

Teenagers and Marketing Communication on Instagram

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Abstract

This study aims to determine if teenagers between the ages of 14-16 years are aware of the marketing communication tactics they are exposed to on Instagram. The study focuses on Instagram because it is one of the most recent platforms and is popular among teenagers as it has more features than other platforms. It is also an increasingly popular pathway for marketers to engage with teenagers, for which reason this study attempts to understand the relationship between the platform and teenager consumers.

The use of mobile phones and Instagram as a platform has increased exponentially and both play an integral role in the lives of teenagers today. It is thus important to understand the influence of Instagram marketing on teenagers.

Marketing communication is ever present in the lives of teenagers (Moore, 2004). Many marketers have recognised that the teenage audience is a very profitable target market. Teenagers are targeted by marketers because they are developing knowledge, skills and values they will use in making purchasing decisions throughout their lifetimes. According to Dieneke and Sompel (2013), many children spend the vast majority of their free time either watching television or surfing the internet, where a lot of marketing communication is placed. With the rise of the internet, mobile technology and social media, teenagers have a number of ways to communicate to the world and gain their own perspective on information.

This research employs qualitative research methods. Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted with teens in the age group of 14 – 16 years old. The interview questions sought to understand how teens perceive and react to marketing communications on Instagram. The teens were asked to login and interact with their Instagram account while being interviewed so that the interviewer had a more complete picture of the teens' reactions while exposed to marketing communications.

The research found that teens were using Instagram as a communication channel with their friends; they were not interested in what influencers were promoting. Although the teens showed some

interest in some of the popular brands, they were always careful with how they reacted to the products they saw. It was mentioned by all the teens that they understood brands were directing advertising at them to encourage them to purchase products. The teens made it clear that they were not easily convinced or pushed into making a purchase. They also stressed they always performed background research on a website and promoted brand before actually buying a product online. The teens were aware of marketers' intentions and skipped through most marketing communication activity they saw on the app.

Managers need to rethink their marketing strategy and make sure that they are not forcing their promotions onto teenagers. Today's teenagers are technologically savvy. They need to be communicated to in a way that shows a promotion relates to their lives – the type of promotion that gets them thinking and wanting to know more.

A limitation of this research is that all participants were from one secondary school in Auckland, New Zealand. The school is a high decile school. A high decile school means that the students come from a high socio-economic background where communities are more financially well off than communities attending lower decile schools, who have less economic opportunities. The educational setting could be one of the reasons why the teens that participated in this study were aware of the different approaches used in marketing communication. It is likely these teens were well educated about technology and more exposed to online marketing communication. Future research could compare a high decile school with a lower decile school to investigate the different reactions of the two different groups of teens to online marketing communications.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signature

Date 10/30/19

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Marketing Communication

There has been a significant change in the way marketers communicate to their audiences. Marketing is forever changing its ways according to the situation taking place around it (Duffett, 2017). To keep up with the evolving world of the internet and its new features such as mobile devices and social media, marketers have adapted to new methods of doing business. Marketing communication is now everywhere, and it is available in all forms and shapes. The most popular forms of marketing are blogs, microblogs, social networks, media-sharing sites, social bookmarking and selection sites, analysis sites, and forums (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). Before the rise of the internet, mobile devices, and social networking platforms, marketers relied heavily on television, radio, newspapers, and billboards to communicate to their audience (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012). While social media platforms in particular have increasingly taken over the marketing communication environment, traditional media platforms have declined.

Marketers have shifted their focus to the use of the internet and social media platforms as the opportunities offered via these vehicles are considerable (Batat, 2008). The internet allows both young and old to be connected to a network that is accessible from anywhere in the world. Advertisers no longer need to reimburse publishers or distributors large amounts of money to embed their messages. This can all now be done through the internet and different social media platforms such as Instagram and marketers are free to create the content exactly the way they want (Saravanakumar & SuganthaLakshmi, 2012).

The rise of Instagram and Technology

The internet hosts platforms such as Instagram that are full of rich information that marketers now use to reach their target audiences anytime and anywhere in the world. The Instagram platform gives marketers access to all types of information, including the age, gender, ethnicity, cultural background, and the religion of its users. With the introduction of private computers, the internet and e-commerce have greatly impacted the way marketers function and promote their goods and services. The internet and social media technologies such as Instagram are developing quickly and they are expected to have a major impact on marketing communication now and in

the future (Duffett, 2017). As new technologies become available, marketers who learn to use innovative technologies such as the Instagram platform will increase their likelihood of meeting their marketing targets. The best examples of technology-driven companies are Microsoft, eBay, Amazon, and Google. The rapid growth of mobile devices is affecting the marketing communication environment and social media connectivity is becoming easier and faster (Lawlor, Dunne, & Rowley, 2016). Mobile devices will continue to drive platforms such as Instagram to an even faster way of communicating.

Teenagers' Exposure to Instagram

Information that would take months to gather about a target audience now only takes hours, even minutes in some cases (Batat, 2008). With most of the world now utilising social media platforms, information gathering is now easy for all marketers. To users such as teenagers, a lack of knowledge of marketing communication intentions can place them in a disadvantageous position. Without the proper education and guidance on how to react to marketing communication on the internet and social media platforms, teenagers can find themselves in a poor position in society (Lawlor et al., 2016). This is because although marketers use the internet and platforms such as Instagram as a marketing communication tool, teenagers use Instagram in particular as a place where they can express their experiences, emotions, and understanding of certain aspects of the world. For this reason, researchers Lawlor, Dunne and Rowley (2016) promote the need to educate teenagers on marketing communication intentions and tactics used by marketers.

Background to the Research

Marketing communication has a big presence in the lives of teenagers. Many marketers and business managers have recognised that a teenage audience is a very profitable target market (Parreño et al., 2013). Adolescent consumers are targeted by marketers because they are developing the knowledge, skills, and values that they will use in making future purchase decisions (Dieneke & Sompel, 2013; John, 1999). There are many ways in which teenagers are now exposed to advertising, whereas previously, there were only a few sources such as television (Moore, 2004). With the rise of the internet, marketers are increasingly focusing on marketing communication through platforms such as Instagram (Duffett, 2017; Lawlor et al., 2016). Research has shown that teenagers lack the knowledge to understand marketers' ways of

communicating on the internet and on social media (Batat, 2008), yet teenagers live in an era where social media influences many of their choices. In this so called ‘selfie-age’, the development of advanced technology, smart phones, the internet, and social media sites has shifted the way marketers communicate to teenagers. According to Saravanakumar and SuganthaLakshmi (2012), the use of advanced technology and social media communication is the way forward for marketing communication. The majority of marketers are aware that the use of social media is all about creating a ‘buzz’ when communicating to teenagers. It is about creating an environment that teenagers can relate to and compare their lives to. For this reason, it is important that this phenomenon is studied and that teenagers are made aware of marketing communication tactics on platforms such as Instagram and the impact these tactics have on their lives.

Gap in the Literature

An investigation of the literature shows a common theme that is highlighted by many researchers. Research shows that teenagers are highly attached to the world of the internet and social media. While teenagers have their own understanding of how marketing communication works on social media, they are in need of educating. The theme of the research shows that teenagers are not as educated as they think when it comes to marketing communication. Teenagers today need to recognise that marketing communication intentions are different from their own use of the internet. The theme also shows that these teenagers have developed a relationship with the internet world. Marketers are highly reliant on this relationship and utilise platforms such as Instagram to support their marketing as these platforms provide them with the freedom to communicate in any way they like. Teenagers are influenced by major brands and events on Instagram that paint a picture of the environment they should be a part of. However, the literature does not have a strong focus on teenagers’ awareness of marketing communication tactics on social media. This is the area that this research will focus on.

Research Problem

This research will address current marketing communication to help teenagers gain an understanding of this phenomenon on social media. It is important that the issue of teenagers’ lack of knowledge of marketing communication tactics on platforms such as Instagram is addressed. Teenagers may have their own ideas of how marketing communication on Instagram

works, however that is only based on their experience (Batat, 2008). Teenagers and their parents need to be made aware that marketing managers use proven scientific methods to reach their audience (Lawlor et al., 2016).

Research Aims and Objectives

This research aims to educate teenagers on the marketing communication used on the Instagram platform. It will give insights into marketers and their marketing communication tactics towards teenagers. It is important that teenagers are aware of how Instagram uses influencers to affect their purchase decisions. It is also important that teenagers grow up knowing how marketing works as this will allow them to make smarter purchasing decisions.

Research Question

Based on the research gaps identified, the following research question was developed:

Are teenagers aged 14-16 aware of marketing communication intentions on Instagram?

The research will focus on this age group because young teenagers are still under the guidance of their parents. It is important to understand this age group as they require the teaching and influence of others to help them make decisions such as parents, caregivers, and educators. If the research was to look at 18 plus age groups, the results and data collection methods could be different as this age group is considered young adults.

Methodology and Data Collection

The study utilised qualitative research interviews and focus groups. A qualitative method was used in this study because it lets the researcher examine a phenomenon in which variables have yet to be identified (Wimmer & Dominick, 1997). Due to the nature of the study and the research question, interpretivism was regarded as an ideal research approach. This is because to fully understand a phenomenon, interpretivists believe that the researcher must intervene and interpret a phenomenon in its natural environment. Thus, one of the key approaches in interpretivist philosophy is to study the phenomenon in its natural environment (Grant & Giddings 2002). Interpretivists attempt to understand the lived experience of a participant from the participant's point of view (Schwandt, 1994). An interpretivist will create reality through his/her own description and interpretation of the lived reality of the participant (Szmigin & Foxall 2000). An

interpretivist attempts to closely relate to and interact with the participant in order to get close to his/her lived experience. To gain a rich understanding of a participant's experience, a focus on the person's description and explanation of the experience is very important. The researcher acts as the listener and the interpreter of what is being explained by the participant. It is important that the researcher understands and makes his/her position clear in relation to the phenomenon under enquiry. Even though both the researcher and the participant are involved in collecting the data, it is the researcher's interpretation that comes first in the analysis process. The researcher has a dominant position in making the interpretation, thus the researcher's analysis of the data is more important. The researcher's ears and eyes are still a very important part of the research as interpretive research is listening to and observing another (Grant & Giddings 2002). Since this research involves teenagers, interaction between individuals was needed to capture each moment and action. For this reason, a qualitative methodology was regarded ideal for this research.

The research will explain the gap in the literature and why it needs to be investigated. It will also help educators and marketers have a better understanding of how teenagers aged 14-16 in the North Island region of New Zealand are currently thinking and what approach they take to marketing communication. A review of the literature was conducted to help gain an understanding of what has been discovered in the past and how it can be developed or questioned through this research. Following the literature review, the data collected for this research are analysed accordingly.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Marketing communication is prevalent in the lives of teenagers. Many marketers and business managers have recognised that a teenage audience is a very profitable target market (Moore, 2004). Teenagers are targeted by marketers because they are developing the knowledge, skills, and values they will use in making future purchasing decisions. According to Dieneke and Sompel (2013), many children spend the vast majority of their free time either watching television or surfing the internet, where a lot of marketing communication is placed. Advertising is a powerful agent that has a big influence on a consumer's interests (Pollay, 1986) and marketers know that advertising has a particular impact on children and teenage consumers. Nowadays, teenagers live in a highly materialistic world where a lot of importance is placed on what they wear, what group or community they belong to, and being accepted by others. Adolescents today are different than in previous decades. With the rise of the internet, new technology, and social media, teenagers have a number of ways to communicate to the world and gain their own information.

This chapter will give the background and the theoretical framework for the study. The aim of this research is to gain an understating of teenagers' marketing communication awareness. This chapter will present a detailed discussion of past research about the internet, technology, and social media platforms such as Instagram as marketing communication tools. Insights from past literature will be provided to gain an understanding of the current situation and the phenomenon of marketing communication that targets teenagers through social media. This literature review will aim to explain the gap in the current research and why it is important to conduct this study. The chapter will first examine the growth in the use of social media and its effects on teenagers. It will then examine more closely teenagers' use of platforms such as Instagram and their impact. Following this, the chapter will identify the tactics digital marketers use on social media sites to influence teenagers. Next, the review will discuss the implications of teenagers' social media use. The literature review will conclude by providing information that can help teenagers develop awareness of the different tactics marketers use to communicate via social media, thus helping teenagers to become more knowledgeable consumers on social media.

Use of social media is growing

Technology Changes in the Last Decade

Over the past decade, there have been significant developments in the world of technology. According to Batat (2008), today's teenagers are 'early adopters' of new technologies. The ever-changing world of media and technology provides the number one-way that adolescents can share their voice. The 'YouTube' generation uses many forms of media simultaneously and can average over six hours a day using the various forms (Hempel & Lehman, 2005). Subsequently, research also suggests that today's teenagers are more competent than their parents in dealing with media and digital products (McDonnell, 1994; Tapscott, 1998), as their consumption learning is based on practising social and entertainment activities via digital equipment and media that enable them to develop consumption skills (Batat, 2006). One of the biggest changes in technology is the inclusion of the internet on mobile devices which gives teenagers full access to all their media hubs (Lawlor et al., 2016). Teenagers with smart phones and portable devices spend 78% more time on social networking activities than other age groups. Having a portable device with internet access means teenagers are not limited to being on a platform such as Instagram in one place. That is, there is more freedom when carrying a mobile device as it gives immediate access to the total social media world.

The Change in Marketing and Advertising Content

The internet and mobile devices have influenced the majority of human lives to the extent that it is now difficult to live without such technology (Duffett, 2017). There are many different types of devices and platforms that we are now 'addicted' to. Technology is now very easy to use and it has made our lives easier as a result. The simplest of examples is ordering online. It is now possible to order most things online, made even easier through the use of hand-held devices such as smartphones and tablets (Lawlor et al., 2016). Technology and platforms such as Instagram have influenced the market and affected the amount of advertising and marketing content that is being shared on these platforms. Advertising campaigns and marketing communication no longer choose radio or television first. All new content is online and is aimed at the right people. Traditional advertising such as television utilised airtime and maximised exposure as the richest type of preparation needed to target the right consumers (Duffett, 2017). However, since the number of people watching television has declined, there is less reason to advertise on television.

Marketing and Advertising Content with the Rise of Instagram Use

Teenagers of today are less likely to watch television, listen to radio, or read newspapers (Duffett, 2017). Marketing is no longer a simple task of working with a creative team to come up with the best ad an advertising agency can think of. This is because everything is available online now through social media and online websites. Even news websites such as CNN and BBC do not get as much attention as social media. It only takes one person to share the news on a social networking platform to stop all others from visiting the initial news provider's website.

While traditional media has declined, other forms of media have risen. The growth of social media platforms over the past two decades has led to a sophisticated user base among teenagers who regard these platforms as important in their everyday lives. This phenomenon has provided marketers with a whole new approach to targeted advertising and the amount of information that is available to marketers about teenagers has raised concerns with parents and educators (Boyd, 2014). According to Smith (2015), due to the increase in the number of social media platforms and online content, parents are advised to educate their teenagers on information sharing and the importance of information.

Role of Parents in the New Marketing Advertising Environment

Parents are urged to protect their teenagers as the methods of delivering advertising and the vast array of content have become almost uncontrollable, despite anti-virus programmes and fire walls (Smith, 2015). Also, according to resilience theory, parents have become a protective factor in their teenagers' lives, encouraging them to increase their resilience when dealing with the marketing and advertising world (Zimmerman, 2013)

However, parents and educators cannot control hidden messages appearing on social media platforms, such as Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook and others. Due to their lack of experience with these platforms, teenagers are not aware of the way in which marketers are experimenting on them to reach their marketing communication goals (Lenhart et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important for parents to take into consideration communication accommodation theory as it allows them to further teach their teenagers about the nature of communication. This theory gives parents the competitive advantage over online marketers as it teaches parents how teenagers are likely to communicate in different social situations (Giles, 2016). Also, according to Batat (2008), young people today and specifically those around the age of 11-15 are early

developers –social media sites are their playground and that is where they have a voice. It is on social media that they can follow anything that interests them and they are prepared to spend many hours a day engaging on such sites (Andrews & Shimp, 2017).

Social media and the way it is being used by marketers means that parents and educators have to educate their teenagers about the different types of marketing communication. The most practical way to do that is to slowly introduce technology to children and teenagers. They should not be given the latest and most advanced technology as soon as they can read and write (Lawlor et al., 2016).

However, the busy lives led most people today means that it is very difficult to control what teenagers are exposed to. According to Lawlor et al. (2016), the majority of teenagers are allowed to play computer games in their bedroom. Now more than ever, parents and educators need to be aware of the affects social media can have on their teenagers if their use of technology is not controlled at an early stage. If there is no control over what teenagers are able to do on social media, they are left vulnerable. According to Ekphrasis (2016), persuasion theory is used to send subtle messages to viewers and change their attitude. This is a key factor that teenagers need to know and understand before being able to gain full access to the world of social media.

Information Availability

It is no longer difficult for marketers to obtain information about teenagers. Today, information is so easily available through social media sites that marketers and advertisers can easily find out the full profile of their target market (Mikalef et al., 2013). With the ever-changing platforms of social media, information such as age, gender, and authenticity is available online for marketers to use exactly how they want to use it. The use of cookies and other information tracking tactics even allows marketers to track purchase and interest behaviours (Duffett, 2017). This means adolescents become a real target for marketers through social media. With all the tools and tactics available to marketers, all they have to do is decide on their audience and focus their communication on that particular audience.

Marketing Communication and the Use of Social Media

With older audiences that have more experience with social media, it may be harder for companies to hide subliminal marketing information; however, for younger users, it is much easier. This is because older audiences, such as those aged 18-20, are likely to have been on

social media platforms longer and know the intention behind different advertising content. Those who are dedicated to communication and marketing know that social media, online games, and applications have an 'addictive component'. This explains why their use is increasing more and more (Lawlor et al., 2016). Users are pulled by the functionalities that social media platforms offer, encouraging the body to generate more endorphins, and, with it, more desire to continue with the activity (Andrews & Shimp, 2017).

Teenagers' lack of knowledge of the social media environment makes them a good marketing target. Teenagers need to be educated to distinguish between commercial and non-commercial content. Smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices have become extremely popular amongst young children. This relationship continues to develop year after year, with the growth in the number of weekly hours dedicated to social media on the rise, especially on WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram (see IAB Study, 2017). The use of instant messaging on these platforms has also significantly increased (Andrews & Shimp, 2017). The increase in hours on these platforms means that marketers can make use of more information and behavioural patterns. It is unavoidable that teenagers will be exposed to social media platforms and mobile devices. How this is handled is something that parents and educators need to make sure is done correctly (Batat, 2008).

Instagram Advertising

Duffett (2017) and Lawlor et al. (2016) highlight that 67% of children aged between 12 and 15 had active social networking profiles in the UK in 2013 and 60% in the US. All these active users were exposed to marketing communication that they were unaware of.

Most of the marketing and advertising online is hidden in advergames, social networking sites, and other forms of online interactive sites that children are increasingly using all over the globe. The research points out that due to the lack of care and understanding that the world has of this type of marketing to children, children are vulnerable to all types of exposure to marketers. In their study of teenagers and online marketing, Lawlor et al. (2016) found that 47% of participants that took part in the research experiment admitted that they were unaware of any forms of advertising on social media sites when in fact there were a number of hidden marketing communication messages throughout. During individual interviews, a high percentage of participants identified that banner advertisements were used in the experiment. However

according to the researchers, there was other advertising that they could not recall or see that promoted well-known brands. This raises the issue of young consumers having difficulty understanding how advertising works and what they are being exposed to (Lawlor et al., 2016).

Teenagers Use of Social Media

Technology and the Network

As highlighted above, the majority of teenagers use social media and it is a relationship that needs to be understood (Lawlor et al., 2016). As technology advances, teenagers are becoming more advanced users and are able to do more using advanced tools. This explains the hours spent on social media sites using mobile devices (Lawlor et al., 2016). Teenagers see it as an expectation to be part of the network. Social media platforms allow teenagers to escape reality and become who they want to become. Their use of social media has become a part of their life and they no longer ask their parents or community for advice or information (Duffett, 2017) as it is much easier for them to access all the information they need through the different platforms. Adolescents would much rather gather information on their own through their social media groups and communities. Each group, including the age, gender and ethnicity of the members, has a presence on social media sites that communicates with and feeds others all the information needed. Social media sites allow teenagers to find opinions about any topic they are seeking. Their search for information is no longer limited to what they learn in school and what they are taught growing up. They are able to involve the world in their everyday lives, which makes teenagers feel important and gives them a sense of belonging (Andrews & Shimp, 2017). Use of the internet is a gateway to social media platforms and its use has become an unconscious act for teenagers.

Teenagers and the Integration of Social Media

Adolescents that are born with the internet integrate the use of social media into their lives a lot more than do many adults. As discussed by Batat (2008), teenagers that have been brought up with the internet regard it as very important for them to be online and available to the world of social media. To teenagers, social media sites are not only places to have fun, learn new things, and become a part of the world, but they also represent a lifestyle they cannot be without (Boyd, 2014). The use of social media platforms and technology has become a behavioural instinct that has given teenagers new beliefs and expectations that are new to this world. Through social

media platforms such as Instagram, teenagers are able to create their own learning and create their own diverse culture. This culture that is derived from the internet and social media sites give teenagers a new way to learn and gain information.

Adolescents Before and Now

Teenagers today differ to teenagers of a couple of decades ago, who learned things differently. There was no internet and no hand-held mobile devices; thus, teenagers learned and gained their culture from their families, friends, and communities (Boyd, 2014). With new technology and access to all types of social media platforms, teenagers have developed a feeling of empowerment (Buckingham, 2005). With minimal parental supervision in most cases, the sense of freedom gained from platforms such as Instagram allows teenagers to make choices on the spot. Adolescents of today do not feel the need to ask anyone for advice in real life anymore; they would much rather take advice from their friends in their social networking community. This could be anything from purchasing, travelling, a point of view about a certain event in the world, to making dates to meet new people. With the power of technology, hand-held mobile devices give teenagers access to the internet and Instagram and the world is opened to them (Buckingham, 2005).

Knowledge Development

With the power to access to all kinds of information, teenagers construct their own knowledge by combining information from several websites then processing the information in their own unique way. This type of learning is followed by the motivation to experience and explore new ideas and activities. According to Hoffman and Novak (1996), learning through construction and discovery adds another dimension to how teenagers learn to become consumers in today's collaborative environment (Batat, 2008). To understand teenagers' learning further, Kolb's (1976, 1981) experiential learning model provides some guidance. Kolb's (1976, 1981) famous model consists of four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, the formation of abstract concepts, and testing a new situation. This model applies to the learning process of teenagers through Instagram and the internet. The first part of the learning process is when they encounter a new experience or situation through their online world. This could be anything from a new way of purchasing goods and services online to downloading a new App that allows them to keep tabs of where everyone is and what they are doing.

The second part of the learning process is teenagers' reflective observation of their new experience or situation. This element is when teenagers compile all their experiences and make sense of them in the best way they see fit as new consumers. After gaining information from what they have processed, teenagers will then start to come up with new ideas to modify their experience. This is the third element of Kolb's (1976, 1981) learning process. It is at this point that new ideas and modifications are born to create a whole new understanding of the experience or situation. Teenagers will then take their understanding and apply the final element – active experimenting. This is when their new and enhanced ideas are applied to the world around them and allow them to see what they have created. Kolb (1976, 1981) argues that the learning process can begin at any one of the four points and should be viewed as an ongoing spiral. The learning process usually begins with someone performing a specific action and then observing the effects of the action in a particular situation. The second step is to learn and understand the effects of that action. This means that if the action is repeated, it can then be anticipated and the same affects following the actions will not happen. In terms of the learning process, Batat's (2008) research reveals that both male and female internet users are highly convinced that they are competent consumers.

Becoming Competent Consumers

Teenagers' understanding of being competent consumers involves shopping and using new technologies to make purchasing decisions. According to Boyd (2014), today's adolescents use media and new technologies in order to improve their consumption skills. Teenagers are continuously looking for new ways to consume and technology helps overcome any limitations they may encounter. These limitations are not only about breaking laws; rather, teenagers want to become competent in consuming goods and services. Teenagers believe that they are more competent consumers than their parents and adults in general in dealing with new technologies. However, according to Andrews and Shimp (2017), Boyd (2014), and Hoffman and Novak (1996), teenagers do not have the knowledge to understand marketing communication that is aimed at them. While teenagers are always finding new ways to consume goods and services by using new technologies and Instagram to research and compile information, they are often ignorant of the intention behind the available information.

Marketers' Use of Technology

Marketers are just as active as teenagers in the use of technology and social media. They are constantly planning and developing their marketing plans to suit new media platforms and technology (Boyd, 2014). A good example is that almost every website that is marketed correctly is now mobile friendly. This is not coincidence; rather, marketers use research and development to target their audience. Marketers are aware of what teenagers are seeking and how their consumption behaviour works and where it will head to next. Knowing that teenagers are always on the move at schools, malls, and at friends' houses and sports means they will always have a mobile device to stay connected to their world. This means connected to the internet and the Instagram communities that they belong to.

Marketers continue to change their marketing plans to suit teenagers and their purchasing behaviour. The Kolb (1976, 1981) learning process that Boyd (2014) uses to describe teenagers' purchasing process can also be applied to marketers who are learning how teenagers operate and process new media and technologies. The difference is that marketers test new media platforms and technology, learn how teenagers react to them, and adapt them to suit their needs without teenagers actually being aware of the complexity of it all. Teenagers learn and adapt to media environments that marketers set out for them and recognise certain aspects of marketing such as banners and paid advertising. However, as many researchers have pointed out, there is a lot that teenagers are not aware of when focused on the world of social media. Teenagers are too lost in their own world of believing that they are the best possible consumers to realise that marketers are using platforms such as Instagram to influence their choices. Marketers set the environment to suit teenagers and their understanding of what they should consume and why they should. With minimal parental guidance (Lawlor et al., 2016) and the use of brand influencers to guide teenagers through their purchasing process (Voorveld, et al. 2018), marketers have a better understanding of how teenagers think than the other way around. This leads the literature review to the next section on marketers' use of social media.

Are Teenagers Aware of Digital Marketers' Tactics on Social Media?

Marketers and New Technology

Marketers today are less dependent on traditional advertising to market their products. There is now a much better and more advanced way to take marketing communication directly to the

targeted consumers. Every marketing department now includes social media in their marketing plan (Duffett, 2017; Voorveld et al., 2018). Marketers are a lot more aware of the information available to them to guide their understanding of their target audience through social media. With the rise of social media platforms such as Instagram and mobile devices, teenagers are providing more of their personal information online which benefits marketers. Communication opportunities via social media are almost endless. Teenagers are aware of some types of marketing communication but unaware of many others (Batat, 2008). According to Duffett (2017), from the firm to the consumer to the supplier to the manufacturer, there is no one that cannot be reached via social media platforms and the internet. The creators of these platforms cater to everyone's wants and needs (Duffett, 2017). This means that there is endless information for everyone involved; however, teenagers use the information at hand to become what they perceive as better consumers (Batat, 2008). The information is then used by marketers to construct a marketing communication environment that suits teenagers (Lawlor et al., 2016). In his study, Duffett (2017) found that new users of social media have a positive attitude towards marketing communication because they lack the experience to fully understand this kind of communication. Lawlor et al. (2016) and Batat (2008) also found that teenagers lack the knowledge to defend themselves from some advertising content. Batat (2008) also maintains that teenagers can be vulnerable consumers because they are in the process of forming an identity.

Forming a Gender Role and Influence

Research has shown that the adolescent market is not taken lightly by marketers and advertising agents. They are a market that is constantly growing and generating profit for firms. This is why marketers and researchers will continue to work on understanding adolescents and their role as consumers. Adolescence is a very important and effective stage in boys and girls as they are learning their gender roles (Erikson, 1968). It is important for adolescents to know their gender role as it forms their identity and it avoids identity confusion (Erikson, 1968). Adolescents develop gender recognition through socialising agents such as parents, school, peers, and the media (Ruble & Martin, 1998). Adolescents use mass media as their socialising agents (Chan & Williams 2013). Taking into account the importance of gender roles, Chan and Williams (2013) investigated the impact of advertising on the gender roles of adolescent girls. The author's investigation found seven themes that stood out in the study. These themes were appearance, personality, skill and work, activities, interests and lifestyle, health and safety, caring and people,

and the environment. The overall conclusion of this research was that adolescents are highly critical and understanding of advertising persuasion. The participants mentioned that the thin and perfect images of females in advertising are unnatural, unreal, and ridiculous and that girls and women should not look like this. The researchers pointed out, however, that although the participants rejected the female ideal portrayed in advertising, recognising that advertising images are often highly photoshopped and edited, it is still hard to ignore the fact that such images are influential and powerful (Chan & Williams, 2013). However, the participants showed respect and admiration for the images of the women who had appropriate clothing and lighter makeup as they were more natural looking. The authors stated that their participants clearly understood what the intention was behind these advertisements (Chan & Williams 2013). Ng and Chan (2014) also looked at whether females in advertising reflect adolescents' ideal female image. The results agreed with the study of Chan and Williams (2013). They found that the adolescent participants focused strongly on successful and sophisticated female role models rather than the excessively thin and heavily made-up types (Ng & Chan, 2014).

Marketers' Drive for Online Advertising

Compared to adults, teenagers are not confident in their self-image. With the encouragement of Instagram and the internet, teenagers perceive what is advertised to them as beneficial for them as consumers. This is another reason why advertisers are enthusiastically integrating social media into their advertising programmes to drive digital engagement. A good example of this is discussed by Voorveld et al. (2018), who refer to the announcement by adidas that they planned to focus exclusively on digital marketing and social media. Adidas is a highly recognised brand all around the world and it makes sense for its marketers to focus heavily on social media. This is where influence plays a part: knowing teenagers and their access to social media, it makes sense for brands such as adidas to shift their focus to social media advertising.

Social Media Advertising

Adidas marketers choose social media as their main advertising tool because the engagement they gain from their campaigns is a lot higher on these platforms than through any other forms of advertising. Voorveld et al.'s (2018) study found that participants were highly positive about seeing advertising on social media. According to marketers, it is important to advertise differently on each social media platform in order to create the correct influence as each platform

requires a different type of advertising to suit its environment and its type of audience. For example, Twitter users have been shown to have a negative response to advertising. This makes sense because Twitter users are usually informed users – the type of users who are referred to as knowledgeable or experienced consumers (Batat, 2008; Lawlor et al., 2016; Duffett, 2017).

Another social networking platform that has scored low in positivity in terms of marketing communication engagement is Facebook. Again, this is a platform that was initially created for older and wiser consumers. The younger generation has caught up with Facebook in recent years; however, they are not as present on the platform as older consumers (Lawlor et al., 2016). Also mentioned by (Batat, 2008) is that social media platforms are used as the context for advertising; that is, the platforms provide the environment for advertising. Norris and Colman (1992) maintain that engagement with a medium is an essential context characteristic to drive a response to advertising. With reference to Norris and Colman (1992), Voorveld et al. (2018) found that the same source delivering the same message to the same audience has different effects depending on the context that the message appears in. The authors refer to earlier studies (Malthouse, Calder, & Tamhane, 2007; Calder, Malthouse, & Schaedel, 2009; Calder, Isaac, & Malthouse, 2016) that show that engagement with a magazine, television, or online media affects reactions to advertising embedded in these vehicles. Voorveld et al.'s (2018) study proved that the more engaged the consumer is with these vehicles, the more positive the response is to the advertising imbedded in these mediums. The authors showed that the evaluation of each imbedded advertisement is highly positive as long as the engagement is high with that particular medium.

Influence of Social Media

Marketers use social media to influence teenagers, and major brands and social media celebrities contribute to that influence. A recent example concerns the royal couple Megan Markel and Prince Harry who hold the Guinness World Record for the fastest Instagram account to reach a million followers – 5 minutes and 45 seconds on Tuesday April 5th, 2019. The couple gained 3.2 million followers within 5 days of opening their account. The couple released never seen photos of themselves during a visit to Botswana in 2017 in which they placed tracking collars on animals so that they could track their wellbeing. The effects of this are likely to have an impact on travel agencies, fans, animal rights enthusiasts, and teenagers, who will be motivated to visit

Botswana and other African countries to show that they belong to this environment. Marketers can use this enthusiasm to their advantage to embed advertising that influences teenagers to travel and promotes helping and volunteering in Third World countries.

If, as Voorveld et al. (2018) suggest, social media sites provide an environment for advertising, the same can be said of the Meghan and Harry Instagram page. Malthouse et al. (2007), Calder, Malthouse et al. (2009), and Calder, Issac et al. (2016) maintain that engagement with Instagram affects advertising reactions on such a vehicle. The influence of Meghan and Harry not only opens the door to travel and tourism marketers, but also to many others. There are undoubtedly videos and images on the royals' Instagram account offering all types of marketing potential such as where they eat, the brands of clothes and shoes they buy, the places they visit, and the type of makeup Meghan uses. This is all information that will be used by marketers to communicate back to teenagers and other audiences.

Celebrity Influence Marketing

Other examples of influence that marketers use are major sports players, movie stars, and music artists. Marketers use these different types of influence to promote and advertise different brands, goods, and services to teenagers in the most subtle way possible. There are endless ways in which marketers use social media to influence and drive marketing communication to teenagers. The use of celebrity influence via social media leads to easier marketing communication activities targeting teenagers. According to Batat (2008), Lawlor et al. (2016), and Duffett (2017), teenagers are incompetent, vulnerable consumers who have a high ambition to belong somewhere which makes them turn a blind eye to marketing communication intentions. Teenagers have some understanding of marketing communication but not to the point where they can be called knowledgeable consumers. They are still in need of education and experience of technology and platforms such as Instagram to make sure they are aware of all marketing communication activities.

Implications for Teenagers' Instagram Use

Teenagers as Social Media Users

Much of the literature advises parents to educate their teenagers on social media use. It is important that social media platforms are introduced into teenagers' lives with guidelines (Batat, 2008) in order to give them some understanding of the marketing communication that is present

through these channels. Teenagers have less knowledge as consumers than adults do due to their age and lack of experience. Teenagers' lack of knowledge as consumers does not help them in terms of protection from marketing communication material targeted at them through social media sites (Lawlor et al., 2016).

Instagram and Teenagers

Instagram has become one of the most attractive social networking sites for teenagers. It is a social network that does not stop growing and it has managed to collect the best features of all other social networks including Snapchat, Twitter, and Facebook (Boerman, Willemsen, & Van Der Aa, 2017). For example, Instagram includes the use of a hashtag based on Twitter and videos based on the success of the Vine application. Developers of Instagram also looked for ways to capture the essence of Snapchat, that is, the ability to create Instagram Stories.

Instagram Marketing Communication

The majority of the advertising on Instagram is based on clothing, fashion, and design. Marketers use this social networking site to promote their products through photos and videos. They also sponsor events or shows to influence teenagers in terms of belonging to the Instagram family. Everything that teenagers relate to in their lives is presented to them through Instagram in a way that allows them to think they are capable of being smart and independent consumers.

Teenagers and their Consumption Knowledge

Teenagers see themselves as knowledgeable consumers who know what they are doing because of their strong knowledge in using new technology and networking platforms. These platforms are heavily used by marketers as an advertising vehicle because they motivate teenagers to get out of their comfort zone and create their own understanding of social media use (Voorveld et al., 2018). Instagram in particular provides teenagers with opportunities and can be a positive tool through which teenagers can express their talents – however, parental guidance is advised. Teenagers need to go through a guided learning process so that they know how to react to the changes around them.

Also, according to Hoffman and Novak (1996), learning through construction and discovery adds another dimension to how teenagers learn to become consumers in today's collaborative environment. This explains why the popularity of social networking sites such as Instagram are growing amongst teenagers as they provide an environment that teenagers can relate to and gives

them the freedom that they are constantly seeking to become the consumers that they want to be – even though this is not quite the way teenagers should approach this world of social networking (Batat, 2008).

It is better to teach teenagers about Instagram and other social networking platforms because these platforms are now the way of the world. There is no way to avoid these platforms, as with the huge growth of technology and mobile devices, teenagers will always gain access to these networks. Parents must take an educational approach to teenagers' knowledge of platforms such as Instagram and how to use them. This will avoid a lack of understanding concerning privacy, cybersecurity, and intended marketing communication aimed at teenagers.

Conclusion

Teenagers of Today

There has been a large amount of research done on teenagers and their use of the internet, some of which has been reviewed in this chapter. It is a topic that researchers have found complex to understand. Teenagers of today have been raised differently and are used to different activities in their daily lives. Modern teenagers have been raised with the internet, technology, mobile devices, and social media (Duffett, 2017). They are a part of social communities on social media sites that they consider educational and places to gain knowledge from. In the past decades, it was easier to know how and from whom teenagers were getting their learning as there were less options around to learn from. Teenagers had television, radio, newspapers, parents, and communities as learning channels (Lawlor et al., 2016). In today's world, all teenagers have access to knowledge and opinionated communities through the internet and mobile devices. Research has shown that teenagers can no longer live without the use of the internet as it is present in their lives every day (Batat, 2008). It has become part of their education system and it is a tool that is used to teach them about many topics. The benefits of the internet are endless for teenagers when it is introduced correctly for the correct reasons. However, it is clear from the literature that there is concern about the time teenagers spend on internet advergaming and social media (Boyd, 2014). Nevertheless, while many researchers have examined the time spent on social media, there has been less research on how marketing communication is affecting teenagers through the internet and platforms such as Instagram. Marketing communication is all

through the internet and Instagram needs to be understood and explored from a teenager's point of view.

Learning from the Internet and Technology

According to the literature, teenagers of today have become their own teachers and prefer it this way. They experiment with the internet and technology to find new ways to learn (Batat, 2008). In the mind of teenagers, having knowledge and becoming a knowledgeable consumer is to be technology friendly (Boyd, 2014). However, although teenagers know and can operate technology better than their parents and care givers, it does not make them better or smarter consumers. Although teenagers of this age are born into and raised with the internet and social media, there is a lack of understanding that teenagers seem to have in regard to marketing communication. Their understanding of marketing communication is limited to their experience and knowledge as consumers. Teenagers are influenced by social media users from all around the world. Influencers are sponsored by brands and companies to drive marketing communication through social media sites to teenagers and other users. There are many social media influencers that teenagers look up to and aspire to be like and while this is not necessarily the worst thing to do, teenagers still need to be educated on how to become consumers.

Teenagers and Marketing Communication

The literature makes it clear that teenagers are heavy consumers of the internet and technology (Lawlor et al., 2016). In the world of teenagers, mobile devices give them access to all types of freedom. Having mobile devices means teenagers are able to go on the internet whenever they want, read whatever they want, and talk to anyone they want. By being able to access the internet everywhere they go, teenagers also have access to all the social networks that they belong to. Teenagers are exposed to all types of marketing communication through social networking sites that utilise influencers and promote brands and companies. There seems to be some understanding of what advertising and marketing communication is and how it works amongst teenagers; however, there is still a lack of knowledge on marketing communication intentions. This is where parents need to get involved to educate teenagers on marketing communication so that they become sound and knowledgeable consumers.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The previous two chapters investigated the literature and background on teenagers' use of social media. This chapter detail the methodology that was used for this research. This thesis used observation and interviews to explore the research question. The research employed semi-structured interviews as a research design. The methodology will be explained as well as why it was considered a suitable paradigm for this type of research.

It is very important that the methodology is explained in detail as it has to make sense to the reader. The process of the interviews and the type of audience that was interviewed will also be explained. Primary data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Data analysis using thematic methods is discussed.

Research Paradigm

Paradigms are generalised views and assumptions of how people view the world around them. These views guide people (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 2002). Research paradigms can be either positivist or interpretivist. The two are different to each other in the nature of how they assume research should be conducted. Each is associated with a different type of research method: qualitative or quantitative.

The nature of a positivist paradigm fits quantitative research best. This approach is independent in nature. The interpretivist paradigm believes interpretation of a phenomenon in its natural environment is required along with intervention (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). This is a paradigm that believes that to fully understand a phenomenon, it is best studied in its own natural environment. There should not be anything that influences the environment of the phenomenon and the behaviour of research participants should flow as it does normally while observations and interpretations are made by the researcher (Schwandt, 1994).

In this research, a qualitative research method utilising an interpretivist paradigm method was employed. The researcher was dealing with teenagers in a face-to-face interview situation where everything could be observed and employing a qualitative method allowed the researcher to observe the phenomenon in its own natural environment.

Methodology

A qualitative method best suited the nature of this research. The research undertook face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with teens aged 14-16 years. The study focuses on this age group because it is an age group that is reliant on parents and educators to make purchasing decisions. An older group age such as those aged 18 plus would mean they are young adults and are able to make their own decisions without anyone questioning them. A qualitative method was used in this study because it lets the researcher examine a phenomenon in which variables have yet to be identified (Wimmer & Dominick, 1997). Due to the nature of the study and the research question, interpretivism was regarded as an ideal paradigm. This is because to fully understand a phenomenon, an interpretivist believes interpretation of a phenomenon in its natural environment is required as well as intervention.

Interpretivists seeks to understand the lived experience of the subject from the point of view of the person who has actually experienced it (Schwandt, 1994). An interpretivist will create reality through their own description and interpretation and through that, communicate back the reality of the respondents (Szmigin & Foxall, 2000). An interpretivist will try to do everything possible to relate and interact with the participants in order to get as close as possible to the participants' lived experience.

To get a rich understanding of the participants' experience, a high focus on each person's description and explanation of the experience is very important. The researcher acts as the listener and the interpreter of what is been explained by the participants. To be able to credibly interpret the story, experience, and point of view of the participants, the researcher must understand and make their position clear in relation to the phenomenon under enquiry. Even though both the researcher and the participants are involved in collecting the data, it is the researcher's interpretation that comes first in the analysis process.

The researcher's ears and eyes are a very important part of the research as interpretive research is listening to and observing another (Grant & Giddings, 2002). Since this research involves teenagers, interaction between individuals was necessary in order to capture every moment and action performed by the participants. It is for this reason that a qualitative method was regarded as ideal for this research. In this research, face-to-face, semi structured interviews were the chosen method of data collection. The interviews were not recorded and data were collected

through hand-written notes and reports. This is because the interviews needed to be conducted without stress in order for the participants to feel comfortable. As mentioned above, observing these teenagers in their real environment also provided the richest information. All the interviews were conducted at a school in a boardroom provided by the school where only the interviewer and the participants were present. The interviewer asked the questions while the participants used their smart phones to browse their Instagram accounts. This allowed the interviewer to collect any verbal or physical data from the participants when asking them questions.

Semi-structured Interviews

This research used semi-structured interviews for data collection because this is the most suitable approach when using qualitative and interpretivist research methods (Yin, 2003). Semi-structured interviews involve open-ended questions that allow the researcher to explore the interviewee's ideas and thoughts about a topic (Patton, 2002). This method of questioning is beneficial for qualitative researchers as it allows them to discover more topics and themes that would be harder to discover in structured interviews (Patton, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews mainly consist of a number of topics and themes which the researcher has already predetermined and wishes to include in the interviews (Patton, 2002). It is the responsibility of the researcher to have an interview guide that covers the main topics that they would like to cover. While this guide is to help the researcher keep track of the topics and themes discussed, it is also in the researcher's best interest to keep the interviews flexible and to be as open minded as possible.

Sample

When undertaking qualitative research, it is common for the researcher to use purposeful sampling. This is because it allows the researcher to identify participants / subjects that will provide meaningful, rich information (Patton, 2002). This research recruited teenagers from Macleans College in Auckland, aged 14-16. This group of teenagers were seen as the best fit for producing rich information because this age group are the future of Apps and programmes. Since they are the main users of Instagram and other online platforms, it is important to understand their use of these Apps in terms of marketing communication. Purposeful sampling allows a qualitative researcher to select and identify participants that are knowledgeable and are able to

provide rich information about a phenomenon ([Cresswell & Clark, 2011](#)). This is the reason behind the selection of teenagers who were required to fit the following criteria:

Male or female aged 14-16

Medium to high smart phone user: which mean they are often on their phone and have a general understanding of how to use all the smart features that come with a smart phone.

Medium to high smart phone Instagram user

Some knowledge of what marketing communication is: has a brief understanding of what marketing communication looks like on Instagram. Able to explain briefly what a particular post is trying to achieve on Instagram.

Able to identify some sort of advertising on Instagram. Has enough experience on the platform to be able to identify a particular post is an advertisement.

Able to explain what their understanding of advertising is

Purposeful sampling makes it easier for a qualitative researcher to select participants who are knowledgeable and have experience in the phenomenon being researched. However, it is still important that there is availability and willingness to participate ([Bernard, 2002](#); [Spradley, 1979](#)). Participants must be willing to communicate and share their opinion in a clear, expressive, and reflective manner. While this study took into consideration purposeful methods of sampling, it aimed at being unbiased in selecting participants according to gender, nationality, and background. As long as the participants met the criteria mentioned above, they were considered as acceptable candidates for the research.

The researcher of this study collected data related to teenagers' awareness of marketing communication on Instagram. The interviews all took place at Macleans College where 14 teenagers aged 14-16 were interviewed about their Instagram usage. Each interview took approximately 30 to 45 minutes. This was enough time for the researcher to get a deep understanding of each participant. The interviewer only took notes on paper and there was no recorded videos or voices, or photos of the participants. Given the nature of the topic and subject being researched 14 participants was regarded as enough to collect rich data to gain the information needed. Face-to-face interviews generally need a high investment in time and effort

from both the interviewer and the participant. The participants for this research were teens that were at high school which meant that everything needed to work for both parties such as their class times, their home time, and their tolerance of being interviewed for 30 minutes plus. Therefore, the amount of time needed and the management of interview participants of this age meant that no more than 14 participants were chosen. Also, given that this was a small sample and no random sampling methods were used, the results are not generalisable (Van Esch & Van Esch, 2013).

Table of Participants

Participants	Gender	Age	Ethnicity
Allen 1	Female	14	Philippines
Anni 2	Female	14	English
Ariee 3	Female	14	Chinese
Ayllae 4	Female	14	English
Beni 5	Male	15	English
Benji 6	Male	17	English
Benibie 7	Female	16	Maori
Brooklee 8	Male	14	English
Jessi 9	Female	16	Venezuelan
Jumi 10	Female	15	South African
Tasha 11	Female	15	Sri Lankan
Sara 12	Female	16	English
Taylee 13	Female	15	South African
Velana 14	Female	15	Peruvian

Trustworthy

This study used a qualitative interpretive research method so assuring trustworthiness was important to show that the research was credible (Guba & Lincoln, 2000). This research focused on trustworthiness rather than reliability and validity. This is important because the notion of reliability and validity are centered on the idea that there is one truth that can be found by the researcher. Thus, a research project which believes that it can identify multiple constructed realities does not focus on reliability and validity. To make sure the research is credible, there must be confidence in the findings of the research. The results of the research are the one true answer and any other possible explanations of the outcomes must be removed.

Credibility assumes that there is not only one real finding. It believes that there are multiple constructions of reality which make one reality unachievable. Thus, the researcher must show that those different constructions are all interpreted truthfully and correctly. To make sure that the research is credible, there should be repeated restatement of the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1985) as well as peer debriefing where expert judges confirm that the transcripts and summaries are correctly interpreted. This helps ensure that what the researcher is interpreting makes sense. Transferability is the external validity in this type of research whereby the findings can be applied to different participants in different situations.

Data Analysis

The best data analysis method for this research was determined to be thematic analysis. This is because thematic analysis is a method for analysing and reporting patterns and themes within the data. It organises and describes the data in great detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Many researchers use thematic analysis; however, it is not always clear what thematic analysis is and how to conduct it. This research analysed the data by following the six steps of thematic analysis detailed in Braun and Clarke (2006). The first step of thematic analysis is to be familiar with the data. This means reading and re-reading notes and initial ideas. The second step is to start making notes of initial codes. This step involves putting together interesting features of information in the data in a systematic way across the whole data set. The data appointed to each code must match the information in the code. The third step is to start searching for themes by collating together codes that could represent potential themes from the whole data set. The second level of step three is to make a map of all the themes available in the data set. The fourth

step is to start reviewing themes, making sure that the themes work with the coded extract. The fifth step is to start defining and naming themes and putting themes into a story. The final step is to write the report. This is when all relevant themes are put together to make up the story that has been extracted and then presented to readers. The thematic method suits this study whereby diverse data was collected from multiple interviews to understand the overall phenomenon of teenagers' reaction to marketing communication on Instagram.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined and explained the research processes and procedures undertaken by this study. These steps and methods needed to be in place so that the researcher had a guide to follow that made sense to both him and the reader. Identifying what method would be used in each part of the research put the researcher in control of the whole process. It was also important to clarify who was being researched and how they fit the criteria to be interviewed.

The methods used in this research helped lead to interviews that provided rich information that the researcher could use to arrive at conclusions. When research methods for both data collection and data interpretation were in place and followed, it helped the researcher find the themes and answers required in the research.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the answers provided by the teenagers about their interaction with the Instagram App. Fourteen male and female teenagers aged 14-16 were asked to provide information about the different aspects of the App and how it worked for them. The chapter analyses the answers that were received from the teenagers in relation to the study in order to find out how marketing communication affected this group of participants. The type of questions asked were open-ended questions that allowed the teenagers to express their experience comfortably.

This analysis provides background information on the teenager's use of Instagram and how frequent their use was. It also helps us further understand how the teenagers reacted to the different features on Instagram. The information that was received from the teenagers will also educate marketers and parents about how these teenagers are dealing with marketing communication on Instagram. The teenager's reaction to marketing communication through Instagram is also explained from their point of view.

Initial Activity when on an Instagram Page

Interviewees were asked what their initial activity was when they logged on to Instagram. Their description of their initial activity on the platform provided information about how and why the teenagers used Instagram. It helped explain the purpose behind the usage of the different features that Instagram has to offer to these students.

While there is a difference in what activity they did first, the category of activities was limited to watching stories and direct mail. The older teenagers were more interested in using the private functions of the App and their initial use was direct mail. Direct mail was mostly used among the female teenagers to communicate with their peers. Some of these teenagers mentioned that they regularly used this function for group chat and as a way of planning activities with their friends. When these female teenagers were asked if they followed famous people on Instagram, they showed little interest; they enjoyed the private functions more than actually focusing on what was happening in the world of famous people. Older female teenagers (15-16 years old) also mentioned that it was a great way for them to plan sports and gathering events. Further proof that the older females mostly enjoyed using the private functions was provided when they were asked

if they had purchased anything online through the guidance of Instagram influencers. The answer was predominantly 'no' as they were careful with any information, they shared with the App. Although there was some interest in the Instagram stories function, use was limited to after they had used the direct mail features to communicate with their friends. It was also mentioned by the older female teenagers that they could do everything from the direct mail feature and therefore there was no need to use other features.

The first thing I always see is Instagram messages. I do not really make my own stories and I mostly just scroll through people's stories. I mostly made Instagram for my netball team-mates so that we can communicate. (Participant 12)

These teenagers also mentioned that they could still take photos directly, send links, and tag their friends all in their group chat.

I always go on my DMs first then my stories and then after all that I go and see what my followers and friends are you up to. (Participants 11,)

A similar question was asked about acceptance of friend requests. The older teenagers – both male and female – mostly stated they would only accept a friend request if they knew the person or if they had a mutual friend in common, whereas the younger teenagers were more open to accepting friend requests based on profile pictures as well as mutual friends.

If their profile photo looked nice, I would consider it as well. (Participant 5)

The older male teenagers (15-16 years old) mentioned that they were mostly interested in what their friends were up to and went on the stories and posts feature straight away.

The first things I look at are posts. I do not really take much interest in stories, mostly posts photos and videos. (Participant 6)

The first thing I always look at are people's stories. Then go into my feed and look at what my mates are doing. (Participant 5)

Some of the male teenagers would use direct mail for the same reason as the girls of the same age group, that is, to communicate with their friends and for planning purposes.

The younger female teenagers (14 years old) also used the direct mail feature first for the same reasons as the older female teenagers.

The first thing I always look at are my DM's – direct mail to see if anyone has texted me.

After that it is stories and to see what is going on. (Participant 2)

The younger female teenagers mentioned that they always preferred to go on the stories feature of the App first to see what their friends were up to.

Friends' stories because you know your friends and you want to know what they are doing.

(Participant 3)

The younger, 14-year-old girls also mentioned that they enjoyed going on the general page of Instagram to get inspirational ideas from other brands and influencers.

The younger 14-year-old boys mentioned that they would always go on stories first to see what their friends were doing. It was also mentioned by this age group that they enjoyed spending a lot of time getting inspirational ideas about what they might enjoy or be a part of. A good example of this is 14-year-old Brooklee who mentioned that after viewing stories, he would go on the general Instagram page to get style and dress ideas from his favourite NBM players. Boys of this age group admitted that they were more interested in what was going on in the world rather than direct mailing their friends.

My friends' stories are always my go to when I use the App. The second thing that I like to do

after stories is always friends' posts to see what they are doing and what they are up to

(Participant 8).

Another good example of younger teenagers is again provided by 14-year-old Brooklee, who mentioned that he was not a heavy user of Instagram but mostly went on the App to enjoy watching other people from around the world streaming their video game stories and photos.

Not a heavy user of Instagram but I quite like to watch recorded posts of people gaming. I also enjoy a laugh jumping from one meme page to another. (Participant 5)

What is Noticed when Using Instagram – Brands, Products, Celebrities, Places to Visit

Instagram is an App that is full of information and has many different stimuli on it all the time.

There are many different brands frequently advertising and promoting their products to teenagers such as these interviewees. The following information was provided by the teenagers when asked about the different types of shared media they had noticed on the platform.

All age groups mentioned that there were all sorts of different things they saw while using Instagram. It was mentioned by the girls that they saw hair and beauty products.

*I am not really sure but things like food product clothes and other random stuff pop up.
(Participant 12)*

Promotions about different styles of clothes and shoes were constantly popping up on their App. The girls also mentioned that they noticed female celebrities and updates of their lives were always being promoted in their feed.

Well I mostly follow accounts about memes and funny stuff, so they sometimes promote different clothing brands which I mostly skip the promos and the adverts because I am not really going to buy anything from there anyway. (Participant 5)

The older female teenagers mentioned that they did not take much notice of the promotions.

I do not follow any brands or celebrities or anything like that. I mainly use it to catch up with my friends through messages. We tend to just tag each other with stuff and just a have a good laugh not really bothered with the other stuff. (Participant 11)

The younger ones admitted that they would sometimes have a look at those types of promotions to get style and fashion ideas.

Well I mostly follow accounts about meme and funny stuff, so they sometimes promote different clothing brands which I mostly skip the promos and the adverts because I am not really going to buy anything from there anyway. (Participant 4)

In contrast, the older females mentioned that they would rather look at their friends' posts for fashion and style ideas as that was the trend and the world, they lived was not what celebrities have to offer.

The older boys had a similar response to the older girls and the younger boys had a similar response the younger girls.

I ignore most random adverts. Yes, I notice a lot of promotional products and celebrities. I do not actually care about what Kim Kardashian or Kane West does. I just enjoy scrolling through mates' stuff. (Participant 6)

Beni, a 16-year-old boy, mentioned that he looked at sports celebrities but realised that their lives were different from his and there was no point in idealising their styles. However, Brooklee, a younger 14-year-old boy, mentioned that he viewed celebrities as ideals that he looked up to for life lessons, goals, and style inspirations.

Acceptance and Friend Requests

When the teenagers were asked what made them accept or send a friend request on Instagram, the answer always leaned towards whether they knew the person or not.

I only accept people that I know and or have mutual friends with. The same things about following people. I mostly follow entertaining stuff that are funny and cool videos to watch. (Participant 5)

Older female teenagers (15-16 years old) were generally fixed on the fact that the person had to be someone they knew in order to be considered or at least to have a mutual friend.

I will always only follow friends or friends of friends and the same thing about accepting. I will always and only accept people that I know or have mutual friends with. (Participant 11)

It was often more of a privacy and pride factor for these teenagers when it came to following and accepting friend requests. The teenagers are worried about their privacy and leaking information on the internet. In this age group it appears that teenagers are proud and would rather wait for someone to send them a follow request rather than the other way around.

If it is something that interest me, I would follow the page. To accept a page, I always make sure it is a legit brand product organisation. I'm worried about dodgy activities. (Participant 3)

The younger females (14 years old) were quite worried about what they were allowed to share on Instagram and also what people could do with their content. Therefore, who they followed

involved more of a fear factor than pride in social media. This was made evident in the comment made by Participant 4:

If it is someone, I know I will accept their request. I will only follow a page if I know the person or the page I am following. I try and be careful about not following random. I am happy using the App because I am careful of what content I want to expose myself to. (Participant 4)

Other female teenagers of the same age had similar answers about exposure and content that they were worried about sharing with the rest of the world and would therefore always use the App with caution.

The older boys (15-16 years old), on the other hand, were particular about the acceptance of a friend request.

I only accept people that I know and or have mutual friends with same things about following people. I mostly follow entertaining stuff that are funny and cool videos to watch (Participant 6).

Amongst the participants, sending friend requests to others was not an issue as long as they were happy with who they were following. However, there was less of a pride factor involved for the boys than for the girls. The boys were mostly interested in doing what they enjoyed on Instagram. The younger girls (14 years old) were also careful about who they followed on Instagram.

The things that drive me to following a page is always the initial post that I liked. If they are my friends or if I knew who they are. I would not accept randoms because you never know what the page is about. It depends on if the page that has requested to follow me if it was set on private and I do not know them then I would not follow. If it is a page that wanted to follow me and it is not private and I like what is being posted on the page then I would follow them. (Participant 8)

It was mentioned by this female age group that they could see themselves idealising a person that they followed on Instagram.

I would say I idealise Drake the most. I like his dress code. Music style everything that he does

is quite unique. That is what I like most about him. I quite enjoy everything that he does but it is more of an entertainment factor. (Participant 8)

Younger females also mentioned that they would always try as hard as they could to copy styles and clothing patterns of people they followed on Instagram. However, the older females were less interested in Instagram influencers, mostly because they were realistic and admitted that they could not be those people and so they did not bother getting involved.

Usage Frequency

It was mentioned by all the teens that they tried to fit their usage around their school hours.

I am normally on it every day for about twice a day when I first wake up and after school but I normally go on it for a few hours each time. (Participant 4)

It was clear that the girls used the platform more than the boys to communicate with their friends.

I am always on it. I use it constantly throughout the whole day and I even wake up in the night sometimes to check what my friends have sent me. I am a bit hooked on it. Because I am always sending things to my friends and they send stuff to me. This is how we mostly communicate. (Participant 11)

The girls also mentioned that they used the platform more frequently during the weekend than during the week because they had more free time.

I am on it daily and three times a day during school and about 30 minutes each time but double that on the weekend. (Participant 2)

The boys mentioned the same patterns; however, they spent less hours on the platform than the girls. One of the boys also admitted that he frequently checked his Instagram, although only in short 10-minute intervals.

I am normally on it every day quite frequently on and off. (Participant 5)

The minimum time spent on the platform by both girls and boys was half an hour per day. However, the girls said they used it longer because it was their main form of communication

with their friends, whereas boys used other platforms to communicate as well, such as Facebook, Snapchat, and SMS.

Purchase Intention on Instagram

When asked if they were ever triggered to act by promotions on Instagram, the teenagers maintained that they did not generally respond to promotions on Instagram as they were fully aware of promotional intent.

No, not at all as I mainly use it to communicate with my friends and as an entertainment hub for us. (Participant 11)

Two of the older girls mentioned that even if they saw something they wanted to purchase on Instagram, they would not buy it right there and then. They said it would take them a while to research the company brand and website that was advertising before actually purchasing what they were interested in. It was also mentioned by one of the girls that even when they had finally decided to buy something, they would not buy it via Instagram; instead, they would go on the actual website and make their purchase.

Yes, I saw a clothing ad on Instagram once and I clicked on the link to go to the website and I purchased a top from there. (Participant 2)

The older boys also said that although there had been cases where they had seen things that they would like to purchase on Instagram, they would not do so because they were aware of the promotional intent.

I have a debit card and I do a fair amount of shopping but nothing from or because of Instagram influence. (Participant 6)

However, one boy mentioned that he had purchased a game online after being influenced by Instagram; however, the purchase was still made through the actual company and not via Instagram.

Yes, I have purchased games due to ads I have seen about a game called COD. I got really attached and inspired by the game and I ended up buying a few different games. I was disappointed in the games and waiting for the new ones to come out so I can buy them as well.

OVelanall, I was happy with the purchase and I was happy to purchase it online – it was easier to buy online. (Participant 6)

The younger boys and girls both mentioned that there were many things that they would like to buy from Instagram but there were restrictions in their lives that did not allow them to do so.

No, I have not. There are a few promotions, but my parents do not like to buy stuff online. They do not like it because they have not had any experience of online shopping. So, they do not let us do it. (Participant 7)

Most of the younger boys and girls did not have credit or debit cards to purchase products online or on Instagram; therefore, purchasing was not really an option and they were accepting of that. They mentioned that when they saw promotions on the platform, it gave them inspirational ideas instead.

No I have not, because I cannot buy anything online – no bank card that allows me to buy. Also, I cannot get around to buying something that I saw and liked on my page. (Participant 8)

Influence of Instagram

When asked if they were influenced by Instagram, the teenagers maintained that the influence was minimal because of lifestyle differences.

No not at all. I just use it as a hub to communicate with my friends. I don't really use it for anything else. I mean I go and scroll through stuff but hardly really follow anything or anyone (Participant 11)

The teenagers were aware that they could not emulate everything they saw on Instagram.

The most thing that I am influenced by from using Instagram is the way I dress. Other things I do not really adapt into my life. (Participant 3).

Two of the girls mentioned that they were quite influenced by travel promotions and posts; however, their age and financial and schooling situation did not allow them to take things further. However, they mentioned that what they saw on Instagram, such as travel promotions and fashion, gave them ideas for the future and they had time to plan and decide how they could approach the things they were influenced by when they were older.

Yes, I think in some aspects, I tend to take similar photos and dress and go out to similar to my friends if I see them and get ideas from them. I mostly am influenced by friends about the type of clothes they wear and places they visit. I am not influenced by celebrities because I do not really follow any. I mean some celebrities may help me choose what brand or product I may buy but not really effect my personality. (Participant 10)

The older boys said that they were not at all influenced by anything they saw on Instagram, other than gaining inspirational ideas to better their lives if they could.

No, not really. I am not about any of that stuff. I go with the cheapest options when I am shopping. Instagram posts and promotions are not influential to me at all. (Participant 6)

Both older boys and girls also mentioned that once again, they were restricted in what they could do based on their age group and schooling situation. The teenagers did mention that Instagram was a good way to get ideas and to see what is happening around the world; however, they did not foresee any dramatic life change based on the influence of Instagram.

The younger boys and girls also mentioned that they were just happy to get ideas from Instagram, although there was no real opportunity for them to act on them since their lives were restricted by age and school.

I am mostly influenced by the type of dressing and styles that I see on my Instagram page. I like to get ideas about dressing and styles from what people post on my Instagram. (Participant 8)

They also had similar responses to the older teenagers in that they could not see Instagram dramatically changing their lives. They were interested in different hair and dress styles but nothing that would cause them to seek a life change.

No, I am more likely to be influenced by friends and family rather than someone I do not know. (Participant 2)

Like the older teenagers, they were fully aware of their restrictions and that not everything that they saw on Instagram could be applied to their real lives.

Relating to and Idealising Instagram Celebrities

The teenagers were asked if they related to or idealised celebrities on Instagram. Both older and younger teenagers thought that most Instagram celebrities are either fake or live unrealistic lives.

No, because that is not why I use it. I am mainly using it for entertainment. (Participant 11)

All were aware of the promotional intent behind Instagram celebrities and showed very little interest in their pages. Most of the teenagers mentioned that they did not follow celebrities because they did not see any point in it.

I would pay attention to what they are saying but I would not really relate to them. (Participant 2)

Although the teenagers admitted that it was nice to see the different styles and fashions of celebrities, it was nothing they could apply to their own lives. Many of the teenagers mentioned they were better off following their friends as this was more realistic. Following a world that was beyond them was seen as a waste of time.

I don't really follow celebrity culture or anything. I am not interested at all. I follow a lot of meme pages for entrainment. (Participant 6)

All were happy with their situation and what they had and could not see themselves relating to any of the celebrities on Instagram.

I like and enjoy the content of celebrities but no I don't idealise them at all. (Participant 3)

It was mentioned by the older girls that it was nice to see the different makeup styles on Instagram celebrities, but it was not something they needed in their everyday lives.

No, not really. Different lifestyles and it's nice to be entertained but nothing I see on my Instagram page really relates to my life. (Participant 6)

They also mentioned that they knew the difference between their lifestyles.

Not really. I don't follow any but mostly get ideas from them about stuff but I do not idealise them at all. (Participant 10)

The younger girls also mentioned that it was hard to compare the lives of celebrities with their own, while the older boys said it was nice to just look at a few videos and pictures.

Not at all, no way. I do not really care about any of that stuff. Mostly memes photos and videos is what I enjoy most about the App. (Participant 6)

The younger boys mentioned that it was cool to see how celebrities dress and what their lives are like but they were fully aware that their own lives were different and therefore they just enjoyed the posts.

I would say I idealise Drake the most. I like his dress code. Music style everything that he does is quite unique. That is what I like most about him. I quite enjoy everything that he does but it is more of an entertainment factor. (Participant 8)

Different Types of Posts, Pages, and Advertising on Instagram

The older teenagers had sound knowledge of the different types of pages on Instagram. They could easily differentiate the promotional pages from the inspirational and influential pages. Both the older boys and girls were fully aware what each page and post was trying to do.

Yes, I know the difference between all the different types of posts. Some will try to suck you in with images, music, and influential quotes, whatever, but clearly, they are just promoting stuff to sell. (Participant 6)

They mentioned that pages and posts were often about promotional products that prompted a reaction such as click here, buy now, colours, and music.

Yes, a lot of sponsored adverts and promotions on my page. Some things are relevant to me and I can relate to and some are just really annoying. (Participant 5)

They also mentioned that promotional posts were quite informative about what they were promoting. The teenagers maintained that it was possible to get a quick insight into what a product was and how it worked from a 20-second post.

Yes, I normally can tell on Instagram what is an advert post, what is a sponsored post, and what is a normal post. They are all different from each other and they all have a different way of being presented. (Participant 8)

Yes, I notice a lot of sponsored adverts and promotions on my page and they are different from normal posts because they always require an action to be taken. That is when you know that this is an advert or a promotion. (Participant 7)

The younger students had a good understanding of the different types of pages and posts as well. However, they mentioned that they would sometimes get caught up in some of the pages and

were tempted to click on a post to get more information. They said even though they knew they were unable to purchase from that post or page, it was still interesting enough for them to want to have a look.

It was also explained by all the students, young and old, that they could tell when a page was sponsored because Instagram lets viewers know.

Yes, I normally can tell on Instagram what is an advert post, what is a sponsored post, and what is a normal post. They are all different from each other and they all have a different way of being presented to you. (Participant 2)

It was easy for the teenagers to see that a post or page was sponsored and promoting a product. Typically, promotional posts and pages always look better than normal posts and pages due to the quality of the pictures and videos.

Yes, ... advert posts are better looking than standard posts of people. Also, they always tell you to follow a link or make you try and buy stuff. (Participant 2)

The teenagers were aware that Instagram used models to promote products and to encourage viewers to buy. The teens explained that they were constantly being encouraged to buy things on Instagram and they were used to the advertising and promotions.

Always trying to sell something, waste of time. (Participant 2)

Thoughts on Advertising

The teens all thought that advertising on Instagram was about promoting products and encouraging viewers to buy products.

Always has a go shop here or do this or do that. It always gives you instructions that lead you to buying something online. (Participant 7)

The older teenagers were able to differentiate between good and bad advertising. It was explained that bad advertising is when the promotions are “in your face” and ask viewers to react and make a purchase despite there being no connection with the audience at all. It was explained that good advertising is when the promotion relates to the audience and uses emotions and stories to connect the audience to the advertisement.

Yes, sponsored posts are always in your face and flashy. Also, just the way they are done, you can tell what type of post it is going to be about and I tend to ignore them. (Participant 6)

They mentioned that promotions and advertisements that were prominent and persuasive were annoying.

An advert is always trying to sell you something and it flashes a lot in your face. It's quite annoying actually because I am just not interested in buying anything online (Participant 12)

The teenagers were likely to skip through the promotions and advertising, whether these were imbedded in stories in their feed or in a general Instagram search.

They always try and promote things to users. The promotions are always trying to get you to buy stuff and tell you how to dress eat and drink. (Participant 11)

However, it was mentioned by some of the older teenagers that they appreciated advertisements and promotions that had meaning and that they could relate to. Most regarded advertisements from well-known brands as good as they were always informative.

Always trying to promote something – maybe themselves as a page or their brand or product through promotions. They are quite informative about the information they are trying to feed you. (Participant 13)

The younger teenagers had a similar response to the older students, however, their reasoning was somewhat different. The younger teenagers mentioned that they were quite helpless in terms of their reactions or thoughts about advertising because they were limited by age and life situations from do anything about it.

Always trying to sell something – waste of time. (Participant 2)

However, some of the younger teenagers could see that different types of advertising were either good or bad and they did not mention that the advertising annoyed them or was a waste of time. They mentioned that they enjoyed the advertisements and that they would like to take action on some if their circumstances did not rule that out.

Yes colorful, sound and sometimes it works even on me if the combination is right. I would most likely click or go to a page that advertised to me if they have good promotional stuff online and I can purchase things I like. (Participant 4)

Some of the younger teenagers admitted that they found inspiration in some of the advertisements that they saw and this helped them better their lives. One of the younger boys mentioned that he watched and followed a lot of MBA related material on Instagram.

I follow the MBA and I always see and enjoy all their posts. But for some reason, I am also always seeing posts and adverts about adidas and culture kings the clothing brand. I think they are related because some of the MBA players use both those brands. (Participant 8)

He mentioned that looking at his favourite team's advertising products such as shoes and clothes made him want to purchase those things once he was able. He also mentioned that seeing those types of advertisements made him want to play basketball more and practice more so that he could be an MBA player one day.

Brands that Advertise and Promote on Your Page

All the teenagers mentioned that advertising and promotion were apparent everywhere on Instagram in many different shapes and forms.

Mostly sports brands like Nike, adidas, and lots of clothing brands. (Participant 11)

They knew the different branded advertisements – those that were imbedded in their feed and those that were public.

All sorts everything about clothes, shoes, food. They have a lot of stuff, but I am mostly interested in pages about makeup and celebrities to see what the new trend is. (Participant 9)

The older students, both male and female, knew that there were cookies on Instagram that allowed the different brands to recognise what each person was looking at and then imbed targeted advertising on their page.

All sorts everything about clothes, travel and shoes and it is stuff I am interested in – it entertains me sometimes. It gives me ideas about what I would like to do when I am older and freer to do things on my own. (Participant, 7)

The girls mentioned that whenever they showed interest in particular makeup or a clothing brand, many other brands started to appear on their page alongside the brand they showed interest in. The older boys said that whenever they started to follow a meme page or liked a meme, they were encouraged to follow similar pages.

Morphy is a makeup brand that I follow and always see adverts and promotions and it does not bother me because I like the brand. I follow it and it just makes me sad that I cannot buy all their products. Zaful also advertises a lot of products on my page and they annoy me because I do not follow them. (Participant 9)

Also, the boys enjoyed video games and mentioned that whenever they liked anything to do with video games, they would see other related advertising on their page.

Not really, just a whole lot of random stuff like Vodafone, Spark, lots of gaming ads as well. (Participant 5)

It was explained by the older teenagers that they knew the intent behind the embedded advertising but it did not influence them unless they were fully satisfied with what they wanted to engage with.

Also, lots of adverts about Instagram models and what they do and where they go which I am not interested in and does not do anything for me. (Participant 5).

The younger teenagers also knew that different brands were targeting them with advertising and promotions. They were able to name brands such as Nike, adidas, Apple and others and mentioned that they received a lot of their advertising. It was not explained by the younger teenagers why or how these brands were appearing.

A lot of sports advertising and promotions because I follow a lot of sports. A lot of sports shoes and clothing advertising. (Participant 8)

The younger teenagers also focused more on what brands they liked and why they liked them instead of explaining the technical reasons for the appearance of the advertising. Unlike the older students, they were not able to explain that Instagram and brand cookies can help advertising companies target them as individuals.

Nike, adidas, I don't really pay attention to them much, but I can still see them. (Participant 2)

The teens were all following different brands and many brands were mentioned. The older girls discussed makeup and hair styling brands. The older boys named a number of gaming, sports, and clothing brands. The younger girls also mentioned makeup and beauty brands as well as travel agent brands because they were interested in travelling. The younger boys mentioned a lot of sports and clothing brands. The majority of the teenagers named Nike, adidas, Gucci and Prada LV, and other top brands.

Purchase Decision Making Prompted by Instagram Advertising

The older teenagers mentioned that they had never been pushed to buy anything instantly on Instagram.

No, never do that. I like to make my own decisions. (Participant 6)

The older teenagers also said that even if they wanted something they saw on Instagram, they would only make a purchase after first looking into the page and brand.

Not really. A lot of promotions pop up in my face all the time but not really, I just ignore them. Just because I see them doesn't mean I would care about what they say or do. (Participant 13)

Although most of the teenagers did not buy anything online, the few that did were not hasty in their purchasing. It was mentioned by one of the older female teenagers that she had wanted to buy some clothes that she had seen on Instagram but she waited for two weeks before doing so. Also, an older male student made a gaming purchase but only bought the game after a week of deciding and researching. It was outlined by all the teenagers that they never felt pushed or convinced enough to buy something online straight away.

No not really, because I'm not interested, and parents are strict about this type of stuff. (Participant 11)

Some of the teenagers also mentioned that they liked to go shopping with their friends to buy things such as clothes. They felt that buying online was quite a dull process; instead, they enjoyed going to the malls and seeing the actual product and trying it on before they bought it. Although they admitted that buying online was easier and sometimes cheaper, they also mentioned it could easily go wrong if, for example, they were not aware of the size differences in

clothing. The older boys had similar thoughts about online buying and preferred to go to an actual store to buy products.

Yes, there are a lot of things that I would like to do that I see on my Instagram page. I wouldn't say I get pushed to making a decision because my age and school prevent me from a lot of things that I like to do or can do. There are a lot of things that I would like to do and have been influenced by or brought to my attention through Instagram but I am waiting for when I am a bit older as at this stage my age prevents me from doing much. (Participant 8)

One of the older boys also mentioned that online buying was something that needed practice and understanding before any action was taken, and for this reason he would never just buy something on Instagram straight away.

None of the younger teenagers made purchases online because they were not able to. It was not possible for them to obtain credit cards and therefore online shopping was not an option. They also mentioned that they had seen things that they would have liked to buy but they were unable to because of parental restrictions on online purchasing.

Not really. A lot of promotions pop up in my face all the time but not really. I just ignore them also because even if I wanted to buy something I couldn't because no money no card and cannot afford it as a student. (Participant 14)

They added they were happy to just to look at products and to become inspired by what they saw. They were not worried that they could not purchase anything online.

Not at all. Even if I saw a promotion and advert that I like I will always only buy what I would like to buy. I get inspired and stuff by things, but I do not buy anything that I do not like. (Participant 3)

The younger teenagers all seemed happy to just look at products until they were old enough to be able to purchase online. It was also mentioned by one of the younger female teenagers that it was all a learning curve for her and she was happy to get travel and cooking ideas from Instagram.

No pressure at all. I am usually happy browsing and enjoying the entertainment. I do not tend to hang on promotions and adverts. They do not affect me. (Participant 3)

This student explained that she was happy even though she could not purchase anything online. She was more concerned about making the wrong purchase and upsetting her parents.

Summary of Interview Analysis

The questions relating to the use of Instagram were asked of all teenagers of different age groups, genders, and ethnicities. The overall feedback received from younger teenagers was different to that of the older students. Younger teenagers mostly used Instagram to look at things that they enjoyed and that brought inspiration to their lives. The younger teenagers also used the App to gather information about activities they wanted to take part in such as travel and sports. It was also mentioned by the younger teenagers that they were quite happy to just look at advertising and promotions as they enjoyed being informed about the world and what it had to offer. It was made clear by the younger teenagers that they were aware of their limitations such as no credit/debit card or transport. These limitations were based on their age and affected their responses to what they saw on Instagram. Because of their lack of power and resources, they had limited options in terms of what they could do on Instagram.

In contrast to the younger students, the older teenagers had more power and less limitations in their use of Instagram. Some of these teenagers were able to purchase things that they saw on the App but generally chose not to. These teenagers mentioned that even if they wanted to purchase something they saw on Instagram; they would undertake background research first. The older female teenagers mentioned that they mostly used Instagram to communicate with their friends. There were very few teenagers who had actually made a purchase on Instagram. This was because of trust issues with companies and being afraid to make these types of decisions. Although the teens enjoyed viewing the different types of products available around the world, they were still careful with how they approached their use of Instagram.

The teenagers pointed out that they were exposed to many different types of advertising every time they used Instagram. All teenagers maintained that they could spot the different types of marketing communication that were presented to them. The older teenagers were more able to explain the different types of marketing communication and the purpose of them. The younger teenagers had an idea but less understanding of the intent and the reasons behind the different types of marketing communication that they were exposed to. Even though the younger teenagers knew what marketing communication was on Instagram, they did not fully explain the

fact that behind all the content was a purchase prompt. The ultimate aim of all the marketing communication presented was to encourage the teenagers to make a purchase, something that was recognised by the older teenagers. Overall, both males and females said that they ignored most marketing communication because they were fully aware of the intention of the marketers.

The teenagers were exposed to many international brands, such as Nike, adidas, and Gucci. These brands all presented advertising that captured the teenagers' attention; however, none actually drove them to take impulsive, immediate action in the form of making a decision on the spot. The teenagers mentioned that they found promotional communication quite annoying and that they generally skipped through it. The teenagers explained that they were aware of all the different types of promotional content and that made them careful in how they reacted to these promotions. From the observations made at the interviews, it was clear, even through the students' body language, that they were aware of marketing communication intent. The teenagers were not influenced by promotions such as cheap deals and adverts that asked for a reaction and they simply flicked through them.

There are many influencers on Instagram that the teenagers were exposed to but not very affected by. The older teenagers mentioned that they did not really care about the world of the influencers. They explained that they knew the difference between celebrity lives and their own lives. The older girls mentioned that they sometimes got makeup and fashion ideas from the celebrities that they were exposed to, but they would never think of idealising any of them. Most of the older teenagers thought they were better off focusing on the real world rather than on a world that they did not belong to or want to belong to. The teenagers made it clear that they were not seriously affected by any of the celebrities that they were exposed to on Instagram because they understood reality. These teenagers explained that they were happier to follow their friends' lifestyles and ways of living rather than those of celebrities. Some of the younger teenagers explained that they gained life experience advice and inspiration from celebrities but they did not idealise them or emulate them. For example, some of the younger boys mentioned that they looked up to sports stars and they felt persuaded to get fit and play sports that they were passionate about because of sport stars and they followed their progress through Instagram. One of the younger girls mentioned that she followed a music band and got clothing and hair style ideas from them as well as enjoying listening to them.

Both younger and older teenagers explained that they did not bother following celebrities and mostly followed their friends. The celebrities that were mentioned and were followed by some of the teenagers were Drake, Cristiano Ronaldo and NBA stars, and Kyle Jenner. All teenagers also made it clear that they would only follow or accept to be followed by their friends or people they knew. Two of the older boys mentioned that they would accept a follow request based on the profile if they deemed that person acceptable.

It was clear that the teenagers used Instagram for different purposes, including communicating with friends, entertainment, inspirational ideas, or just out of boredom. All teenagers explained that they were happy with what Instagram had to offer them because it was a part of their lives and they only used it in the way they wanted to. The teenagers explained that they did not feel pressured to make any hasty decisions while using Instagram and what they were exposed to had little to no effect on their lives. It was explained by all that they were happy to keep using Instagram in the way they were used to, and they saw no reason to make any changes. Both males and females made it clear that they were confident in their use of Instagram.

Key Findings Summary

The list below shows the key findings and themes that emerged from the data collected

- All the participants were able to point out marketing communication intended content
- Privacy was a big concern for the majority of participants
- Most of the participants had sound knowledge of using the Instagram platform
- A majority of participants were able to explain the role of advertising on Instagram
- All knew and were able to explain that marketing intention is to eventually persuade viewers to buy or subscribe to something.
- Idealising celebrities and influencers was not that favorable among all the participants
- The use of Instagram among participants was mostly for generating fashion, travel, and food ideas.
- The belief that teenagers are easily influenced by marketing and advertising was not true in the case of these participants
- All the participants were able to explain how marketing communication works on Instagram and in which part of the platform

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This research aimed to give an overview of teenagers' understanding of marketing communication on Instagram. Using qualitative research methods, interviews were conducted to obtain information on 15 teenage participants reacting to marketing communication through Instagram. This research examined how and why these teenagers used Instagram. The platform was discussed with the teenagers to see what effect it had on them in regard to marketing communication.

This chapter will discuss the research question and what it means so that readers can be reminded of the purpose of this research. The findings from the research will be discussed and explained in relation to the extant literature review to determine whether there are similarities or disparities in the conclusions. The implications and limitations of the research will also be explained as well as ideas for future research.

The Research Question

The purpose of this study was to determine the awareness teenagers have of marketing communication on Instagram. The research question was, "Are teenagers aged 14-16 aware of marketing communication intentions on Instagram?" The question takes into consideration what teenagers think of advertising on Instagram and if they are aware that it is aimed at them. The question also relates to how teenagers react to marketing communication on Instagram. To answer the research question, 15 teenage teenagers were interviewed and observed while they interacted with their Instagram account.

Comparison of Research Findings with the Literature

The literature review conducted in this research showed evidence that social media platforms such as Instagram are increasingly popular among teenagers (Smith, 2015). Instagram in particular is a platform that teenagers enjoy actively using and are knowledgeable about. The teenagers interviewed for this research were able to describe exactly how they use Instagram and the purpose of their use. The younger teenagers who were interviewed shared that they were using the platform mostly for entertainment and to gain inspirational ideas on such subjects as

style and fashion. The older teenagers stated that they used the platform mainly for browsing and communicating with their friends. The teenagers also mentioned that while they enjoyed using the platform, they were always aware that matters could get out of hand when using such Apps. This showed that the teenagers were worried about privacy matters and thus most stated that they were careful about what they posted online and what they allowed to come through on their feeds. Previous research does not indicate that young teenagers are actually aware of all these issues (Batat, 2008), which means that they are vulnerable and need to be monitored.

It has also been found that young teenagers are not fully aware of the marketing communication that appears on social media platforms such as Instagram (Lawlor et al., 2016). However, all the teenagers who took part in this research pointed out to the interviewer that they were aware of marketing communication intent on Instagram and that they were the targets of advertising. They were also able to explain the different types of posts and advertisements on Instagram, commenting that they found it annoying that brands were constantly trying to promote goods and services in the hope of getting a reaction out of them.

During the interviews, the teenagers showed the interviewer the different types of sponsored posts that they were being targeted by. They were able to differentiate marketing communication content and the purpose of it by pointing out that promotional content is always informative about a specific product. The older boys mentioned that brands and companies were always trying to sell them products. They pointed out that that they were aware of this and explained that marketing communication is all over Instagram. The older girls also pointed out that they were targeted to purchase goods and services throughout Instagram. Both older and younger teenagers mentioned that they skipped through advertising while using the App, knowing the intent was to encourage the user to click on the links provided and to make a purchase. All the teenagers had a good understanding of what each brand and company was trying to do with their posts on Instagram – which was to sell something.

Even though these teenagers had little experience as consumers, they had a sound understanding of marketing communication on Instagram. The teenagers made it clear that they all used Instagram for their own individual purposes. The older girls said that they mostly used the direct message (DM) function to communicate with their friends. This helped them organise events and share things they enjoyed with each other such as videos, photos, and memes. They were most

happy with the privacy factor of the DM function. The older boys also maintained that they used Instagram to stay in touch with friends and to enjoy memes for entertainment. The younger teenagers also mentioned they enjoyed the entertainment aspects of Instagram.

The findings from this research differ from the findings of previous research. According to Lawlor et al. (2016), teenagers are unaware of any marketing communication and advertising on social media platforms. The teenagers who took part in the research by Lawlor et al. (2016) expressed that they did not understand what the different types of posts and pop-ups meant on social media sites – referring to pop-ups as square boxes that appear on the top of the social networking site they were using. The teenagers in this research showed that they were aware of marketing communication on Instagram and they were able to explain how it works. They came from a high decile college and their understanding of Instagram advertising was better than suggested by previous research. These teenagers also explained that to protect themselves and their identities, they were always careful about what they clicked on as they were always worried about the content they could be exposed to. It was also explained by the teenagers that they were very careful about who they followed and who they allowed to follow them. These teenagers were fully alert and had a solid understanding of being safe when using Instagram based on the fear that it could lead them to negative content and a cyber-world that they do not want to belong to. In the interviews, they stressed that they ignored anything that tried to capture them into a sale or trick them into sharing any further details about themselves. All the teenagers that took part in this research explained that the online world was frightening and that they were always careful about what they did.

In their study, Hempel and Lehman (2005) found that teenagers spend up to six hours a day on social media. This differed for the teenagers involved in this research, who managed their time on Instagram and went on it either before or after school with an average of two to three hours use a day. The majority of the teenagers mentioned that their use increased to six hours a day during the weekend when they had no school and more time. However, Instagram was not a priority in their lives, and they fitted it around other activities. There have been claims in the literature that teenagers look for recognition and social media sites such as Instagram are the place for them to achieve this; these sites are their playground and places where they can voice their opinions (Lawlor et al., 2016). However, this was not the case for teenagers in this research,

who were concerned about the content they shared on the Instagram platform. This can be partly explained by the fact that the teenagers came from different cultural backgrounds and their upbringing had a strong influence on the control they had in their use of social media. There is no indication that that teenagers of this research lacked knowledge about marketing content intentions. While upbringing and parental education is important in social media use, these teenagers showed that they could educate themselves from experience and interaction with social media.

It is assumed by previous research that older users of social media sites such as Instagram are more experienced in marketing communication intent. Teenagers of this research proved that this is not the case and they were able to show their experience and understanding of Instagram to a high level. While Lawlor et al. (2016) maintain that teenagers are likely to be addicted to social media use, these teenagers explained that time management was important in their lives and therefore their lives did not revolve around Instagram. Instead, it was the other way around in that the teenagers placed education, sports, family, and friends before their use of Instagram.

It was explained by the teenagers of this research that they did not depend on Instagram to actually develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them even though it played a big role. It was explained that they relied on friends and family to gain knowledge and understanding as consumers. Previous research (e.g., Batat, 2008) has found that teenagers use social media and online websites as their main knowledge source. This research indicates that there have been changes in how teenagers think about and use social media. While it is often believed that teenagers live on social media sites such as Instagram and these sites are an essential part of their lives, this research has shown that this is not entirely the case. As much as mobile devices and social media sites such as Instagram have become part of this world, it seems that teenagers are used to their presence and have managed to extract their benefits accordingly. This means they know when to use platforms such as Instagram for entertainment, education, knowledge, and other factors in their day to day life.

Theoretical Contribution

The question investigated in this research was, “Are teenagers aged 14-16 aware of marketing communication intentions on Instagram?” Based on the conducted research and data analysis, the answer to the question was yes. The research confirmed that teenagers aged 14-16 years of age

are aware of marketing communication intentions. The research also proved that these teenagers were able to point out the different types of marketing communication on Instagram. This contribution can help researchers develop an understanding of teenagers of this age.

Managerial Implications

Based on the research results, there are factors managers need to take into consideration for the future. The first thing managers need to think about is their communication with teenagers. Managers cannot assume that teenagers of this age are mindless and can be pulled into any type of advertising. In fact, all the teenagers involved in this research had sound knowledge of what marketers were trying to achieve and they all knew when they were being targeted. Teenagers of today do not respond to aggressive advertising and are likely to skip through it.

For managers to operationalise these findings, they need to take into consideration that these teenagers are more aware of typical mass marketing. Every marketing communication intention by managers must be thought out carefully, which means these teenagers need to be communicated to with something they can relate to.

This research indicates that teenagers understand privacy and they do not like it to be abused through cookies and other tracking devices. They know and understand that what is presented to them is based on an interest they have shown, and they understand the link between cookies and what is advertised to them.

It is best that marketing managers communicate to teenagers in less aggressive ways as teenagers are unlikely to respond to being told what to do. Managers cannot assume that all teenagers are the same – they may be wiser and more knowledgeable than past research suggests. The most effective marketing communication managers can utilise is the type that gives teenagers the choice to think and the option to do.

Limitations

The first limitation of this research is the choice of school from which the data was collected – it is one of the highest ranked schools in the country. This meant that the teenage participants who attended this school had a guarded social upbringing and understood what they could and could not do on social media. It was clear that these teenagers were highly educated and discussed the

need to use Instagram reasonably and to protect themselves from content they should not be seeing. Future research could compare a low decile school with a high decile school to see how this affects the data.

The second limitation of this research is the different cultural backgrounds of the student participants. Some teenagers were influenced by their parents concerning their social media activities and their parents played a big role in their Instagram usage. The Asian teenagers in particular referred to what their parents allowed them to do. The European teenagers also had a “correct upbringing” but there was not as much parental influence concerning what they could do on Instagram. Future research could widen the ethnic mix of participants to get a broader picture of how ethnicity can affect the way in which teenagers react to marketing communication on Instagram. The third limitation is the availability of devices. The student participants had grown up with devices such as mobile phones always available and thus control and responsibility of these things has been taught to them.

Thesis Conclusion

The assumption that all teenagers are similar and need to be educated about marketing communication needs to change. The teenagers involved in this study had a sound knowledge and understanding of the intent of marketing communication on Instagram. Moreover, they pointed out that they were fully aware of the power of Instagram influencers, but they had little interest in following them. The teenagers also provided evidence that they had good time management in terms of their use of Instagram.

Teenagers of this generation are different depending on the type of upbringing they have had and the environment in which they live. This research shows that teenagers maybe be smarter and wiser than the literature has suggested. They are aware of and understand the fact that they are a target of different types of promotions and advertising. It is best to treat teenagers of this generation as a special case. As more specific research data is collected on teenagers’ reactions to marketing communications on social media, a clearer picture of this issue will emerge.

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Appendix 1- Ethics Approval Letter



Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

AUT

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKĀU RAU

3 July 2019

Ken Hyde
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Ken

Re Ethics Application: **19/182 Are children in the age range of 14 to 16 aware of the different types of marketing communication on Instagram?**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

The school's approval for access is noted.

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 3 July 2022.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation, then you are responsible for obtaining it. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,

Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: aliubaid177@gmail.com; katharine.jones@aut.ac.nz

Appendix 2- Participants Information Sheets

Information Sheet

AUT

TE WĪNANCA ARONHI
O TĀMARI MAKAU RAU

This letter tells you what will happen if you want to help me do the study.

Hello,

My name is Ali Ubaid and I am a Master of Business student at AUT University. I am finding out if children in the age range of 14 – 16 are aware of the different types of marketing communication on Instagram. I am finding out if teenagers like yourselves understand the different advertising that is targeting you and how to explain it.

I am really wanting to know how much knowledge teenagers have about marketing communication on Instagram and if they understand it. I am interested to find out what teenagers make of marketing communication on Instagram and how they explain it.

If you would like to be part of the study, I will interview you at your school in your [class room](#) or a room where we can talk freely. That way I can make sure you understand the questions and are aware of your answers.

I will ask you questions about how you use Instagram and how much notice you take of the different things happening in the app. You will be observed while you are on Instagram and will be asked questions about what you are seeing and doing.

The information you give me will help me write a report that will help me understand how aware children and young people of your age are about the different types of marketing communication used on Instagram.

You don't have to do this if you don't want to. If you would like to participate, I will invite you to sign an Assent form, and I will invite your Parent or Guardian to sign a Consent form.

If you don't understand anything you can just ask me what I am doing. I won't use your real name when I write my report. If there is something you don't understand or are scared about you can talk to your parents.

You get to keep a copy of this Information Sheet and the Letter That Gives Your Permission.

Thank you for your help.

Ali Ubaid

Participant Information Sheet

AUT

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMĀKĀI MĀKĀU RĀU

Date Information Sheet Produced:

25/06/2019

Project Title

A Study About Teenagers and Marketing Communications on Instagram

An Invitation

You are cordially invited to participate in this research because you have been identified as an Instagram user between the age of 14 – 16 years old. This research is being conducted as part of my Master of Business degree with Auckland University of Technology.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of the research is to identify how much knowledge teenagers have about marketing communication on Instagram and if they understand it. I am interested to find out what teenagers make of marketing communication on Instagram and how they explain it.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been selected on the basis that you have an Instagram account and are within the age range of 14 - 16.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and ~~whether or not~~ you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You will be invited to sign a consent form for participation in the interview.

You ~~are able to~~ withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

If you would like to be part of the study, I will interview you at school (outside of class-time) in your classroom or a room where you are free to talk, when there will be a teacher present. Or I will interview at your home with a parent or guardian present at an agreed time and date. I will be asking you questions about how you use Instagram and how much notice you take of the different things happening in the app. You will be observed while you are on Instagram and will be asked questions about what you are seeing and doing. This will take approximately 30 minutes.

Where will the interview take place?

The interview will take place within one of the high schools in the Auckland region. A School is yet to be selected by Ali Ubaid. Once a school has been selected you will be notified the full details of the school.

What are the discomforts and risks?

There are no potential discomforts with completing the interview.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

There are minimal discomforts or risks involved in this research.

What are the benefits?

You will receive a \$10 gift voucher as a token of appreciation for your participation.

How will my privacy be protected?

The interview is confidential and you will not be asked for any information that will identify you.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost in participating in the research. The interview may require up to thirty minutes of your time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please take up to one week to decide if you want to respond.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you would like to request an Executive Summary of the research findings when they are complete, please email anahmad@aut.ac.nz

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Ken Hyde, ken.hyde@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 ext.5605

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 ext.6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Ali Ubaid

aliubaid177@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Assoc. Prof. Ken Hyde

ken.hyde@aut.ac.nz

(09) 921 9999 ext.5605

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 3 July 2019, AUTEK Reference number 19/182.

Information Sheet for parents/ guardians

Date Information Sheet Produced:

25/06/2019

Project Title

A Study About Teenagers and Marketing Communications on Instagram

An Invitation

This is an invitation for your child to participate in this research because they have been identified as an Instagram user between the age of 14 – 16 years old. This research is being conducted as part of my Master of Business degree with Auckland University of Technology.

What is the purpose of this research?

The aim of the research is to identify how much knowledge teenagers have about marketing communication on Instagram and if they understand it. I am interested to find out what teenagers make of marketing communication on Instagram and how they explain it. It is a research topic that will aim to help teenagers and parents gain an understanding about social media advertising.

How was my child identified and why are they being invited to participate in this research?

Your child has been selected on the basis that he/she has an active Instagram account and is within the age range of 14 - 16.

How do I accept that my child can participate in this research?

Your child's participation in this research is voluntary (it is your child's and your choice) and ~~whether or not~~ your child participates will neither advantage nor disadvantage them. You will be invited to sign a consent form for your child's participation in the interview. Your child will also be invited to sign a consent or assent form. Your child will receive a \$10 gift voucher as a token of appreciation for their participation.

Your child ~~is able to~~ withdraw from the study at any time. If they choose to withdraw from the study, then they will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to them removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

If your child would like to be part of the study, I will interview them at school (outside of class-time) in their classroom or a room where they are free to talk, when there will be a teacher present. Or I will interview them at your home with a parent or guardian present at an agreed time and date. I will be asking your child questions about how they use Instagram and how much notice they take of the different things happening in the app. Your child will be observed while they are on Instagram and will be asked questions about what they are seeing and doing. This will take approximately 30 minutes.

Where will the interview take place?

The interview will take place at your school or at your home at an agreed time and date. If the interview takes place at the school then a teacher will be present and if at home a parent or guardian will be present. Your child ~~will be around an adult at all times.~~

What are the discomforts and risks?

There are no potential discomforts with completing the interview.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

There are minimal discomforts or risks involved in this research.

What are the benefits?

Your child will receive a \$10 gift voucher as a token of appreciation for their participation.

How will my privacy be protected?

The interview is confidential and your child will not be asked for any information that will identify them.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost in participating in the research. The interview may require up to thirty minutes of your child's time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please take up to one week to decide if you would like your child to participate in this research.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you would like to request an Executive Summary of the research findings when they are complete, please email anahmod@aut.ac.nz

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Ken Hyde, ken.hyde@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 ext.5605

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, (09) 921 9999 ext.5038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Ali Ubaid

aliubaid177@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Assoc. Prof. Ken Hyde

ken.hyde@aut.ac.nz

(09) 921 9999 ext.5605

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 3 July 2019, AUTEK Reference number 19/182.

Appendix 3- Consent/Assent Forms



Assent Form

Project title: *Are children in the age range of 14 - 16 aware of the different types of marketing communication on Instagram*

Project Supervisor: *Ken Hyde & Katharine Jones*

Researcher: *All Ubaid*

- I have read and understood the sheet telling me what will happen in this study and why it is important.
- I have been able to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that only notes will be taken during the interviews and no audio or video recording will be used.
- I understand that I can stop being part of this study whenever I want and that it is perfectly ok for me to do this.
- If I stop being part of the study, I understand that then I will be offered the choice between having any information that that other people can know is about me removed or letting the researcher keep using it. I also understand that sometimes, if the results of the research have been written, some information about me may not be able to be removed.
- I agree to take part in this research.

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 3 July 2019, AUTEK Reference number 19/182.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Consent Form

Project title: *Are children in the age range of 14 - 16 aware of the different types of marketing communication on Instagram*

Project Supervisor: *Ken Hyde & Katharine Jones*

Researcher: *Ali Ubaid*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 21st June 2019
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that only notes will be taken during the interviews and no audio or video recording will be used.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes No

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 3 July 2019, AUTEK Reference number 19/182.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Project title: *Are children in the age range of 14 - 16 aware of the different types of marketing communication on Instagram*

Project Supervisor: *Ken Hyde & Katharine Jones*

Researcher: *All Ubaid*

I Understand that I am consenting to a face-to-face interview, with my child. All Ubaid will be interviewing my child, EITHER at home at an agreed time OR at school in the classroom at an agreed time with a teacher OR present close by. I also understand that my child will be interviewed on his / hers social networking application Instagram.

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 21st June 2019.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that only notes will be taken during the interviews and no audio or video recording will be used.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand that if I withdraw my child/children and/or myself from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to my child/children and/or myself removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of our data may not be possible.
- I agree to my child/children taking part in this research.
- I understand that my child is able to refuse to give assent to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes No

Child/children's name(s) :

Parent/Guardian's signature:

Parent/Guardian's name:

Parent/Guardian's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 3 July 2019, AUTEK Reference number 19/182.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.