

THE ANTECEDENTS OF THE SATISFACTION OF FASHION BRANDS' FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM AND THE EFFECT ON THE INTENTION TO FOLLOW THE INFLUENCER'S ADVICE

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the antecedents and the consequences of the satisfaction of fashion brands' followers on Instagram. The results of a sample of 300 respondents to an online questionnaire showed that perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment and socialization positively and significantly influence satisfaction. This variable, in turn, has a positive effect on the intention to follow the influencer's advice. In addition, the moderating role of the need for interaction has been confirmed.

Keywords: Instagram, Perceived enjoyment, socialization, satisfaction, intentions to follow the influencer's advice

INTRODUCTION

According to Business Insider (2023), investments in influencer marketing are expected to reach between 10 and 15 billion dollars in 2024, with an annual growth of 30%, mainly in the fashion sectors which is considered one of the most important sectors, since it represents a significant share of the global economy (McKinsey & Company, 2016). In the fashion sector, fashion blogs have aroused great interest since their appearance at the beginning of the century (Delisle & Parmentier, 2016). Moreover, among the many social networks available, Instagram is experiencing a constant growth in the number of active fashion-related users (Yesmail, 2015), reached 1.158 billion users in July 2020 (Statista, 2020b), and its exponential growth has allowed companies to use it as a platform to present their products to the public (Zilber & al., 2019). Consumers are increasingly using social media to gather information and base their decisions. Several influencers have become influential members of online communities and are recognized as a source of advice for other consumers (Casaló, Cisneros, Flavián and Guinalíu, 2009; Thakur, Angriawan and Summey, 2016). In addition, influencers play an important role in the fashion industry (Wiedman, Hennings and Langner, 2010). Indeed, influencers exchange new trends and new styles with consumers, share information and make suggestions, which underlines the role of social communication in spreading fashion trends (Goldsmith and Clark, 2008).

Work based on the U&G theory of uses and gratifications shows that the satisfaction experienced when using social networks constitutes an essential determinant of online behaviors (de Oliveira & al., 2016; Kim and Kim, 2019; Pelletier & al., 2020; Qin, 2020). This satisfaction appears to be a

central factor in understanding subsequent consumer behaviors on social media (Casaló & al., 2017a). However, despite its theoretical importance, existing research has rarely studied, within the same model, the antecedents of satisfaction and its particular behavioral consequences on Instagram. Some studies have focused on the motivations and rewards of users (Whiting and Williams, 2013; Casaló & al., 2017a), others on brand promotion mechanisms and their effects on sales (Hung, 2014; Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017). At the same time, some studies have shown that interactions on platforms such as websites (Ko & al., 2005), Facebook (Qin, 2020) or social media in general (Corrada & al., 2020) influence behavioral intention. Nevertheless, this relationship has not been formally established for Instagram, which represents a notable gap in the literature. To our knowledge, no study has so far examined in an integrated way how satisfaction on Instagram simultaneously influences the intention to follow the influencer's advice. Moreover, the literature still neglects the role of individual differences in this relationship. In particular, the need for interaction, although central to explaining the preference for human interaction in services, rarely remains integrated into digital models. Very few studies have examined its moderating function (Pereir & al., 2021), in particular on the satisfaction–intention relationship. The Need for Interaction has mainly been studied in traditional services, its role in pure digital environments remains little explored. This absence limits the understanding of how digital experiences really influence behaviors according to user profiles. Based on these observations, several research questions guide this study:

QR1: Does the perceived usefulness influence the satisfaction of the followers with the Instagram account?

QR2: Does the perceived enjoyment influence the satisfaction of followers?

QR3: Does Socialization influence satisfaction with the Instagram account.

QR4: Does the satisfaction of followers influence their intentions to follow the influencer

QR5: Does the need for interaction influence the relationship between satisfaction and the intention to follow the influencer

This research is structured as follows: the first section presents the theoretical framework and the research hypotheses. The second section describes the methodology and the measures used. The third section presents the empirical results and their analysis. Finally, the last section presents the main theoretical and practical contributions of the study, as well as its limits and future research avenues.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this research we have mobilized a theory and a model. First, the theory of uses and gratifications (U&G) has developed to challenge the idea of a passive public in front of the media. According to this approach, consumers make intentional choices among the available content, guided by specific needs, motivations or expectations (Whiting & Williams, 2013). They actively interpret media messages, including advertisements, and integrate them according to their own context, values or personal goals. The theory of uses and gratifications has gained major interest with the emergence of social networks (Whiting and Williams, 2013; Pelletier & al., 2020), which now consider the user as a real participant in the communication process, and no longer as a simple passive receiver of content. This process makes it possible to achieve a level of satisfaction in accordance with their psychological desires or needs (Kim and Kim, 2019). Secondly, the TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) model, proposed by Davis (1989), makes it possible to evaluate the acceptance of

information technologies by individuals. He postulates that the attitude towards the use of these technologies depends on two main factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

This research is based on a set of fundamental concepts that structure our theoretical model. First, perceived usefulness is defined as "the extent to which the technology leads to the achievement of the user's objectives" (Davis, 1989; Davis & al., 1992). According to Basak and Calisir (2015), perceived usefulness is related "to the extent to which a social media account provides the information that users need to make specific decisions". On Instagram, "consulting accounts allows, in an entertaining way, to obtain complete and relevant, useful information about the products or services sought" Casalo & al. (2017a). Then, the perceived enjoyment that "refers to the degree of fun, relaxation, mental stimulation and pleasure that people feel when interacting with social media" (Casaló, Flavián and Sergio, 2017). Then, satisfaction which is defined "as the psychological or emotional state resulting from the cognitive evaluation of the confirmation between expectations and results" (Oliver, 1981). In addition, Park & al. (2009) define socialization as "an individual's interest in meeting and interacting with other people, as well as obtaining peer support and a sense of belonging to a community". However, the need for interaction is defined as "the need to maintain personal contact with others during a service interaction" (Curran and Meuter, 2005).

DEVELOPMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The expansion of social networks and especially that of Instagram is of inestimable utility for the development of marketing strategies for several companies (Walker, A. P., Banks, L., Gibbs, D. J., Lee, H., & Lee, H. Y., 2025). Indeed, this platform helps to strengthen consumer confidence and encourage online purchases through influencers (Astuti, PramestiPutri, 2018). In the context of Instagram, the perceived usefulness of pages leads to user satisfaction with an account (Alhabash and Ma, 2017; Huang and Su, 2018). Nevertheless, the studies of Raacke and Bonds-Raacke (2008), Whiting and Williams (2013), and (Casalo et al., 2018) demonstrated that perceived usefulness contributes to user satisfaction in virtual environments, because it reveals the benefits related to access to these media and participation in them. Thus, our first hypothesis:

H1: The perceived usefulness positively influences the satisfaction of the followers with the Instagram account

In the case of Instagram, fashion brands often publish interesting and interactive content to arouse attention and engagement. For example, they can post a survey or make users participate in a contest that they may find enjoyable. This perceived enjoyment leads to a pleasant experience that creates a probability that the user perceives his user experience as satisfactory. The studies of (Cheah & al., 2020; Nayal and Pandey, 2020; Van der Heijden, 2004) show that perceived enjoyment can come from playing games, engaging with other people and in some cases, engaging with new technologies or a particular brand (Muntinga, Moorman and Smit, 2011). Thus, our second hypothesis:

H2: The perceived enjoyment positively influences the satisfaction of followers

In the context of social networks, socialization is highlighted in several studies (Park & al., 2009; Quan-Haase and Young, 2010). The use of socialization to obtain peer support (Sung & al., 2010), communicate with others and interact with friends or family members (Kim and Kim, 2019) are important aspects of social networks. Facebook Instagram's study (Phua & al., 2017) shows that Instagram has obtained the highest score in terms of sociability compared to several social networks, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat. Therefore, our third hypothesis:

H3. Socialization positively influences user satisfaction with Instagram accounts.

Oliver (1980) show that satisfaction reflects the fact that the benefits derived from the use of a product / service exceed those expected. In this way, in the context of social networking sites, satisfaction has proven to be a key variable to explain user behavior (Casaló et al., 2011b). The relationship between user satisfaction and positive intentions towards fashion brands has been well established (Casaló, Flavián and Sergio, 2017). According to Mazzarolo, Mainardes and Innocencio (2021), satisfaction with the Instagram experience can lead users to approve brands and increase purchase intent. In the case of fashion brands, satisfied users often return to the brand's account when the account owners share new content (Casaló, Flavián and Sergio, 2017). Since Instagram account of the company is often followed by customers of fashion brands and interacted with it online (Casaló, Flavián and Sergio, 2017), it is likely that user satisfaction with a fashion brand's Instagram account will have a positive impact on other user behaviors, such as intentions to follow the account and the likelihood of positive word-of-mouth. Users of an Instagram brand page have positive perceptions of the experience when the site is useful, pleasant or a combination of both (Casaló, Flavián and Sergio, 2017). This can be the result of satisfactory content (Seol & al., 2016) that meets their expectations and inspires positive behaviors with and towards the brand on and off Instagram (Mahmoud & al., 2021d). Thus, our fourth hypothesis:

H4: The satisfaction of followers positively influences their intentions to follow the influencer

Human interaction is a valuable experience during service interactions (Bitner & al., 1994). The study by Langeard & al. (1981) suggested that the need for interaction with the service provider would be a determining factor for the use of technological self-service systems. In a retail context, customers with a greater need for interpersonal contact tend to avoid machines (Prendergast and Marr, 1994). The idea is that, for many consumers, the purchase process is not a simple commercial transaction, but a process that provides social benefits, such as the possibility of exchanging with other consumers or interacting with sellers to obtain more information. While others deliberately avoid interacting with the staff to assert their independence (Meuter & al., 2000). The reduction of this human interaction can be perceived as a disadvantage for consumers who are looking for human contact when shopping. The study conducted by Pereir & al. (2021) shows that the absence of human interaction negatively influences consumer intention. Thus, our fifth hypothesis:

H5: The need for interaction moderates the relationship between satisfaction and the intention to follow the influencer

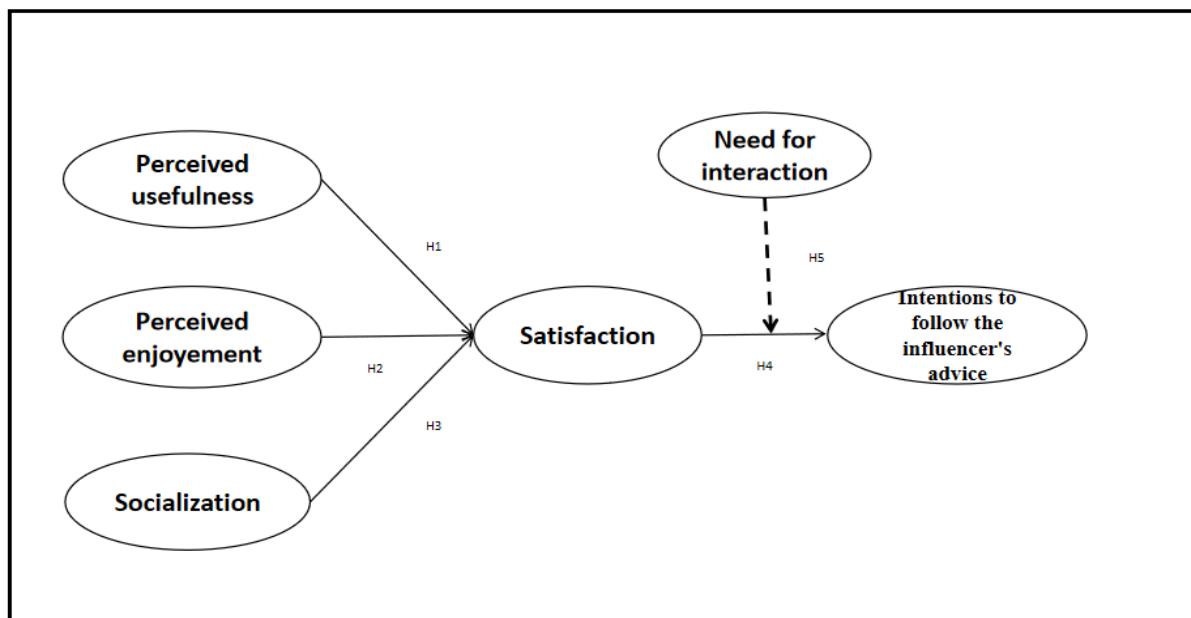


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to test these relationships, we administered an online questionnaire and only 300 Internet users answered. Every Instagram user who has had interactions with fashion brand accounts on Instagram can be considered among our sample. In this regard, as recommended by Mahmoud & al. (2021) two selection questions were placed at the beginning of the survey. (1- "Do you have at least one account on Instagram? "2- "Do you follow fashion-related content on Instagram? »). This step allows us to select people who are familiar with Instagram and fashion-related content. Our sample is selected according to the availability and the motivations of the individuals to participate in the survey.

Participant

The characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 1. This is 46.7% of men and 53.3% of women. The majority (51.7%) were between the ages of 31 and 50, were single people (60%).

Table 1: Characteristics of the sample

Demographic variables		Frequency	Pourcentage
Gender	Homme	140	46,7%
	Femme	160	53,3%
Age	-30 ans	65	21,7%
	Entre 31 et 50 ans	155	51,7%
	51 ans et plus	80	26,7%
Civil status	Célibataire	180	60 %
	Marié	120	40 %

Measures

To measure the variables, we based ourselves on scales borrowed from the literature. Each item is measured on the seven-point Likert scale (from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The questionnaire includes six measurement scales. Perceived enjoyment is measured by the scale of Nambisan, S. and Baron, R.A. (2007), adapted by Casaló, Flavián, and Sergio (2017). Our choice for the scale for measuring Perceived usefulness was made with reference to the one-dimensional scale of Casaló, Flavián, and Sergio (2010). Socialization is measured by the scale of Park & al. (2009). Our measure for satisfaction is that of the one-dimensional scale of Casaló, Flavián, and Sergio (2011). Finally, for the intention to follow, we used the one-dimensional scale of Belanche & al. (2021).

Table3. Scale of measurement of the variables used

Construct	Item	Authors
Perceived enjoyment	Visiting this Instagram account makes me spend some enjoyable and relaxing time	From Nambisan, S. and Baron, R.A. (2007), adapted by Casaló, Flavián, & Sergio (2017)
	Visiting this Instagram account is funny and pleasant	
	Visiting this Instagram account entertains me and stimulates my mind	
	I have great enjoyment when visiting this Instagram account	
Perceived usefulness	Visiting this Instagram account helps me get suggestions about clothing.	Casaló, Flavián, & Sergio (2010)
	Visiting this Instagram account helps me get new ideas about fashion.	
	In general, visiting this Instagram account is useful.	
Socialization	I follow Instagram accounts for other people's opinions or suggestions on common subjects	Park, N., Kee, K.F. and Valenzuela, S. (2009)
	I follow Instagram accounts to meet like-minded people	
	Following Instagram accounts makes me feel part of a larger community	
	I participate in Instagram accounts to talk to people about account-related issues	
	Participating in Instagram accounts allows me to tighten ties of interest with people I know	
Satisfaction	In general terms, I'm satisfied with my experience in this Instagram	Casaló, Flavián, & Sergio (2011)
	I have obtained several benefits derived from visiting this Instagram	
	I think that I made the correct decision to follow this Instagram account	
Need for Interaction	Human contact makes the process enjoyable for me.	Ashfaq & al. (2020.)
	The personal attention is significant to me	
	I like to interact with the person who provides the service.	

Intention to follow the influencer's advice	If this account gives advice I will take into account its recommendations	Belanche & al. (2021)
	If this account gives advice I will feel safe following its recommendations	
	If this account gives advice I will follow its recommendations	

Reliability and validity

The measurement model was examined using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (RC), extracted mean variance (VME) as well as factorial saturations. Since the values of RC and the Cronbach's alpha are greater than 0.7, the reliability of the constructs is ensured (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). In addition, the VMEs exceed the threshold of 0.5, which confirms the convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The factorial saturations, between 0.528 and 0.957, all exceed the minimum required level of 0.5, indicating a good contribution of the items to their respective constructs (see Table 4). Moreover, the discriminant validity has been verified according to the approach of Fornell and Larcker (1981), which stipulates that the square root of the VME of a construct must be greater than its correlations with the other constructs. The results obtained confirm that the different scales have satisfactory discriminant validity (see Table 5).

Table 4: Psychometric qualities of the measurement scales

Variables	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach	Composite Reliability	AVE
Perceived usefulness (PU)	PU1	0.538	0.917	0.921	0.751
	PU2	0.620			
	PU3	0.884			
Perceived enjoyment(PE)	PP1	0.890	0.960	0.930	0.782
	PP2	0.892			
	PP3	0.906			
	PP4	0.853			
Socialization (SO)	SO1	0.528	0.803	0.920	0.710
	SO2	0.618			
	SO3	0.601			
	SO4	0.642			
	SO5	0.566			
Satisfaction (SA)	SA1	0.848	0.853	0.901	0.763
	SA2	0.823			
	SA3	0.843			
Need for interaction (NI)	NI1	0.745	0.823	0.875	0.753
	NI2	0.852			

	NI3	0.679			
Intentions to follow the influencer's advice (INT)	INT 1	0.686	0.857	0.831	0.734
	INT2	0.865			
	INT3	0.882			

Table 5: Discriminant validity

	PU	PP	SO	SA	INT
PU	0,866				
PE	0.350	0,884			
SO	0.256	0.284	0,843		
SA	0.170	0.423	0.124	0,873	
INT	0.440	0.274	0.003	0.263	0,857

We evaluated the relationships between variables by establishing a structural model. The results suggest an acceptable fit of the model ($\chi^2/df = 1.577$; RMSEA = 0.067; RMR = 0.075; GFI = 0.986; AGFI = 0.941; NFI = 0.993; TLI = 0.987; CFI = 0.997). Les hypothèses sont vérifiées à l'aide du logiciel AMOS. Table 6 presents the results of the research hypotheses test (direct effects).

Table 6. Results of the research hypotheses test (direct effects)

Paths	B	T value	P	Result
PU → SA	0.659	4.645	0.000	Supported
PE → SA	0.583	4.554	0.000	Supported
SO → SA	0.793	4.827	0.000	Supported
SA → INT	0.834	7.606	0.000	Supported

A multigroup analysis (MGA) was set up to test the moderating effect of the desire for interactivity on the intention to follow the influencer. As shown in Table 5, the results indicate that satisfaction significantly and positively influences the intention to follow the influencer by subscribers with a strong feeling of need for interactivity ($\beta = 0.864$) than for those with a low feeling of need for interactivity ($\beta = 0.045$).

Table 7: Test of the moderating effect of need for interaction

Causal relationship	Std. coefficient		P value	
	Low	High	Low	High
SA → INT	0.045	0.864	0.546	0.000

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

The results of this study confirm that perceived usefulness has a positive and significant impact on follower satisfaction. This observation joins the previous work of Casalo & al. (2017). The more followers judge that a service brings them added value, whether in terms of saving time, ease of use or improving their experience, the more their level of satisfaction tends to increase. In a context marked by strong competition and a multiplication of offers, perceived usefulness therefore becomes a major strategic lever to satisfy followers and limit the churn rate. The results indicate that the perceived enjoyment exerts a positive and significant influence on the satisfaction of followers. This observation joins the previous work of Nayal and Pandey (2020) and Casalo & al.(2017). Indeed, when followers feel enjoyment, whether it is a feeling of entertainment, commitment or well-being during use, they develop a more favorable attitude towards the service. The perceived enjoyment thus contributes to enriching the lived experience beyond simple functionality, reinforcing the hedonic value associated with service. This emotional dimension makes it possible to create a stronger connection between the user and the service, which translates into increased satisfaction. Nevertheless, the results show that socialization exerts a positive and significant influence on user satisfaction with Instagram accounts. This observation suggests that the interactive features of the platform such as comments, private messages, "likes" or even content sharing strengthen the feeling of connection and belonging of users. When they can interact in a fluid and meaningful way with other members, they perceive the experience on Instagram as more engaging and rewarding, which increases their overall satisfaction level. These results are consistent with the previous literature, by Kim and Kim (2019) which emphasizes that social interaction is an essential determinant of satisfaction in digital environments. By multiplying the opportunities for communication, relationship building and community participation, Instagram strengthens users' emotional attachment to the platform. Thus, the continuous improvement of social features and the encouragement of interactions between users appear as strategic levers to increase satisfaction and long-term commitment. On the other hand, the results confirm that the satisfaction of subscribers positively influences their intentions to continue following the influencer. When followers perceive a satisfactory experience, whether in terms of content quality, consistency, authenticity or perceived value, they develop a more favorable attitude towards the influencer, which strengthens their desire to maintain their subscription. Satisfaction thus acts as a key psychological engine that encourages people to stay subscribed or come back regularly to consult the content and follow the influencer's advice. These conclusions align with the previous research of Mazzarolo, Mainardes and Innocencio (2021). By offering a useful, pleasant and consistent perceived experience, influencers can therefore increase the likelihood that their followers will follow their advice. This positive relationship underlines the strategic importance for content creators to invest in the quality and relevance of their publications in order to sustainably strengthen the engagement of their audience. The multi-group analysis reveals that this influence is not uniform, it is substantially stronger among consumers with a high need for Interaction. This result is consistent with the research of Pereir & al. (2021). In other words, users who have an important need for the presence of human contact convert their satisfaction into intention. This

result suggests that the way in which individuals interpret a digital experience varies according to their personal preference for human interaction.

CONCLUSION

Theoretical implications

The results confirm that satisfaction is an essential predictor of the intention to follow an influencer, which enriches the theoretical models. By showing that variables such as perceived enjoyment or socialization influence satisfaction, the study emphasizes the importance of integrating hedonic (enjoyment) and social (interaction, belonging) dimensions in the evaluation models of social platforms. This expands the traditional understanding focused only on perceived usefulness. The results offer an additional explanatory framework to understand why some influencers manage to retain their audience. They provide a new empirical perspective showing that satisfaction plays a key role between the characteristics of the content and the intention to follow. Nevertheless, this research enriches the literature by showing that the Satisfaction-Intention relationship is not universal, but moderated by individual factors rarely considered. This contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the mechanisms of intention formation.

Managerial implications

The results of this study allow us to draw conclusions that are relevant for marketing professionals who want to optimize their influencer marketing initiatives on the Instagram platform. They also help guide professionals to ensure that they achieve their pre-established goals regarding their efforts on social media, especially in the fashion industry where the choice of social media channels for marketing communications would be very critical (Anselmsson and Tunca, 2019). These results underline the importance for companies to develop truly relevant services, aligned with the specific needs of users, in order to sustainably improve their satisfaction. In markets where the offers are increasingly similar, the ability of a service to generate pleasure becomes an essential competitive advantage. Companies should therefore pay particular attention to creating engaging and enjoyable experiences to sustainably consolidate the satisfaction and, potentially, the intention of their followers. Influencers must produce regular, relevant and authentic content, because it is the follower's satisfaction that largely determines their intention to remain engaged. Perceived enjoyment is a driver of satisfaction. Creators can therefore integrate more entertaining formats (creative videos, engaging stories, emotional content) to increase the entertainment of their followers. Nevertheless, the results show that socialization improves satisfaction. Influencers and brands therefore have an interest in encouraging interactions: responding to comments, launching surveys, using interactive stories, valuing community contributions. In addition, companies should enrich the digital experience with personalized messages, warmer communication elements and more social conversational interfaces.

Contributions, limits and future paths of research

we have limited the current research to fashion brands while using the dual pleasure-utility approach because the use of visuals is consistent with the visually rich nature of Instagram, future research may seek to replicate our results by using social media accounts for brands in other less visual industries, such as financial services. Finally, the possibility of exploring other platforms according to the targeted culture and community is also to be considered. For example, the social network TikTok could be interesting to study due to the growth of influencer marketing on this platform.

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