
Insta-shopping: Examining use of Instagram for shopping online using Theory of Reasoned Action

Dr. Sanjukta Pookulangara, University of North Texas, USA
Jacqueline Parr, University of North Texas, USA
Lindsey Tanoff, University of North Texas, USA
Kimberly Nix, University of North Texas, USA

Keywords: Instagram, Social-Commerce, Interpersonal, Purchase

The growth and popularity of social commerce, i.e. shopping using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. has created opportunities for increased interactions between sellers and buyers over various social media platforms and if leveraged properly, brands can lead customers to any of their channels as a direct response to that social media experience (FitzPatrick, 2017). Instagram has the highest rate of engagement with 600 million users worldwide (Chaffey, 2017) and also considered an important platform for marketing purposes (Kulp, 2016). Thus, it is imperative to holistically examine how consumers perceive Instagram as a shopping platform. This current study explores consumer perceptions of shopping via Instagram and eventual purchase intention using the Theory of Reasoned Action.

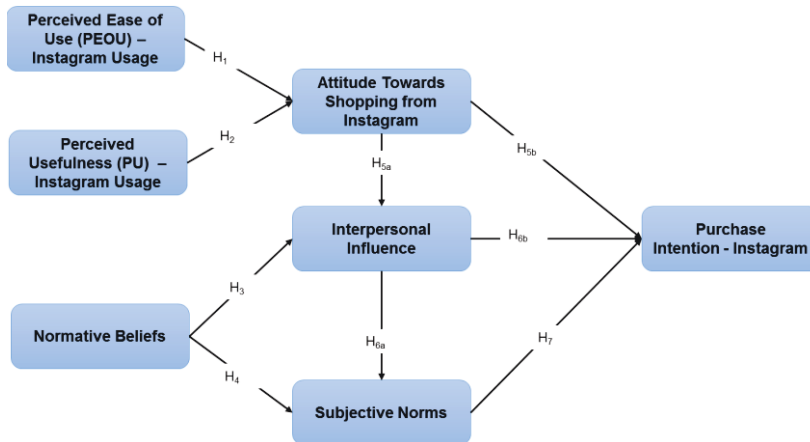
Rationale of the Study: Instagram is an image rich application that has the potential to influence consumers' behaviors and motivations differently than any previous social networking site (Lee et. al., 2015). Instagram has recently unveiled "shoppable tags on photos" which will further entice consumer to shop without leaving Instagram. Current research on Instagram includes: examining primary usage of Instagram (Lee et. al., 2015; Phua, Jin, & Kim, 2017); body image satisfaction (Ridgway & Clayton, 2016) and comparison of user-generated and brand generated content (Bennett & Kunze, 2016). The current study utilizes Theory of Reasoned Action and examines (1) consumer's purchase intention on Instagram; (2) the impact of interpersonal influence. Millennials were considered the appropriate population for this study as Instagram is clearly popular with younger age groups (Chaffey, 2017) (see Figure 1).

Findings of the study: Data was collected via an online survey at a university resulting in a sample size of 342. The students were appropriate as the study focused on millennial consumers. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis and Structural Equation Modeling. The model was tested using measurement and structural model in SEM. The fit indices of the overall structural model ($\chi^2 = 991.49$, d.f. = 385, $p = 0.00000$, RMSEA: 0.068, NFI: 0.95, NNFI: 0.97) supported the model fit. Based on the parameter estimate t value which stated that value greater than 2.00 is considered an indicator of statistical significance, three hypotheses were not supported, i.e. influence of PEOU on Attitude Towards Instagram Usage; influence of Interpersonal Influence on Subjective Norms and impact of Subjective Norms on Purchase Intention.

Conclusions and Implications: The findings of this study indicate that attitude towards shopping from Instagram is influenced by PU, not PEOU. This finding supports the industry trend that Instagram usage is strong among millennials and is where millennials turn for purchase inspiration (Cohen, 2014). Normative beliefs impact interpersonal influence and subjective norms. Thus, it can be inferred that millennials are connected on Instagram and generally gravitate towards people like themselves. Attitude towards shopping from Instagram influences both purchase intention as well as interpersonal influence. This finding provides support to the attitude-intention relationship. Furthermore, it can be inferred attitude towards shopping from

Instagram will impact the brands followed, i.e. shoppers who are already inclined toward a brand will be the most impacted by Instagram. Interpersonal influence does not impact subjective norms. Subjective norm is defined as the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a behavior (Ajzen, 1991), indicating that individual consumers are not influenced by other followers of a brand. Purchase intention is impacted by interpersonal influence. Retailers can capitalize on this finding by ensuring their Instagram page is followed by “brand advocates” who can use their interpersonal influence in promoting the brand.

Figure 1. Proposed Research Model



References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50, 179-211.
- Bennett, D. R., & Kunze, C. (2016). Is a visual worth more than a thousand words? An investigation into brand engagement and social shopping on visual social media. XXIV *AEDEM International Conference London (United Kingdom)* September, 1-2, 2015
- Chaffey, D. (2017). Global social media research summary 2017. Retrieved from <http://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/>
- Cohen, H. (2014). *Social Media Millennial Shopping Trends [Research]*. Retrieved from <http://heidicohen.com/social-media-millennial-shopping-trends-research/>
- FitzPatrick, H. (2017). *Is Instagram Shopping on the Rise?* Retrieved from <https://www.yahoo.com/style/is-instagram-shopping-on-the-rise-165652236.html>
- Kulp, P. (2016). *Instagram Expected To Have More Advertisers Than Twitter By Next Year*. Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2016/11/30/instagram-pass-up-twitter/?utm_cid=mash-com-tw-aus-link%2317p5codLmpqO#l_8W5Sox.Sqz
- Lee, E., Lee, J. A., Moon, J. H., & Sung, Y. (2015). Pictures speak louder than words: Motivations for using Instagram. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 18(9), 552-556.
- Phua, J., Jin, S. V., & Kim, J. J. (2017). Gratifications of using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat to follow brands: The moderating effect of social comparison, trust, tie strength, and network homophily on brand identification, brand engagement, brand commitment, and membership intention. *Telematics and Informatics*, 34(1), 412-424
- Ridgway, J. L., & Clayton, R. B. (2016). Instagram unfiltered: Exploring associations of body image satisfaction, Instagram# selfie posting, and negative romantic relationship outcomes. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 19(1), 2-7.