NELSON MANDELA

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THE EFFECT OF INSTAGRAM REELS ON THE BRANDS OF SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSES IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY
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DECLARATION:

In accordance with Rule G5.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that I have not previously been submitted to another University or for another qualification

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ABSTRACT

Social media has evolved since the first time it was introduced to the world. As a result, it plays a significant role in how things are done in today's world and also how firms run their businesses and market their products and services. Businesses can now use social media for their marketing and branding activities. This may result in more sales for businesses.

The objective of this study is to investigate the role of Instagram on fashion business brands in South Africa. The research question of the study is whether Instagram is an effective method of marketing for fashion retailers and can a fashion retailer/fashion industry attract/gain more customers through the use of Instagram. Quantitative research will be used for the study. Data will be collected and analysed to determine if a firm's Instagram activities impact a firm's sales figures. The study's findings showed no correlation between Instagram reels and monthly sales figures.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM STATEMENT, AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Social media has made it possible to connect people and makes it possible for individuals around the world to communicate regardless of where they are located in the world. Through advancement and technology, almost anyone and anywhere around the world has access to the Internet. Technology is always evolving and changing (Sharma 2021:1-2). New and advanced social media platforms have been launched and developed, which include Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Telegram.

Large numbers of individuals and businesses such as Mr. Price, Woolworths, and Foschini and sports brands such as Nike, Puma, and Addidas now use social media for their benefit (DataReportal 2022). One of the benefits of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, is the ability to communicate with people, regardless of their geographical location. In January 2022, South Africa had a total of 28 million social media users (DataReporta 2022). Social media platforms allow users to communicate and share various details of their lives through words, pictures, videos, and other multimedia forms (Nelson, Moore, & Swanson 2019:1). For example, Apple releases a new iPhone every year with better features than the previous version, such as Touch ID, Face ID, 5G usage, and A14 Bionic chip (iPhone 2022). Furthermore, over the years, some of these social media platforms have been used as a base to market firms' new activities, such as advertising new products on their social media pages.

Users of social media can share their lives based on their privacy settings. Privacy settings provide the option to only share with only certain friends on their social media pages and to prevent the public from viewing their pages with the world. Businesses are also using social media to engage with their customers and attract new customers (Nelson *et al.* 2019:2). Firms can use social media to conduct branding activities, such as sharing content on their latest product ranges.

Branding can be referred to as equity enables customers to identify a firm's brand remember it, and differentiates it from its competitors. Furthermore, a brand makes it possible for a firm to charge differentiated prices, obtain more brand loyalty, and gain more market share (Kitchen & Tourky 2021:9). According to Cambridge (n,d), social media can be defined as media communication platforms on the Must or cell phones.

Social media makes it possible for businesses to communicate with their target market and possibly attract more customers. Businesses should consider using social media to build their brand and communicate with their customers. Social media users are exposed to firms' communication online.

There is a total of 3.96 billion users of social media as of January 2022. Instagram has more than two billion users as of 2022 (Sproutsocial 2022). More than 90% of Instagram users follow a business (Needle 2021). Social media allows individuals and firms to engage with their customers. The number of social media uses proves that individuals are highly active on social media. According to Sharifzadeh, Brison, & Bennett, (2021:556), a brand can include an image, an organization, an individual, a product, and a service. The use of social media is especially effective in the case of the fashion industry (Nelson *et al.* 2019:2).

Businesses share pictures, sales, and details of their businesses to create more awareness of their products and services with the goal of users sharing with others. Businesses have started to use social media as a marketing tool (Teo, Leng, & Phua, 2019:1). Firms can now use social media to offer customer service through their engagement with their customers on the platforms (Guo, Fan, & Zhang 2020:1). A firms brand name can grow through social media.

People, places, organizations, and ideas can also be considered a brand. Branding should not only be limited to products and services. Branding goes beyond and includes more aspects (Swaminathan, Sorescu, Steenkamp, O'Guinn, & Schmitt 2020:39). For example, Sun City can also be considered a brand and has to be maintained to attract more customers to it. A firm can use social media to gain the trust of its social media followers.

There is a high level of trust in social media in terms of recommendations and purchasing decisions (Barnhart, 2022). The level of trust can be contributed to Instagram users providing reviews and feedback on the firm's brand on their social

media pages. Users spend 2 hours and 27 minutes every day on social media on average. More than half of the globe uses social media. (Chaffey, 2022). The knowledge of the amount of time spent on social media by its users can be beneficial to firms when planning their social media campaigns. Based on data collected by DataRePortal (2022), it states the main reasons for the use of social media include meeting new people, live stream watching, following and keeping Up to Date with favourite celebrities, influencers, and brands, sharing content on one life, boredom, career networking, and to be connected to family and friends. Figure 1.1.1 and figure 1.1.2 provide results on the number of users, the most used social media platform, and time spent on social media globally. This information can be useful for companies who are looking into using social media platforms to promote their firm's brands. Based on the below figures, the number of users of different media can assist businesses in reaching their target markets. For example, as per Figure 1.1.1, Facebook has 2 912 000 000 users and Instagram has 1 452 000 000 users in the year 2022. All these users can be exposed to businesses marketing their company brands on social media.

Figure 1.1.1 Social media overview

Overview of social media use	
Number of social media users	4.65 Billion
Year-on-year change in social media users	326 Million
Average daily time spent using social media	2H 29M
Average number of social media platforms used each month	7.4
Social media users vs total population	58.7%
Social media users vs total population age 13+	75.1%
Female social media users vs total social media users	45.8%
Male social media users vs total social media users	54.2%

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Source: Recreated/ Redrawn with Excel from (DataRePortal, 2022)

Figure 1.1.2 Most used social media platform
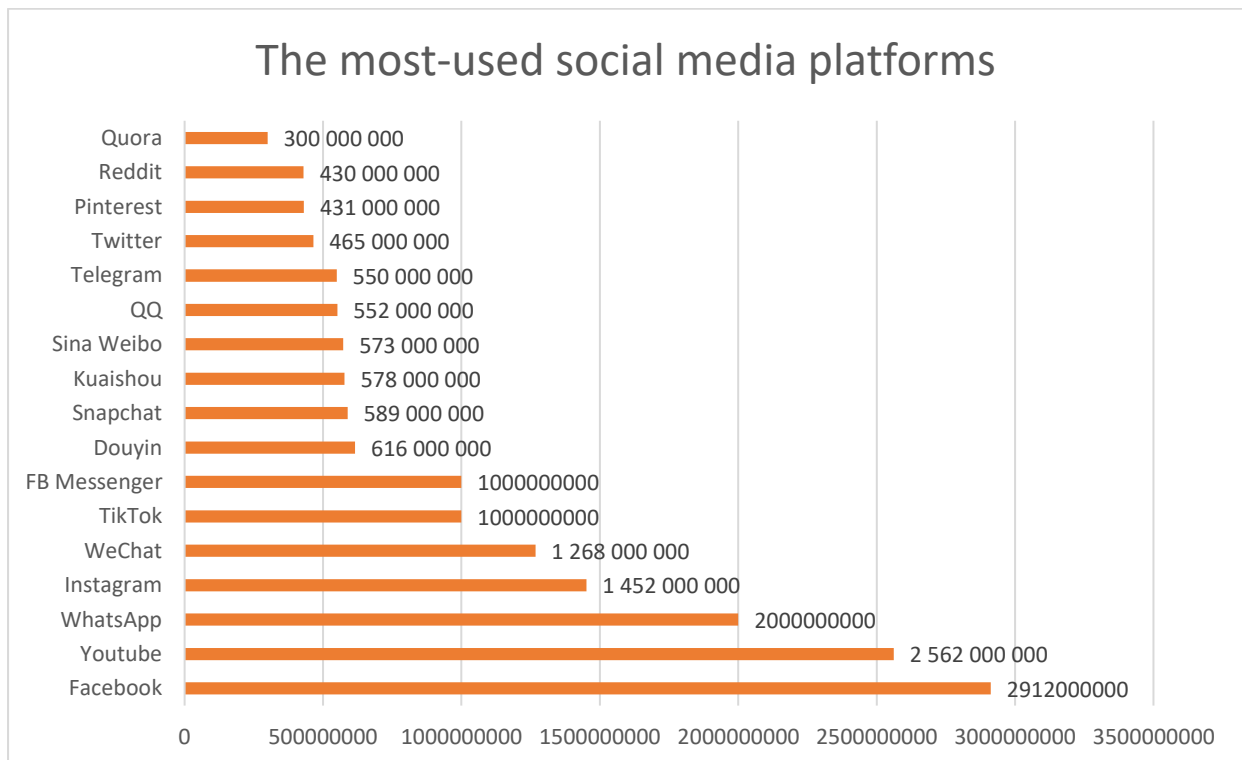
Source: Recreated/ Redrawn with Excel from (DataRePortal, 2022

Firms are using Instagram, along with Facebook to promote their company brands because it assists them to create more awareness about their brands, and more than four billion people use social media in the world (DataRePortal, 2022). According to Teo *et al.* (2019:328), it has been discovered that users of Instagram have certain intentions and motives when they use social sites. As such, the goal and purpose of this study are to discover and determine the effect of Instagram on the brands of businesses in the fashion industry in South Africa. Businesses can now sell their products on Instagram in addition to being able to promote their brand.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social media engagement has become an essential part of business and firms should make efforts to look after their social media platforms. Firms now have what they call social media managers. Social media managers are responsible for handling and managing an organization's social media platforms to the benefit of their firm. They are experts in the field, establish a social media strategy and execute it. They also protect the brand and engage with customers on different platforms via responding to comments, reviews, questions, direct messages, and all social media aspects (Jacobson, 2020:715).

A new trend and form of marketing have been established through social media, which is social advertising. Firms have changed how they advertise their products to be more personalized due to social media (Rehman & Al-Ghazali, 2022:3). On average, social media users spend about two hours and 25 minutes on the platforms. In the year 2020, social media had 1,3 million new users joining every day (Needle 2021). Users of Instagram use the platform to shop every week. Social networking networks are used by 44% of users to shop.

Social media has not only become a great platform to communicate with others but also to advertise and create awareness about a firm's brand. Considering the amount of time social media users spend on social media, firms should make use of the opportunity to promote their brands and grow their brands. Most brands desire to get as many followers as possible. TikTok has rising figures. Instagram allows for the most engagement of 81 % compared to other platforms. The most used functions of

Instagram include Grid posts with 93 and Instagram stories with 83 %(Barnhart 2022). According to Valacherry and Pakkeerappa (2017:52), the purchasing decisions of customers are greatly based on the information that they have access to. Social media makes it possible for firms to control the type of information their target market is exposed to (Valacherry & Pakkeerappa 2017:53).

Instagram has great potential to increase the awareness of a fashion business brand. Instagram allows users to post pictures, and videos and create profiles fitting the brand image of a firm. A firm can create a brand image on its Instagram profile that highlights the benefit and advantages of the brand. Videos and images can be uploaded on the firm's Instagram profile with the latest fashion products to get customers to shop online and shop at their stores. The full impact of Instagram on the fashion industry has not been researched in a South African context. Limited information exists on the role of Instagram on the brands of fashion businesses in South Africa. This study will investigate the role of Instagram on South African fashion brands.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

The study aims to investigate the role of Instagram on fashion business brands in South Africa.

1.3.2 SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

- To determine if Instagram can attract and create more awareness of a fashion brand's target market.
- Also, whether firms using Instagram can their target market based on their following on Instagram.
- To determine if the use of Instagram has a favourable impact on fashion companies' sales and earnings.
- To determine if Instagram is a new way for businesses to engage with their customers and if it encourages more communication between fashion brands.

1.3.3 METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

For the research aim and secondary objectives to be achieved and met, methodological objectives have been formed.

- To conduct a theoretical research study into the effectiveness of using Instagram to promote the success of the business.
- To determine the most suitable research design for the study that will produce the best results per the research project.
- To simplify the findings of the study through graphs and tables.
- To provide possible branding tools based on the research findings

1.3.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

- Has Instagram affected the fashion businesses of major fashion brands in South Africa by creating brand awareness in its target market, increasing sales, attracting more customers to its brands, and promoting its brand image?
- Is Instagram an effective method of marketing for fashion retailers?
- Can a fashion retailer/fashion industry attract/gain more customers through the use of social media platforms such as Instagram?

1.3.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The existing literature review indicates that there is a gap in the literature regarding the impact of Instagram on brands in the fashion industry. The study will contribute to the existing knowledge and research on the effect of Instagram on the brands of businesses in the fashion industry in South Africa, in particular the Woolworths group and the Mr. Price Group.

The study can provide knowledge to the fashion industry about the benefits of using Instagram to market its products and the impact of social media platforms. The study has the potential to have a positive impact on the profits of the fashion industry.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The initial part of the literature review will focus on defining social media and branding and the role that it plays in people's lives and businesses. Secondly, the review will focus on discussing Woolworths and Mr. Price and their brands. Thirdly, the evolution of social media as well as the various types of social media platforms, will be examined, and how branding will be made possible through the platform. Lastly, the importance and role of branding and social media in the success of business in today's age will be discussed.

2.2   DEFINITIONS

2.2.1 SOCIAL MEDIA

According to Lutkevich (2021), social media can be defined as websites and applications that are used to share information, communicate, and socialize with others through the use of websites and applications. Social media makes it possible for individuals and businesses to share content online with the public in a fast manner. Information shared can include pictures/photos, videos, and words. Computers, tablets, and mobile phones can be used to access social media platforms. Social media can be used to shape the opinion of the public (Hudson 2020). Social media can, for example, be used for a political campaign to create more awareness of a particular political party or discredit another individual or institution (Flew & Iosifidis 2019:19).

2.2.2 BRANDING

Branding is a marketing term that refers to the image or concept that people have in their minds when they think of a company's specific products, services, and activities.

A brand can be described both logically and emotionally. The process of creating and shaping a brand in the minds of consumers to give meaning to a specific organization, company, product, or service is referred to as branding. Establishing what a brand is and isn't, may assist customers in instantly recognizing and experiencing it, as well as provide them with a reason to choose their products over those of competitors. (Marion 2022).

2.2.3 WOOLWORTHS HOLDINGS LIMITED (WHL)

Woolworths opened its first store in the year 1931 in Cape Town, South Africa. More stores were opened in Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Johannesburg in the next few years. Woolworths South Africa, David Jones, and Country Road Group are all brands that fall under Woolworths Holdings Limited. WHL further established Woolworths Financial Services along with Barclays Bank to provide financial services for its customers. WHL has stores in Australia and New Zealand. The firm has an estimated 45 000 employees and 1453 stores in 13 countries (Woolworths n,d). WHL has built a reputation for offering high-quality goods over the years.

WHL caters to women, Children, Babies, Homes, Beauty products, Mobile phones, and food products (Woolworths n,d). Figure 2.2.3.1 provides all the names of the divisions that fall under Woolworths Limited Holdings.

Figure 2.2.3.1   Woolworths divisions

WOOLWORTHS LIMITED HOLDINGS

Woolworths SA	David Jones	Country Road Group

Woolworths FBH		Country Road
Woolworths Food		Trenery
Woolworths Financial		Mimco
		Witchery
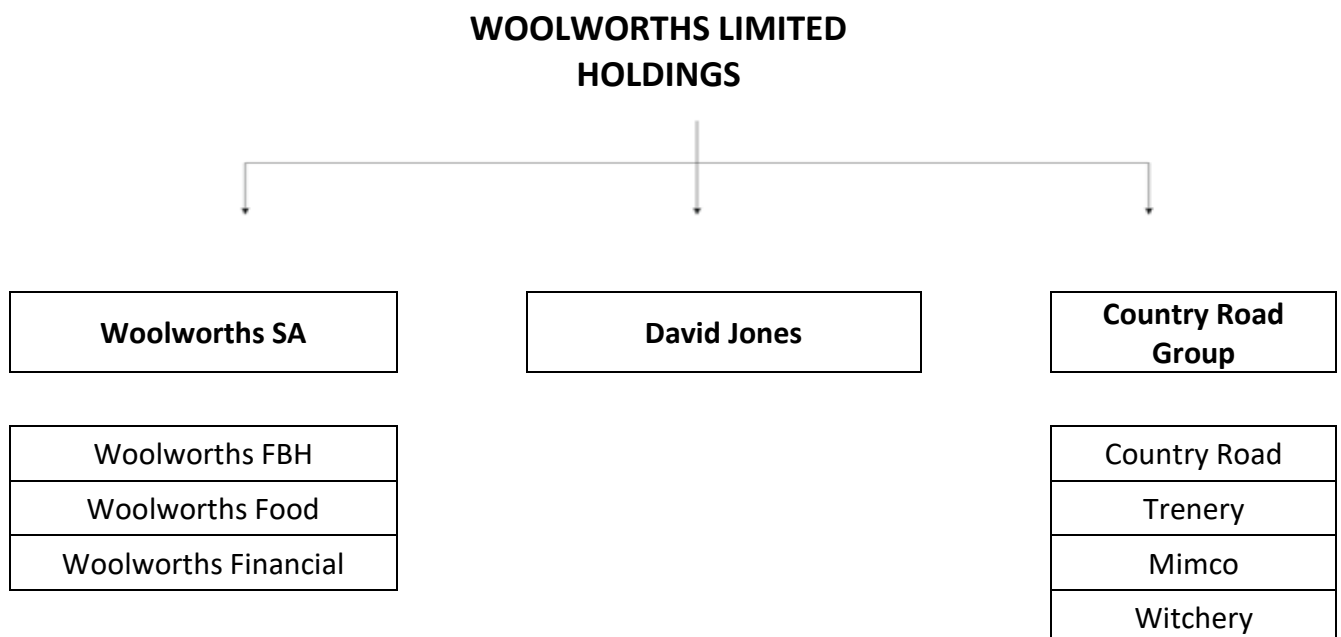
2.2.4 MR. PRICE GROUP

In the year 1985, the Mr. Price Group was established. The group has a total of 1702 stores, 1572 stores in South Africa and 130 in Africa. The Mr. Price Group caters to women, men, babies, beauty products, homeware, food, and children. The group is well known for providing affordable products. One of the group's goals is to offer competitive prices in the retail sector. Figure 2.2.4.1 provides all the divisions that fall under the Mr. Price group and the number of stores each division has in South Africa.

Figure 2.2.4.1   Mr. Price Divisions
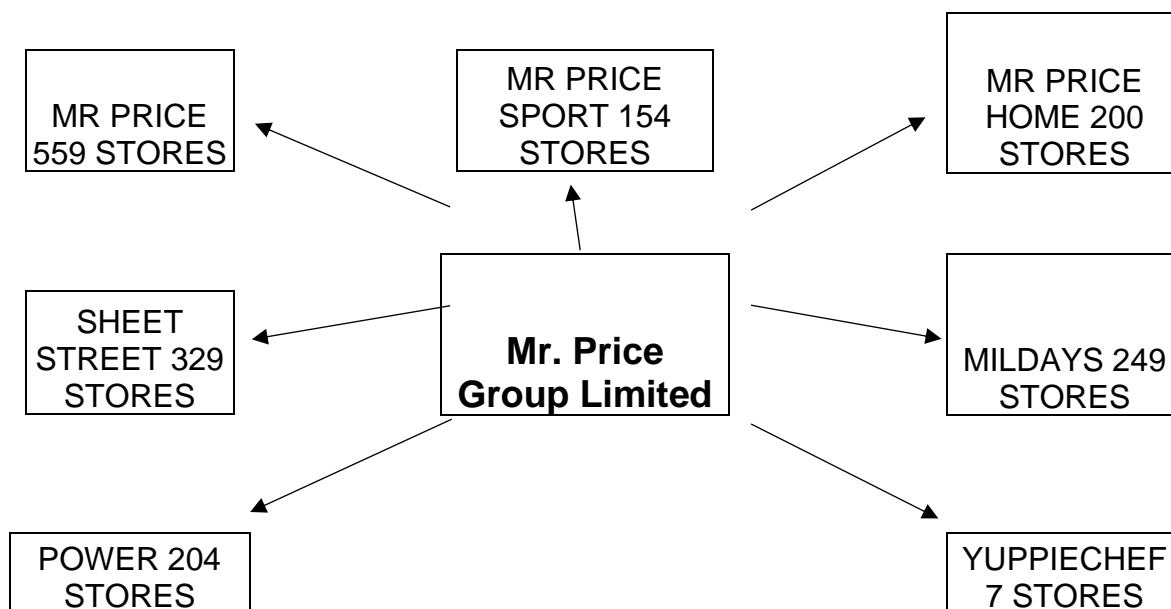
2.3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON SOCIAL MEDIA, BRANDING, AND INSTAGRAM

2.3.1 EVOLUTION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The evolution of social media is going to be discussed in the next part of the study. Individuals are allowed to share and communicate can share and communicate with the world through social media, o interact, collaborate, and share material for

themselves and the public. (Sharma & Verma, 2018:19). Brands can engage with their customers directly through traditional media and other social media platforms or indirectly through offline conversations and online interactions with other customers (Sharma & Verma 2018:25).

According to Miami University (2021), On May 24th, 1844, the telegraph machine was invented, marking the birth of social media. Samuel Morse sent a telegram from Baltimore to Washington, DC. The ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network) was founded in 1969, and it was this network that paved the way for the rise of social media. Scientists from four major universities were able to connect and share their software, hardware, and other resources from the comfort of their offices, thanks to this newly constructed digital network. In 1979, the National Science Foundation (NSF) created NSFNET, a vibrant, fast, and increasingly digital network. As a result, social media grew in strength. A decade later, the first social networking platform was launched. (Miami University, 2021).

The first social media page was launched in the year 1997 and it was referred to as SixDegrees.com. This site allowed users to create profiles and send messages. A few years later in the year 2000, AmIHotorNot.com was created. The purpose of this website was to allow users to be rated on their attractiveness by other users. Some people become insecure as a result of this. Soon after in 2002, Friendster was launched (Samur, 2018).

MySpace was introduced to the world in 2003 and was a popular site for young people. Then Facebook creator, Mark Zuckerberg, launched Facemash in 2003. He then created Facebook in 2004. Twitter and LinkedIn were launched in 2006, then followed by Youtube in 2007 (Samur 2018).

Facebook used to be the most popular social media platform among young people. This has changed over the years as more social media pages have been introduced to the world. Smartphone ownership has become an almost common feature of teen life (Anderson & Jiang 2018:1). 95% of teenagers have mobile phones. As a result of these mobile connections, more consistent online activities are being fuelled: In today's world, 45 % of teenagers claim they are online almost all of the time (Anderson & Jiang 2018:2). Young people are active on social media. A large majority of these

teenagers use three internet sites other than Facebook in 2018, including YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat (Anderson & Jiang 2018:3).

2.3.2 THE ROLE OF INSTAGRAM

Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, who met while attending Stanford University, founded Instagram in the year 2010. They managed to secure funding worth 500 000 dollars from Silicon Valley firms Baseline Ventures and Andreessen Horowitz. Their goal for creating the App was to create a social media platform whereby people can share their lives through the use of pictures (Miler 2019:23). The App managed to secure 10 million users within less than a year of its being launched to the public (Miler 2019:24). Facebook has purchased the app. In the year 2010, Facebook made an offer to purchase Instagram for one billion dollars, and the purchase was finalized in the year 2012 (Miller 2020:108). Instagram makes it possible for users to shop online whilst using the App. According to Diaz-Ortiz (2019:84), individuals and firms can increase their Instagram following by ensuring they provide capturing and interesting content and attractive aesthetics, working with social media influencers to market their products and paying to be able to advertise their products and services online (Diaz-Ortiz 2019:84). Through the content creation it allows users to be creative.

Instagram is an app that makes it possible for users to create visually appealing aesthetics. Users can also filter the media they share on the platform. It is well suited to use for pushing beauty items, embracing and promoting specific body images, and advocating for certain types of lifestyles and well-known luxury businesses (Jin, Muqaddam, and Ryu, 2019:567). Instagram has become a great place for the food industry to market its products. Food is presently one of the most popular products advertised on Instagram. Users share their food content and restaurants that they visit. Instagram has also changed how people consume food, such as picking Instagram attractive foods or restaurants or photographing their food and publishing it on their Instagram accounts before eating it (Kusumasondjaja and Tjiptono 2019:660).

As the name suggests, an Instagram business profile is used for marketing and promoting businesses on social media. Instagram allows brands to communicate with customers, both current and potential. 90% of Instagram users follow a company (Instagram business n.d. Instagram has a major impact on branding (Gajic,

Radovanovic, Tretiakova &Syromiatnikova 2020:34). High consumer reactions such as increased brand identification, have resulted in favourable sentiments toward the brand, and purchase intent can be captured through quality and proactive brand-sponsored content on Instagram (Kusumasondjaja & Tjiptono 2019:660).

The Instagram App has made efforts to be business-friendly and allow businesses to sell their products online by providing business resources on the App (Miller 2020:107). Instagram can assist firms in improving their marketing efforts via eCommerce. Instagram allows businesses to create advertisements, set up shoppable posts function, and the ability to manage their company brand online (Miler 2019:53). Because of Instagram's growing popularity, businesses are investing heavily in social media operations to interact and connect with potential customers (Ballester, Ruiz, & Rubio 2021:357). Instagram can change people's perceptions ofof a brand and how its viewed.

People will have a positive attitude toward a featured brand if they associate better with the source when they see a visual depiction of an Instagram celebrity with a premium product (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019:570).

2.3.2.1 Ways to Improve the Instagram page

Brands need to be conscious about how their Instagram page looks and should not randomly post pictures and content that does not represent nor match their brand. According to Miller (2020:114) improving an Instagram page includes, having a good colour scheme and the scheme being consistent throughout the Insta page. The colours should complement each other. Secondly, the lighting of the Insta page should also be taken into consideration. Thirdly, the arrangement of the content needs to make sense and complement each other. Lastly, the users need to focus on the goal of their Instagram page and stick to it.

2.3.3 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND BRANDING

Many brands are using social media to express their goals to consumers as they establish sustainability projects (Testa, Bakhshian, & Eike 2021:569). Social media

can assist marketers in developing stronger ties with customers (Kusumasondjaja 2019:16).

Firms need to ensure they have excellence in mind when they use social media marketing. Social media provides a platform for customers and the public to comment on a firm's products and services; hence a business must have a good balance of what they sell and what they advertise (Diaz-Ortiz 2019:106). The mindset of consumers can be strategically set to see a firm's brand differently. Social media makes it possible to enhance a firm's brand through the creativity of the platforms. Social media helps firms tell the public a story of the firm and lets them in on the brand. It can further help in assisting consumers in making purchasing decisions making (Freberg 2019:56).

A brand is the additional intangible worth that a product or service can have. The creation of a brand requires commitment and dedication from the firm. A firm needs to come up with a strategy on how they want its brand to be received by the public (Gajic *et al.*, 2020:33). The logo, strapline, slogan, actual items, and physical shop setting are all substantial characteristics of a brand. A brand, however, is more than the sum of its elements, as the majority of what makes up a brand is intangible. The brand is a paradox in many ways, a composite that is shaped both internally by company strategy and outwardly by consumer perception and experience.

A brand is formed from a unique combination of tangible and intangible features, including not only the garments, store atmosphere, packaging, and advertising but also the meanings, values, and associations that people assign to the brand (Posner 2019:140). As the "best" of digital networks, Instagram serves as the ultimate visual register and digital surveillance system, encouraging individuals and brands to present their best selves (Rodner, Goode, and Burns 2021:46). Tangible elements of a firm's brand name and logo may be managed from within the firm. The logo is the most visible aspect of the brand; its design should capture and express the brand's essence or core idea (Posner 2019:142).

The goal of branding is to give a product, service, or organization a clear and identifiable identity. The goal is to ensure that the brand stands out from the competition. Branding gives value to a product or raises its perceived value, allowing a corporation to charge a higher price for branded items (Posner 2019:144).

Campaign marketers seek involvement through social media posts in addition to direct communication. Users are more likely to see highly engaged content in their newsfeeds, share them, or have them famous in an ad style, it's critical to comprehend their convincing power (Munoz &Towner 2021:2). So Marketers must create advertising that can halt viewers and hold their attention long enough for them to absorb the ads cognitively before scrolling up or down to see more photographs (Kusumasondjaja &Tjiptono 2019:660). Consumers respond positively to content created by a firm's social media marketing resulting in increased recognition, increased firm reputation, future repeated purchasing, and customer engagement (Ballester *et al.*, 2021:357).

How customers respond to a firm's products and services is impacted by how the firm communicates with them.

A range of branding messages is communicated through social media. Through likes, shares, and comments on social media, marketers can directly engage with customers and get rapid feedback. On any given day, at least one business profile is visited by more than 200 million Instagram users visit at least one business profile directly with followers daily is one of the key benefits of social media branding. A public persona that is more engaged is more likely to elicit higher levels of affinity and trust (Jin *et al.*, 2019:571).

Luxury businesses are using social media to enhance their image and preserve their relevance, earning an estimated $5 billion in advertising income (Kusumasondjaja 2019:15). Companies can send messages in a variety of methods, including static visual images or audio-visual presentations, which are vital for luxury brands to develop comprehension and image fluency to achieve good responses (Kusumasondjaja 2019:16). Luxury brands use social media to reach out to a younger audience. Through elements such as hashtags, visual imagery or photographs, or video, social media allows firms to transmit marketing information in more intriguing and engaging ways (Kusumasondjaja 2019:16).

Individuals want to display their best possible selves through the brands, products, and services they consume, and and interacting with others socially, plays an essential role in who we are. The introduction of social networking sites has increased the ease with which human beings and brands may put themselves on display (Rodner *et al.*,

2021:47). This is relevant because the platforms allow individuals to share their best sides of themselves in the manner they want to be perceived by the public.

2.4   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The customer-based brand equity concept states that the core of brand equity is based on the brand awareness that marketing campaigns have cultivated in customers' minds and activities. Customer-based brand equity, in particular, is described as the distinctive impact that Customers' responses to brand marketing are influenced by their brand understanding (Keller 2009:143).

High brand equity characterizes a strong brand. Brand equity is the difference in how customers react to a product and its marketing depending on how well they know the brand name. It serves as an indicator of a brand's capacity to win over and retain customers. Consumers are more likely to respond favourably to a brand when compared to a generic or unbranded version of the same goods. If customers respond less favourably than they would to an unbranded version, it has negative brand equity (Kotler *et al*. 2020:251). A corporation can benefit from several competitive advantages thanks to strong brand equity. A strong brand has high levels of consumer brand loyalty and awareness (Kotler *et al*. 2020:252).

Brand awareness and brand image are two particularly crucial elements of brand understanding. Brand recall or recognition in various circumstances is a measure of brand awareness because it shows how strong the brand node or trace is in consumers' memories. Brand image is characterized by how people feel about and favour a product, as shown by the different brand connotations they have in their minds. Strong, positive, and distinctive brand associations are crucial as differentiators that can act as sources of brand equity to fuel the differential impacts (Keller, 2009:143).

To create the necessary awareness and image in the minds of consumers, marketing communications must be integrated, which requires combining several communication channels.

The ease and frequency with which consumers think of a brand when confronted with different consumption or purchasing scenarios are known as brand salience. How successfully a product or service satisfies the functional needs of clients are referred to as brand performance. Brand imagery describes the extrinsic characteristics of the good or service, such as how the company tries to satisfy the psychological or social demands of its clients. Customer evaluations and opinions are the main focus of brand judgments. The emotional reactions and responses of consumers to a brand are referred to as brand feelings (Keller, 2009:143).

Figure 2.4.1 Customer base brand equity model pyramid
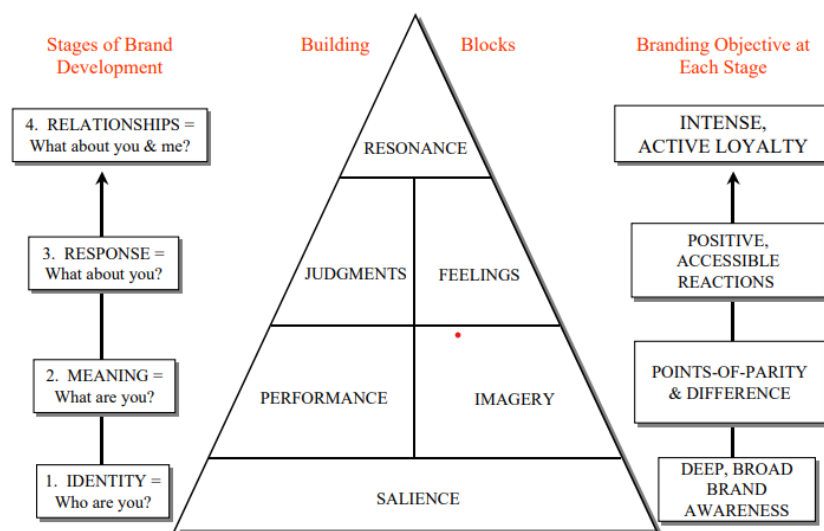
Source: Adapted from (Keller, 2009:144).

The brand equity pyramid model indicates that in order marketing activities are necessary to create awareness of a firm's brand. Different communication channels can be used to create brand awareness, including social media. The brand equity model provides a framework for this study because it highlights the importance of branding and how different channels can be utilized to market a firm's products and services

Figure 2.4.2 Social media connections
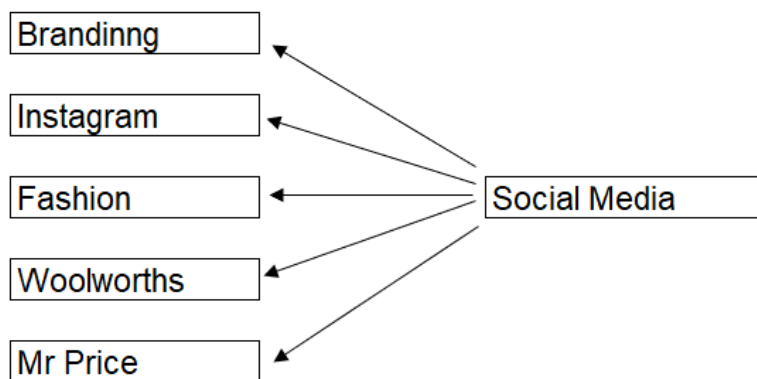
Source: 'Researchers' compilation

Figure 2.4.2 shows how social media connects branding, Instagram, the fashion industry, Woolworths, and Mr. Price. Through the use of social media, the fashion industry can market its brands on Instagram. As a result, firms can gain new followers, attract more customers, and possibly have increased sales.

2.5   SUMMARY

Branding and social media have been defined. Woolworths Holdings Limited and the Mr. Price Group have greatly developed and grown as brands in South Africa. Both

firms have started using social media to market their products. One of the platforms both firms use ,is Instagram. The firms display their products and the latest sale offers. The evolution of social media and how it has progressed from the days of Myspace to today's most popular social media pages, which include WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter have been discussed and the impact that the evolution of social media has had on the world and businesses. All of them have shown great progress, growth, and advancement that have been made throughout the years. Branding plays a big role in a firm's product being known to its target market. As technology advances, so do fashion retailers and other industries need to evolve as well to catch up with the times. Social media plays a big role in the brands of firms and helpshelps grow a firm's brand.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1   INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The concept of a broad principle that will guide a research project is known as the research methodology. The research methodology consists of the entire plan for investigating the subject, and it takes into account things like limitations, obstacles, and ethical issues. Research methodologies are distinct research methods and, questionnaires and interviews are examples of research procedures that can be used to collect data (Dawson 2009:14). The distinctions between qualitative and quantitative research must be considered in terms of research methodology. Quantitative research will be used for this study. The study is objective rather than subjective.

Figure 3.1.1 provides examples of research designs. The research design that will be used is empirical as the study is not based on observations but rather on existing, objective secondary data. The secondary data will be sourced from Instagram and sales figures.

Figure 3.1.1 Research designs descriptions

Box: Examples of how the research design of a study may be described

Non-empirical or empirical

Case-based or sample-based

Observational or interventional

Retrospective or prospective

Cross-sectional or longitudinal

Uncontrolled or controlled

Single arm or multiple arm

Nonrandomized or randomized

Crossover or parallel group

Non-blind, single-blind, or double-blind

Superiority or non-inferiority

Exploratory (hypothesis-generating) or confirmatory (hypothesis-driven)

Source: Adapted from (Andrade 2019:202)

3.1.2 QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Dawson (2009:15), to acquire statistics, quantitative research use large-scale survey research methods such as questionnaires and structured interviews. Quantitative research comprises circumstances in which a market researcher engages the general population to participate in the study or distributes a mail-in questionnaire. This type of research not only reaches a far bigger number of people but also contacts them much more swiftly.

Through procedures such as interviews or focus groups, qualitative research investigates attitudes, behaviours, and experiences. It attempts to evoke a comprehensive response from the audience. Because attitudes, behaviour, and experiences are so important, fewer people participate in the study, but the time spent with them is substantially longer (Dawson 2009:15).

Triangulation is the process of merging qualitative and quantitative research. Many researchers believe that this method is an excellent way to research since it allows a researcher to understand both qualitative and quantitative research shortcomings (Dawson 2009:20). The term "population" refers to the entire set of instances from which the researcher's sample is selected (Taherdoost 2016:18).

3.2   RESEARCH POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A 'Universe' or 'Population' is made up of all objects in any subject of study. A census inquiry is a comprehensive count of all items in the 'population.' When all things are covered, it can be assumed that there are no missed opportunities, and the most truthful results can be obtained. To construct a micro cross-section, the respondents chosen should be as representative of the entire population as feasible. Those who have been selected to participate and represent the population as referred to as a sample,' and the procedure of picking them is referred to as a sampling procedure.' A sample survey is a survey done in this way (Kothari 2009:55).

Probability sampling is most commonly associated with survey research procedures, in which the researcher concludes information about a population from a sample to answer research questions and meet research objectives. Another term for it is representative sampling, (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2016:276). A variety of sample selection methods, the a bulk of which rely on subjective judgment, refers to non-probability sampling (or non-random sampling) encompasses (Saunders *et al*, 2016:295). For this study, probability sampling will be used. This is due to the study being objective instead of subjective. Furthermore, the sample will not be based on random groups of samples.

3.2.1   THE SAMPLING PROCESS HAS THE FOLLOWING STAGES:

Stage 1: Clearly Define Target Population

The target population must be precisely defined before the sampling procedure can begin. The number of people living in a certain country is generally referred to as population (Taherdoost 2016:19).

The target population is Instagram followers for Woolworths and Mr. Price.

Stage 2: Select Sampling Frame

A sampling frame is a list of real-life cases from which a sample will be selected. The population the n must be represented by the sample frame (Taherdoost 2016:20).

The sampling frame will not be relevant due to the study being based on secondary data from Woolworths Holdings Limited and Price Group. These will consist of the Instagram viewers of reels.

Stage 3: Choose Sampling Technique

There are two types of sampling techniques which include non-probability and non-random sampling. For this study, the sampling technique to be used will be probability sampling, and it will focus on simple random due to the nature of the data collected.

Figure 3.2.1.1   Sampling techniques
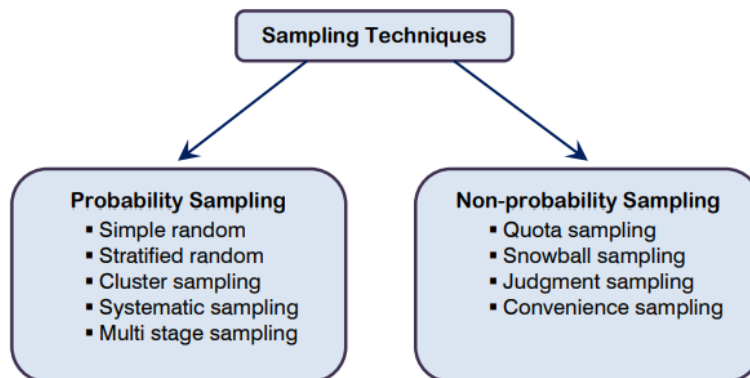
Source: Adapted from (Taherdoost 2016:20)

Stage 4: Determine Sample Size

A larger sample may result less likely in the findings being skewed; when samples exceed a certain size, diminishing returns can soon set in, which must be balanced against the researcher's resources. Larger sample numbers and lower sampling error, albeit at a diminishing pace (Taherdoost 2016:24).

For determining sample size, there are several statistical formulas accessible.

Stage 5: Collect Data

The next stage is to gather data after determining the target population, sampling frame, sampling procedure, and sample size (Taherdoost 2016:26).

Data will be collected through secondary sources. The secondary sources include Instagram, Woolworths, and Mr. Price's sales figures

Stage 6: Assess Response Rate

The number of cases that agree to participate in the study is referred to as the response rate. Each non-response can skew the final sample, the response rate is critical. Sample bias can be reduced in some cases by clearly defining the sample, using the appropriate sampling technique, and obtaining a big sample (Taherdoost, 2016:26). Due to the study being based on secondary resources, they will not be a response rate for the study.

3.3   DATA COLLECTION

Background research can be classified into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary research is seeing and investigating a subject from where the topic or subject started to where it is in today's time and age. Background research is what is undertaken for a major research project, but primary research might be required for the background work if a researcher is unable to discover any previously published material on the topic. Primary research can stem from own observations or experiences as well as information gathered from others (Dawson 2009:40).

Secondary research entails gathering data from previous studies on a topic conducted by other researchers. Libraries and the internet are the two most convenient and easy-to-use sources of this knowledge. However, it is vital to keep in mind that anybody can publish anything on the internet, and some of that information may be misleading or erroneous (Dawson 2009:41).

For this study, secondary data will be used. Secondary data sources for the study include sales figures for Woolworths and Mr. Price Group. Instagram likes, comments, video views counts, and reel view counts.

3.4   DESIGN OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Measurement is the process of giving numbers to objects or observations, and the level of measurement is governed by the laws that govern it. (Kothari 2009:70). Scales of measurement can be analyzed using mathematical properties. The most common measurement scale classifications are ratio scale, nominal scale, interval scale, and ordinal scale. The nominal scale is a method of labelling events by assigning numerical symbols to them (Kothari 2009:and). The ordinal scale is the lowest level of the ordered scale that is often employed. The ordinal scale sequentially organizes events, but there is no attempt to make the intervals scale according to some standard. Rank orders, which are commonly used in qualitative research, are used to scale (Kothari 2009:71). Among quantitative data, interval data is one subset. It employs an ordered scale on all variables and divides them into categories. Additionally, an equal amount of space is always used to organize and separate interval values (Hillier 2021). The interval scale will be used as the measuring instrument for the study due to the counting of the monthly Instagram reel uploads on each brand's page and sales figures. The most frequent uses of interval data are in statistical research, exam grading, IQ testing, credit scoring, population-based scientific studies, and probability calculations (Hillier 2021). Due to the data being of statistical nature, the interval scale is the most appropriate scale for the study.

3.5   DATA ANALYSIS

Data needs to be processed and analyzed according to the framework established after the collection of the data. This is to make the data more valuable. The framework established is vital for a scientific investigation and to ensure that all pertinent data is available for comparisons and analysis (Kothari 2009:122). Most people have little understanding of quantitative data in its raw form, that is, before it has been processed and analyzed (Saunders *et al*, 2016:496).

Processing, in technical terms, entails the editing, coding, classification, and tabulation of data so that it may be analyzed. The term "analysis" refers to the computation of specific measures as well as the search for patterns of relationship between data sets

(Kothari 2009:122). The software that will be used to analyze the data will be Microsoft Excel ToolPak. This will assist in sorting, processing, and analyzing the data more simply and efficiently.

3.6   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical principles need to be followed and maintained throughout the research to prepare for unpredicted ethical difficulties that will inevitably occur before the investigation (Kothari 2009:139). Ethics rules are intended to prohibit the unethical activity, malpractice, and injury, as well as to promote ethical behaviour and the general good. Risk must be assessed to avoid or at the very least reduce harm. When assessing risk, consider the chance of injury as well as the magnitude and severity of the harm that might be created (Saunders *et al.*2016:245).

For this study, the policies and guidelines of Nelson Mandela University will be followed. There isn't any risk of harm, or embarrassment will be caused by the study whether slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties, or the communities at large. The privacy of the participants will be protected. Also, vulnerable groups will not be considered in the study. Furthermore, consent of an institutional authority will not be required for the data collected.

3.7   SUMMARY

The research methodology for the research project has been discussed in Chapter 3. The research project will be using quantitative research. The data collection method has been identified as secondary data. The probability sampling technique will be applied in the form of simple random samples. Furthermore, ethical considerations are vital in a research study and they should not be violated; individuals should not be harmed through the study.

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CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 provided an overview of the literature on social media, Instagram, branding, and the fashion industry. Chapter 3 discussed the methodology for the study. Chapter 4 will focus on the analysis of the data for the study.

4.1.1   DATA

The data that has been used comes from the Instagram pages of Woolworths and Mr. Price. These pages include the different fashion divisions of the Groups. The Woolworths divisions include Woolworths SA, Country Road, David Jones, and Trenery. The Mr. Price Group includes Mr. Price SA, Mr. Price Home, Mr. Price Home, Milady's, and Sheet Street. Secondary data has been used for this study.

Figure 4.1.1.1 Is an illustration of a picture of what the Instagram page of Mr. Price fashion looks like.
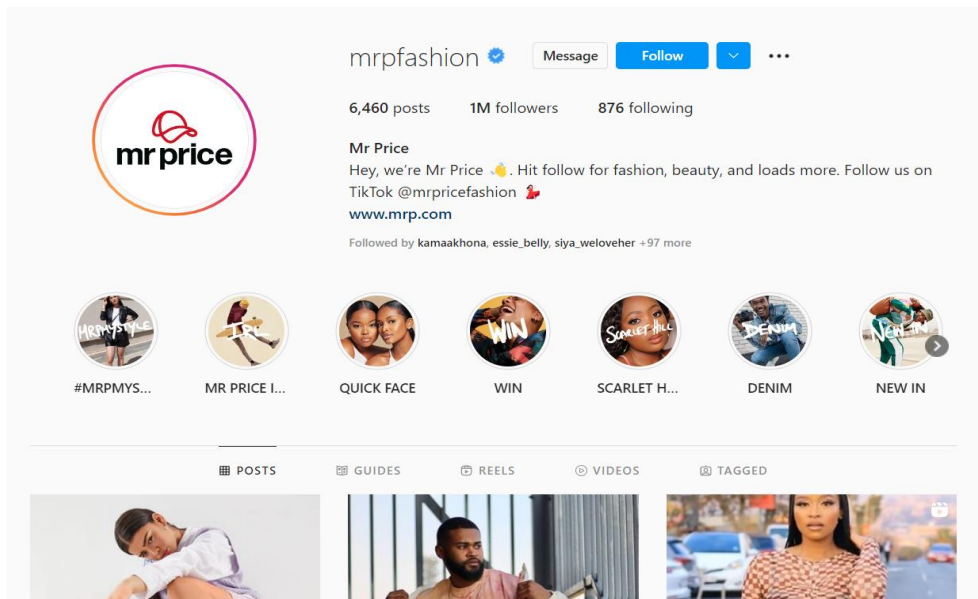
Source: Adapted from (Instagram Mr. Price 2022)

The Instagram page shows the number of followers, the number of followers, the number of posts, the count of reel views, the count of videos, and the number of likes on the pictures.

Woolworths Holdings Limited divisions include Woolworths South Africa, David Jones, and Country Road Group. The Mr. Price Group has the following divisions Mr. Price, Mr. Price Sport, Mr. Price Home, Sheet Street, Milady's, Power, and Yuppiechef. Each division has an Instagram page, and each page was visited to collect the data required for the study. The data from the pages include 'Instagram's number of reels/videos released every month, the highest video view counts, the highest reel view count, the number of followers each page has, and the number of tags each brand has The highest video view counts the highest reel view count, the number of followers each page has, and the number of tags each brand has were used for demographic purposes, and Instagram's number of reels/videos released every month was used for data analysis.

The data for the sales figures for Woolworths Holdings Limited and Mr. Price Group has been obtained through Investing.Com. the website publishes sales figures and other financial figures such as the share price of companies for daily, monthly, and yearly periods.

4.2   RESULTS OF THE DEMOGRAPHICS

Due to the nature of the study using secondary data, the demographics of the followers of the Woolworths and Mr. Price groups are hard to determine. The profiles of the followers can be viewed and observed on Instagram. The gender and race of the followers can be determined through observation of their Instagram pages, but the age, career paths, and preferences of the followers cannot be determined. Table 4.1 contains the number of following for each of the divisions, the number of tags, the highest accumulated likes on the videos, and the highest accumulated likes on the reels. These form part of the demographics of the study

Table 4.2.1 Accumulating branding data

Store	Number of followers	Number of tags	Likes on videos	Likes on reels
Woolworths South Africa	892 000	233 000	256 000	648 000
David Jones	414 000	406 000	79 200	204 000
Country Road Group	785 000	450 000	97 100	182 000
Trenery	73 100	11 100	64 400	7000
Witchery	605 000	804 000	59 800	213 000
Mr. Price	1 000 000	39 400	190 000	106 000
Mr. Price Sports	93 100	1000	58 800	29 400
Mr. Price Home	507 000	5000	28 800	189 000
Milady's	83 700	5 000	21 800	11 800
Sheet Street	136 000	1 000	13 200	45 700

Based on table 4.1 Price has the highest number of followers, with 1 million followers, followed by Woolworths SA, with 892 000 followers as of the 10th of July 2022. Trenery has the lowest number of followers, with 73 100 followers. The number of followers for each division indicates how many people the different brands can reach with their Instagram activities. This helps with their marketing and advertising efforts by showing how many followers have access to their marketing activities on the platform.

Furthermore, the brands can engage with their followers on the pages through direct messages in their Instagram inbox and comments on their posts.

Graph 4.2.1 Number of followers for brands divisions
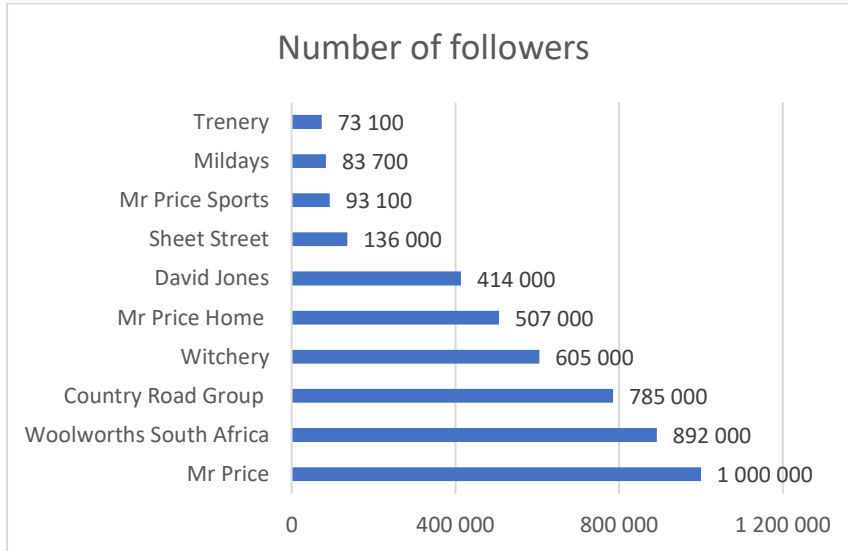
Source: 'Authors' illustrations

Graph 4.2.2 Data comparison of brands divisions

Source: 'Authors' illustrations

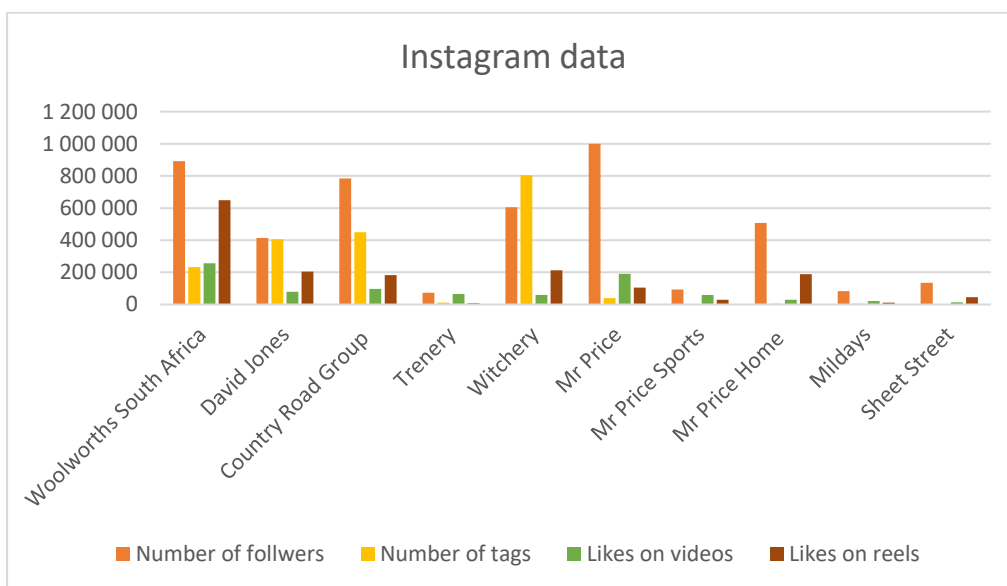Graph 4.2.2 and table 4.2.1 represents the different interactions the brands have with their followers and how many of those efforts reach them. The number of tags indicates how many times individuals and businesses on Instagram tag the brands to usually indicate items they purchased from the brand and also their individual experiences with the brand. The likes for the reels indicate how many individuals have watched their reels and liked the content. The results of graph 4.2.1 indicate that Instagram reaches close to one million individuals and is useful in the marketing efforts of the 'firm's brands. The results further prove brands should continue to use Instagram to market their brands. Many great things can be achieved for their brands through the use of the platform such as possible increased in-store traffic, increased brand reputation, and cheaper marketing activities. Woolworths and Mr. Price Instagram social media pages enable them to engage with customers and share their 'firm's content. The platform can help also change the perceptions of the customers.

4.3 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF INSTAGRAM ON BUSINESS BRANDS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The Pearson correlation approach is a technique for numerical variables, which assigns a value between 0 and 1, where 0 indicates no correlation, 1 indicates total positive correlation, and -1 indicates total negative correlation (Nettleton 2014). The Pearson R approach will be used to determine the correlation between the sales figure and the number of Instagram reel uploads for Woolworths and Mr. Price.

'Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (Lani n.d.)

- Perfect: If the value is close to 1, then the correlation is considered to be perfect. As one variable grows, the other variable tends to either increase (if positive) or decrease (if negative).
- High degree: A correlation is considered strong if the coefficient value is between 0.50 and 1.

- Moderate degree: A medium correlation is defined as a number that falls between 0.30 and 0.49.

- Low degree: A correlation is considered to be of a low degree when its value is less than +.29.

- Zero value: When there is no correlation.

4.3.1   INDEPENDENT AND DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The independent variable of the study is the number of reels uploaded on each of the 'brand's Instagram pages every month from January 2021 until July 2022.

The dependent variable of the study is the sales figures of each brand every month from January 2021 until July 2022.

4.3.2   CALCULATING THE R-VALUE

The data was calculated using excel data analysis Toolpak. Excel calculated using excel data analysis Toolpak was used to determine the r value for both Mr. Price and Woolworths. The data table for each brand was highlighted and the Data Analysis tab was selected. The regression data analysis was selected. The input for the y-range was the number of reels on the Instagram page per month column. The Input for the X-Range was the sales figure column. Then the labels tab was ticked. Once all the steps were followed, the data table was created containing the R-value and p-value.

Figure 4.3.1 Excel Toolpak data analysis template

Table 4.3.1   Pearson R Correlation Mr. Price

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
Regression Statistics								
Multiple R	0,112759913							
R Square	0,012714798							
Adjusted R Square	-0,045360802							
Standard Error	7,692592535							
Observations	19							
ANOVA								
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*			
Regression	1	12,95571	12,95571	0,218935285	0,645794985			
Residual	17	1005,991658	59,17597991					
Total	18	1018,947368						
	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*	*Lower 95%*	*Upper 95%*	*Lower 95,0%*	*Upper 95,0%*
Intercept	17,63863779	9,597179321	1,837898115	0,083618314	-2,609640648	37,88691622	-2,609640648	37,88691622
Mr Price sales	1,95583E-07	4,17997E-07	0,467905209	0,645794985	-6,86313E-07	1,07748E-06	-6,86313E-07	1,07748E-06

The is a correlation of 0,11 between Mr. Price Instagram video count and Mr. Price's sales figure. The is a low degree of correlation between the data. A correlation is considered to be of a low degree when its value is less than = or less than.29. The results have indicated that there is a low positive relationship between the sales figures and the number of reel uploads on the Mr. Price Instagram reels.

Table 4.3.2   Pearson R Correlation Woolworths Holdings Limited Group

SUMMARY OUTPUT								
Regression Statistics								
Multiple R	0,244736124							
R Square	0,05989577							
Adjusted R Square	0,004595521							
Standard Error	6,150233344							
Observations	19							
ANOVA								
	df	*SS*	*MS*	*F*	*Significance F*			
Regression	1	40,96870678	40,96870678	1,083101278	0,312580616			
Residual	17	643,0312932	37,82537019					
Total	18	684						
	Coefficients	*Standard Error*	*t Stat*	*P-value*	*Lower 95%*	*Upper 95%*	*Lower 95,0%*	*Upper 95,0%*
Intercept	30,68552492	7,518387195	4,081397263	0,000777382	14,82311449	46,54793534	14,82311449	46,54793534
Woolworths sales	-1,00534E-07	9,66005E-08	-1,040721518	0,312580616	-3,04344E-07	1,03275E-07	-3,04344E-07	1,03275E-07

Based on the results of the Pearson R Correlation model, Woolworth's sales figures also do not have a positive correlation model with the number of video view counts. The r value for WHL is 0,244. This means the is a negative relation between the variables.

4.4   SUMMARY

In this chapter, the empirical results of the study were discussed and explained. Firstly, the demographics of the data were discussed. Secondly, the Pearson R Correlation analysis model was discussed, and how it will be used for the study. Thirdly, the results of the study are examined and assessed. The correlation between the data is displayed and interpreted as per the connection of the data to each other. The results of the data have shown how store brands are impacted through marketing efforts on Instagram and the number of people the social media platform enables the brands to reach.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to report and conclude on the findings and results of the Chapter 2 literature review and Chapter 4 findings and interpretation. In Chapter 2, previous literature relating to the study was collected. Chapter 4 focused on the data analysis. The data was collected using Instagram pages, Woolworths, and Mr. Price group sales to capture the correlation between the two firms and their Instagram activities. A quantitative method was used for this study. Chapter 5 will focus on answering the research problem and the objectives of the Quantitative further explained in Chapter 4.

Chapter 1 introduced the research problem and the research question. The background of the study was also introduced in Chapter 1. The study aims to investigate the role of Instagram on fashion business brands in South Africa. To achieve the primary aim of the study, the below secondary objectives were formulated:

5.1.1 SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

- To determine if Instagram can attract and create more awareness of a fashion brand's target market.
- Also, whether firms using Instagram can their target market based on their following on Instagram.
- To determine if the use of Instagram has a favourable impact on fashion companies' sales and earnings.

To determine if Instagram is a new way for businesses to engage with their customers and if it encourages more communication between fashion brands

5.2 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 focused on previous research relating to Instagram and the role that it plays on a firm's brand. Based on the literature review the results of the study showed that

the development of social media has changed how individuals communicate and interact. Furthermore, the literature also showcased how social media plays a big role in firms reaching, advertising, and communicating with their customers. The study proved that more and more people use social media platforms such as Instagram to follow their favourite brands and the offers they have.

The history and details of Woolworths and Mr. Price Group were discussed. Both firms are retail giants in South Africa. These firms both use Instagram to promote their firm brands. Both brands have more than 800 000 and one million followers, respectively. This means that all the followers on Instagram have access to their promotional activities.

Social media utilization is now advantageous for business owners of goods and services who want to promote their offerings. Like hosting a large party on Twitter, social media marketing is a combination of art and science. Through platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and others, people can attend parties in a way that makes them eager to purchase the goods or services being offered as well as to simply enjoy themselves (Kharismatul Ula 2022;298)

Reels are short, entertaining videos that can last up to a few minutes. They provide users with a variety of opportunities, including advertising and self-presentation. A large audience, including those who do not subscribe to a specific channel, can access these videos. Additionally, using the capabilities in the Instagram application, you may alter the video, giving you the option to further diversify your post's mediums (Nypadymka, 2022;228). Reels have added value for influencers and producers by distributing material to audiences' newsfeeds regardless of whether a user is a follower, allowing content to be seen by an even larger audience (Kuncoro, 2022).

Instagram can be used as a platform to introduce services or goods being marketed as part of social media marketing strategies (Kharismatul Ula 2022;302)

5.3   MAIN RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Chapter 4 comprises data results relating to sales figures of Woolworths and Mr. Price. The data ranges from January 2021 until July 2022. The number of video views for each brand's Instagram page is the study's independent variable. The sales figures are the study's dependent variable. The number of each of the two brands was counted based on their Instagram uploads. Both brands released more than 10 videos/reels respectively every month. The reels have high accumulative views, some reaching 1 million views. These views show how many individuals have seen their branding activities. The more views and likes, the more the number of their target market. The number of reels shared on Instagram was counted individually and added up based on the month that the reels were released. The reels were grouped based on the month of release. Furthermore, the descriptive statistics were calculated using excel data analysis Toolpak.

5.3.1 MR. PRICE GROUP CORRELATION

Based on the data the is zero correlation between the sales figures. The is a correlation of 0,11 between Mr. Price Instagram video count and Mr. Price's sales figure. The is a low degree of correlation between the data. A correlation is of a low degree when its value is less than +.29. The results have indicated that the is no positive relationship between the sales figures and the number of reel uploads on the Mr. Price Instagram reels.

5.3.1 WOOLWORTHS GROUP CORRELATION

Based on the results of the Pearson R Correlation model, Woolworths sales figures also do not have a positive correlation model with the number of video view counts. This indicates that is a chance that the sales figures might not be affected by the number of reel views. The r value for WHL is 0,244. This means the is a negative relation between the variables.

This shows that the sales of the firm are not affected by the number of reel uploads by the brands.

Even though the is little correlation between the two brands' Instagram reels and their sales figures, this does not mean that the social media platform does not impact the sales. The online activities, including the reels of the firm, can customers to the stores

and websites to make purchases. From my own experience as an Instagram user, I made purchases based on content I have seen on Instagram.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that both brands continue to use Instagram as a marketing tool to create awareness of their products. This will be done to reach their target market through social media. Furthermore, the more followers the brands have, the more people their Instagram content reaches.

The brands should also engage with their followers in the comment section of their reels to better understand their needs and help sort out any possible concerns or misunderstandings. Communicating with their followers will further ensure that Woolworths and Mr. Price are up to date on what their customers think of their products. Also, the brands will be able to analyze their customer's reactions to their Instagram posts through the comment section.

The brands should have a dedicated social media team, that focus on ensuring that the needs of the online community are met and that that they can cater to them. By having a dedicated social media team, Woolworths and Mr. Price and other fashion brands will be certain that their online community receives the attention that the brands require and that the online community is not ignored. The social media team will also be able to better understand the needs and wants of the online community better than when the is no dedicated team. This will ensure that the content is shared on Instagram based on the customer's and target markets' preferences, needs, and wants. Social media content can be tailored based on the followers.

The social media teams of the brands should also protect their firm's brand online and they should also ensure that the Instagram page's aesthetics align with the actual brand. The platform will give the social media team the ability to protect their firm's brands on the platform and will be on the lookout for anything that could potentially tarnish their firm's brands. Furthermore, the team needs to be conscious of the aesthetics of their Instagram page. The team needs to be careful and

creative in the manner they present their content on the Instagram page and ensure that the content aligns with their brand.

The social media team should also ensure that the Instagram pages represent the values of the firm. The firm's values should be portrayed on its social media pages. For example, Woolworths' quality values are highly portrayed on its Instagram page. Brands need to stay true to their values, even on social media.

The brands should also create as much online content as possible and ensure all their campaigns are on their social media platforms. Brands should try to be as active as possible on their Instagram pages. This is because the more content the brands release, the more potential followers they can gain and could attract more of their target market. Instore and online purchases could potentially increase due to the content that firms share on their Instagram pages. Woolworths and Mr. Price can share their summer, winter, autumn, and spring range on their social media pages.

Firms can use Instagram as an inexpensive way of marketing their products and services. They need to educate themselves more on how to use their social media page creatively.

5.5   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study contributes to the existing knowledge on the impact of social media platforms Instagram as a fashion brand and its sales. This literature can benefit the fashion industry and other industries as well because it shows how social media can create more awareness about a firm's products and services. Instagram is an inexpensive way of marketing a firm's brand. Due to its inexpensive nature, new and existing firms can help expose and market their products to their target markets. Firms should also be intentional and put effort into their branding activities on Instagram and other social media pages they may choose to use for their brands.

The important thing that firms should do when using Instagram is to maintain consistency, creativity, and being up to date with the latest social media trends.

Furthermore, Instagram can bring and attract new customers to a firm's brand and retain the demand through its activities/content for its followers. Content (pictures and reel uploads) is vital on Instagram. The more likes on their pictures and reel uploads content, the more the world is aware of the latest products, specials, sales, and developments that a brand has. High like counts and reel view counts could be a good indication of how much social media users like a 'firm's branding activities on Instagram. This means that their customers will be aware of the brand's developments through their electronic devices.

Firms can use their Instagram pages to attract more customers and also to gain favourable sales through the effective use of social media. Brands need to be creative when using this platform. The use of high-quality pictures and videos, a good choice of colours that complement their brands, and effective use of pictures and hashtags make a big impact on the appearance and branding of a firm's Instagram page.

Social media, Instagram, and branding were clearly defined. The evolution of social media showed how different platforms have developed. The most used social media platforms currently, as per the literature review are Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok, and YouTube.

Instagram also allows brands to have an idea of what their competitors are currently doing concerning their brands. Instagram content/posts can lead customers to a brand's shop or to their websites to purchase what they saw on their Instagram pages. Social media, Instagram in particular, has changed how firms conduct their businesses and how they market their brands.

Instagram users can also shop on Instagram under the Instagram shopping tab and search for their favourites and can go through their latest product offerings. All these functions of Instagram can help grow a firm's brand.

Social media marketing is a good of attracting people of different ages.

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APPENDIX A

NELSON MANDELA

UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES

ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR TREATISES / DISSERTATIONS / THESES

Instructions:
- Should be completed by the study leader and student
- Must be signed off by student, study leader, and HoD
- ***Please note that by following this Proforma ethics route, the study will NOT be allocated an ethics clearance number***

FACULTY:_____Business and Economic Sciences _____

SCHOOL / DEPARTMENT:__Business Management_____

I, (surname and initials of study leader) __AH Nelmapius_____

the study leader for (surname and initials of candidate)___Ratsoana LF_____

_____ (student number) _____s215017838_____

a candidate for the degree of __BCom Honours Business Management_____

with a treatise/dissertation/thesis entitled (full title of treatise/dissertation/thesis):

The effect of Social media on the brands of businesses in the fashion industry in South Africa._ _____

_____

considered the following ethics criteria *(please tick the appropriate block):*

			YES	NO
1.	1.	Is there any risk of harm, or embarrassment of offense, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties, or the communities at large?		X
2.	2.	Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics, and/or disease status?		X
1.	2.1	Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		X
2.1.1		Children under the age of 18?		X
2.1.2		NMMU staff?		X
2.1.3		NMMU students?		X
2.1.4		The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		X
2.1.5		A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		X
2.1.6		Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		X

				X
3.	3.	Does the data that will be collected require the consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organization that is established by the government to protect vulnerable people)		X
1.	3.1	Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		X
4.	4.	Will the participant's privacy, anonymity, or confidentiality be compromised?		X
1.	4.1	Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		X
a.	4.1.1	Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		X
b.	4.1.2	Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		X
c.	4.1.3	Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		X
d.	4.1.4	Will offer an incentive to respondents to participate, i.e. a lucky draw or any other prize?		X
e.	4.1.5	Will create doubt about whether sample control measures are in place?		X
f.	4.1.5	Will be distributed electronically via email (and requesting an email response)? Note: • If your questionnaire **DOES NOT** request respondents' identification, is distributed electronically and you request respondents to return it *manually* (print out and deliver/mail), AND respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO. • If your questionnaire **DOES NOT** request respondents' identification, is *distributed via an email link, and works through a web response system (e.g. the university survey system); **AND*** respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.		X
g.	5.	Do you wish to publish an article from this study and submit it to an accredited Journal?		X

*Please note that if **ANY** of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative **(YES)** the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty RECH (Ethics) representative.*

and hereby certify that the student has given his/her research ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

20 May 2022

_____   _____

STUDY LEADER(S)   DATE

_____   _____
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT   DATE

2022/05/23

_____   ___17 May 2022_____
STUDENT   DATE

APPENDIX B

Ratsoana.LF - 215017838

Content Withdrawals (20% of the time)		Content Deposits (80% of the time)	
I Content You Create		**II** Content You Create	
Content You Create (left vertical label)	• Impactful Images • Selfies • Videos • Statistics • Articles, Blog Posts, and Podcast Episodes with calls to action		• Articles, Blog Posts, and Podcast Episodes • Quotations • Statistics • Impactful Images • Selfies That Don't Suck • Videos
III Curated Content		**IV** Curated Content	
Curated Content (left vertical label)	• Testimonials • Quotations • Statistics • Impactful Images • Videos		• Articles, Blog Posts, and Podcast Episodes • Quotations • Statistics • Impactful Images • Videos

20% of the Time   80% of the Time

Diaz 2019:41