purpose of the study, as well as what would be expected from the participants to get informed consent. The questionnaire took roughly 15-20 minutes to complete. Professionalism in this perspective denotes conforming to the procedures and rules of conducting research. Henceforth, the researcher did not create a bad image of the businesses that were participating. The ethical requirements for this study were met in accordance with the ethical norms of Durban University of Technology.

4.11.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity and confidentiality were safeguarded by the not revealing the participants' names in the questionnaire. The researcher communicated with the participants. The researcher explained through an email, prior to administering research questions, that the information provided by them will be kept confidential. In addition, to ensure anonymity and confidentiality, data was safely stored.

4.11.2 Permission

Glesne (2015:77) recommends that one aspect of being a researcher is being mindful about how permission is sought from individuals being studied. The researcher had to seek permission from businesses that are utilising Instagram as their communication tool to conduct research. The researcher had to download a letter of information from the DUT website, the application form used to carry out research within various areas. The form required the researcher to provide the ethics committee with full names, contact details, the topic and proposal of researcher. After participants were selected, each participant was issued with a consent letter, which needed to be signed by the participant as proof that they were participating willingly. The signed consent form was collected and filed.

4.11.3 Harm to research participants

According to Nyamapfene (2017:70), there is usually an agreement stating that participants should not suffer as a consequence of their participation in the research. The researcher had to make sure that participants' self-image and social standing are not in any way affected by being involved in the research. The participants of this study were guaranteed that there was no harm that would originate from their participation in the study.

4.12 Data analysis

The data analysis phase in the research process is significant because this phase indicates that the data that has been collected is converted into information that is meaningful and understandable. Data analysis can be well-defined as the practice of applying analytical and logical thinking in order to apprehend the data that has been collected (Kallier 2016:111). After the raw data is collected, it is validated, edited,

cleaned, coded and tabulated in order to enable the processing of the results into meaningful information (Kallier 2016:111). According to Coldwell and Herbst (2004: 18), data analysis is the method of systematically applying numerical or rational methods to define and illustrate, abbreviate and evaluate data. The researcher analysed participants' feedback through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24.0. This was further summarised with the aid of bar charts, histograms and tables. SPSS is a progressive software design mostly utilised by research scientists, which assists them to process critical data in simple steps. Working with data can be a time-consuming process and complex. Nonetheless, this software can effortlessly handle and operate information with the assistance of certain methods. These methods are utilised to analyse, produce and transform a representative pattern between various data variables. Additionally, the output can be attained through graphical illustration, with the goal that the user can easily comprehend the results (Noels 2018).

4.13 Delimitations/Scope

The current study is confined to fashion business owners who use Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. The study was limited to the geographic boundaries of Durban. Businesses outside this boundary were not considered.

4.14 Limitations

A limitation is a representative of a research project that the researcher has no control over and that has a negative effect on the outcome of the study (Ntobaki 2018). The sample size, time and financial constraints were factors that limited this study, given that there were only 119 participants in the study. Given that the respondents will be drawn from fashion business owners around Durban, the sample size becomes a limiting factor as other cities within the province were not included. Representativeness of collected data was also condensed as financial resources were limited to conducting research in Durban only, and in a constrained time-frame. The researcher did not include other provinces therefore; thoughtfulness needs to be

exercised when generalising the results of this study to the entire population of South Africa.

4.15 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methodology and guidelines that the researcher used to conduct the study. It provided a detailed explanation on the research design, quantitative research, target population, sampling methods, data collection, validity and reliability. The following chapter will demonstrate clear findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: STATEMENT OF FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research method used in this study. Data was collected utilising questionnaires that were distributed through the electronic mail method. The findings are presented and discussed in this chapter. The questionnaires were handed out to 130 fashion business owners to assess their use of Instagram as a communication tool in Durban. In terms of response rate, 119 questionnaires were returned, which gave a 91.5% response rate. This is a very good response rate that was achieved as a result of greater cooperation from the respondents and follow-ups that were made by the researcher. The data collected was examined utilising SPSS version 24.0. The findings will show descriptive statistics for the quantitative data collected in the form of graphs, cross-tabulations, and other figures. Inferential approaches will also be provided, such as the use of correlations and chi square test values, which are interpreted using p-values.

5.2. The Research Instrument

The research instrument comprised of 41 items, each having a nominal or ordinal measurement level. As indicated below, the questionnaire was divided into four sections, each measuring a different theme.

- A** Biographical data
- B** Opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool
- C** How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses
- D** Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry

Besides the first section on biographical data, the other three themes were aligned with the objectives of the study. The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify the opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing communication tool within the Durban Fashion industry;
- To examine how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses within the Durban Fashion industry; and
- To determine the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry.

5.3 Reliability Statistics

Reliability and validity are the two most significant features of accuracy. Reliability is calculated by taking many measurements on similar subjects (Gliem 2008:87). For a newly established theory, a reliability coefficient of 0.60 or above is measured "acceptable" (Gliem 2008:87). Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of internal reliability that shows how a set of items is closely associated as a whole. Furthermore, when the composite score variance and covariance's are known, Cronbach's Alpha allows researchers to guess the consistency of a composite (amongst all its components). The table below reveals the Cronbach's alpha scores for all the items that constituted the questionnaire.

Table 5. 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficient

	Section	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
B	Opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool	3	0.584
C	How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses	10	0.666
D	Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban fashion industry	6	0.571
Overall		30	0.687

The reliability scores for all sections surpass the recommended Cronbach's alpha value of 0.60. This shows a degree of consistent and acceptable scoring for these sections of the research.

5.4 Factor Analysis

Why is factor analysis important?

According to Moonsamy and Singh (2012:5), factor analysis is defined as a statistical method that aims to reduce data. Factor analysis is utilised in a special method in survey research, where a researcher needs to represent a number of questions with a limited number of hypothetical factors. For instance, as a component of a national survey on political sentiments, individuals can reply to three questions about environmental policy, reflecting problems at the local, state and national level. Each question would be a poor indicator of opinions toward environmental policy, but taken collectively, they could deliver a better measure of the attitude.

Factor analysis may be utilised to determine if the three measures are measuring the same thing. If so, they can be merged to create a new variable, a factor score variable, which incorporates a score for each respondent. Factor approaches may be used in different situations. A researcher may be interested in learning whether the skills needed to compete in a decathlon are as varied as the ten events themselves, or if only a few essential skills are necessary. Although it is not required to believe that factors do exist in order to undertake a factor analysis, the factors are commonly construed, given names, and spoken of as real things

The matrix tables are preceded by a summed-up table that uncovers the results of KMO and Bartlett's Test. The **KMO and Bartlett's Test** table below demonstrate two tests that show the appropriateness of data for structure detection. The **Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy** is a statistic that shows the quantity of variance in the variables that can be caused by underlying factors. "High values (close to 1.0) usually specify that a factor analysis may be valuable with the data. If the value is less than 0.50, the results of the factor analysis probably would not be very useful".

Bartlett's test of sphericity tests the hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, which would indicate that the variables are unrelated and therefore unsuitable for structure detection. "Small values (less than 0.05) of the significance level indicate that a factor analysis may be useful with the data. Factor analysis is done

only for the Likert scale items. Certain components divided into finer components. This is explained below in the rotated component matrix”.

Table 5. 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

		Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
			Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig.
B2	Opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool	0.515	53.146	28	0.003
C3	How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses	0.670	183.418	45	0.000
D4	Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban fashion industry	0.544	96.807	36	0.000

The requirements for factor analysis are all fulfilled. This suggests that the instrument's variables were accurate measures of the component. The sections in the instrument accurately measured the things they were designed to measure. That is, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy value should be greater than 0.500 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity sig. value must be less than 0.05.

5.5 Rotated Component Matrix

Factor analysis is a statistical method which aim to reduce data. In survey research, factor analysis is commonly used to represent a large number of questions with a small number of hypothetical factors. With reference to Tables 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5:

- The extraction method used was principal component analysis, and the rotation method used was Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. By using an orthogonal rotation strategy, the number of variables with high loadings on each factor is reduced. The factors' interpretation is made easier by this.
- Factor analysis/loading displays inter-correlations among variables.
- Questions that loaded the same propose measurement along the same factor. An investigation of the content of items that loaded at or above 0.5 (“and using the higher or highest loading in instances where items cross-loaded at greater than this value”) successfully measured along the various components.

Rotated Component Matrix

Table 5. 3: Opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool

B	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram	-0.027	0.780	0.047	-0.284
Through Instagram, companies are communicating with their customers by endorsing them (i.e. following them and liking and commenting on their posts) and receiving a response in the form of getting endorsements in return	-0.064	-0.032	0.013	0.890
Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience	-0.069	0.171	0.612	0.346
Instagram offers the marketers an easier way to understand their customers	0.724	-0.122	0.148	-0.068
Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram	0.734	0.014	0.062	-0.127
The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action	0.705	0.205	-0.332	0.199
Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.	0.106	0.003	0.826	-0.155
Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.	0.034	0.746	0.073	0.242

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

This section measures the impressions or the opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry. As depicted in Table 5.3, the section loaded perfectly as all items loaded above 0.5 and it is split along four sub-themes. This section is characterised by strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree questions. Within the section, the spits are colour-coded.

Rotated Component Matrix

Table 5. 4: How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses

C	Component		
	1	2	3
Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.	0.629	0.147	0.448
Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity	0.206	0.655	0.177
Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.	- 0.248	0.739	0.035
Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information.	0.637	- 0.097	0.191
Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building.	0.757	0.127	0.281
Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations.	- 0.092	- 0.013	0.753
There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and share brand values with target consumers.	0.180	- 0.081	0.408
Instagram can help in sustaining a business by improving sales	0.660	0.201	- 0.281
Instagram has positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram	0.305	0.670	- 0.214
Instagram offers a business a good marketing channel that is cost effective	0.281	0.234	0.605

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

This section measures the impressions of how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses. As depicted in Table 5.4, the section did not load perfectly along one factor and it is split along three sub-themes. This section is characterised by strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree questions. Within the section, the spits are colour-coded.

Rotated Component Matrix

Table 5. 5: Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry

D	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business	- 0.088	0.102	0.704	0.430
Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products	0.611	0.039	0.243	- 0.011
Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from	0.766	- 0.058	- 0.252	0.043
Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools	- 0.030	0.849	0.145	- 0.093
Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms.	0.655	0.282	0.112	- 0.038
A picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool.	0.196	- 0.097	0.777	- 0.304
Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool	- 0.192	- 0.081	- 0.037	0.693
Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer	0.252	0.743	- 0.200	0.160
Instagram is offering consumers easier ways to purchase clothes	0.349	0.134	0.017	0.692

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

This section measures the impression of the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry. Table 5.5 shows that all the sections loaded perfectly, which explains that participants identified similar trends in the section. Within the section, the splits are colour-coded. This section is characterised by strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree questions. In conclusion, the variables that made up the sections were loaded along 3 or 4 components (sub-themes). This indicates that respondents identified distinct patterns within the sections. The splits are color-coded within the sections.

5.6 Section A: Profiles of organisations and their use of online platforms

This section summarises the profiles of fashion business owners and their use of online/social media platforms such as Instagram. The section focuses on the type of products the business specialises in; whether the business falls under the formal/informal sector; the number of years the business has been in operation; and the importance of online platforms used to convert followers into customers. Particular attention will also be given to Instagram, covering issues like the importance of getting 'likes' for posts and the benefits of marketing a brand on this platform. The statistical information is presented in pie charts, frequency tables and numbered figures.

Table 5. 6: Products business specialises in

	Frequency	Percent
Fashion brand	81	68.1
General Clothing	38	31.9
Total	119	100.0

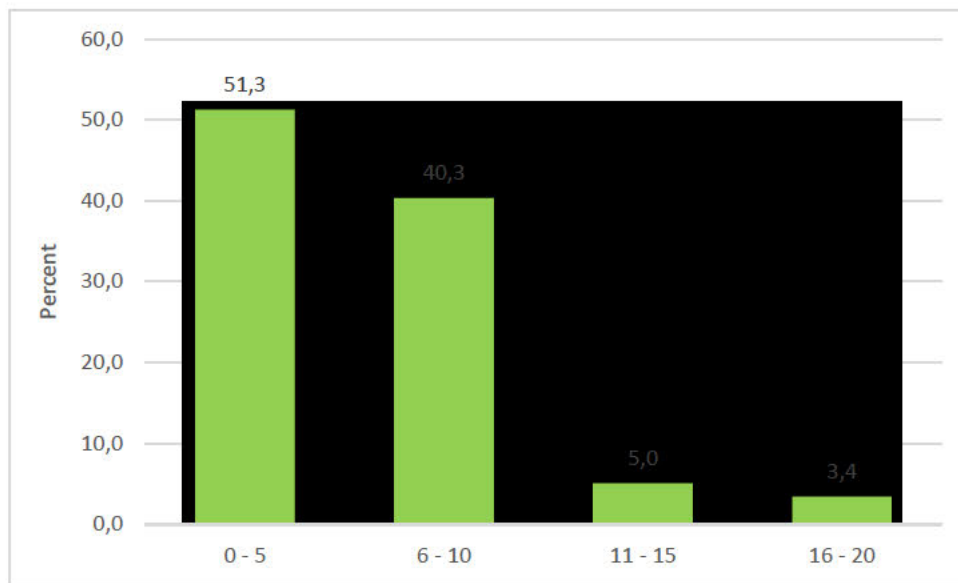
Two-thirds of the respondents (68.1%) indicated that they specialise in Fashion Brand, with the remaining respondents identifying General Clothing as their main business focus (31.9%). Obtaining two-thirds of businesses that specialise in fashion brands is justifiable as the researcher purposively selected such businesses.

Table 5. 7: Formal sector

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	84	70.6
No	35	29.4
Total	119	100.0

Slightly above two-thirds of the businesses (70.6%) fall in the formal sector and are most probably the ones that specialise in fashion brands. Almost a third of the businesses (29.4%) indicated that they operate in the informal sector and probably are the ones specialising in General Clothing, as shown in Table 5.6 above.

Figure 5. 1: Years in operation



Just above half (51.3%) of the respondents indicated that their businesses were in operation for more than 5 years, and more than a third of the others (40.3%) have been in operation for 6-10 years. The two remaining alternatives collectively were less than 10%, but they show fashion businesses that have been in operation for many years, of up to 20. This is a useful statistic as responses are from experienced sources.

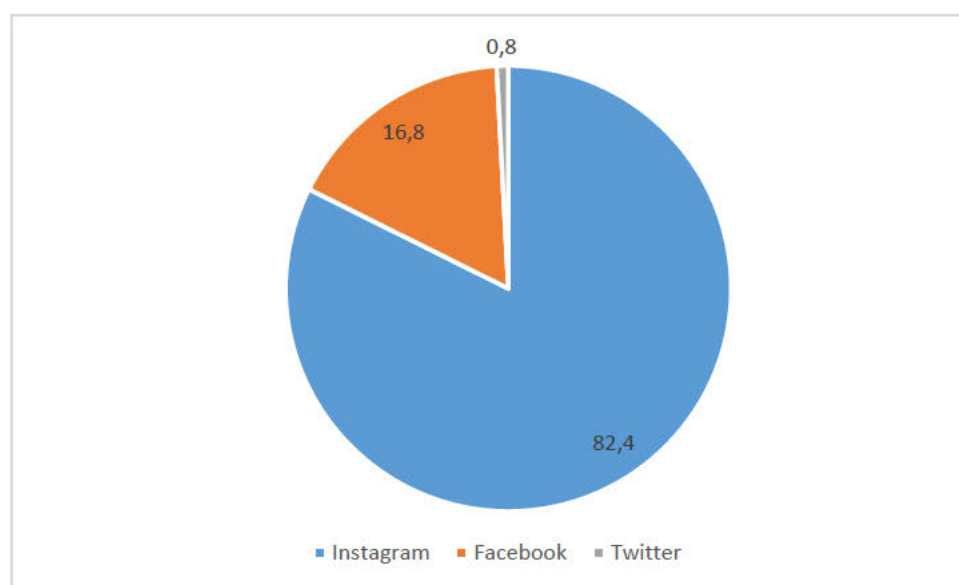
Table 5. 8: Importance of online platforms to fashion businesses

	Frequency	Percent
Important	69	58.0
Very important	50	42.0
Total	119	100.0

Table 5.8 indicates that a majority of the respondents (58%) stated that online platforms are important for them, whilst 42% indicated that online platforms were very important. All of the respondents indicated some degree of importance assigned to online platforms ($p = 0.082$). All business, both in the formal and informal sectors as well as those specialising in General Clothing, stressed the importance of various online platforms for their businesses. There was no response for 'Not Important', meaning that fashion businesses consider online platforms to be of much importance to their operations. This is in line with the sentiments of Virtanen, Bjork and Sjostrom

(2017), who state that the number of people utilising social media globally is growing each year. Social media has developed to be an important part of everyday life for communicating and disseminating information and has changed the manner consumers behave, which is an improvement that businesses must respond to. Customers are receiving progressively dynamic roles in co-creating marketing content with businesses and their brands. Social Media Marketing has grown to be the latest practice of advertising for companies

Figure 5. 2: Social media platform utilised most



The majority of respondents (82.4%) indicated that Instagram was the most common platform used, followed by Facebook with 16.8% and 0.8% used Twitter. This study shows that Instagram is the most used platform. The assertion made by Virtanen, Bjork and Sjostrom (2017) with regard to marketing, Instagram has a more significant amount of utilisation for communication, engagement and co-creation compared with other platforms. Marketers appear to have observed this, since the utilisation of Instagram as a Social Media Marketing tool is growing. Moreover, Instagram as the most frequently used platform supports this finding.

Table 5. 9: Converting social media followers into customers

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	113	95.0
No	6	5.0
Total	119	100.0

The majority of respondents agreed that they want to convert their social media followers into customers, with 95% saying 'yes' and 5% saying 'no'. This means that businesses do not just need followers on online platforms, they strive to convert followers into customers, although it is not always easy. Nevertheless, having followers on social media is also important for generating brand awareness.

Table 5. 10: Strategies to incorporate social media influencers

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	75	63.0
No	14	11.8
No comment	30	25.2
Total	119	100.0

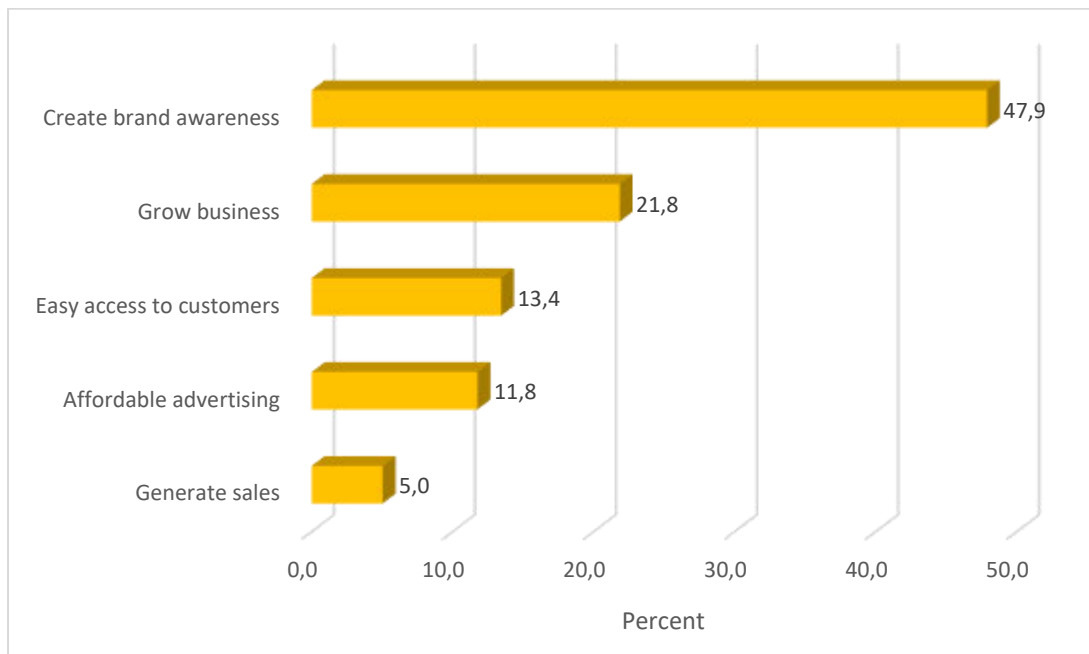
Approximately two-thirds of the respondents (63.0%) indicated that they were working on strategies to incorporate social media influencers less than 12% said no and 25.2% did not want to comment. This finding is consistent with Jarrar, Awobamise and Aderibigbe (2020:40) who state that nowadays, social media influencer marketing is becoming a significant marketing tool for brands around the globe. Social Media Influencer Marketing was encouraged by the acceptance of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, which allowed normal individuals to become social media influencers. As the internet becomes more abundant, influencer marketing will not merely survive but may perhaps become a very beneficial alternative to traditional advertisements and even traditional social media or internet advertising.

Table 5. 11: Profile with basic information about the company on Instagram

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	119	100.0

All of the respondents indicated that they did have a profile with basic information about the company or the brand that they promote. This shows that Instagram is a perfect-fit platform in the Fashion industry and every organisation strives to have its presence on such a platform. However, the level of use differs from company to company since the question only probes for just presence on the platform. According to Nummila (2015:7), like most social networks, a business that is present on Instagram may create a profile with simple information regarding the business. The profile of the business should demonstrate the values of the brand in order for a business to acquire the greatest value. The Instagram profile must have all the basic information and moreover, supplemental information that makes the profile appealing to the eye.

Figure 5. 3: Aim to achieve by being present on Instagram



Roughly half of the respondents, 47.9%, indicated that the main aim for having an Instagram account was creating brand awareness, with 21.8% indicating that they want to grow their business. In addition to that, 13.8% indicated that Instagram affords

them easy access to customers; 11.8% stated that it is affordable to advertise on Instagram; and lastly, 5% indicated that their presence on Instagram was to generate sales. This concurs with Agam (2017), who states that Instagram has become a platform for companies to promote and increase sales for their product. It has become a medium to reach potential customers. Instagram has turned out to be one of the most viewed social media platforms. Furthermore, the main aim of being present on Instagram by fashion brands is to create brand awareness, which in turn gives the potential to grow the business and to have access to customers, thus contributing towards increasing sales. The greater the influence of communication between the brand and the customer, the higher the customer's brand loyalty and preference (Bilgin 2018:129).

Table 5. 12: Importance of getting ‘likes’ on the content posted on Instagram

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	111	93.3
No	8	6.7
Total	119	100.0

The majority of respondents (93.3%) indicated that it was important to get ‘likes’ on the content they post on Instagram and less than 7% indicated that it was not important ($p < 0.001$). These ‘likes’ on online platforms are a powerful force that can contribute towards creating brand awareness and preference. The correlation between ‘likes’ and brand awareness was not however established in this study. The study only revealed that it is important to get likes on content that is posted. Nummila (2014:15) states that people have a tendency of liking pictures that connect with them emotionally. The images on Instagram incite the feelings and thoughts of consumers that are the basis for purchasing decisions. The findings are also in consistent with Usher and Schunk (2018), who indicate that the popularity of an Instagram post is determinant on the responsive nature of users and is shown by the number of likes and comments on the post.

Table 5. 13: Benefits from marketing brand on Instagram

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	107	89.9
No	12	10.
Total	119	100.0

The majority of respondents, 89.9%, indicated that they have benefited from marketing their brand on Instagram and 10% indicated that they did not benefit ($p < 0.001$). This is an interesting finding, that there are some organisations available on Instagram that have not claimed a benefit for being active on these platforms. One-tenth of the respondents stressed that they have not benefited from marketing their brands on Instagram. Everyone active on these platforms therefore does not reap the same benefits, some benefit more and some do not. This can however also be attributed to the difference in their brands and what they symbolise in the market.

5.7 Section Analysis

This section examines the respondents' score patterns for each variable in each part. First, the findings are shown as total percentages for each of the elements' constituent factors. The significance of the statements is then used to guide further analysis of the data.

5.7.1 Section B: Opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool

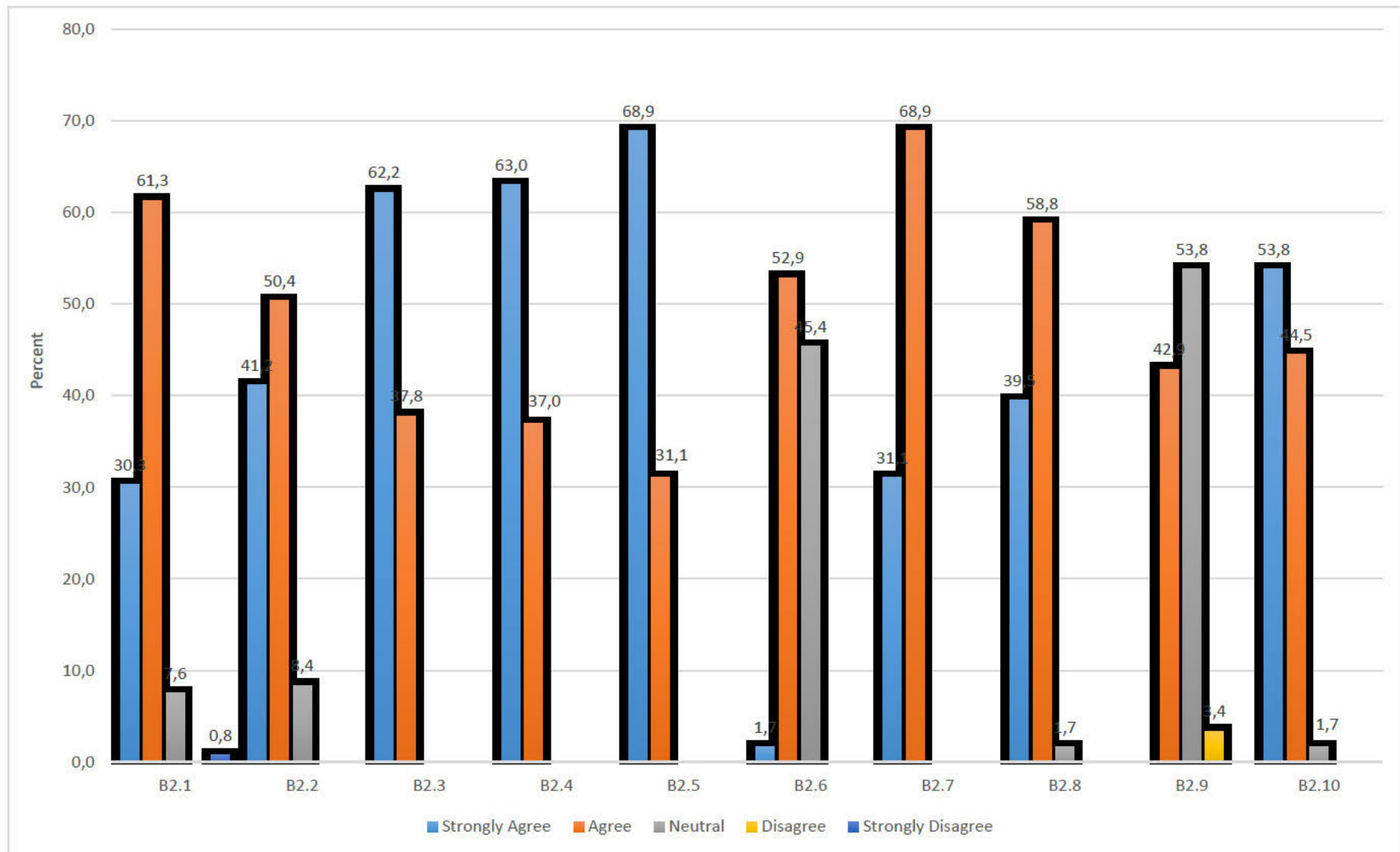
Table 5.14 summarises the scoring patterns of the respondents on opportunities attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool.

Table 5. 14: Chi square tests

		Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Chi Square p-value
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	
Instagram is becoming an important marketing tool for businesses within the fashion industry	B2 .1	36	30.3%	73	61.3%	9	7.6%	0	0.0%	1	0.8%	< 0.001
Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram	B2 .2	49	41.2%	60	50.4%	10	8.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is assisting in generating fashion brand awareness	B2 .3	74	62.2%	45	37.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.008
Through Instagram, companies are communicating with their customers by endorsing them (i.e. following them and liking and commenting on their posts) and receiving a response in the form of getting endorsements in return	B2 .4	75	63.0%	44	37.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.004
Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience	B2 .5	82	68.9%	37	31.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram offers the marketers an easier way to understand their customers	B2 .6	2	1.7%	63	52.9%	54	45.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram	B2 .7	37	31.1%	82	68.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action	B2 .8	47	39.5%	70	58.8%	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.	B2 .9	0	0.0%	51	42.9%	64	53.8%	4	3.4%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.	B2 .10	64	53.8%	53	44.5%	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001

The highlighted sig.value (p-values) are less than 0.05 (the level of significance), which suggests that the distribution was not the same. That is, the difference between the manner respondents scored (Strongly agree, agree and neutral) were significant. The scoring pattern is shown statistically in Figure 5.4.

Figure 5. 4: Opportunities attributed to Instagram



As can be seen from Figure 5.4, the highest scoring (68.9%) was obtained for statement B2.5 and B2.7 this was in agreement that Instagram offers cost-effective opportunities to connect with audiences and friendly relationships can be promoted on Instagram. This was followed by 63% for statement B2.4, which claimed that companies communicate with their customers on Instagram by endorsing them and those companies also get endorsements in return. Statements B2.3 (62.2%), B2.1 (61.3%), B2.8 (58.8%), B2.10 (53.8%), B2.6 (52.9%) and B2.2 (50.4%) respectively showed that Instagram assists in creating brand awareness; Instagram is an important marketing tool in the fashion industry; Instagram is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action; Instagram has a visual appeal; Instagram offers an easier way to understand customers; and lastly customers are developing a positive attitude towards this platform. One statement, B2.9, has the highest level of neutral (53.8%) compared to neutral measures in other statements and agreement and disagreement levels in that statement. The statement claimed that Instagram allows brands to share their distinctive opinions and many respondents seemed to not be sure about that assertion. Another neutral value that was significant (45.4%) was obtained for statement B2.6, where many doubted that Instagram offers an easier way to understand customers. It is not always easy to understand customers on this and many other platforms. Levels of disagreement were all very low and less than 9% across all statements. All these are great opportunities that can be attributed to Instagram as a marketing tool and the impact of this platform is arguably more evident in the Fashion industry. It is indeed a marketing tool that makes many opportunities available for promoting fashion brands.

These findings are consistent with Trad and Dabbagh (2020), who indicate that social media has become a influential tool for marketing and advertising. With over 500 million monthly users, Instagram has become the most popular site for sharing images. Instagram has reached 1 billion monthly active users. Entrepreneurs found Instagram is user-friendly and in expensive, and also provided high publicity for their products. Instagram provides a popular place for sharing content among people and communicating, whereby consumers are given an opportunity to communicate more effectively. Instagram offers consumers an opportunity to look for other people's experience with products. Instagram affords customers to recommend certain products and share their experiences. Nevertheless, the growing promptness of the latest trends and the demand for change has forced a majority of fashion brands to

adopt Instagram as a marketing channel. As a result, Instagram has become the shopping center for both fashion brands and consumers all over the world. The power of Instagram for the Fashion industry is undeniable. Instagram, which has exploded in popularity in recent years, making the fashion industry to be accessible to the general public

In addition to this interpretation, the following patterns are observed:

- When comparing levels of agreement to levels of disagreement, all statements show (significantly) higher levels of agreement.
- There is only one statement indicating a level of disagreement.
- The significance of the differences is tested and shown in the table.

A chi square goodness-of-fit test was conducted to determine whether the scoring patterns for each statement and each choice were significantly different. According to the null hypothesis, the same number of respondents gave each statement's scoring option a score (one statement at a time). The alternative demonstrates that there is a substantial gap between the levels of agreement and disagreement.

The results are displayed in Table 5.14. All statements have sig. values (p-values) less than 0.05 highlighted (the level of significance). This indicates that the distributions were not comparable, implying that there were significant variances in how respondents scored (agree, neutral, disagree).

Factor analysis indicate that the following two statements form a sub-theme:

“Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience” and “Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions”. In this sub-theme, all of the respondents agreed that “Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience”. A larger number of respondents also agreed compared with disagreement (42.9% to 3.4%) that “Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions”. However, it is noted that more than half of the respondents (53.8%) scored neutral.

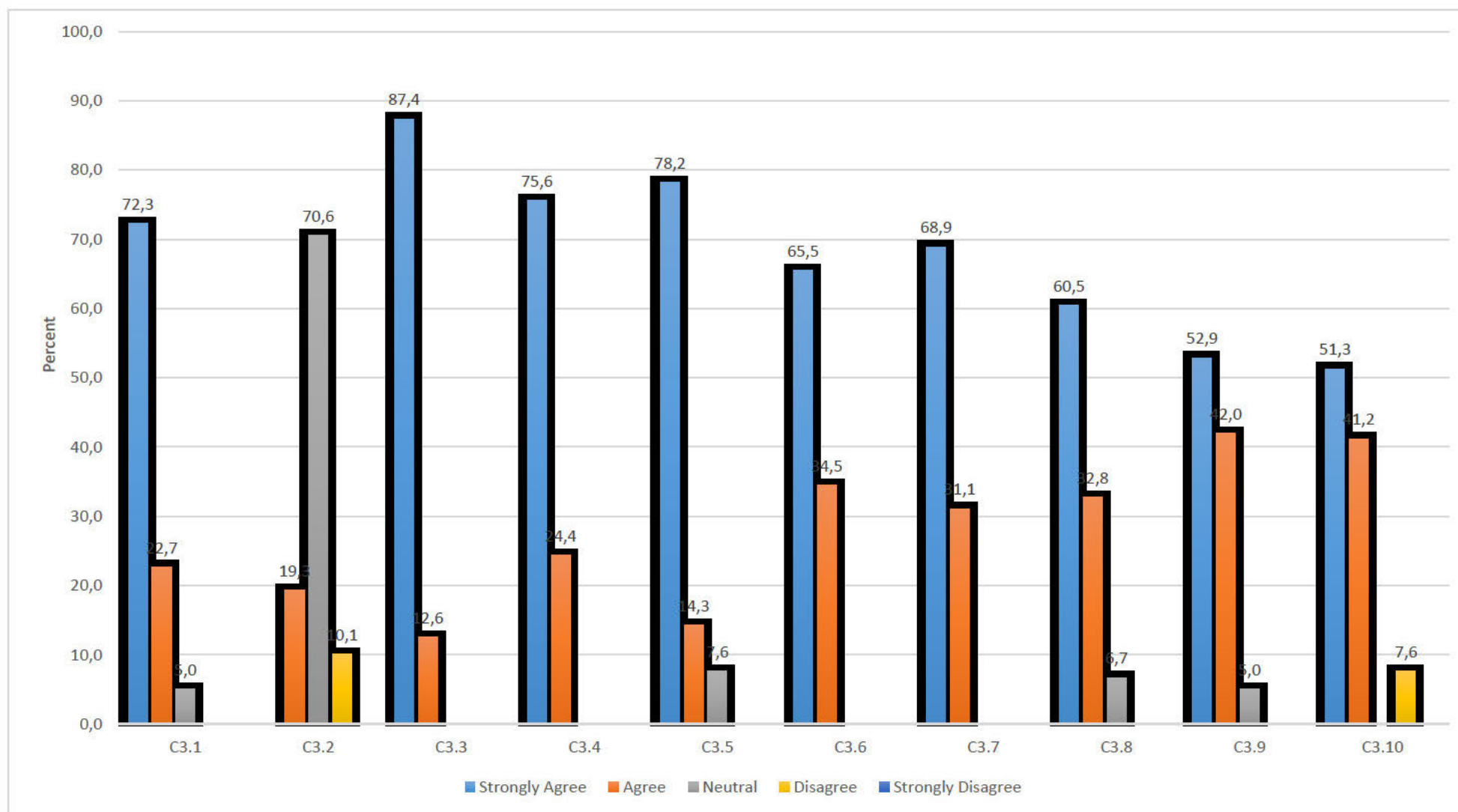
5.7.2 Section C: How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses

Table 5. 15: Chi square

		Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Chi Square p-value
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	
Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.	C3.1	86	72.3%	27	22.7%	6	5.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity	C3.2	0	0.0%	23	19.3%	84	70.6%	12	10.1%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.	C3.3	104	87.4%	15	12.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information.	C3.4	90	75.6%	29	24.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building.	C3.5	93	78.2%	17	14.3%	9	7.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations.	C3.6	78	65.5%	41	34.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.001
There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and share brand values with target consumers.	C3.7	82	68.9%	37	31.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram can help in sustaining a business by improving sales	C3.8	72	60.5%	39	32.8%	8	6.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram has positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram	C3.9	63	52.9%	50	42.0%	6	5.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram offers a business a good marketing channel that is cost effective	C3.10	61	51.3%	49	41.2%	0	0.0%	9	7.6%	0	0.0%	< 0.001

This section deals with how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses. Figure 5.5 below summarises the scoring patterns. The scoring patterns are not the same across each option. The difference between respondents who strongly agree and agree were significant, as shown by the highlighted p-values of less than 0.05. The difference is significant on all statements since they all have lower p-values.

Figure 5. 5: How Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses



All statements show significant differences in the scoring patterns, with high scores of strongly agree and agree to the statements concerning how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses. There is a significant difference between the levels of strongly disagree, agree, disagree and neutral. The four highest levels of agreement were C3.3 with 87.4%, C3.5 with 78.2%, C3.4 with 75.6% and C3.1 with 72.3% for “Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page”, “Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building”, “Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information” and “marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients”. The level of scoring on all four statements indicates that Instagram affords fashion brands a much easier platform to advertise their fashion brands at an effective cost and also to gain potential customers. This indicates that Instagram is an effective tool for fashion brands as Instagram allows for fashion brands to communicate directly with customers, promote various initiatives and build brand awareness.

One statement had the highest level of neutral, C3.2 with a 70.6% measure for “Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity” According to Baxi, Panda and Karani (2016), Online Reputation Management is significant for online community marketers. One negative remark about an organisation on social media platforms can have a negative impression in the minds of people. To reduce the negative impact, quick replies to negative comments are compulsory. Negative word-of-mouth publicity has a higher impact than positive word-of-mouth publicity. The findings are consistent with Falah and Aseri (2021:268), who state that Instagram has appeared as an effective and trustworthy platform of marketing and advertising fashion products. Instagram has introduced an effective social media platform that utilises visual features and other multimedia content to permit better communication in the Fashion industry, where these visual features are more effective than verbal or written story-telling. Fashion brand presence on Instagram has become imperative in engaging customers and influencing their buying decisions. Rather than only offering textual information, Instagram may enhance a company's visual storytelling.

5.7.3 Section D: Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool

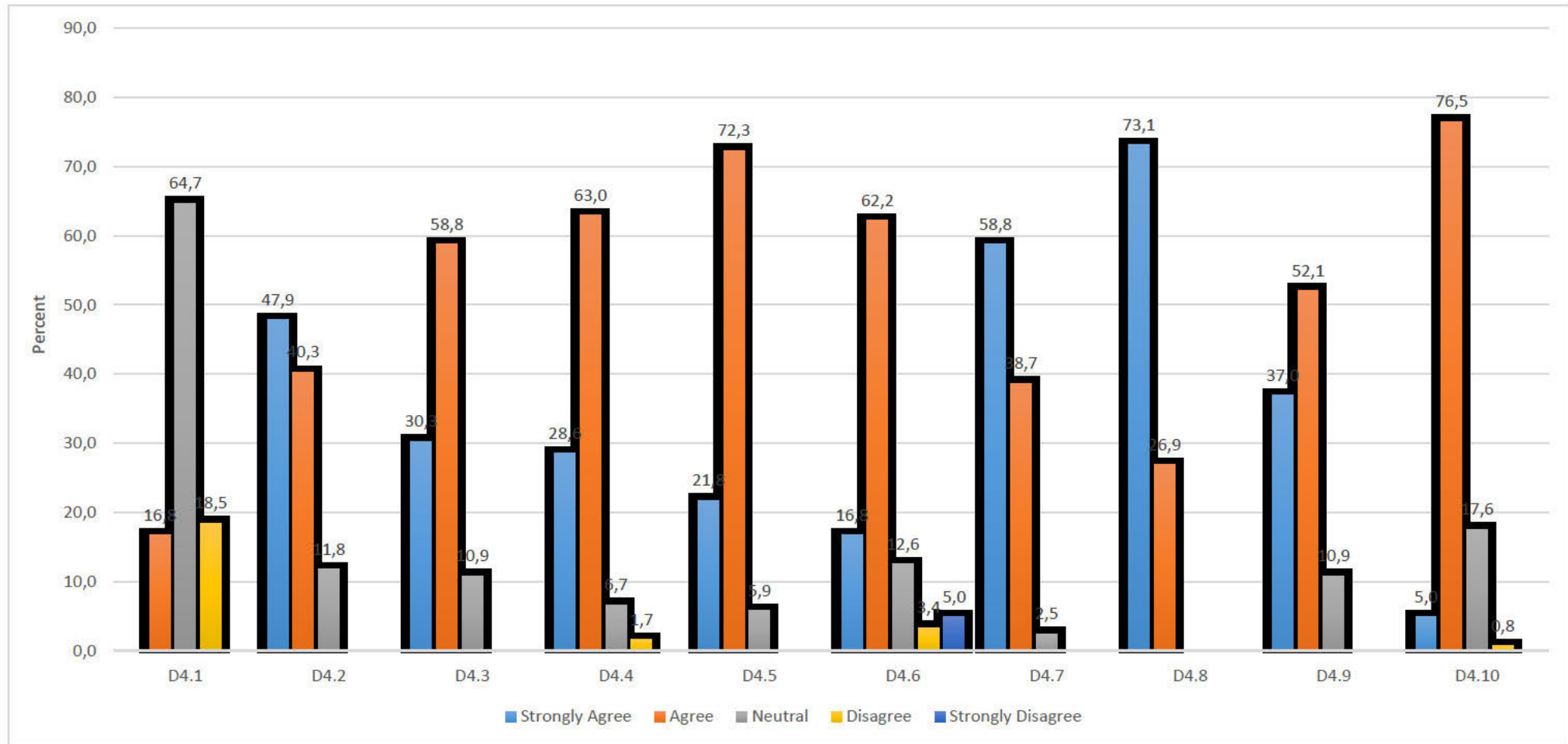
This section deals with the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry. The table below summarises the scoring patterns.

Table 5. 16: Chi Square test

		Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Chi Square p-value
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	
Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business	D4.1	0	0.0%	20	16.8%	77	64.7%	22	18.5%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products	D4.2	57	47.9%	48	40.3%	14	11.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from	D4.3	36	30.3%	70	58.8%	13	10.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools	D4.4	34	28.6%	75	63.0%	8	6.7%	2	1.7%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media	D4.5	26	21.8%	86	72.3%	7	5.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms.	D4.6	20	16.8%	74	62.2%	15	12.6%	4	3.4%	6	5.0%	< 0.001
A picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool.	D4.7	70	58.8%	46	38.7%	3	2.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool	D4.8	87	73.1%	32	26.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer	D4.9	44	37.0%	62	52.1%	13	10.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	< 0.001
Instagram is offering consumers easier ways to purchase clothes	D4.10	6	5.0%	91	76.5%	21	17.6%	1	0.8%	0	0.0%	< 0.001

The scoring patterns are different, as shown in Table 5.16 that all Chi Square p-values are less than 0.05.

Figure 5. 6: Effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry



In most instances, there is a strong level of agreement in comparison to strongly agree (Agree + Strongly agree). Statement D4.10, with 76.5% of respondents indicating that Instagram is offering consumers easier ways to purchase clothes; D4.5 with 72.3% and 21.8% of the total sample agreeing and strongly agreeing that Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media was recorded; while D4.4 with 63.0% agreeing and 28.6% strongly agreeing that Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools was recorded; and lastly, for D4.6, 62.2% agreed and 16.8% strongly agreed that Instagram has a more significant level of co-creation, usage for interaction and engagement compared with other platforms. The level of agreement is higher compared to strongly agree. Two statements have a level of strongly agree in comparison to agree (Strongly agree + Agree). For D4.8, 73.1% strongly agree and 26.9% agree that the Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool and D4.7 has 58.8% who strongly agree and 38.7% agree that a picture speaks a thousand words. There are no statements indicating high levels of disagreement as the highest levels of disagreement were 18.5%, 1.7%, 3.4 and 0.8%. The highest level of neutral was D4.1, with 64.7% of respondents who indicated that Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business. One of the objectives of the study was to ascertain the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry. These findings reveal that Instagram is an effective marketing tool that fashion brands can utilise. This is consistent with Alkhowaiter (2018), who states that Instagram has turned into a popular marketing platform amongst companies not just because of its increasing number of users, but also because of its features, highlighting the trend of visual content in Social Media Marketing.

5.8 Hypothesis testing

The traditional way of reporting results needs a statement of statistical reference. A **p-value** is produced from a **test statistic**. An important outcome is identified with “ $p < 0.05$ ”. These values are identified with a *. To ascertain whether there was a statistically significant association between the variables, a second Chi square test was conducted (rows vs columns). According to the null hypothesis, there is no correlation between the variables. The alternative hypothesis states that there is an association. The Chi square test findings are summarised in the table in Appendix C.

5.9 Cross-tabulations

Results from the chi square tests demonstrate a number of significant relations between the biographical data of the respondents and the research statements. The p-value between “marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients” and “what product/ products does your business specialise in?” is **0.001**. This indicates that the variables highlighted in yellow have a significant relationship. That is, the type of product did affect the client base. What product/ products does your business specialise in? also showed significant relationships with the statements: “Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information,” with a p-value of 0.012; “Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building,” had a p-value of 0.014 and “Instagram has positively impacted your business’s visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram,” had a p-value of 0.029. This means that the type of product/product a business specialises in plays a role in the type of clients it attracts, the importance of sharing the brand’s values with customers and Instagram has proven to be a platform to present products with pictorial descriptions.

From the table in Appendix B, significant relationships exist between “how important are online platforms for your company,” and the following statements: “There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and share brand values with target consumers,” with a p-value of 0.015, “Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products,” with a p-value of 0.017 and “Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer,” with a p-value of 0.049. This means that online platforms play an important role,

specifically Instagram, with regard to creating brand awareness, opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing tool, getting a fashion brand known by advertising it on Instagram and the level of trust of information on social media.

“Which social media platform does your business utilise the most,” shows significant relationships with the following statements: “Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words,” “Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity,” and “Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information,” had a p-value of 0.046, p-value of 0.006 and p-value of 0.002, respectively). These results show the significance of creative content since Instagram is an app that has a visual appeal and brands can take advantage of Instagram’s features and Instagram allows fashion brands to convey their brand values.

A substantial relationship is evident between “do you strive to convert social media followers into customers,” and the following statements: “Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions,” with a p-value of 0.007, “Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building,” with a p-value of 0.007. “Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products,” with a p-value of 0.037, “Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to other digital marketing tools,” with a p-value of 0.008 and “Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media,” with a p-value of 0.044. These results indicate that fashion brands that are present on Instagram want their followers to become their customers, the Instagram platform gives fashion brands a chance to connect and engage with their customers and potential customers, it can be on the comment section or during live videos as well as the affordability of marketing a fashion brand on Instagram.

Is your company working on strategies to incorporate social media influencer marketing?, shows significant relationships with the following statements: “Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from,” (p-value 0.008), “Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms,” (p-value 0.011) and “a picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool,”

(p-value 0.056). These results show that working with influencers will influence purchasing decisions since people prefer products or services that are recommended by the next person.

Lastly, significant relationships were revealed between “what do you aim to achieve by being present on Instagram?” and the following statements: “Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools,” (p-value 0.045) and “Instagram is offering consumers easier ways to purchase clothes,” (p-value 0.043). The aim of being present on Instagram displays a significant association with Instagram being an effective communication and marketing tool and also the Instagram features that make it easy for online shopping. Results showed that 71.9% of respondents are present on Instagram because they want to create brand awareness, which shows that business owners are now recognising the need to have an Instagram account as everything has gone digital. The results also reveal that business owners prefer Instagram because it is more effective as a marketing tool when compared to other platforms and Instagram is the most utilised social media platform.

All values without an asterisk (*) or (p-value more than 0.05) do not have a significant relationship.

5.10 Correlations

Bivariate correlation was also performed on the (ordinal) data. Appendix B contains the results (Correlations). The results display the following patterns: A positive value suggests a direct comparable link between the variables, whereas a negative value indicates the opposite. All relationships that are important are indicated by a * or **. The value of the correlation between “Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram” and “Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page” is 0.209. This is a directly related proportionality. Respondents indicated that the more easily customers can get prices, the more positive the customers’ attitudes will be, and vice versa.

Negative values suggest an opposite relationship. That is, the variables have a contrasting result on each other. If one variable increases, the other decreases. The correlation value between “Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on

Instagram” and “Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients” is -0.194. That is, the friendlier relationships are with customers, the less the need for marketing.

There is a directly proportional relationship between the statement: ‘Instagram is becoming an important marketing tool for businesses within the fashion industry’ and the statement: ‘Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer (correlation value 0.181). Respondents indicated that the platform is becoming more important to them as it allows them to provide more information about their brands to potential customers. ‘Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience’ is positively correlated with the statement: ‘Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool’, with a correlation value of 0.207. Respondents further indicated that Instagram advertisements are cost-effective and the platform becomes imperative for communicating brand information. This means even though organisations want to communicate brand information, they want to do so in a manner that does not affect their budgets.

One of the objectives of the study was to identify the opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing communication tool within the Durban Fashion industry. These findings show that there is an opportunity of providing more information about fashion brands using Instagram in a cost-effective manner that can benefit even start-ups and even others that may be financially unstable. The opportunity to connect with customers is what every business strives for and this can be achieved using Instagram in the Fashion industry.

The statement: ‘Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients’ shows a positive relationship (correlation value 0.400) with the statement: ‘Instagram allows your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information’. This shows that the strength of Instagram in allowing good visual displays that capture the attention of customers can help the business to find more clients. The same statement is also positively related with the statements: ‘Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building’ (0.469), ‘Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations’ (0.231), ‘Instagram has

positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram' (0.221), and statement: 'Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products' (0.339). The respondents indicated that Instagram supports their businesses in finding new clients through good visual displays in videos and pictures that they use to communicate with customers, which in turn creates more fashion brand awareness and enhances the visibility of the business.

Another objective of the study was to examine how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses within the Durban Fashion industry. The findings reveal that promoting a brand using this platform attracts customers to become aware of the brand and the visibility of the business is enhanced. This can be achieved in a cost-effective manner and Instagram proved to be one of the most effective digital marketing tools.

There is a positive relationship between the statement: 'Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools' and the statements: 'Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer' (correlation value 0.261), 'Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms' (correlation value 0.206). Respondents indicated that compared with other digital marketing platforms, Instagram is more effective in that it gives more information about products and is used for co-creations, interactions and engagements between the businesses and their customers.

The last objective of the study was to determine the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban Fashion industry. It was revealed by these findings that it is one of the most effective digital marketing tools in that it allows for more information to be provided to customers in a visually appealing, interactive and more engaged manner.

5.11 Conclusions

This chapter presented all the analysed data collected from the study, together with the outcomes of the study. The reliability of the measuring instrument (questionnaire)

was tested using the Cronbach's alpha, which produced an acceptable value of 0.60. The findings show that there is an opportunity for providing more information about brands using Instagram in a cost-effective manner that can benefit even start-ups and even others that may not be financially stable. The findings further reveal that promoting a brand using this platform attracts customers to become aware of the brand and the visibility of the business is enhanced. Instagram was established to be one of the most effective digital marketing and communication tools to be used, or already in use, in the Fashion industry. It featured as an effective and trustworthy channel of marketing fashion products. The next chapter will present the conclusions and recommendations of this research.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on data analysis and interpretations to produce the findings of this study. This chapter presents conclusions from the findings in respect of the study's objectives. Further recommendations on the use of Instagram as a communication tool will be provided. Finally, suggestions for further research will be offered.

6.2 Summary of theoretical study

The aim of this study was to examine the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry. The target population was fashion business owners who use Instagram as a medium to communicate with their audience. Chapter two discussed the South African fashion industry, fashion marketing and marketing communication strategies. Chapter Two revealed that, fashion is a commercial business producing and selling clothes. The continuous change in fashion includes the exercise of creative design skills, which results in products ranging from basic to rare products. Marketing can assist in providing additional knowledge and the skills needed in order to ensure that the creative component is utilised to its best advantage, allowing businesses to succeed and grow (Dickson 2017). Henceforth, the researcher believed that investigating the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the fashion industry would assist fashion business owners to convey marketing communication effectively, engage with customers and persuade their buying decisions.

Chapter Three presented the theoretical underpinnings related to the use of Instagram as a communication tool. It was revealed that fashion is viewed as a visual industry. Instagram is a visual medium, it has proven to be an effective marketing and communication tool to present products with visual descriptions that are creative (Ting 2016:16). The study revealed a strategic significance of utilising Instagram as communication tool. It was highlighted that Instagram specifically has been extremely beneficial for social media because of the site's visual nature, network hierarchy of influence and huge numbers of users, it has converted to being a key source of income for brands and users. Despite the fact that several brands use social media strategies

across a variety of channels, Instagram is proving to be a great tool for reaching consumers and influencing their purchasing decisions (Kleintjes 2017:26).

One of the qualities that distinguishes Instagram from other social media platforms is that Instagram is user-friendly, i.e. the ability to communicate and engage with users. The nature of Instagram permits users to share content among people and consumers are given an opportunity to communicate more effectively. It was found necessary for fashion brands to be present on Instagram, as Instagram has become a shopping centre for both fashion brands and consumers all over the world. The power of Instagram for the fashion industry is undeniable, Instagram, has made the fashion industry to be easily accessible around the world.

6.3 Summary of the empirical study.

The analysis from quantitative data obtained through online questionnaires as the research instrument showed that businesses who are in the fashion industry are using Instagram as a medium to communicate with customers, promote products and find clients. However, majority of respondents felt neutral about Instagram having the power to redeem a brand that has been tarnished by bad publicity. Nonetheless, this did not affect the use of Instagram as a communication tool as quite a substantial number of respondents indicated that Instagram has become an imperative brand communication tool. Respondents indicated that Instagram is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with targeted audience. Furthermore, it was confirmed that Instagram allows a business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information. It was revealed that in comparison to Twitter and Facebook, Instagram is one the most used social media platform by fashion businesses.

6.4 Realisation of research objectives

Three research objectives were set out in order to solve the research problem. These are described as follows:

6.4.1 Objective one

The first objective was to identify opportunities of using Instagram as a marketing communication tool within the Durban fashion industry. With Instagram having over 1 billion active users, it has proven to be a social media platform that businesses who are in the creative industry can use to produce content and gain brand visibility. Instagram is a powerful platform that enables improved communication within the fashion industry by using visual features and other multimedia information, where these visual features are more effective than verbal or written story-telling. The findings revealed that Instagram offer users a chance to like, comment, share tag and discover. Fashion business owners can take advantage of these opportunities to weigh their visibility on Instagram. Instagram is a visual app that permits businesses to showcase their best offerings. It offers an attractive visual appeal, increases brand awareness and build friendly relationships with customers. What remains important for fashion businesses who are on Instagram is presence and engagement. As a result, the first objective was achieved.

6.4.2 Objective two

The second objective was to examine how Instagram can be used to enhance the performance of fashion businesses within the Durban fashion industry. Chapter three explained that for a business to enhance its performance on Instagram, it is of paramount importance for fashion businesses to be updated with the latest Instagram updates and trends. Instagram is constructed on the notion of sharing content to prompt action. For example, when a company shares content and users react to the post by liking, commenting or by following the company. The findings revealed that promoting a brand utilising Instagram attracts customers to be aware of the brand and the visibility of the business is enhanced. This can be achieved in a cost-effective manner and Instagram proved to be one of the most effective social media platforms. Instagram offers businesses a space to share and engage with customers and potential customers. Being present on Instagram can assist a business to communicate its vision and track audience engagement. As such, this second objective was achieved.

6.4.3 Objective three

The third objective was to determine the effectiveness of Instagram as a marketing tool in the Durban fashion industry. Instagram over the years has gained billions of users and businesses are seeing the need to be present on this social media site to promote products, leverage competitive advantage and gain popularity. Instagram has proven to be an effective marketing tool. The findings revealed that Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool, Instagram allows for information to be shared to customers in a visually appealing, interactive and engaged manner. Instagram in nature is visual based therefore, using Instagram for marketing purposes is an excellent way to promote a fashion business and connect with target audience. As a result, the last objective was achieved.

6.5 Conclusions

The conclusions derived from the findings are:

- Instagram is becoming a significant communication tool for brands that want to be known. Therefore, the platform should be made part of a business marketing strategy.
- Instagram offers brands opportunities to use all the visual marketing features, engage with customers, build up user-generated content.
- Instagram is of paramount importance in enhancing the performance of fashion businesses.
- Instagram is offering fashion brands a cost-effective opportunity to connect with audiences and to also get insights into people's opinions about the brand and how can they improve.
- Instagram is making it easier for fashion brands to connect with customers.
- Instagram can make or break a brand and once a brand receives bad publicity, there is a slight chance for a brand to redeem its image through Instagram.
- Instagram enables fashion brands to be creative when posting images and videos. This study concludes that Instagram is one of the most effective platforms for fashion brand advertising.
- Instagram is of paramount importance in creating brand awareness for fashion products.

6.6 Recommendations based on findings

The research investigated the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion Industry. Subsequent to the findings of this study, it is recommended that fashion business owners who are not using Instagram to market their products should familiarise themselves with Instagram because of its influence. It is also recommended that those fashion businesses owners who are present on Instagram must engage often with their followers and produce quality content that is appealing on the eye. Fashion brand owners should maintain a strong company-customer relationship as it could result to increased revenues and save on marketing costs. According to Berg and Sterner (2015:2), many companies have Instagram accounts where they upload content. The fact that posting photos and videos on Instagram is free makes it an effective and cheap promotion channel. Ting (2015:16), stated that with Instagram mainly being a photo-sharing platform, it has surpassed as an effective marketing and communication tool to present products with visual descriptions that are creative. Henceforth, the platform becomes a valuable social networking site instantly to companies and individuals.

According to (Nedra, Hadhri and Mezran 2019), Instagram is the new photo-based social network, communication through sharing pictures and videos seems to be a new strategy for marketing. Companies and brands have included this application in their digital strategy to promote their brands better. This type of communication informs, attract and arouse desire, it also disseminates a positive image. The presence of fashion brands on Instagram has become imperative in engaging customers and persuading their buying decisions.

Businesses that are present and active on Instagram should have a profile with detailed description, an appropriate profile picture and a link to the website. If other social media forums are used, the account should have updated contact information and maybe links to them. Sharing posts is essential for the company in order to get spreading and continuity. Creating brand awareness is vital and it is necessary to be active on all the channels that the company utilises. For the sake of creating the biggest conceivable engagement for followers, it is vital to be present and active (Buinac and Lundberg 2016).

Instagram should not be the only social media platform that fashion brands are using to communicate with customers, as they should also use other platforms like Twitter and Facebook. A brand can link its Instagram account with Twitter and Facebook so that whenever they post their images and videos, these can also appear on their Twitter and Facebook accounts. It is advised that fashion brands should use different social media sites, so that different customers are catered for. Potential customers are found on these different sites.

Lastly, hiring a social media expert could assist the business in achieving the desired results. While a business may save cost by being in charge of their own social media account, hiring a social media expert would make their social media marketing efforts more successful

6.7 Suggestions for further research

Further research can be undertaken to examine the influence of Instagram in promoting fashion businesses. The current study focused on the use of the platform by businesses but did not ascertain the influence from the perspective of the customers.

Further research can as well be undertaken on comparing Instagram to other social media platforms or comparing its effectiveness with traditional media platforms. Further research can reveal the unique qualities or features of Instagram that make it so appealing in the fashion industry.

Besides fashion industry, further research can be undertaken to reveal the use and effectiveness of Instagram in other industries such as automotive industry or agriculture industry.

6.8 Conclusion

The study examined the use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban fashion industry. Literature revealed that Instagram is an effective communication tool that fashion business owners can use to advertise and market their products. Instagram is regarded as a relatively new communication tool and fashion businesses

are embracing this social media platform. Instagram is a distinct social media site that allows for brands to present products with visual descriptions, convey marketing communication well and engage with customers. According to Bander and Hartvig (2021:8), Instagram is perceived to be very influential due to the high amount of communication that is taking place on the platform. The researcher recommends that fashion businesses should be open to using other social media platforms, fashion businesses should increase their marketing efforts by posting regularly on the business page. It is suggested that fashion businesses should consider hiring an expert to assist with social media marketing strategies. Engaging with customers and producing quality content that is creative is the best way to attain an intense and diverse following.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE



Permission to use my response for academic research

This information is necessary to show that a real person completed the questionnaire. Any information that is made available will be private and confidential and used with discretion; no names will be linked to responses.

I hereby give permission that my responses may be used for research purposes.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Please cross (x) the appropriate box to indicate your response

SECTION A: FASHION BUSINESSES AND THEIR USE OF ONLINE PLATFORMS

1.1 What product/ products does your business specialise in?

1.2 Does your business fall within the formal sector? Yes ☐ No ☐

1.3 How many years has the business been in operation?

1.4 How important are online platforms for your company?
Important ☐ Very important ☐ Not important ☐

1.5 Which social media platform does your business utilise the most?
Instagram ☐ Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Other (Please specify)

1.6. Do you strive to convert social media followers into customers?

Yes ☐ No ☐

1.7. Is your company working on strategies to incorporate social media influencer marketing?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Comment

1.8 Do you have a profile with basic information about the company on Instagram?

Yes ☐ No ☐

1.9 What do you aim to achieve by being present on Instagram?

1.10. Is it important for you to get 'likes' on the content you post on Instagram?

Yes ☐ No ☐

1.11. Would you say you have benefited from marketing your brand on Instagram?

Yes ☐ No ☐

SECTION C: OPPORTUNITIES ATTRIBUTED TO INSTAGRAM AS A MARKETING TOOL

Note- **SA**: Strongly Agree; **A**- Agree; **N**- Neutral; **D** – Disagree; **SD**- Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	N	D	SD
2.1	Instagram is becoming an important marketing tool for businesses within the fashion industry					
2.2	Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram					
2.3	Instagram is assisting in generating fashion brand awareness					
2.4	Through Instagram, companies are communicating with their customers by endorsing them (i.e. following them and liking and commenting on their posts) and receiving a response in the form of getting endorsements in return					
2.5	Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience					
2.6	Instagram offers the marketers an easier way to understand their customers					
2.7	Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram					
2.8	The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action					

2.9	Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.					
2.10	Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.					

SECTION C: HOW INSTAGRAM CAN BE USED TO ENHANCE THE PERFORMANCE OF FASHION BUSINESSES

		SA	A	N	D	SD
3.1	Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.					
3.2	Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity					
3.3	Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.					
3.4	Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information.					
3.5	Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building.					
3.6	Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations.					
3.7	There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and share brand values with target consumers.					
3.8	Instagram can help in sustaining a business by improving sales					
3.9	Instagram has positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram					
3.10	Instagram offers a business a good marketing channel that is cost effective					

SECTION D: EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTAGRAM AS A MARKETING TOOL IN THE DURBAN FASHION INDUSTRY.

		SA	A	N	D	SD
4.1	Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business					
4.2	Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products					

4.3	Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from					
4.4	Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools					
4.5	Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media					
4.6	Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms.					
4.7	A picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool.					
4.8	Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool					
4.9	Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer					
4.10	Instagram is offering consumers easier ways to purchase clothes					

Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX B: CORRELATIONS

		Instagram is becoming an important marketing tool for businesses within the fashion industry	Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram	Instagram is assisting in generating fashion brand awareness	Through Instagram, companies are communicating with their customers by endorsing them (i.e. following them and liking and commenting on their posts) and receiving a response in the form of getting endorsements in return	Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience	Instagram offers the marketers an easier way to understand their customers	Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram	The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action	Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.	Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.	Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.	Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity	Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.
Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram	Correlation Coefficient	0,031	0,015	0,037	-0,125	0,020	.284**	1,000						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,740	0,868	0,689	0,176	0,831	0,002							
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119						
The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action	Correlation Coefficient	-0,026	-0,008	-0,037	0,032	-0,064	.280**	.316**	1,000					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,782	0,932	0,689	0,730	0,491	0,002	0,000						
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119					
Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.	Correlation Coefficient	-0,041	0,040	0,005	-0,061	0,135	0,137	0,073	-0,113	1,000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,658	0,670	0,953	0,509	0,142	0,138	0,430	0,223					
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119				
Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.	Correlation Coefficient	-0,009	.199*	-0,107	0,095	0,055	-0,016	-0,003	0,115	0,083	1,000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,920	0,030	0,247	0,304	0,552	0,861	0,976	0,213	0,370				
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119			
Marketing through	Correlation Coefficient	-0,069	0,031	0,016	-0,083	0,052	-0,029	-.194*	-0,043	0,057	0,111	1,000		

Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,454	0,736	0,862	0,370	0,574	0,753	0,035	0,644	0,540	0,230			
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119		
Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity	Correlation Coefficient	-0,113	0,168	0,064	0,132	0,141	-0,079	-0,077	0,026	-0,083	0,011	.258"	1,000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,220	0,067	0,487	0,151	0,127	0,392	0,403	0,777	0,370	0,904	0,005		
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	
Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.	Correlation Coefficient	0,051	.209'	0,122	0,129	.182'	0,066	0,036	0,089	-0,013	.219'	-0,058	.204'	1,000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,585	0,023	0,188	0,163	0,047	0,476	0,695	0,336	0,884	0,017	0,531	0,026	
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information.	Correlation Coefficient	0,015	0,100	0,001	-0,029	0,084	0,021	0,043	0,084	-0,021	.185'	.400"	0,116	-0,039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,869	0,281	0,988	0,752	0,365	0,818	0,642	0,365	0,822	0,043	0,000	0,207	0,676
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building.	Correlation Coefficient	-0,051	-0,047	0,023	-0,036	0,018	0,019	-0,058	0,041	-0,022	0,123	.469"	.189'	0,039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,581	0,613	0,803	0,699	0,849	0,837	0,531	0,657	0,810	0,183	0,000	0,039	0,675
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations.	Correlation Coefficient	-0,126	0,028	0,091	-0,079	.201'	-0,150	-0,048	-0,043	0,052	-0,012	.231'	0,051	-0,009
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,172	0,766	0,325	0,392	0,029	0,104	0,605	0,641	0,576	0,901	0,012	0,578	0,923
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and	Correlation Coefficient	0,070	0,047	0,038	0,012	-0,137	0,036	-0,019	-0,092	-0,010	0,074	0,128	0,113	-0,091
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,451	0,615	0,684	0,897	0,136	0,701	0,834	0,322	0,914	0,425	0,164	0,223	0,325
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119

share brand values with target consumers.														
Instagram can help in sustaining a business by improving sales	Correlation Coefficient	-0,129	0,052	-0,044	0,067	-0,008	0,058	0,013	-0,023	0,062	0,091	0,118	.185*	0,003
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,164	0,573	0,633	0,467	0,929	0,528	0,884	0,803	0,501	0,325	0,200	0,044	0,971
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram has positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram	Correlation Coefficient	-0,099	.193*	0,054	0,055	0,039	0,106	-0,141	-0,025	0,036	0,136	.221*	.269**	.191*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,285	0,035	0,557	0,555	0,674	0,253	0,127	0,784	0,696	0,140	0,015	0,003	0,037
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram offers a business a good marketing channel that is cost effective	Correlation Coefficient	0,056	0,131	0,091	-0,082	.299**	-0,044	0,063	-0,041	.191*	0,025	0,165	0,173	0,052
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,545	0,155	0,328	0,376	0,001	0,638	0,497	0,660	0,037	0,785	0,072	0,060	0,574
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business	Correlation Coefficient	-0,016	-0,041	0,094	-0,168	0,073	.197*	-0,012	0,039	0,011	-0,053	0,089	0,115	-0,095
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,863	0,661	0,309	0,068	0,432	0,032	0,896	0,673	0,905	0,568	0,335	0,212	0,305
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products	Correlation Coefficient	0,160	0,001	0,081	0,163	0,180	-.200*	-0,144	-0,098	0,035	0,169	.339**	.271**	0,175
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,081	0,995	0,378	0,076	0,050	0,029	0,119	0,288	0,704	0,066	0,000	0,003	0,057
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from	Correlation Coefficient	0,113	.253**	-0,040	0,062	0,144	-0,175	-0,005	0,040	-0,137	0,109	.289**	0,173	.196*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,222	0,006	0,663	0,502	0,118	0,057	0,956	0,663	0,137	0,237	0,001	0,060	0,033
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
Instagram is more effective	Correlation Coefficient	-0,083	-0,010	0,023	-0,073	-0,079	-0,045	-0,119	-0,165	-0,031	-0,048	.314**	.269**	0,075

as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,369	0,912	0,803	0,427	0,394	0,630	0,197	0,073	0,740	0,603	0,001	0,003	0,419
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient	-.209*	-0,133	-0,049	-.213*	-0,109	0,067	0,078	-0,015	0,097	-.245**	0,003	-0,017	-.235*
Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,022	0,150	0,594	0,020	0,236	0,470	0,399	0,873	0,292	0,007	0,970	0,856	0,010
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient	-0,029	0,045	-0,082	0,171	.181*	-0,165	-.343**	-0,125	-0,086	0,094	.330**	.221*	0,048
Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms.	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,753	0,626	0,375	0,062	0,049	0,073	0,000	0,176	0,350	0,311	0,000	0,016	0,607
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient	0,023	-0,036	0,028	0,097	-0,043	0,013	-0,130	.234*	-0,159	.277**	0,156	0,075	0,104
A picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool.	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,808	0,699	0,759	0,294	0,642	0,891	0,160	0,010	0,085	0,002	0,090	0,415	0,261
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient	0,052	-.244**	0,152	-0,033	.207*	0,029	0,080	0,012	0,003	-0,039	-0,042	-0,038	0,055
Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,575	0,007	0,098	0,724	0,024	0,756	0,388	0,900	0,976	0,676	0,650	0,685	0,551
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient	.181*	0,150	-0,018	-0,099	0,105	-0,067	0,029	-0,134	0,112	0,017	.251**	.222*	-0,065
Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,049	0,104	0,849	0,285	0,257	0,466	0,753	0,147	0,225	0,857	0,006	0,015	0,484
	N	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119	119
	Correlation Coefficient													

APPENDIX C: CHI SQUARE TESTS

	Chi-Square	df	Asymp. Sig.
What product/ products does your business specialise in?	15,538	1	< 0.001
Does your business fall within the formal sector?	20,176	1	< 0.001
How many years has the business been in operation?	85,269	3	< 0.001
How important are online platforms for your company?	3,034	1	0,082
Which social media platform does your business utilise the most?	133,227	2	< 0.001
Do you strive to convert social media followers into customers?	96,21	1	< 0.001
Is your company working on strategies to incorporate social media influencer marketing?	50,437	2	< 0.001
What do you aim to achieve by being present on Instagram?	66,42	4	< 0.001
Is it important for you to get 'likes' on the content you post on Instagram?	89,151	1	< 0.001
Would you say you have benefited from marketing your brand on Instagram?	75,84	1	< 0.001
Instagram is becoming an important marketing tool for businesses within the fashion industry	106,445	3	< 0.001
Customers are developing a positive attitude towards Instagram	34,807	2	< 0.001
Instagram is assisting in generating fashion brand awareness	7,067	1	0,008
Through Instagram, companies are communicating with their customers by endorsing them (i.e. following them and liking and commenting on their posts) and receiving a response in the form of getting endorsements in return	8,076	1	0,004
Instagram advertising is offering organisations a cost-effective opportunity to connect with its audience	17,017	1	< 0.001
Instagram offers the marketers an easier way to understand their customers	54,672	2	< 0.001
Friendly relationships with customers can be promoted on Instagram	17,017	1	< 0.001
The Instagram app is based on the idea of sharing to prompt action	60,319	2	< 0.001
Instagram is a platform that allows brands to share their distinctive opinions.	50,235	2	< 0.001
Instagram platform has an attractive visual appeal, where a picture can truly be worth thousands of words.	55,176	2	< 0.001
Marketing through Instagram has supported your business in finding clients.	86,739	2	< 0.001
Instagram can be used to redeem your brand image that has been tarnished by bad publicity	75,849	2	< 0.001
Customers can easily get product prices on your Instagram page.	66,563	1	< 0.001
Instagram allows for your business to enhance its visual storytelling rather than just presenting textual information.	31,269	1	< 0.001
Instagram can assist your fashion businesses in saving costs on brand building.	108,37	2	< 0.001
Videos on Instagram add an element by which those in the fashion space have the chance to communicate an aspect of their creations.	11,504	1	0,001
There is a potential on Instagram to create brand awareness and share brand values with target consumers.	17,017	1	< 0.001
Instagram can help in sustaining a business by improving sales	51,647	2	< 0.001
Instagram has positively impacted your business's visibility as compared to when you did not use Instagram	44,992	2	< 0.001
Instagram offers a business a good marketing channel that is cost effective	37,378	2	< 0.001
Instagram can help you understand how customers perceive your business	52,756	2	< 0.001
Instagram is the most effective digital marketing tool for enhancing brand awareness of fashion products	25,933	2	< 0.001
Instagram provides customers with a wide range of products and services to select from	41,462	2	< 0.001
Instagram is more effective as a marketing media in comparison to other digital marketing tools	111,218	3	< 0.001
Instagram is more effective as a marketing tool in comparison to traditional media	85,731	2	< 0.001
Instagram has a more significant level of usage for interaction, co-creation and engagement compared with other platforms.	139,529	4	< 0.001
A picture speaks a thousand words: this makes Instagram an effective marketing tool.	58,101	2	< 0.001
Instagram platform has become an imperative brand communication tool	25,42	1	< 0.001
Instagram ads can give more information about products to the potential customer	30,975	2	< 0.001

APPENDIX D: EDITING LETTER

696 Clare Road
Clare Estate
Durban
4091
27 November 2021

To: Whom it may concern

Editing of Master's Thesis: THANDEKA NGCOBO

**THE USE OF INSTAGRAM AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL IN THE DURBAN
FASHION INDUSTRY**

This letter serves as confirmation that the aforementioned thesis has been language edited.

Any queries may be directed to the author of this letter.

Regards

MP MATHEWS

Lecturer and Language Editor

Mercillenem@dut.ac.za

083 676 4778

APPENDIX E: LETTER OF INFORMATION



Title of the Research Study: The use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion industry.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher: Thandeka Ngcobo, Master of Management Sciences in Public Relations Management

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s: Dr E Madondo

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to examine the role of Instagram as a marketing communication tool in the fashion industry in Durban.

Outline of the Procedures: The questionnaire will take roughly 15-20 minutes to complete. The participants are requested to fully complete the questionnaire as this will allow the researcher to analyse and interpret the responses accurately.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant: There are no risk to participants.

Benefits: This study will potentially benefit the participants and the entire population that utilise the Instagram platform as their marketing tool by making recommendations on how they can take advantage of the platform. There will be no financial benefits to participants.

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study: Participation is voluntary; respondents may withdraw at any time.

Remuneration: No remuneration will be received by participants

Costs of the Study: There is no cost of the study

Confidentiality: Confidentiality will be ensured by the non-disclosure of the participant's names in the questionnaire

Research-related Injury: No injuries can be expected in this study.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

(Supervisor and details) Please contact the researcher Thandeka Ngcobo on 078 519 1359, my supervisor Dr E Madondo on 063 350 8280 or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on 031 373 2900. Complaints can be reported to the DVC: TIP, Prof F. Otieno on 031 373 2382 or dvctip@dut.ac.za.

General:

Potential participants must be assured that participation is voluntary and the approximate number of participants to be included should be disclosed. A copy of the information letter should be issued to participants. The information letter and consent form must be translated and provided in the primary spoken language of the research population e.g. isiZulu.

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APPENDIX F: CONSENT



Statement of Agreement to Participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, _____ (name of researcher), about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study - Research Ethics Clearance Number: _____,
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research which may relate to my participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant

Date

Time

Signature

/

Right Thumbprint

I, _____ (name of researcher) herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Witness (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) **Date** **Signature**

Please note the following:

Research details must be provided in a clear, simple and culturally appropriate manner and prospective participants should be helped to arrive at an informed decision by use of appropriate language (grade 10 level - use Flesch Reading Ease Scores on Microsoft Word), selecting of a non-threatening environment for interaction and the availability of peer counseling (Department of Health, 2004)

If the potential participant is unable to read/illiterate, then a right thumb print is required and an impartial witness, who is literate and knows the participant e.g. parent, sibling, friend, pastor, etc. should verify in writing, duly signed that informed verbal consent was obtained (Department of Health, 2004).

If anyone makes a mistake completing this document e.g. wrong date or spelling mistake a new document has to be completed. The incomplete original document has to be kept in the participant file and not thrown away and copies thereof must be issued to the participant.

References:

Department of Health: 2004. *Ethics in Health Research: Principles, Structures and Processes* <http://www.doh.gov.za/docs/factsheets/guidelines/ethnics/>

Department of Health. 2006. *South African Good Clinical Practice Guidelines*. 2nd Ed. Available at: http://www.nhrec.org.za/?page_id=14

APPENDIX G: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS

COMMITTEE (FREC) 27 November 2019

Student Name: **Ms T Ngcobo**

Student No: 21532245

Dear Ms T Ngcobo

MASTER OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: PUBLIC RELATIONS

TITLE: The use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion Industry.

Please be advised that the FREC Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: **Approved – Ethics Level 2**

Date of FRC Approval: 27 November 2019

Approval has been granted for a period of two years from the above FRC date, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's. Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours sincerely

Prof JP Govender
Chairperson: Faculty Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX H: FRC PROPOSAL APPROVAL



21 January 2020

Student number: 21532245

Dear Ms T Ngcobo

MASTER OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: PUBLIC RELATIONS

This serves to confirm the approval of your research proposal by the Faculty Research Committee, at its meeting on 2Jth **November 2019**, as follows:

1. Research proposal and provisional dissertation title:

The use of Instagram as a communication tool in the Durban Fashion Industry.

Supervisor: **Dr E Madondo**

Co-supervisor: n/a

Please note that any proposed changes in the thesis/dissertation title require the approval of your supervisor/s, the Faculty Research Committee, as well as ratification thereof by the Higher Degrees Committee.

2. Research budget to the amount of RIO 000.00

Please note that this funding is not a scholarship or bursary and is therefore not paid directly to you, but is controlled by the Faculty. Any proposed changes to the use of this funding allocation requires the approval of your supervisor and the Dean. Please note that funding will be reimbursed to you after the provision of receipts.

The Institutional Research Committee has stipulated that:

- (a) This University retains the ownership of any Intellectual Property (patent, design, etc.) registered in respect of the results of your Masters/Doctors Degree in Technology studies as a result of the award and the provisions of the above Act;
- (b) Should you find any of the terms above not acceptable then you are given the option to decline the Research budget award to your project in writing.

PROPOSAL APPROVAL_NOV 2019_20 1

May we remind you that in terms of Rule G25{2}(b), if you fail to obtain the Masters/Doctors degree within the maximum time period allowed after first registering for the qualification, Senate may refuse to renew your registration or may impose any conditions it deems fit. You may apply to the Faculty Research Committee for an extension.

Please note that you are required to convert your registration from the informal to the formal course and re-register each year.

Please note that the following must be adhered to:

Registration:

1. Ensure formal registration has taken place (***the onus is on the student and the supervisor to ensure registration takes places at the beginning of each year whilst the student is currently engaged with his/her Masters or PhD qualification***)
2. Ensure that application for Conferment of Status has been made in the event of your undergraduate qualification being different to this application. ***Your attention is drawn to the fact that Conferment of Status is required for registration.***
3. Ensure that your supervisor has submitted your proposal to the Faculty Research Officer (FRO) for IREC clearance (institutional research ethics committee). This is in the case of Ethics level 2 IREC and level 3 IREC (in the case of a study dealing with vulnerable populations). See guideline attached. ***It is the researcher's responsibility to check the Ethics requirements and submit to the relevant bodies irrespective of the reviewer's recommendation.***

Dissertation submission for examination:

1. Ensure that you submit the intention to submit form **(PG 5)**, signed by the HOD and Supervisor
2. Ensure that the signed checklist is submitted with the **PG 5**
3. Once your dissertation is submitted to the supervisor for examination purposes, communication from here on will only be with you supervisor and not with the faculty.
4. Your supervisor **MUST** nominate the examiners three months prior to submission of the dissertation/thesis for examination.
5. On submission for examination, please note that three ring bound signed copies must be submitted to your supervisor along with the completed and signed **PG 7** form, **FMS Checklist** and **Turn** it in **report**.
6. Feedback will be provided to your supervisor regarding the examination result after the result is ratified by the Higher Degrees Committee (HDC).
7. In the event of a resubmission the reports will be submitted to the supervisor who will communicate with you for revision. Once revision has taken place your supervisor will submit to the FRO for resubmission to the examiners.
8. In the case where there is a discrepancy in examiners results, an Arbiter will be nominated via the HOD and supervisor and tabled at FRC and ratified at HDC. On completion of this process, the Arbiters report will be tabled at FRC and ratified at HOC.
9. Results of the Arbitration process will be communicated to your

supervisor PROPOSAL APPROVAL_NOV 2019_20 2

Graduation requirements:

1. Ensure that you submit a completed signed PGIO form
2. one hard bound dissertation/thesis with a pdf version on CD
3. response to post graduate examination form
4. completion of study form (IREC form)

Should you experience any problems relating to your research, your supervisor must be informed of the matter as soon as possible. If the difficulties persist, you should then approach your Head of Department and thereafter the Faculty Research Coordinator.

Please refer to the 2019 General Rule Book and the Postgraduate Students' Guide 2019 concerning the rules relating to postgraduate studies, which

include *inter alia* acceptable minimum and maximum timeframes, submission of thesis/dissertations, etc. Please do not hesitate to contact this office for any assistance. We wish you success in your studies.

Kind regards,

Prof J'p GGender

Oba FRC Chairperson: Professor VP Rawjee

Faculty of Management Sciences

APPENDIX I: PROOF OF REGISTRATION

Student Number	21532245
Email Address	Thaandekangcobo@gmail.com
Student Contact	0785191359
Academic Year	2022
Qualification	MMPRM1 - M MANAGEMENT SCIENCES (PUB REL)
Offering Type	D1 - Durban Campus Full-time
Block	P0 - POST-GRAD ANNUAL REGISTRATIONS
Period of Study	3 - Study period 3

APPENDIX J: GATE KEEPERS LETTERS





DISCLAIMER

This message may contain information that is confidential, private or privileged in nature. If you are not the intended recipient, you may not peruse, use, disseminate, distribute or copy this message or any file, which is attached to this message. If you have received this message in error, please notify the sender immediately by e-mail, facsimile or telephone and thereafter return and/or destroy the original message. Please note that the recipient must scan this e-mail and any attached files for viruses and the like. Spero Villioti Couture/ Villioti Fashion Institute accepts no liability of whatever nature for any loss, liability, damage or expense resulting directly or indirectly from the access of any files which are attached to this message. Your co-operation and assistance is appreciated.

From: thaandekangcobo ngcobo <thaandekangcobo@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, 28 June 2019 2:17 PM
To: assessments@villioti.co.za
Subject: Re: Permission to do reseach

Good day

My research focus is on businesses who use the Instagram platform as their marketing and advertising tool. I am required to hand out a questionnaire to the owner of the company who will be a participant in my study. Kindly find the attached documents.

Thank you for your response

Kind Regards



BLACKFACES APPAREL

(My Culture, My Identity)

Letter of confirmation

Consent letter to do research

I hereby confirm that the researcher has informed me about the nature of the research. I have read the letter of information regarding the study. I hereby confirm and agree that Thandeka Ngcobo can collect data.

Important Information from Nike.com



Inbox



Nike Assist 22 Feb 2021

to me ▾



Hi Thandeka,

Warmest greetings!

In reference to your recent contact with us, yes sure! and I'll be more than happy to assist you. If you have further questions don't hesitate to contact us back.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Sha

Nike Service