

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram

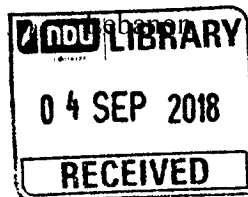
A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Arts in Media Studies/Advertising

by

Eliana Moarbes

Department of Media Studies
Notre Dame University – Louaize



FALL 2017

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Masters of Arts in Media Studies/Advertising

by

Eliana Moarbes

Department of Media Studies

Notre Dame University – Louaize

Lebanon

FALL 2017

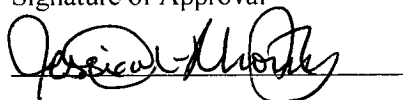
Thesis Committee:

Name

Signature of Approval

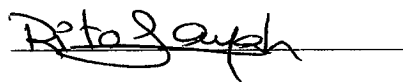
Date

Dr. Jessica R. El-Khoury
Thesis Advisor, Assistant Professor



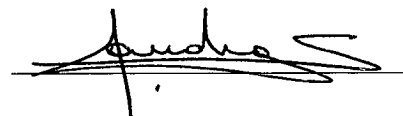
8-31-2018

Dr. Rita Sayyah
1st Reader, Assistant Professor



8/31/2018

Ms. Sandra Younes
2nd Reader, Lecturer



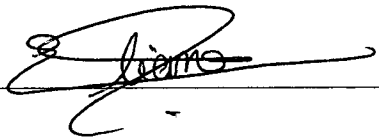
8-31-2018

Department of Media Studies

The Thesis Release Form

I, Eliana Morales, authorize Notre Dame University – Louaize to supply copies of my thesis to libraries or individuals on request.

I, _____, do not authorize Notre Dame University – Louaize to supply copies of my thesis to libraries or individuals on request.



Signature

23-7-2018

Date

Table of Contents

Abstract	
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Chapter 2: Literature Review	3
2.1 The Influence of Fashion Blogging	3
2.2 Fashion Blogs Credibility	7
2.3 Motives behind Following Blogs	9
2.4 Motives behind Following Fashion Blogs	10
2.5 Fashion Blogging in Lebanon	12
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework	15
Chapter 4: Hypothesis and Research Question	20
Chapter 5: Methodology	21
5.1 Sample	21
5.2 Procedure	23
5.3 Variables	24
Uses and gratifications	24
Perceived credibility	24
Fashion choices	25
Purchase intentions	25
Demographics	25
Media usage	25
Data Analysis	26
Chapter 6: Results	27
RQ1: Motives for Following Blogs	27
Hypothesis a:	30
Hypothesis b: Credibility of the Blogger and Purchase Intentions	30
Chapter 7: Discussion	31
The Blogger Credibility	36
The Blogger Content Credibility	40
Chapter 8: Limitations and Further Suggestions	42
Chapter 9: Conclusion	44
References	46

Appendix A: Questionnaire.....	51
Appendix B: Tables.....	59

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram

Abstract

This research focused on the motivations Lebanese women have for following fashion blogs on Instagram. This study is important since we are lacking in Lebanon researches that focuses on the relationships between people and blogs on social media especially Instagram. Rather than focusing on the impact of the social media on people's lives, the researcher looked from the people's eye and examined their motives for following fashion blogs on Instagram.

Using a survey with measures adapted from previous research on fashion blogs motivations, the researcher was able to discover the main reasons for following fashion blogs in Lebanon. The most important motivations were entertainment, specific inquiry, social surveillance, and accessibility. Additionally, this research indicated that the millennial generation (18-33 years old) made up the higher percentage of the participants' followers of fashion blogs and pages on Instagram

Moreover, this study examined the perceived credibility of fashion blogs and its impact on women's fashion choices and purchase intentions. The research based its study on credibility measurement scale adapted from previous studies to examine the perceived credibility of both blogs message and source. The findings of this study showed that credibility of fashion blogs is one of the key factors of fashion blogs influence on consumer behavior trends and their decision process of buying fashion products.

These findings can help marketers who are currently focusing on targeting the millennial generation in order to better tailor the content of fashion blogs to fit this demographic and their needs. Further research should focus on qualitative methods that can allow the researcher to understand better consumers' insights and dig deeper into consumer needs.

Keywords: Uses and Gratifications, Fashion Blogs and Pages, Instagram, Perceived Credibility, Fashion Blogger/Digital Influencer, Blog Source, Blog Content

Chapter 1: Introduction

Imagine newspapers and magazines being created every minute or a total of one hundred thirteen million newspapers and magazines circulating throughout the world. Some would say this concept is unattainable and even unbelievable. However, with the emergence of Web 2.0, and in particular blogging, this impossibility has become real. Blogging which is an integral part of online culture has reshaped the flow of information. Blogs or weblogs are “web-pages with frequently updated posts that are arranged so the newest material is at the top of the page...they provide a mechanism for personal publishing, encouraging the expression of thoughts, feelings, and commentary” (Trammell & Keshelashvili, 2005, p. 970). The first blog called “personal homepage” was Links.net in 1994(Chapman, 2016). The word “weblog” was invented in 1997 by Jorn Barger (Chapman, 2016).

The rapid growth of technology and the emergence of blogs are currently accelerating the move away from traditional media to new media (online media) which is a global system that goes beyond national borders and people are able to gain knowledge at the press of a button. Nowadays, it is recognized that more people switch to the internet for their information and entertainment. They are no longer depending on the traditional media like TV and magazines to keep up with news and trends or relieve boredom. “Sales of newspapers are declining, radio advertising is down, and television viewers are switching off in record numbers” (Matin, 2016, p. n.p.). For instance, magazines are facing a fierce competition from e-media which don't require traditional paper, printing, or distribution costs, and have better interactivity level. Therefore, many organizations started considering blogs as a new medium tool in order to survive. Among these organizations, a remarkable increase in blog usage was spotted by the fashion industry. “Fashion bloggers are fast becoming an influential force within the fashion industry, which has

been facilitated by the growth of new media” (The Influence of Fashion Blogs on Consumers, p. 1).

Many studies abroad have examined the influence of the fashion blogs on the consumers and the perceived gratifications behind following these blogs, however very little research in Lebanon has looked at this issue. The purpose of this exploratory research is to examine the motivations behind the Lebanese females’ following of fashion blogs specifically on Instagram using the uses and gratifications theory and the influence of fashion bloggers on consumers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents an overview of the literature about fashion blogs and the way they influence the audience, as well as the reasons that drive people to follow fashion blogs. First, this chapter discusses the influence of fashion blogging and its impact on the people's behavior and choices. Second, it examines the credibility factor which is one of the main reasons behind making fashion blogs influential. Third, the chapter examines the motives behind following blogs in general and fashion blogs in particular based on the uses and gratifications theory. Finally, the researcher will examine the trend of fashion blogs specifically in Lebanon in order to be able to understand the motives behind following fashion and style blogs.

2.1 The Influence of Fashion Blogging

Nowadays, many people read blogs whether official news blogs linked to traditional news media or blogs purely for entertainment. Many have at least one favorite blog. According to an article published on the Guardian website, the world's top three blogs are related to politics and technology like The Huffington Post, Boing Boing, and Techcrunch (Aldred, et al., 2008). Among these listed blogs, fashion blogs are considered as also among the top blogs such as The Sartorialist #20 and Stylebubble#48. Every 0.25 of a second, a fashion blog is launched somewhere in the world. (Wood, 2016) Fashion blogs are growing and switching from a pleasing hobby to a practical new media business. "The craze for fashion bloggers has only increased and how," said Ambika Zutshi, CEO of Fashionbi, Milan. "They started off as fashion enthusiasts having an opinion and willing to spread it across via digital means." "Now, bloggers have really gained 'celebrity status' for themselves," she said (See in Jones, 2014). They are becoming the new source of information and replacing the traditional "a huge 82% stated that fashion blogs would become more influential than fashion magazines in the future, stating that the appeal of a constant stream of fresh, free content would push blogs ahead" (Psyche Style and Inspiration,

p.1). People are now relying more on blogs rather than magazines to gather information about fashion trends and news. Hauge (2010) stated that “for some [blogs are] a substitute for fashion magazines as they are easily accessed and cheap” (p. 4).

Nowadays, fashion blogs are considered a prominent source of user-generated content, and accordingly, the fashion industry is benefiting from this new communication trend in addressing consumers “Newly emerging as this visual industry’s most trusted influencers, fashion bloggers provide for a means for designers to not only show, but inform, a larger, global audience of their brand and their products” (Thornley, 2014). It is perceived as having a strong influence on the followers “Fashion bloggers have become trusted sources of new and emerging trends and products for fashion audiences to rely upon for inspiration and consumption” (Thornley, 2014). A fashion blogger is “someone who writes about Fashion trends and tips in a blog” (Nayyar, 2017). Some of the fashion bloggers are also considered as influencers due to their blogs/pages success (Alexander, 2017). “The worth of an influencer is rooted in how many followers they have and who their followers are – if his or her Instagram Insights indicate that their following is loyal, wealthy and aged between 25 and 35, then they're in luck” (Alexander, 2017). Their popularity and degree of influence is then translated through launching their own brand. “Both bloggers and influencers - if they're really popular - become brands in their own right. launching their own fashion and/or accessory collections, or podcasts (Palermo. Ferragni and Viera Newton have all gone down this route)” (Alexander, 2017). In Lebanon, Lana el Sahely is an example of a digital influencer who started to create her own brand and collaborate with famous designers and brands. For instance, she collaborated with Fendi and created LANA a doll-like charm. “As part of her blogging journey, Lana developed a special interest in designer collaborations. It all started with a necklace designed with Mauboussin, which then led to accessories created with Aura Headpieces and pumps produced in partnership with Pose

Design.” (*L'armoire de Lana reveals ten limited-edition collaborations*, 2016, para.1) Various research (Hauge, 2010; Pentala and Saarela, 2012) relating to fashion blogging focus on its influence on the followers especially when it comes to brand preferences.

In the study done by Hauge in 2010, he used the Endorser theory as well as The Elaboration-Likelihood Model (ELM) to examine how consumers' attitudes to fashion are influenced by fashion blog usage. The results were based on interviewing women from 21 – 27 years old from the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration (NSEBA) in 2010. The study showed that blogs are an important source of influence on users' attitudes and they have taken over the role of fashion magazines. The research showed that, women have several sources of inspiration for purchase of fashion such as magazines, people on the streets, friends, celebrities, and stores. According to the interviewees, fashion blogs are considered as an important inspiration source. They have informational influence as they influence the followers in their search for fashion, which is either done for the goal of actual purchase or just to keep themselves updated. Fashion bloggers are assumed to have the authority to influence the followers due to being well liked or for having a certain level of respect. All the respondents believe that the most famous bloggers have a strong influence and an impact over the fashion industry since they are considered as a media tool that can be used to reach a large number of people with cheaper cost. Tine, one of the interviewees, claimed that as “she has less knowledge of make-up products she takes the advice of those fashion bloggers who write about cosmetics more into consideration” (Hauge, 2010, p. 56). This is mainly due to the fact that followers identify with fashion bloggers as they are similar or likeminded peers with an achievable style. Another research done in 2012 entitled “Study on the Effect of Blogs on Young Women's Online Buying Behavior When Purchasing Fashion Items from Online Stores” focuses on checking the effect of blogs on young Finnish female's online buying behavior when purchasing

fashion items from online stores. This study was based on the Consumer Buying Behavior theory which “involves the study of individual or groups in a process where they select, purchase, use or dispose of products or services to satisfy needs and desires (Solomon, 2011, p. 33). The researchers conducted face-to-face semi-structured interviews in with ten Finnish female aged between 19-32 years old who are active in following blogs that focus on women’s fashion topics. The results of the research indicate that the behavior of young women when buying from online web stores is affected by the fashion blogs they read. The article points out that fashion blogs have influence over buying-stages like the consumers’ buying process and the post buying experience. Nine out of the ten interviewees stated that they use blogs as a way to gather information about the product they consider buying especially if it is a valuable item. They consider blogs as a solution for their problem and they rely on the blogger’s unbiased recommendations as main indication before purchasing the product. All participants had a positive outlook on the bloggers’ recommendations and none of them said that they have never followed or never would follow these recommendations. The results showed that most of the users end up buying the same product that is shared in the blog. Therefore, fashion blogs can be regarded either as a source of encouragement to do more research on the products they are thinking of buying or as a tool with which to find products they feel they want to buy. It can also at times create a need to buy that did not exist before visiting the blog. Along with the previous results, questions were raised to examine why blogs have the power to influence the behavior and to change the way consumers do pre- purchase research. The results show that the most common reason among the interviewees for following bloggers’ recommendations is the feeling that the bloggers’ posts could be trusted to be unbiased and therefore are believed to provide them with good recommendations about what to purchase.

2.2 Fashion Blogs Credibility

As stated in the previous study, an important element to blogs' success in influencing the readers is that they are perceived as credible by consumers. The bloggers posts are considered as unbiased opinions on products and trusted information. "The results indicate that the most common reason for following recommendations is because the participants feel that the bloggers' reviews can be trusted to be unbiased and therefore are believed to give good recommendations about what to buy" (Penttala & Saarela, 2012, p. 48). Researchers (Kang, 2010; Hansson, 2015) have further applied communication theories to analyze the credibility component.

Kang (2010) examined the perceived credibility of blogs in general. His aim was to come up with measure of blog credibility. First, he conducted focus group with 41 blog users in November 2009 and developed a measurement scale for blog credibility which includes a list of key attributes in blogger source credibility and blog content credibility. Then, he confirmed the reliability of the proposed measure of blog credibility through a survey conducted in April 2010. He stated that it's important to develop the blog credibility measure in this new era of digital media and to examine the relationship between the organizations, the social media especially blogs, and individuals. "In other words, what are key attributes of successful social media that initiate interaction/relational loops with individual stakeholders?" (Kang, 2010). Based on the findings and previous studies, credibility is considered the key (Kang, 2010).

According to key results of this study, *authority* (to be "influential") and *reliability* of the blogger are highlighted in the blogger credibility factor, and that *accuracy* and *focus* (as "the niche" of personal interests and experience) are key indicators of the blog content credibility. The results are consistent with previous literature on blog credibility (Banks, 2008; Scoble & Israel, 2006; Weil, 2006). In terms of relations among blog credibility indicators, the researcher also found that authority and reliability are very proximate,

suggesting these two attributes are strongly associated with each other. Among indicators of the other factor (i.e., blog content credibility), the results of this study indicate that three attributes (“authentic”, “insightful” and “informative”) are proximate indicators, while “focused”, “consistent”, and “fair” are strongly associated (p. 21).

Regarding the source credibility, the first top key attribute is authority. This attribute is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “the power or right to give orders, to make decisions and enforce obedience” (Ferrier, 2014). It is considered as one of the pillars of influence in the psychology of persuasion (Ferrier, 2014). The second top key attribute which is reliability, it is the quality of being reliable. As per the Cambridge dictionary, reliability is defined as someone who can be trusted or believed because he/she behaves well in the way others expect. As for the content credibility, the accuracy is a very important element that affects the personal reputation and it builds trust with readers (Imbert). The other content key attribute is focus. In blogs, it is defined as when the bloggers’ topics are “targeted at a specific audience, which makes their posts feel relatable and relevant (Griffin, 2016). As per Melyssa, sharing specific topics helps in building the blog and growing the number of followers (Griffin, 2016).

In a study done in 2015, Linn Hansson conducted six interviews with five women and one man all between the ages of 25-28 who often read fashion blogs in Sweden 2015. This study examined first the blog credibility attributes which were measured through a survey questions by the interviewees. A credibility model that resulted from former blog credibility measurements was used as framework for this study. It described the credibility in terms of source (blogger) and message (information). Despite that the sample is too small to draw statistical generalizations, but it can provide a good overview. Based on the results, “It could be said that blog readers believe fashion bloggers to be credible when it comes to personal interests,

expertise, the message style and reputation, but due to sponsored blog posts the information becomes less objective, which lower the credibility” (Hansson, 2015, p.49).

According to Thornley (2014), fashion bloggers are considered the newly emerging most trusted influencers and the fashion specialists are relying on them to show and inform people about their products and brand. “Fashion bloggers have become trusted sources of new and emerging trends and products for fashion audiences to rely upon for inspiration and consumption” (Thornley, 2014, p. 2).

2.3 Motives behind Following Blogs

The previously mentioned studies have looked at the influence and impact of blogging on the followers; however other studies tackled the subject of blogging from the followers’ standpoint. They analyzed the motivation for using blogs as done previously for traditional media such television, radio, newspaper, and magazine through the uses and gratifications theory.

Barbara K. Kaye shows in her study “It’s a blog, blog, blog world: Users and Uses of Weblogs” (2005) that there are six main reasons for accessing blogs. The results were assessed based on a survey done online in 2003 to a random selection of 239 bloggers identified by the author through Yahoo! and Google searches. The study revealed that the six primary motives for using blogs are information seeking, convenience, personal fulfillment, political surveillance, social surveillance, and expression and affiliation. However, the 28 statements which were later categorized into six labels were derived from past uses and gratifications studies and not adapted specifically for Weblogs. For this reason, Kaye, B. K. (2010) conducted a follow-up survey in 2007. She relied on motivations that are derived from open-ended questions about blog use rather than motivations from preexisting scales measuring traditional media or Internet use. This study highlighted nine motivational factors which are convenient information seeking, anti-

traditional media sentiment, expression/affiliation, guidance/opinion seeking, blog ambiance, personal fulfillment, political debate, variety of opinion, and specific inquiry. The top motives for following blogs proposed that people use blogs mainly because they find them easy and convenient tool that will help them to stay up-to-date with current issues as well as gather information and opinions (convenient information seeking). Accessing blogs to “learn something new”, “for links to more information”, and “for access to experts” were strong motivations in this study however they were not even proposed as possible blog use motivations in Kaye previous study. Moreover, the results pointed out another motive than seeking information which is avoiding mainstream media or Antitraditional Media Sentiment. It indicates that Blog readers find blogs as a substitute to traditional media which in most of the time underestimates or omits some information. They consider blogs independent of traditional media, thus they follow them to check the accuracy of the information provided by the mainstream media accounts which are perceived as biased, distasteful and view with suspicion. Therefore, this motive confirms the findings regarding blogs credibility found in the previous studies. Blogs have a unique voice that earns the trust of readers, thus causing the readers to return again and again (Hewitt, 2005).

2.4 Motives behind Following Fashion Blogs

Adopting the same theory, additional studies were done in order to examine if the uses and gratifications for using blogs in general are the same for fashion blogs. The thesis called “Fashion Blogging and Consumers: Examining the Uses and Gratifications of Readers of Fashion Blogs” shows that the majority of main motivations for accessing blogs are the same for accessing fashion blogs (Fink, 2015). As per the results of a survey done with a sample size consisted of 122 people recruited from Amazon, mTurk and other University sources in May 2015, the main motivations for following fashion blogs are social surveillance and entertainment (Fink, 2015). They mostly confirm the researcher’s hypothesis that socialization, entertainment,

social surveillance, and expression/affiliation would be considered as most significant motives for users of fashion blogs. Social surveillance seems to be the top gratification which includes the following looking for general information on fashion, style, beauty, and product information as well as keeping up with current events and trends. The second top gratification is entertainment which, as per the participants, is relieving boredom. The remaining factors like socialization and expression/affiliation did not appear to have the same importance to fashion blog readers.

Qualitative methods would help formulate a deeper investigation into consumer needs. Johnson (2011) conducted interviews with highly educated women reside in Toronto or the GTA and are between the ages of 19 to 31 years-old. 24 reasons for using fashion blogs were identified during the in-depth interviews, but the most highly reported ones are ‘for information about a specific interest (fashion and style), ‘because blogs are more personal’, ‘because it is part of my daily routine’, ‘to look at fashion images’, ‘because I am directed to updates’ and ‘for inspiration on how to dress’ (Johnson, 2011). All 24 motivational factors were categorized into four groups for fashion blog use as per the following accessibility and convenience of information seeking, blog attributes, specific inquiry, and escapism and enjoyment. This first category, accessibility and convenience of information seeking, is the same one that was determined by Kaye (2010) study while examining the use of blogs in general. In the previous study done by Kaye (2010) this category was made up of 14 specific motivational factors, however in this study Johnson discovered six strong factors for fashion blog users. Two of them, habit (because it is part of my daily routine) and entrance (because updates are directed to me), were not identified in Kaye’s (2010) list of 14 factors. The remaining three categories identified in this study (Blog Attributes, Specific Inquiry, and Escapism/Enjoyment) were also identified in Kaye’s study (2010), but in different names. One other unique motivational factor under “blog



attributes” that was not identified by Kaye (2010) is the ability to retrieve/save content (saving and organizing of information and content that other forms of media do not). The three unique factors that were found in this study, habit, entrance, and retrieve/save content, were among the most prominent reported motivations for fashion blog use.

According to these two studies, the top motives for following fashion blogs are social surveillance, entertainment, accessibility and convenience of information seeking, and blog attributes.

2.5 Fashion Blogging in Lebanon

As an observation from the researcher of this study, seemingly over the past couple of years, fashion blogs started to emerge in Lebanon and gained a lot of popularity among the Lebanese females. The top one social media for fashion blogging is Instagram “It is also the most popular application in the fashion world” (Chirinian, 2014, p.44). The Lebanese marketers are now considering Instagram as top social media platform and including it in their strategies in order to stand out from the competition. “According to latest industry research, Instagram has more than 400 million monthly active users worldwide including more than 950,000 active users in Lebanon.” (“How Lebanese Businesses are Using Instagram in 2016”). This article states also that 85% of Instagram users in Lebanon access the app on a daily basis. According to Roula Nahas, the Regional Marketing & PR Manager of Bestseller, Instagram is one of the most effective platforms for fashion in Lebanon and the Middle East. (Hijazi, 2014) Instagram is perceived as the quickest and easiest social media platform for fashion news and trends. “All you have to do is follow some popular fashion pages which vary from big fashion houses to amateur fashion bloggers” (Chirinian, 2014, p.44). Deem Saidi, a luxury and PR marketer, considers that people are bored of reading and that’s why they prefer Instagram to look at the photos and get information in the minimum amount of time possible (Hijazi, 2014). She added also that

Instagram is the best social media tool to influence people. “If I want to be an influencer, I would rather be it on Instagram” (Hijazi, 2014, p.55). Moreover, Marie Jose Abed, Regional Communications Manager at HST (GS), confirms that Instagram users are more interested in fashion/lifestyle-related visuals.

As stated before, people are now switching from mainstream media to fashion blogs in order to get information about fashion trends. Senior Psychology Instructor Loulwa Kaloyeros at LAU University, (Tribunelau.com) stated “for years people focused on magazines to follow what is fashionable and what famous people wear. Bloggers are much cheaper and more accessible” (Bejjani, 2015) Many well renowned Lebanese fashion brands and designers such as Elie Saab and Zuhair Murad are using social media platforms to share their design and reveal some behind the scenes (Hamdan, 2014, p.46). Beside, many influential fashion blogs such as L’armoire de Lana, IvySays, Fashion to Tracy, among others, had gained popularity among the Lebanese female (Hamdan, 2014, p.46). They became not only references, but also trendsetters whose tips and tricks are followed and implemented (Hamdan, 2014, p.46). People consider fashion bloggers as reference to fashion and young people consider them more as role-models (Bejjani, 2015). Instagram bloggers' accounts can be considered as a hub for fashion ideas through their constant sharing of posts. Kaloyeros explains:

A research I did on 15 Instagram fashion accounts revealed that, on average, Instagram fashion bloggers post eight pictures per day of their clothes, makeup, hair and accessories. The research also showed that the average number of followers for these blogs is around 100,000 followers (cited in Bejjani, 2015)

As these bloggers gained followers, brands began to partner with them for advertising campaigns, events and other marketing efforts. (Sorin, 2015) Companies are perceiving fashion bloggers as influential and the Lebanese are vulnerable to the influence of bloggers. “Fashion

blogs, socialite blogs and Instagram incredibly influence teenagers in how they perceive looks and shopping” (Bejjani, 2015).

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

Uncovering the motives behind following fashion blogs by the Lebanese females is an important issue to deal with since blogging has become an extremely important part of today's marketing tools. Therefore, in order to discover the reasons behind fashion blogs usage, the study will be based on the uses and gratifications theory. It is a classic theory of mass communication that was developed in the 1940s and continues to have relevance in today's media world (Fink, 2015). It was first introduced by Elihu Katz when he came up with the concept that people use the media to their benefit (Rossi, 2002). Katz and his two colleagues, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch continued to expand this perception in the early 1970's (Rossi, 2002).

The Uses and Gratifications theory specifies how people use media for their needs and gratifications rather than just focusing on the media effects on people. In other words this theory focuses on what people do with media rather than what media does to people (Perse, 2014). Thus, this theory contradicts older assumptions that the audience is considered as passive. The uses and gratifications theory considers the audience as active; they actively choose a particular media and content to get certain gratifications that will satisfy their needs (Perse, 2014).

Many studies have used the uses and gratifications perspective in order to understand the users' motivations behind traditional media such as Cantril and Allport (1935) on the radio audience; Waples, Berelson, and Bradshaw (1940) on reading; Herzog (1940, 1944) on quiz programs and the gratifications from radio daytime serials; Berelson (1949) on the functions of newspaper reading; and Lazarsfeld and Stanton (1942, 1944, 1949) on different media genres (Fink, 2015). Each of these studies came up with a list of gratifications specific to the medium examined. For instance, Chandler (1994) stated in his article that the gratifications for using television according to McQuail (1987) are information, personal identity, integration and social

interaction, and entertainment. As stated in Rossi (2002) and based on the previously mentioned studies, the uses and gratifications theory has five basic assumptions. These assumptions help in better understanding the relationship between the media and media users. First, the audience is perceived as active user. They actively choose specific media source according to their needs and they are goal-oriented in their media use. Second, the audience is more powerful than the media. The media user selects what he wants to be exposed to and uses the media to his advantage. Third, the audience has several needs and has different choices to satisfy. Thus, the media should compete with these other sources of need satisfaction. Forth, the media users are know well their motives and choices and they tend to use the media to shape their own identities. Finally, the audience determines the value of the media content through their decision of media selection.

The study done by Morris and Ogan's in 1996 was a fundamental turning point in the researches since it tackled the uses and gratifications theory on the internet's users (Fink, 2015). In Kaye and Johnson's study (2002), four primary motivations for connecting to online political information were revealed (a) guidance, (b) information-seeking/ surveillance, (c) entertainment, and (d) social utility. Based on the studies done on traditional media, it was found that the main motives were information, personal identity, integration and social interaction, and entertainment. In regards of internet motives, the personal identity is no more considered as a motive and information-seeking/ surveillance replaces it. Personal identity means that traditional media audience members use the media source for reinforcement for personal values, finding models of behavior, identifying with valued other (in the media), and gaining insight into one's self. (Chandler, 1994) However, the internet users are generally interested in searching out for specific information and keep an eye on the news.

Early studies (Charney & Greenberg, 2002; Papacharissi & Rubin, 2000) treated the Internet as a single mass medium. "However, a study by Johnson and Yang proposed the

notion that the Internet is rather a medium of multiple mass media, as it offers access to a variety of forms of media, including traditional media with online streaming of radio programs and online newspaper editions. Other channels include instant messaging, blogs, and social media and networking site (Johnson & Yang, 2009)” (Fink, 2015, p.15).

Hence, some of these studies listed hereafter examined the motives of blogs usage. When studying blogs, there are several factors that should be taken into consideration. First, blogs are different from other online sources since they allow users to interact not just simply read the posts. (Fink, 2015) The readers have a public dialogue and share their opinions.

Second, it is important to note that there are different kinds of blogs. Previously, blogs were considered as online diaries, then they transformed into general information blogs. (Fink, 2015) Nowadays, they became niche blogs that focus on specific issues targeted specific audience. (Fink, 2015) All these factors were taken into account in the study done by Kaye (2005) who concluded that the six primary motives for using blogs are (a) information seeking (Actively searching out information about current issues), (b) convenience (an easy-to-use and convenient venue for news and information), (c) personal fulfillment (Gathering information to use in discussions with others, and fulfilling various emotional needs: entertainment, relaxation, excitement, involvement), (d) political surveillance (Keeping an eye on the political landscape, including reports on politicians’ stances and actions), (e) social surveillance (Learning about others’ points of view and opinions on various issues and current events), and (f) expression and affiliation (Expressing personal viewpoints and interacting with like-minded individuals). Additionally, the follow up study done by Kaye in 2010 found out nine motivational factors of which four were new (a) anti-traditional media sentiment (connecting to blogs because they are independent of traditional media, which they find distasteful and view with suspicion), (b) guidance/opinion seeking (relying on blogs for support and validation of their own opinions and

to help them make up their minds about important issues), (c) blog ambiance (enjoy affiliating with a specific blogger, reading personal accounts of events, and following his or her interactions with others), and (d) specific inquiry (seeking specific information and looking for support of one's point of view). Blogging and accessing blogs are significant subjects to identify and investigate.

As previously mentioned, the motives between the different genres of blogs differ such as the motives for using a political blogs is different from the ones using fashion blogs. Therefore, further studies (Fink, 2015; Johnson, 2011) have tackled fashion blogs separately through the same theory. These studies showed that most of the motives of blogs in general are similar to the ones for fashion blogs. For instance, Fink (2015) came up by the following motives (a) socialization, (b) entertainment, (c) social surveillance, and (d) expression/affiliation while Johnson (2011) classified the motives into four major categories (a) accessibility and convenience of Information Seeking, (b) blog attributes, (c) specific inquiry, and (d) escapism and enjoyment. He found three new factors like habit, entrance, and retrieve/save content that were not found before and were highly reported among the respondents. Based on the findings of these two studies, the top four motives are entertainment, social surveillance, accessibility and convenience information seeking, and blog attributes. Entertainment was described as a gratification that is related to leisure and amusement needs. (Park et al., 2009, p.731) For instance, Haridakis and Hanson (2008) found in their study that the young males used YouTube to fulfill entertainment needs such as thrill-seeking and information-seeking. Whereas fashion blogs followers' motives are including excitement gratification, entertainment gratification, and relaxation needs. (Fink, 2015) Social surveillance is considered according to Kaye (2010) "the learning about others' points of view and opinions on various issues and current events". In other words, people follow fashion blogs as a source of surveillance and to ensure that they 'stay in the

loop' with the current events and trends. Accessibility and convenience information seeking which is when media users found gratification in the amount of information provided to them (Park et al., 2009, p. 731). For instance, Facebook users seek out information about on- and off-campus events and political and civic issues (Park et al., 2008, p.732). Sweetser et al. (2008) stated that there is an increasing use of journalists' and public relations practitioners' blogs who are perceived as a credible source of information for the people. Similar to fashion blogs, followers consider blogs as an easy media tool to gather information related to fashion news and trends. The information are easily found and retrieved. (Fink, 2015) blog attributes which are the specific qualities of the blogs. Some of the attributes for fashion blogs are the ability to retrieve and save content, free to access, more personal than other forms of fashion media (Fink, 2015). Entertainment, social surveillance, accessibility and convenience information seeking, and blog attributes motives will be further examined in this study to understand what motivates usage of these blogs or in other words the gratifications satisfied by fashion blogs on female participants.

Chapter 4: Hypothesis and Research Question

As previously stated, Fashion blogging are fast becoming an alternative media tool to traditional media. This new occurrence pushed many researches to examine this new trend in the media industry. Some of these studies used the uses and gratifications theory to uncover the motives behind following fashion blogs.

However, these particular aspects of blog usage have not been investigated in Lebanon and are of emerging importance to media specially the fashion industry. Therefore, this research will bridge the gap in the scholarly literature by examining the motivations behind the Lebanese females' use of style and fashion blogs through the uses and gratifications theory. In addition, it will study the relationship between the blogger perceived credibility and its influence on the fashion choices and purchase intentions.

Research Question: What are the main gratifications sought by the Lebanese followers of fashion blogs and pages on Instagram?

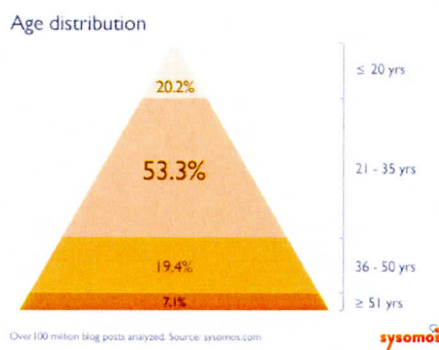
Hypothesis: The perceived credibility of the blogger has an association with the influence of a) fashion choices and b) purchase intentions.

Chapter 5: Methodology

This chapter deals with the methodology that will be used to investigate the study. It will first identify the research sample, the procedure, and the variables. Researching a study that relies on the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory can be conducted either quantitatively, qualitatively or using a mixed-methods approach. However, the most used methodology in uses and gratifications research is quantitative, where the researcher collects a list of previously found motivations and applies them to the medium that is being examined (Johnson, 2011), in the case of this study, fashion blogs. The quantitative method helps in discovering and categorizing the most important uses and gratifications of fashion blogs. This study will therefore use the quantitative research method; it will rely on the online survey as a data collection tool. Therefore, an exploratory questionnaire will be used to identify the leading motivations of the Lebanese females to follow style and fashion blogs.

5.1 Sample

According to Breaking Media which is the company that owns the fashion blog Fashionista.com, 75% of Fashionistas' readers are between the ages of 18 to 49 years old (Johnson, 2011). Moreover, the below graph shows that the most active bloggers (53.3%) are between 21 to 35 year-olds (Sysomos, 2010). In the findings of the Ariel (2015) study, people aged 18 to 33 or Millennials are the top age group of fashion blogs readers.



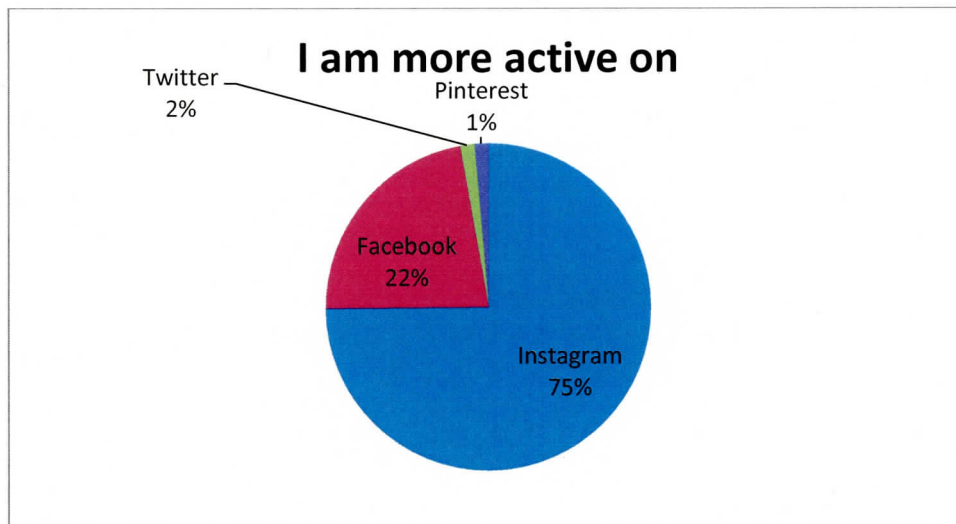
Since the information regarding the top age group of women who read fashion blogs is not available in Lebanon, therefore the age bracket of the sample chosen is wide. It allows the future studies tackling the same topic in Lebanon to specify the age group based on the results of this study; however it is still close to the bracket specified above. The sample consisted of females aged between 14 and 45 ($M = 27$) who currently reside in Lebanon.

As the study focuses on fashion blogs on Instagram, therefore the participants chosen should have an Instagram account and are following at least one fashion blog. Due to the fact that it is impossible to have a clear list of all the Lebanese women aged between 14 to 45 years old who follow fashion blogs on Instagram, a non-probability sampling was utilized. The participants were chosen based on snowball sampling method, where they automatically forward the survey link to their friends who too are fashion blog readers. 381 people did the survey, and of the total number of respondents, 139 were kept since the remaining did not meet the qualifying questions. A series of screening questions were asked at the beginning of the survey in order to ensure proper participant recruitment. These questions specified the gender of the respondents as well as their internet habits. The qualifying or screening questions were:

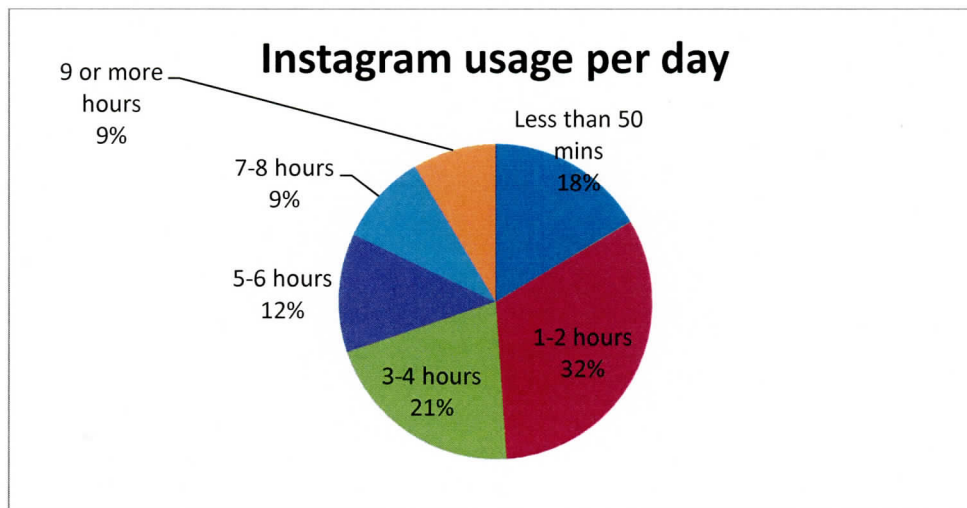
Gender (participants were required to identify as female).

Internet habits (participants were required to follow fashion blogs/pages on Instagram)

The majority of this sample are single ladies who hold a bachelor's degree (43.2%) followed by the ones who hold a master's degree (25.2%); the rest of the participants have a high school degree (15.1%) have some college education (8.6%), still in high school (6.5%) and hold a PH.D. (1.4%). They are more socially active on Instagram (74.8%) than Facebook (22.3%), Twitter (1.4%), and Pinterest (1.4%).



Moreover, 32.4% spent 1-2 hours per day on Instagram and 20.9% of the participants spent 3-4 hours the rest of the hours made up 18% or less and are noted below in the pie graph. .



5.2 Procedure

The research tool used to investigate the study is an online questionnaire. It aimed at determining a general understanding of female users' motivations for using fashion blogs, examining the relation of the bloggers' perceived credibility, as well as blog's content with their fashion choices and purchase intentions. This online questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed on Qualtrics Online Survey Software.

First the researcher sent the link of the survey to a list of friends who are following on Instagram at least one of the following accounts ghinaghandour_official (103K followers), larmoiredelana (162K followers), chiaraferragni (7.3M followers), fashion4perfection (806K followers), and lebanesestreetstyle (143K followers). Then, this list of friends was asked to forward it to their friends who follow also fashion blogs (snowball sampling technique). The participation was purely voluntary and respondents were promised anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Before collecting data this study was approved by the Institution Review Board (Protocol Ref #: IRBF17_1_FBAE) to ensure ethical research practices.

5.3 Variables

Uses and gratifications. Uses and gratifications refers to the motives such as social surveillance, expression/affiliation, and entertainment behind following fashion blogs. The motives are adapted from Ariel (2015) and Johnson (2011) and measured following two steps. First, the eight motives were measured by a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), and such items included “I typically use fashion blogs for social surveillance” and “I typically use fashion blogs for entertainment ($\alpha = 0.712$, $M = 3.554$, $SD = 0.536$). Second, the top four motives: Social surveillance ($\alpha = 0.848$, $M = 3.898$, $SD = 0.592$), Entertainment ($\alpha = 0.748$, $M = 3.430$, $SD = 0.583$), Accessibility and convenience seeking ($\alpha = 0.854$, $M = 3.608$, $SD = 0.632$), and Blog attributes ($\alpha = 0.831$, $M = 3.461$, $SD = 0.658$) were measured separately also using a 5-point Likert-type scale and included a total of 20 statements (five statements for each motive) such as “I typically use fashion blogs to get product information,” “I typically use fashion blogs to look at fashion images,” and “I typically use fashion blogs to see trends instantly as they are happening online.”

Perceived credibility. Perceived credibility refers to the trustworthiness of the fashion blogger and blog content. Therefore, it was evaluated in terms of two dimensions which are

Blogger (source) credibility ($\alpha = 0.875$, $M = 3.384$, $SD = 0.669$) and Blog message/content credibility ($\alpha = 0.883$, $M = 3.558$, $SD = 0.554$). Each one was divided into attributes such as “knowledgeable,” “influential,” “passionate” for blogger credibility and “authentic,” “insightful,” “informative” for blog content credibility. They were measured using 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = not important at all; 4 = neutral; 7 = very important) adapted from (Kang, 2010).

Fashion choices. Fashion choices refers to the person decision when it comes to things related to fashion like clothes, hair style, cosmetics, accessories. This variable was measured using a Likert scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree and included seven items, such as “I typically follow fashion blogs to get ideas from blogs for my own style,” “I typically follow fashion blogs to get good tips on current discounts going on in stores,” and “I typically follow fashion blogs to check the trend” ($\alpha = 0.855$, $M = 3.955$, $SD = 0.588$).

Purchase intentions. Purchase intentions refers to the likelihood that the fashion blog followers will buy a particular product. This variable was measured using a Likert-type scale from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree and included 13 items such as “blogs give me ideas about what to buy,” “it's nice to hear about peoples experiences,” and “Blogs encourage me to break my routine shopping” ($\alpha = 0.881$, $M = 3.457$, $SD = 0.697$).

Demographics. The first four questions deal with background factors of the respondents, mapping out the relevant, personal information that would help in further data analysis. These questions included age, level of education, marital status, and current occupation. All of the results have been detailed in the sample section.

Media usage. In the second part, the respondents will be asked to identify their internet habits like social media time spending, social media platform along with three screening

questions that will allow the researcher to identify the fashion blogs followers only. All results were used to describe the sample of participants' media usage habits.

Data Analysis

The results were examined for outliers. Three respondents were detected as outliers and their responses were removed from the results.

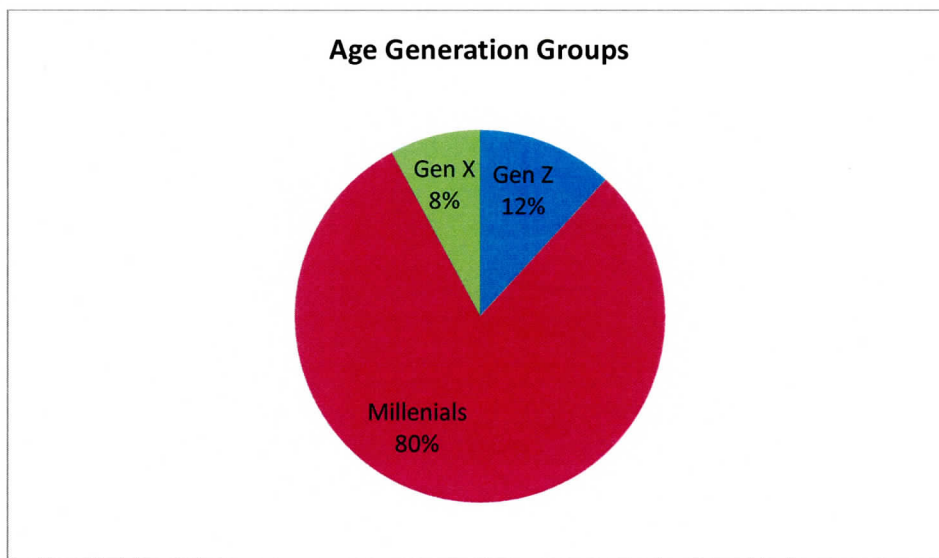
The responses were analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies were computed on respondents' demographic characteristics as well as media usage. First, in order to answer the research question and determine the main motives behind following fashion blogs, the mean scores were computed for each motivation statement.

Second, the hypotheses were analyzed by using linear regression in order to investigate if the perceived credibility of the blogger and the content have an association with the influence of fashion choices and purchase intentions.

Chapter 6: Results

RQ1: Motives for Following Blogs

The first research question addresses the motives behind following fashion blogs and pages among the Lebanese female participants. The majority of respondents who follow fashion blogs and pages belong to the age bracket 18-33 years old (millennials) compared to Gen Z- below 18 years old (12%) and Gen X above 33 years old (8%).



The below table, fashion blogs top motives, shows the main gratifications sought by the Lebanese females followers of fashion blogs and pages on Instagram. A descriptive analysis of each motive was done in order to compare the mean scores. Means are based on a five-point scale (e.g., 5 = strongly agree). Based on the below results, the top four motives are entertainment, specific inquiry, escapism/enjoyment, and social surveillance. However, the two motives entertainment and escapism/enjoyment will be considered as one motive since they have similar meaning. The fourth top motive is accessibility and convenience information seeking. This result is partially consistent with the previous studies done on fashion blogs abroad since specific inquiry was considered in this study more important than blog attributes.

Fashion Blogs Top Motives

Motives	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Socialization	139	1	5	2.89	1.054
Expression/Affiliation	139	1	5	3.09	1.056
Social surveillance	139	1	5	3.71	.942
Entertainment	139	1	5	4.01	.803
Accessibility and convenience	139	1	5	3.60	.906
Information seeking	139	1	5	3.28	.893
Blog attributes	139	1	5	3.28	.893
Specific inquiry	139	1	5	3.97	.884
Escapism/ Enjoyment	139	1	5	3.86	.830

The following table, the mean scores of the motivational statements, displays the mean scores of each statement. Based on these data, the top motive statements agreed among the majority of the participants are “for a wide variety of information on fashion, style and beauty” (M = 4.17), “because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion” (M = 4.07), “to keep up with current events and trends in fashion” (M = 4.04), “For inspiration on how to dress” (M = 4.01), and “to see style and fashion experts” (M = 3.96) belong to the social surveillance motive. The remaining three statements “to look at fashion images” (M = 3.98), “because they are easily accessed at all times” (M = 3.95), and “Because it shows style and lifestyle not just clothes” (M = 3.93) are under the other three top motives studied (entertainment, easy accessibility, blog attributes).

These results confirm that the top motives are social surveillance, entertainment, and accessibility. However, as stated previously, based on these results blog attribute is not an

important motive to be looked at contrary to what was stated in the previous studies (Kaye, 2010; Johnson, 2011) done on fashion blogs abroad.

The mean scores of the motivational statements

Motives	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
to get product information	139	1	5	3.75	.910
for a wide variety of information on fashion, style and beauty	139	1	5	4.17	.732
because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion	139	1	5	4.07	.890
For inspiration on how to dress	139	1	5	4.01	.897
to keep up with current events and trends in fashion	139	1	5	4.04	.793
for credible or honest information (not found in traditional media)	139	1	5	3.43	.901
because I want to learn something new about fashion or beauty	139	1	5	3.80	.827
to see style and fashion experts	139	1	5	3.96	.788
because I'm addicted to them	122	1	5	2.63	1.151
because fashion blogs are exciting	122	1	5	3.69	.891
When I have free time	122	1	5	3.92	.675
as a pastime	122	1	5	3.38	.921
to look at fashion images	122	1	5	3.98	.643
to stop buying print magazines and then throwing them out	122	1	5	2.96	1.071
because I can do other things at the same time like chatting, watching ...	122	1	5	3.51	.938
to see trends instantly as they are happening online (the new live feature)	122	1	5	3.55	.980
because they are easily accessed (at all times)	122	1	5	3.95	.726
For convenience sake	122	1	5	3.60	.768
To get information quickly	122	1	5	3.89	.730
To feed my fashion curiosity within one minute	122	1	5	3.89	.821
Because they are part of my morning routine	122	1	5	3.03	1.067
Because they are part of my everyday life	122	1	5	3.16	1.136
Because it's faster, more current and more up-to-date	122	1	5	3.87	.782
To save images and file them	122	1	5	3.17	1.096
To tag my friends on something interesting I've found	122	1	5	3.56	1.005
Because they are more creative and they write more casually—I like the informality	122	1	5	3.56	.910
Because if I like something I can just click on it and it will take me to the site or account	122	1	5	3.58	.952
Because It's a more personal perspective	122	1	5	3.50	.836
Because you get someone's opinion	122	1	5	3.42	1.003
Because people say stuff on these pages that they would never say in a magazine	122	1	5	2.99	1.048
Because it shows style and lifestyle not just clothes	122	1	5	3.93	.901

Hypothesis a: Credibility of the Blogger and Fashion Choices

H1a is supported. Linear regression indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the blogger credibility and the fashion choices ($b = 0.381$, $r = 0.413$, $r^2 = 0.171$, $p < 0.001$). The perceived credibility of the blogger accounts for 17.1% of the variance of the fashion choices.

Hypothesis b: Credibility of the Blogger and Purchase Intentions

H1b is supported. According to the linear regression there is a significant positive relationship between the blogger credibility and the purchase intentions ($b=0.444$, $r= 0.411$, $r^2=0.169$, $p < 0.001$). The perceived credibility of the blogger accounts for 16.9% of the variance of the purchase intentions.

Chapter 7: Discussion

The impetus of this research study is that the fashion blogs and pages on Instagram are constantly growing in Lebanon and the fashion industry along with the marketers are relying more on them as a substitution to traditional media. “Gone are the days when women took their beauty tips mainly from fashion and beauty magazines. In the digital age, those titles — and their editors — are quickly becoming almost irrelevant, not only to consumers but to the brands themselves” (Robinovitz, 2016). There are different types of fashion blogs and pages. They are mainly categorized into typical fashion blogs, brands/designers pages, fashion pages, and fashionistas accounts. The fashion industry significantly considers these blogs and pages in their marketing strategies in different ways. For instance, brands offer them sample of their products, invite them to fashion shows and events, and even sometimes label their names on their products. “They're paid to attend fashion shows, designer dinners and fashion parties because it earns the brand kudos to have them there” (Alexander, 2017). Due to the fact that these blogs and pages have sometimes millions of followers, it is certainly an efficient marketing strategy for the brands. The below findings are important for marketers and fashion brands to take into consideration when addressing to millennials.

First, this study has looked at the followers as active audience and as such it examined their motivations for visiting fashion blogs/pages on Instagram. The results show that entertainment, social surveillance, specific inquiry as well as accessibility are the top reasons agreed upon among the participants for following fashion blogs/pages. These findings are important for fashion brands and marketers since it will help them to determine the ultimate content that will most likely attract the attention of the fashion blog followers. It is also important to mention that based on this study, in Lebanon specific inquiry is listed among the top motivations instead of blog attributes which was determined in the previously mentioned

scholarly studies. Participants consider that following fashion blogs/pages for getting specific information like outfit inspirations, instructional DIYs (specific inquiry) is more important than blog attributes (ability to save images/files, clickable links, tagging friends, e-store website...etc.). In Lebanon, people are less likely to practice online activities and do online shopping mainly due to online security and internet speed issues. "The Lebanese e-commerce market continues to struggle with several challenges endemic to the Middle East in general: a lack of secure online payment gateways and a mistrust of online purchasing. Lebanese buyers in particular prefer to purchase offline from their favourite local stores" (Rahal, 2013, n.p.). Therefore, the users perceived these pages and blogs as their ultimate source for getting specific information like outfit inspiration when having a trouble selecting the best outfit and wardrobe struggles instead of practicing online activities. These kind of practical information are very beneficial in their daily lives. This confirms what was stated before by Hamdan (2014) that these digital influencers are becoming not only references, but also trendsetters whose tips and tricks are followed and implemented. In addition, the only blog attribute statement that is among the top motivational statements is "Because it shows style and lifestyle not just clothes" (M=3.93). This statement doesn't describe directly the blog qualities, but it is more related to specific inquiry. For instance, posts that show a healthy breakfast or the recipe of a healthy meal are considered as instructional information.

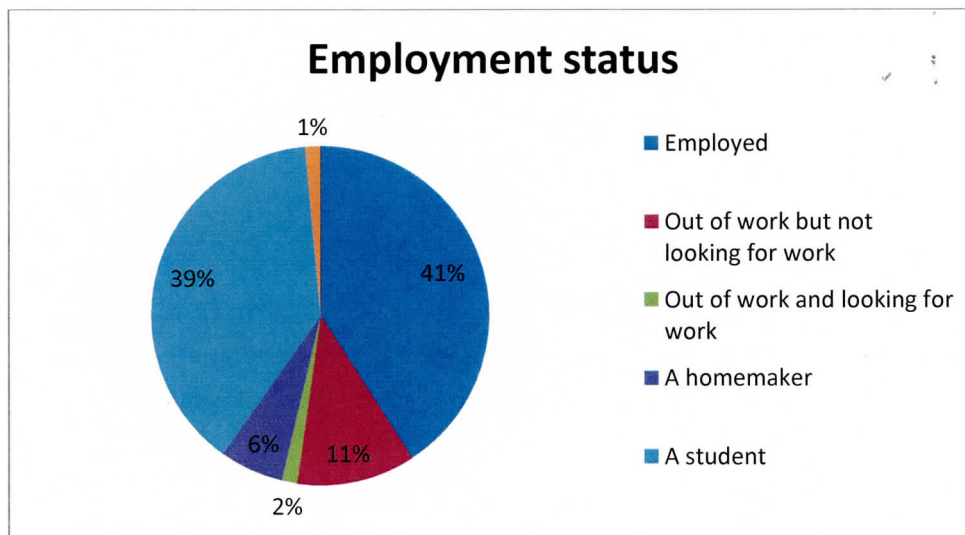
They benefit from the blogger's posts in order to solve their fashion troubles like selecting the best outfit combination or fixing their wardrobes and to be inspired by their lifestyle. They rely on these trendsetters for giving them practical hints and tips related to fashion, beauty, and even health. Moreover, it is recognizable that the DIY posts and bloggers are emerging. "The rapid spread of DIY can be largely traced to its very modern platform: blogging has taken what would otherwise be a solitary, isolated activity and amplified it by allowing people to share their

projects, creating a vociferous community of crafters who comment and encourage each other's projects" (Atik, 2011). Nowadays, some of the women like to realize and re-invent their favorite branded pieces for a cheaper price as well as customizing the items just for them (Atik, 2011). Some of the DIY posts help the users refashion the old pieces of fashion that they already have in their wardrobes. "Altering old articles of clothing and transforming them into fashionable, new articles of clothing is a smart way to save money and a great way to pass a rainy afternoon" (Metzler, 2015). In addition to clothing, fashion bloggers are sharing a lot of DIY posts related to jewelry, home decor, recipes, hairstyle etc.

Along with specific inquiry, the participants identified the two other categories entertainment and social surveillance as top motives for following fashion blogs and pages. The top motivational statements belong to the social surveillance category. The followers value these pages because they provide them with general information on the current fashion news, events, shows, trends as well as beauty and style tips. They rely on the blogs to get information about fashion and lifestyle because the information are up-to-date "because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion" (M= 4.07) as well as to see fashion and style experts "To see style and fashion experts" (M = 3.96). One characteristic of the blogs is that they are consistently updated. Every 0.25 of a second, a fashion blog is launched somewhere in the world (Wood, 2016). Contrary to magazines, which the majority are published monthly, fashion blogs allow users to get at any time the latest news. It confirms with was stated previously by Hamdan (2014) that many Lebanese fashion brands and designers such are using social media platforms to share their design and reveal some behind the scenes. Providing latest fashion news is another blog content criterion that fashion marketers and brands should take into consideration.

Regarding entertainment, the respondents' main entertainment gratification is "to look at fashion images." 74.1% of the participants claim that they spend the majority of their time looking at photos rather than reading what the blogger has written (caption) (5.8%) or reading other viewers' comments (0.7%). They enjoy looking at beautiful fashion images on these pages and they prefer getting the information that they need from the visual rather than reading texts. This outcome proves for marketers that visual content is more likely to garner the followers' attention than texts. In future posts, it is recommended to focus on sharing more attractive visuals with fewer texts in order to have a better impact. Another entertainment top motivational statement is "When I have free time" ($M=3.92$) also, 54.7% of the respondents look at fashion blogs/pages throughout the day. Therefore, they tend to check the fashion blogs/pages throughout the day whenever they have a free time. It's mainly due to the easy accessibility of the blogs. They can access it at any time and any place. The accessibility motive is also considered as the last top fashion blogs motivations.

Participants consider that fashion blogs and pages are an easy way to retrieve information about a specific area of interest "because they are easily accessed (at all times)" ($M = 3.95$). The majority of the respondents are working (38.8%) and student (36.7%) so they obviously live a hectic/busy life. Therefore, their way of life is another reason for relying on the fashion blogs and pages on Instagram which they consider them as the ultimate easy accessed tool that provides them with instructional and up-to-date information.



Their hectic life and having too many daily responsibilities make these fashion blogs and pages on Instagram as their ultimate easy accessed tool for getting all the information they need about fashion at anytime and anywhere by a simple click on the Instagram app icon.

These results confirm with the study done by Fink (2015) which highlighted that the top two motives for accessing fashion blogs are entertainment and social surveillance. However, it partially contradicts with the results of the study done by Johson (2011) who stated that blog attributes is among the top motives in addition to accessibility. This indicates that through time the motives might change depending on the evolvement of the content provided and technology. Nowadays, majority of the content shared on these fashion blogs and pages are DIY posts, inspirational outfits, beauty and fashion tips which make the fact that specific inquiry appeared to be as top motive among Lebanese female participants.

These outcomes are very significant for fashion brands and marketers to look at. It provides them with the key elements from these four top motives in order to ensure effective posts on these pages on Instagram. As a result and based on the top motivational statements

(highest mean scores) the important key elements that should be considered for successful posts are beautiful images, useful information, and latest fashion news.

As previously mentioned, the uses and gratifications theory states that individuals are considered as active recipients of the messages. They select the medium that is more credible than the other media in order to rely upon. Therefore, in addition to the top key elements, the perceived credibility is an important element that played a significant role in influencing the followers/readers of fashion blogs and pages on Instagram. As stated before by Bejjani (2015), people are considering these digital influencers as reference to fashion and role-models. The majority considered these blogs/pages as trusted and unbiased sources to rely on. The perceived credibility is divided into the blogger and blog content.

The Blogger Credibility

The majority of the respondents agreed that the fashion blogger or digital influencer is passionate (61.9%), influential (59%), and knowledgeable (46.1%) as compared to the other key attributes (reliable, believable, trustworthy, transparent, and honest) which have no major agreement. The Lebanese female participants consider the fashion bloggers as trusted sources to rely upon for fashion news and trends. It is important to state that the top key attributes in blogger source credibility (passionate and influential) contradicts with Kang (2010) study which found that authority (to be “influential”) and reliability to be the top key attributes. This discrepancy can be because Kang’s study was done on blog in general rather than fashion blogs. For that reason the key attribute passionate seemed to be more important than reliability among the Lebanese participants’ followers of fashion blogs/pages.

The Lebanese female participants consider fashion bloggers and digital influencers as passionate because they are expressing a deep passion towards everything related to fashion news and trends through their daily posts. They are always present in top fashion events around

the world and aware of the latest fashion news. They show their interest in fashion as they take initiative to learn more about the industry and update their knowledge. For instance, they take the initiative to go to a new store and they share posts or even live coverage of their experience. Moreover, these fashion bloggers are not just sharing posts of branded items, but their passion for fashion is also expressed through their Instagram stories, where these products are being integrated in their daily routine. Integrated, these branded products is called product placement and it's considered as an indirect advertisement. Product placement is the fact of showing a branded product or service within a context rather than an explicit advertisement (Suggett, 2017) the blogger shares Instagram stories while having a family lunch, having coffee, traveling...wearing branded items rather than just sharing a post of the product itself. A blogger shares the posts on social media, wearing the product and trying to mix and match different items to stand out and give new ideas and be creative. For instance, Lana el Sahely (larmoiiredelana) shares Instagram stories while traveling highlighting the branded products and other fashion pages show pictures of how to travel in style wearing branded items. This shows how passionate a blogger is about the product and the branded items, which plays an important role in the perceived credibility of fashion blogger or digital influencer.

In addition, the participants perceived the blogger/ digital influencer as knowledgeable. They consider bloggers to be well informed about everything related to fashion and lifestyle. This can be related to the fact that the participants' top motive is social surveillance. People rely on these fashion blogs and pages to get the latest fashion news and trends because they believe that the source is knowledgeable. For instance, the top two motivational statements agreed among the participants were "for a wide variety of information on fashion, style and beauty" ($M = 4.17$) and "because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion" ($M = 4.07$). Moreover, the fact that the participants perceived the blogger or digital influencer as

knowledgeable and the fashion blogs/pages as source of information confirms with was said previously about the blog as new media tool. As stated in previous studies (Psyche Style and Inspiration, p.1; Hauge, 2010), the fashion blogs are becoming a new source of information and starting to replace the traditional media. People will switch from reading fashion magazines to fashion blogs in order to gather information about the latest fashion news and trends. Hauge (2010) and Senior Psychology Instructor Loulwa Kaloyeros at LAU University (2015) among other studies state that people are substituting to following blogs mainly because they are easily accessed and cheap. As a proof, the top motivational statement among the accessibility motive was “because they are easily accessed (at all times)” ($M = 3.95$).

Similar to Kang study 2010 people perceived also the blogger as influential which supports the hypothesis that fashion blogger perceived credibility has an association with the influence of fashion choices and purchase intentions. The Lebanese females respondents consider that fashion blogs and pages help them to get ideas for their own style, provide them with new outfit ideas as well as news about the trend which justify the main motives (i.e., specific inquiry and social surveillance). The perceived blogger or digital influencer’s credibility as being influential is another proof that confirms that fashion blogs/pages are emerging media tool that replace the traditional media “consumers believe more in the product-related content or information created which other consumers generate on social networking sites, multimedia sites, blogs and so on than producer or company produced related content, despite being personally unknown or unrelated to the user” (Thornley, 2014, n.p.). When it comes to fashion choices, people used to gather all the information mainly from the magazines. However, nowadays they are getting this fashion info from the blogs and pages which they follow on Instagram. It is also related to the fact that they perceive them passionate in contrary to the magazines’ editors who are hired to write and get info. They might not be interested or like

fashion as they are just doing their job. However, the blogger is somehow available 24/7 to publish and share any emerging news about fashion on Instagram. Fashion is part of their daily routine!

The fashion blogger/digital influencer is not only influencing the females' fashion choices, but it also has huge impact on their purchase intentions. The Lebanese females respondents highly agreed on the following statements "I get inspiration to find similar clothes that I want to buy", "I got to know new brands that I don't know they even exist", and "pages/blogs encourage me to break my routine shopping" Fashion blogs and pages are indeed new marketing tools in the fashion industry! While millions of dollars were paid for ads on traditional media to at least create awareness about a certain product, here a simple post shared on a fashion blog/page can trigger people to consider the product. Since the bloggers are now considered among the Lebanese females as trusted sources for information, marketers are now relying more on them to advertise and promote their brands. They are benefiting from the low cost versus the high exposure, which they can get due to the huge number of followers. It costs the fashion brand to only offer the blogger its product as gift so in return the blogger will share a post on Instagram. Thousands of Lebanese females will be reached. However, the chance that they induce immediate action to purchase the items seen on the page/blog has no major agreement (28% agree vs. 23% disagree). Therefore, the fashion blogger or digital influencer play an important role in influencing females fashion choices and purchase intentions but lack enough power to push them to purchase the products shared in their posts. . It can be related to the fact that there was no major agreement on the blogger perceived credibility key attributes like transparent, honest, trustworthy, and believable. It is plausible that the items shared are only branded expensive items so directed only to a niche segment (affluent females). It's recognizable that the majority of the fashion blogger or digital influencers belong to the upper middle class

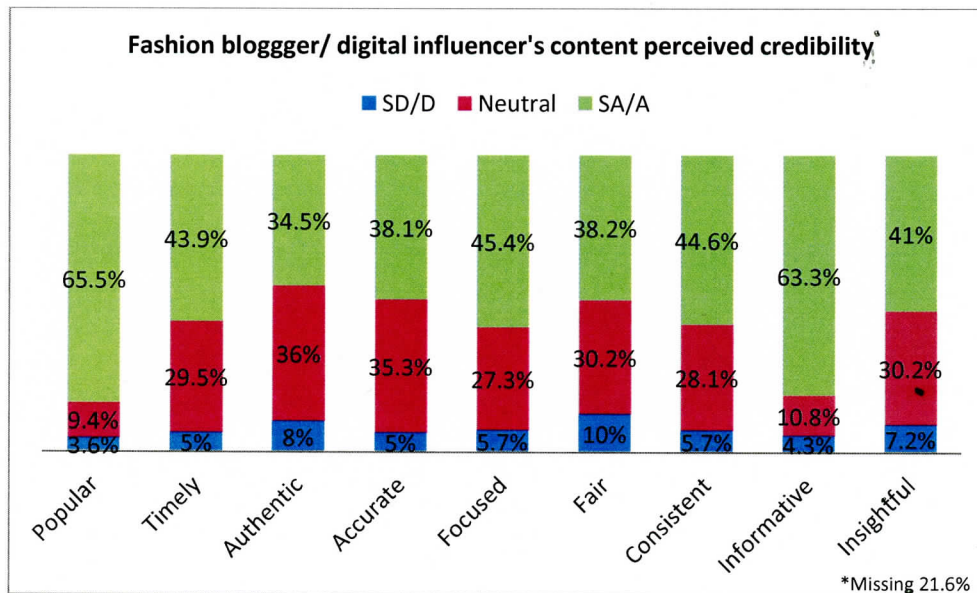


and all the items shared are luxury products (citation needed). People enjoy looking at them and know the trends of the luxury designers, but can't afford to buy them.)

The Blogger Content Credibility

Minimal studies on blog content credibility exists currently since the majority of them focus on the blog source itself. However, the blog content perceived credibility is also a significant element to be examined. As the results of this study indicated, the perceived credibility of the blog content ($M = 3.559$) weights in a bit more than the perceived credibility of the blogger ($M = 3.384$) in terms of purchasing. The participants consider the content provided is more important than the source itself. Marketers should not only focus on selecting the best blogger, but they should take into consideration the content provided as well.

As opposed to Kang (2010) study, which stated that accuracy and focus are key indicators of the blog content credibility, the Lebanese female participants considered fashion blogs/pages as popular (65.5%) and informative (63.3%) more than the other attributes. It's mainly due to the fact that Kang studied the blog in general which may include news blogs, and business blogs where accuracy and focus are important key attributes compared to fashion blogs.



For millennials in this study, the perceived credibility of the fashion message communicated is popular and informative. Since their top gratifications for following these pages is social surveillance, therefore they value more the content that included the most up-to-date and popular fashion news. Marketers and fashion brands should focus on providing popular and informative content in order to make the content more credible. For instance, it might be through sharing the most popular picture of a celebrity wearing the branded items or informing people about a hit item during a certain international ceremony like red carpet.

However, the ultimate goal of the marketers is not only to create awareness about a certain product instead they want them to induce immediate action. Based on these results, the perceived credibility of the blogger succeeds in influencing the fashion choices ($M = 3.956$) of the Lebanese participants more than their purchase intentions ($M = 3.457$). Therefore, further studies should be done to tackle the content perceived credibility in regards to fashion choices and purchase intentions in order to check how marketers and fashion brands can better use the content targeted to millennials in order to induce action and encourage them to buy.

Chapter 8: Limitations and Further Suggestions

Several limitations can be listed in this study on methodological and theoretical perspectives. First, the use of online survey to conduct the research may be considered as one of these limitations. People are nowadays bombarded by online messages and surveys to fill out; therefore they might be annoyed and automatically ignore this survey. They may also believe that the online survey can invade their privacy even though all participants were promised confidentiality and anonymity. Second, since it's an online survey, the researcher was not present in order to clarify any misunderstandings. Also, the absence of the researcher increases the risk of random error since there is no possibility to make sure that the person who filled out the survey is the intended participant. Third, this study was based on the theories applied on fashion blogs in general rather than fashion blogs/pages on Instagram. Forth, the fact that some of the bloggers are being sponsored without being noticed by people may affect the perceived credibility and the participants' results. For instance, some of the bloggers started to have rate cards. Finally, the sample of this research was not probability sample so it's not possible to generalize it back to the population.

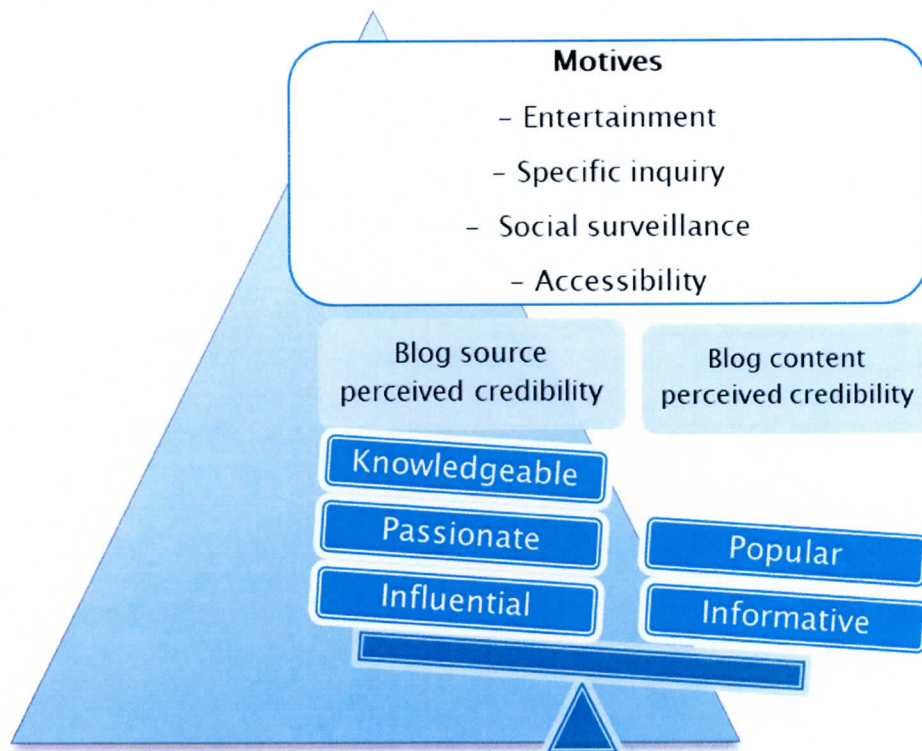
While a survey is necessary for this investigation stage of uncovering previously undefined motivational factors, and allowing for establishing a list of motivational factors and categories for fashion blogs, a qualitative approach to measuring the theory uses and gratifications can be used, such as in-depth interviews to determine other motives and/or further investigations into the ones which preexist as an explanation of why people select the particular responses. A future qualitative study can rely on the motivational factors that emerged in this study along with others for general blog use and to create a comprehensive list of confirmed uses and gratifications for such platforms.

This suggested qualitative approach may be useful to include men who have an interest in fashion and read fashion blogs, as well as users in other countries. Including both men and women will allow for researchers to determine whether there are any gender differences in regards to motivations for fashion blog use. As well as, further studies can examine the motivations for following the fashion blogs and pages according to each age bracket category and check the impact of the perceived credibility on their fashion choices and purchase intention.

Based on the results of this study, the perceived credibility of the content weights a bit more than the source. Therefore, it is very important in later studies to examine the association of the perceived credibility of the content and the influence on fashion choices and purchase intentions. The results might fill the gap in this study by showing the influence of the perceived credibility of the content if it has more impact on the fashion choices or the purchase intentions.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Fashion blogs and pages are developing and attracting the attention of marketers and fashion companies. Overall, this research provides insight on the uses and motives of the Lebanese female participants to follow fashion blogs and pages on Instagram as well as the perceived credibility of both blog source and content. It provides a model that can be relied on for future marketing strategies and exploratory studies tackling fashion blogs.



This research confirms with previous studies done abroad that the main motives for following fashion blogs and pages are entertainment, social surveillance, and accessibility. However, it contradicts with the results that highlighted blog attributes as top motive since the majority of the respondents agreed on specific inquiry as main motivation instead. Therefore, the Lebanese female participants perceive the fashion blogs/pages on Instagram as accessible and easy way to gather information about fashion news and trends as well as inspirational and instructional info. In addition, through following these blogs and pages, they are able to gratify entertainment needs

while looking at the images. These insights are very important for marketers and fashion companies when using fashion blogs as a media tool to advertise their products to the millennials. They should think of providing followers with imagery materials or even videos in a more instructional way rather than texts. For instance, instead of just sharing the picture of a make-up item, it's better to show people how to do the perfect make-up using this item in DIY post. Also, they should always provide users with the most up-to-date fashion and lifestyle news.

In addition, fashion marketers and brands should take into consideration the perceived credibility issue when addressing people. In Lebanon, the female participants agreed that the perceived credibility of the source has more influence on the fashion choices than the purchase intentions. They also agreed that passionate, influential, and knowledgeable are the top key attributes in the perceived credibility of the fashion blogger or digital influencer. Therefore, fashion brands and marketers should focus on the most passionate, influential and knowledgeable bloggers when addressing to millennials because they will more likely have the power to influence their fashion choices. However, the blog content perceived credibility weights a bit more than the source credibility. Thus, it will be interesting for future research to examine the content perceived credibility on both fashion choices and purchase intentions and check if it will bridge the gap of the source perceived credibility in influencing the purchase intentions.

References

- Aldred, J., Behr, R., Pickard, A., Wignall, A., Hind, J., Cochrane, L., Potter, L. (2008, March 09). The world's 50 most powerful blogs. Retrieved January 28, 2017, from <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2008/mar/09/blogs>
- Alexander, E. (2017, October 11). What is the difference between a fashion influencer and blogger? Retrieved December 12, 2017, from <http://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/fashion/fashion-news/news/a41898/fashion-influencer-fashion-blogger-definition/>
- Atik, C. (2011, October 24). Make it, don't buy it: DIY style goes high-fashion. Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://www.today.com/news/make-it-dont-buy-it-diy-style-goes-high-fashion-wbna44979847>
- Blogger Demographics by Gender, Age, Geography. (2010, June). Retrieved January 29, 2017, from <https://sysomos.com/reports/blogger-demographics/>
- Bejjani, E. (2015, June). Instagram fashion accounts. *Tribune*. Retrieved from <http://tribunelau.com/2015/06/instagram-fashion-accounts/>
- Chapman, C. (2011, Mar). A brief history of Blogging. Retrieved from <http://www.webdesignerdepot.com/2011/03/a-brief-history-of-blogging>
- Chandler, D. (1994). Why do people watch television?. Retrived from <http://visual-memory.co.uk/daniel/Documents/short/usegrat.html>
- Chirinian, A. (2014, June). Five apps for a fashion fix. *Cloud 961*. Retrieved from [http://www.mindsoupblog.com/2014/07/fashion-meets-social-media.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+MindSoup+\(Mind+Soup\)#!/2014/07/fashion-meets-social-media.html](http://www.mindsoupblog.com/2014/07/fashion-meets-social-media.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+MindSoup+(Mind+Soup)#!/2014/07/fashion-meets-social-media.html)

- Cox, J. (2013). *Radio After the Golden Age: The Evolution of American Broadcasting Since 1960*. McFarland & Company Incorporated.
- Ferrier, S. (2014, April 02). Authority vs Credibility – Which one will work for you? Retrieved December 13, 2017, from <http://persuasivepresentations.com.au/authority-vs-credibility-one-will-work/>
- Fink, A. (2015). *Fashion blogging and consumers: examining the uses and gratifications of readers of fashion blogs* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from http://acumen.lib.ua.edu/content/u0015/0000001/0002049/u0015_0000001_0002049.pdf
- Griffin, M. (2016, May 12). How to Choose Your Blog's Niche Focus. Retrieved December 13, 2017, from <http://www.melyssagriffin.com/blog-guide-narrowing-focus/>
- Hansson, N. (2015). *The perceived credibility of fashion bloggers and sponsored blog posts* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://lup.lub.lu.se/search/publication/8001196>
- Haridakis, P., & Hanson, G. (2009). Social interaction and co-viewing with YouTube: Blending mass communication receptions and social connection. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 53(2), 317-335.
- Hauge, T. (2010). *Fashion blogs - a study on how consumers' attitude to fashion is influenced through fashion blog usage* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/handle/11250/168609>
- Hebbard, D. B. (2016, August 29). Survey from online fashion site finds blogs more influential than fashion magazines. Retrieved March 29, 2017, from <http://www.talkingnewmedia.com/2016/08/29/survey-from-online-fashion-site-finds-blogs-more-influential-than-fashion-magazines/>
- Hewitt, H. (2005). *Blog: understanding the information reformation that's changing your world*. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

- How Lebanese Businesses are Using Instagram in 2016. (n.d.). Retrieved February 07, 2017, from <http://www.cloudsonline.net/blog/how-lebanese-businesses-are-using-instagram-in-2016>
- Imbert, T. (n.d.). The Nine Ingredients That Make Great Content. Retrieved December 13, 2017, from <https://blog.kissmetrics.com/ingredients-of-great-content/>
- Johnson, S. (2011). *Fashion 2.0: the uses and gratifications of fashion blogs* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <http://digital.library.ryerson.ca/islandora/object/RULA%3A3224/datastream/OBJ/view>
- Kang , M. (2010). *Measuring Social Media Credibility: A Study on a Measure of Blog Credibility* [PDF]. Institute for Public Relations. <http://digital.library.ryerson.ca/islandora/object/RULA%3A3224/datastream/OBJ/view>
- Kaye, B.K., Johnson, T.J. (2002). Online and in the know: uses and gratifications of the web for political information. *Journal of broadcasting & electronic media*, 46(1), 54-71. Retrieved from <http://www.journalism.wisc.edu/~dshah/blog-club/site/Kaye.pdf>
- Kaye, B.K. (2005). It's a blog, blog, blog world: users and uses of weblogs". *Atlantic journal of communication*, 13:2, 73-95. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15456889ajc1302_2
- Kaye, B.K. (2010). Going to the blogs: toward the development of a uses and gratifications measurement scale for blogs. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, 18:4, 194-210. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2010.505904>
- L'armoire de Lana reveals ten limited-edition collaborations, now available to shop online. (2016, December 20). Executive Bulletin. Retrieved December 14, 2017, from

<http://executive-bulletin.com/other/larmoire-de-lana-reveals-ten-limited-edition-collaborations-now-available-to-shop-online>

Metzler, A. (2015, September 8). The Best D.I.Y. Clothing Websites. Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://www.hercampus.com/school/northeastern/best-diy-clothing-websites>

Nayyar, I. (2017, September 22). What is a Fashion Blogger | Meaning of Fashion Blogger. Retrieved December 12, 2017, from http://blogcheater.com/what-is-a-fashion-blogger/#Meaning_Of_Fashion_Blogger

Park, N., Kee, K., & Valenzuela, S. (2009). Being immersed in social networking environment: Facebook groups, uses and gratifications, and social outcomes. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 12(6), 729-733.

Penttala, S., Saarela, H. (2012). *Study on the effect of blogs on young women's online buying behaviour when purchasing fashion items from online stores* (Bachelor's thesis). Retrieved from https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/49601/penttala_sanna%20saarela_heidi.pdf?sequence=1

Perse, E. (2014, Jan 30). *Uses and Gratifications*. Retrieved from <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199756841/obo-9780199756841-0132.xml>

Rahhal, M. (2013, February 14). *E-Commerce in Lebanon: An Overview*. Retrieved from <https://www.wamda.com/2013/02/overview-of-the-e-commerce-scene-in-lebanon>

Robinovitz, K. (2016, August 10). Bloggers and digital influencers are reshaping the fashion and beauty landscape – LA Times. Retrieved December 14, 2017, from <http://www.latimes.com/fashion/la-ig-bloggers-20160809-snap-story.html>

Rossi, E. (2002). *Uses and gratifications/dependency theory*. Retrieved from

<http://zimmer.csufresno.edu/~johnca/spch100/7-4-uses.htm>

Roula Nahas: seasoned expert, at the forefront of the region's marketing and communications

[Interview by M. Hijazi]. (2014, July 4). *Cloud 961*, (11). Retrieved February 7, 2017,

from <http://cloud961.com/blog/2014/07/roula-nahas-seasoned-expert-at-the-forefront-of-the-regions-marketing-and-communications/>

Solomon, M. 2011. *Consumer Behaviour; Buying, Having and Being*. Ninth Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education Limited.

Suggett, P. (2017, June 9). The Delicate Art of Product Placement Advertising. Retrieved from

<https://www.thebalance.com/the-delicate-art-of-product-placement-advertising-38454>

Thornley, P. (2014). *Examining the role of bloggers in the fashion industry: a public relations strategy for new designers* (Bachelor's thesis). Retrieved from

<http://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1074&context=joursp>

Trammell, K. A. & Keshelashivili, A. (2005). Examining the new influencers: A selfpresentation study of A-list blogs. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82(4), 968-982.

Wood, J. (2016, July 22). The Best Fashion Blogs Ever. Retrieved January 28, 2017, from

<http://www.marieclaire.co.uk/fashion/the-best-fashion-blogs-ever-69888>

Jones, S. (2014, November 26). How much influence do fashion bloggers have? Retrieved

February 06, 2017, from <https://www.luxurydaily.com/how-much-influence-do-fashion-bloggers-have/>

Wu, J. (2015, April 25). Who, What, Wear? Retrieved Jan. & feb., 2017, from

<https://wu286.wordpress.com/2015/04/21/who-what-wear/>

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

As a graduate student majoring in Media Studies at Notre Dame University- Louaize, I am conducting a survey to collect data for my Thesis entitled Fashion Blogging and Readers. The purpose of my study is to examine the motivations of the Lebanese females to follow style and fashion blogs. All you need to do is to complete this questionnaire, which should take approximately 15 minutes.

Your answers to the questionnaire are valuable for this research. Kindly note that all participants will remain anonymous and all the information collected will be treated with strict confidentiality and will be used for academic reasons only (such as thesis and academic journal).

Thank you in advance for your voluntary participation!

Fashion Blogs

Please specify your gender.

- Male
- Female

Condition: Male Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Please type your age below.

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, no degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Ph.D.

What is your marital status?

- single
- married
- widow

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram 52

Employment Status: Are you currently...

- Employed
- Out of work and looking for work
- Out of work but not currently looking for work
- A homemaker
- A student
- Other. Please specify _____

How often do you use social media?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Yearly
- Never

I am more active on...

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Pintrest

In a typical day, how many hours do you spend on Instagram?

- 0 hours
- Less than 50 minutes
- 1-2 hours
- 3-4 hours
- 5-6 hours
- 7-8 hours
- 9 or more hours

Condition: 0 hours Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Do you follow fashion pages/blogs on Instagram?

- Yes
- No

Condition: No Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Specify at least 2 fashion pages/blogs that you follow on Instagram. If you only follow one, please specify. Indicate a brief reason why you follow this/these specific blogs.

I look at fashion pages/blogs on Instagram on the weekend more than during the week.

- yes
- no
- sometimes

I prefer to look at fashion pages/blogs on Instagram....

- in the evening
- in the morning
- throughout the day

When looking at a fashion page/blog on Instagram, I spend the majority of time...

- reading what the blogger has written (caption)
- looking at the photos
- reading other viewers comments
- I spend equal time doing all three
- other, specify _____

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about fashion pages/blogs from strongly agree to strongly disagree?

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram for...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Socialization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expression/Affiliation (to be in contact with like-minded people)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social surveillance (Learning about others' points of view and opinions on various issues and current events)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessibility and convenience Information seeking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Blog attributes such as retrieve and save content, more personal, free access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific inquiry (specific information like outfit inspirations, instructional D.I.Ys)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Escapism/ Enjoyment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram 54

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about fashion pages/blogs from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram...

	Strongly disagree	disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
to get product information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
for a wide variety of information on fashion, style and beauty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For inspiration on how to dress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to keep up with current events and trends in fashion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
for credible or honest information (not found in traditional media)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
because I want to learn something new about fashion or beauty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to see style and fashion experts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about fashion pages/blogs with your level of agreement.

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
because I'm addicted to them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
because fashion blogs are exciting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I have free time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
as a pastime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to look at fashion images	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
to stop buying print magazines and then throwing them out	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
because I can do other things at the same time like chatting, watching ...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram 55

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about fashion pages/blogs by level of agreement.

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram....

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
to see trends instantly as they are happening online (the new live feature)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
because they are easily accessed (at all times)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
For convenience sake	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get information quickly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To feed my fashion curiosity within one minute	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because they are part of my morning routine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because they are part of my everyday life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because it's faster, more current and more up-to-date	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about fashion pages/blogs with level of agreement.

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
To save images and file them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To tag my friends on something interesting I've found	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because they are more creative and they write more casually—I like the informality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because if I like something I can just click on it and it will take me to the site or account	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because It's a more personal perspective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because you get someone's opinion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram 56

Because people say stuff on these pages that they would never say in a magazine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Because it shows style and lifestyle not just clothes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about the **fashion blogger or digital influencer**?

I consider the **fashion blogger or digital influencer on Instagram** to be...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Knowledgeable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influential	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Passionate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transparent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Believable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trustworthy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The motives of Lebanese Women Followers of Fashion Blogs and Pages on Instagram 57

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about the Instagram fashion bloggers or digital influencer's **content and message**.

I consider the **fashion blogger or digital influencer's content and message on Instagram to be...**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Authentic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Insightful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Informative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consistent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fair	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focused	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accurate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Timely	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Popular	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about the influence of Instagram fashion bloggers or digital influencers on **fashion choices**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
To see their original style so I might also get inspired	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get ideas from blogs for my own style	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get ideas on how I could combine clothes that I already have in different ways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get new ideas about how to manage my style and ways of combining things in my already existing wardrobe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To get good tips on current discounts going on in stores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To check the trend	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For the following please indicate the extent to which the following statements reflect how you feel about the influence of Instagram fashion bloggers or digital influencers on **purchase intentions**.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Before I purchase an item, I find information about it on the page/blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I need to know the feedback of the fashion blogger before purchasing the product	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think it is safer to buy a product that have already been recommended on the blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think it is a good tool in helping me decide if what I am thinking of buying is worth it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I got to know new brands that I don't know they even exist	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pages/ blogs encourage me to break my routine shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I directly purchase something I have seen on the page/blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get inspiration to find similar clothes that I want to buy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Before I purchase an item, I find information about it on the page/blog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank You for Completing the Survey!

The fact that you are reading this message indicates that you have completed the questionnaire, and that I owe you a debt of thanks. I am very appreciative of the time you have taken to assist in our analysis, and commit to utilizing the information gained to contemplate and implement. Once again, I am extremely grateful for your contributing your valuable time, your honest information, and your thoughtful suggestions.

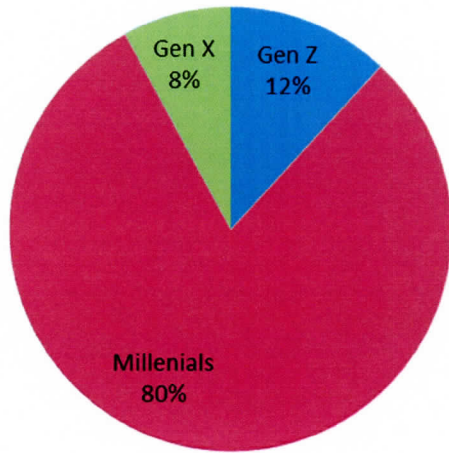
Many thanks,

Eliana Moarbes

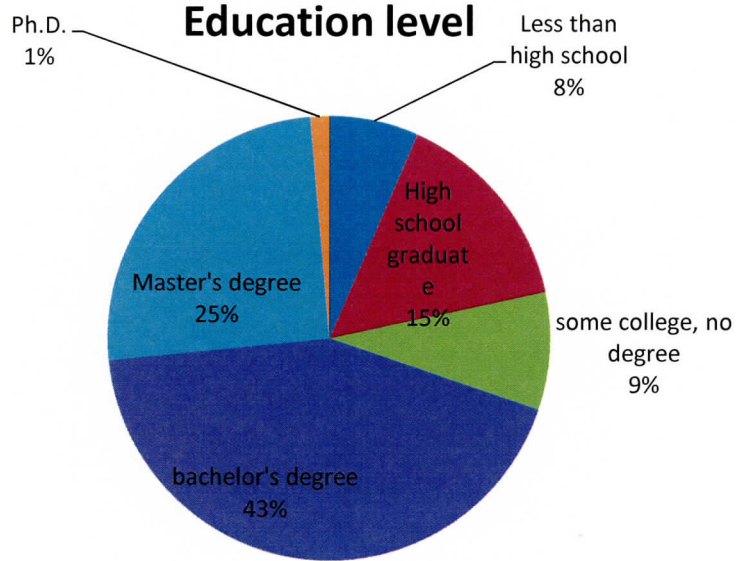
Appendix B: Tables

I. Demographic and media usage:

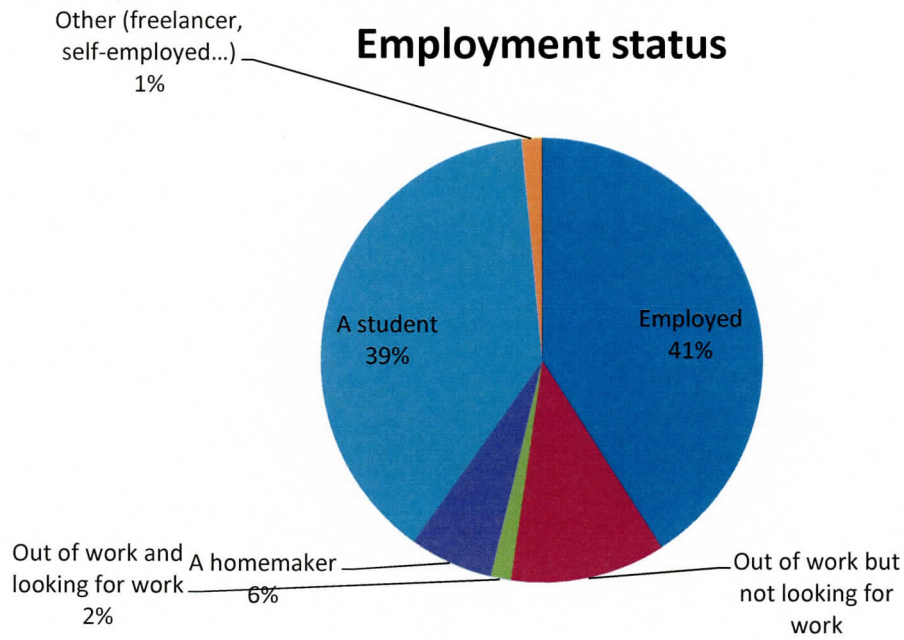
Age



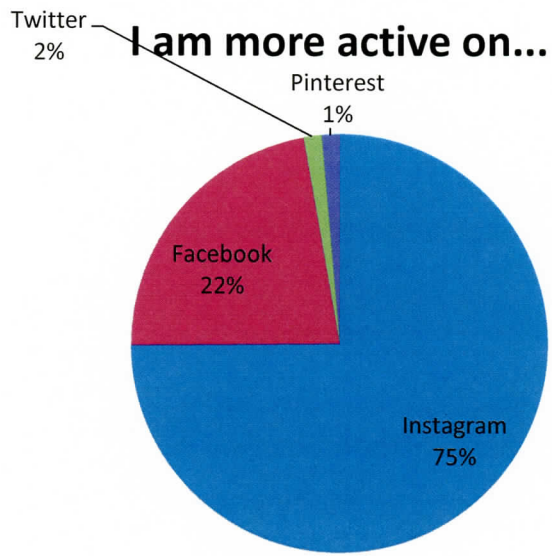
Education level



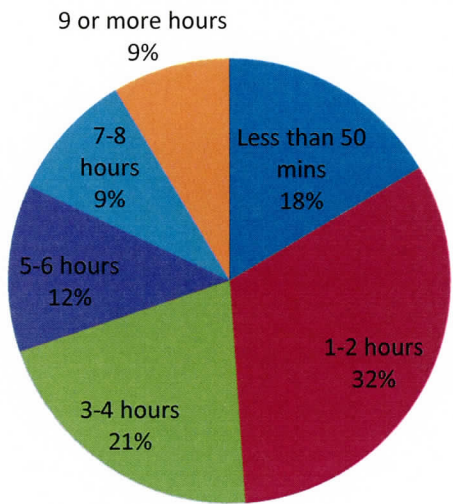
Employment status



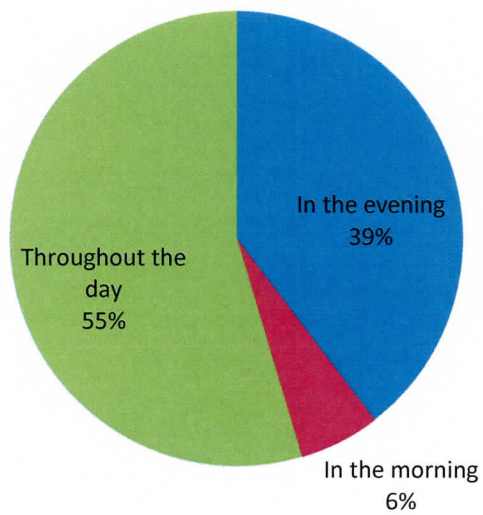
I am more active on...



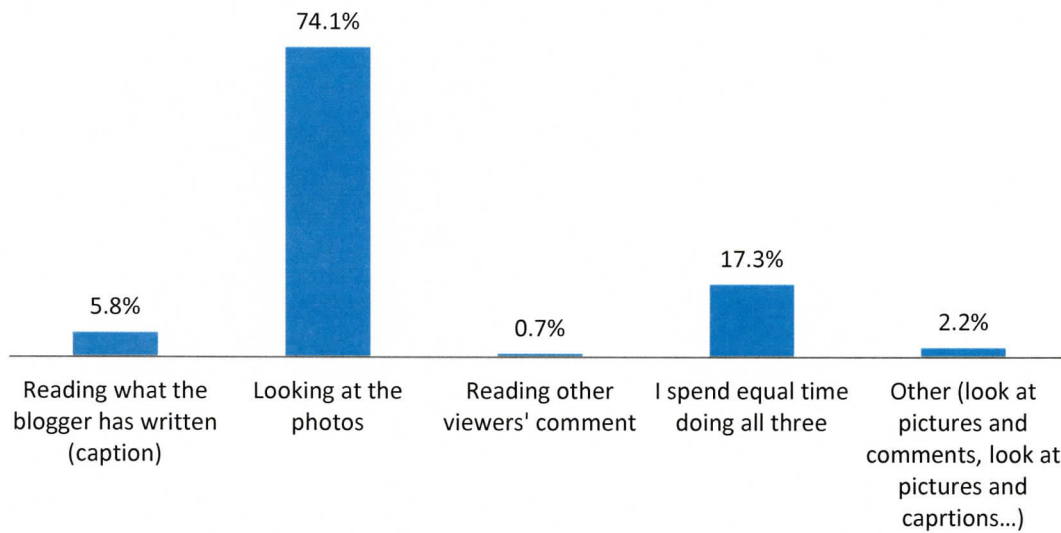
Instagram usage per day



I prefer to look at fashion pages/blogs on Instagram....



When looking at a fashion pages/blog on Instagram, I spend the majority of time...



II. Research question:

I typically use fashion pages/blogs on Instagram for...

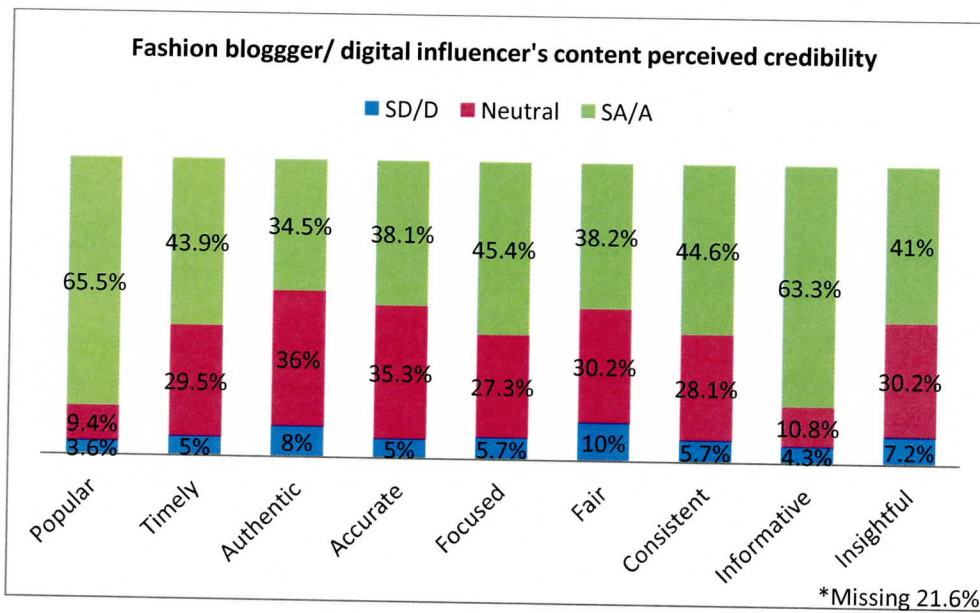
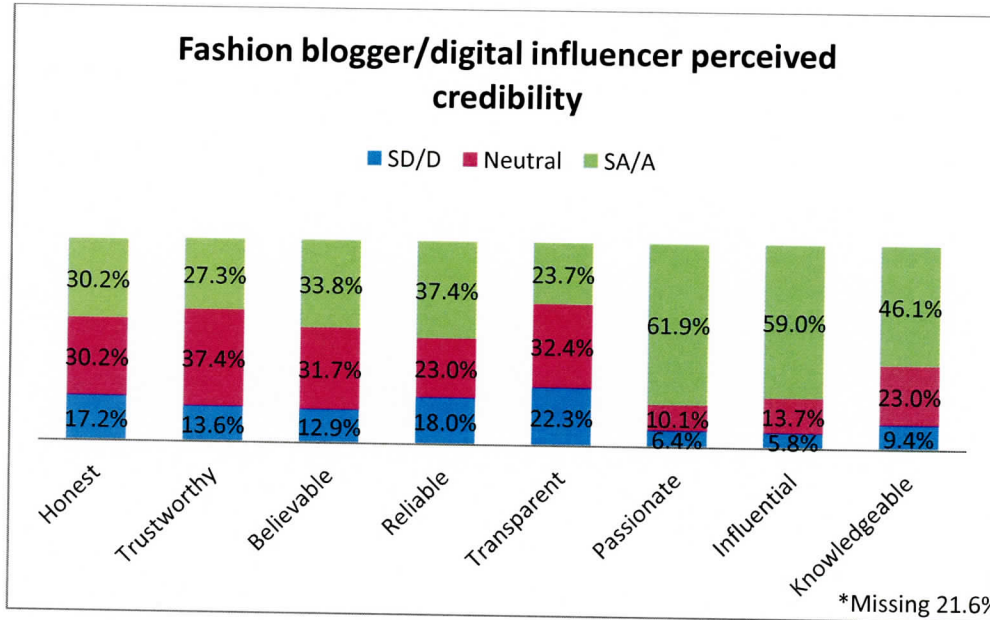
Motives	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Socialization	139	1	5	2.89	1.054
Expression/Affiliation	139	1	5	3.09	1.056
Social surveillance	139	1	5	3.71	.942
Entertainment	139	1	5	4.01	.803
Accessibility and convenience	139	1	5	3.60	.906
Information seeking	139	1	5	3.28	.893
Blog attributes	139	1	5	3.28	.893
Specific inquiry	139	1	5	3.97	.884
Escapism/ Enjoyment	139	1	5	3.86	.830

The mean scores of the motivational statements

Motives	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
to get product information	139	1	5	3.75	.910
for a wide variety of information on fashion, style and beauty	139	1	5	4.17	.732
because they provide the most up-to-date information on fashion	139	1	5	4.07	.890
For inspiration on how to dress	139	1	5	4.01	.897
to keep up with current events and trends in fashion	139	1	5	4.04	.793
for credible or honest information (not found in traditional media)	139	1	5	3.43	.901
because I want to learn something new about fashion or beauty	139	1	5	3.80	.827
to see style and fashion experts	139	1	5	3.96	.788
because I'm addicted to them	122	1	5	2.63	1.151
because fashion blogs are exciting	122	1	5	3.69	.891
When I have free time	122	1	5	3.92	.675
as a pastime	122	1	5	3.38	.921
to look at fashion images	122	1	5	3.98	.643
to stop buying print magazines and then throwing them out	122	1	5	2.96	1.071
because I can do other things at the same time like chatting, watching ...	122	1	5	3.51	.938
to see trends instantly as they are happening online (the new live feature)	122	1	5	3.55	.980
because they are easily accessed (at all times)	122	1	5	3.95	.726
For convenience sake	122	1	5	3.60	.768
To get information quickly	122	1	5	3.89	.730
To feed my fashion curiosity within one minute	122	1	5	3.89	.821
Because they are part of my morning routine	122	1	5	3.03	1.067
Because they are part of my everyday life	122	1	5	3.16	1.136
Because it's faster, more current and more up-to-date	122	1	5	3.87	.782
To save images and file them	122	1	5	3.17	1.096
To tag my friends on something interesting I've found	122	1	5	3.56	1.005
Because they are more creative and they write more casually—I like the informality	122	1	5	3.56	.910
Because if I like something I can just click on it and it will take me to the site or account	122	1	5	3.58	.952
Because It's a more personal perspective	122	1	5	3.50	.836
Because you get someone's opinion	122	1	5	3.42	1.003
Because people say stuff on these pages that they would never say in a magazine	122	1	5	2.99	1.048
Because it shows style and lifestyle not just clothes	122	1	5	3.93	.901

III. Hypothesis:

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Blogger Credibility	112	1	5	3.3842	.66963
Content Credibility	112	1	5	3.5585	.55495
Fashion Choices	104	1	5	3.9551	.58810
Purchase Intentions	104	1	5	3.4573	.69747



Fashion choices		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
To see their original style so I might also get inspired		101	1	5	3.93	.711
To get ideas from blogs for my own style		101	1	5	4.04	.734
To get ideas on how I could combine clothes that I already have in different ways		101	1	5	4.06	.732
To get new ideas about how to manage my style and ways of combining things in my already existing wardrobe		101	1	5	4.02	.812
To get good tips on current discounts going on in stores		101	1	5	3.62	.904
To check the trend		101	1	5	4.09	.763
Purchase intentions		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Before I purchase an item, I find information about it on the page/blog		101	1	5	3.40	1.011
I need to know the feedback of the fashion blogger before purchasing the product		101	1	5	3.23	1.121
I think it is safer to buy a product that have already been recommended on the blog		101	1	5	3.39	1.039
I think it is a good tool in helping me decide if what I am thinking of buying is worth it		101	1	5	3.54	.954
I got to know new brands that I don't know they even exist		101	1	5	3.79	.864
Pages/ blogs encourage me to break my routine shopping		101	1	5	3.68	.894
I directly purchase something I have seen on the page/blog		101	1	5	3.07	1.070
I get inspiration to find similar clothes that I want to buy		101	1	5	3.75	.841