# Using Instagram as Online Shopping Channel: Key Predictors of Consumers' Purchase Involvement on Instagram in Saudi Arabia

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This study examined key predictors of Saudi consumers' purchase involvement on Instagram. An online snowball sampling approach was used to reach Saudis via social media, with 1,671 Saudis recruited as valid samples. Results suggested Saudis' frequency of Instagram shopping, Instagram credibility, and Instagram seller credibility as three major factors toward Saudis' purchase involvement. Saudis who reported higher Instagram credibility and Instagram seller credibility would be more likely to involve with online shopping on Instagram. As two personality variables (materialism and self-esteem) were not found as powerful as other experiential variables that impacted Saudis'

purchase involvement on Instagram, marketing channel planners who would use Instagram as a key online shopping tool should attempt to secure shopping privacy and payment safety on Instagram. Moreover, as Saudis' positive attitudes were activated toward seller credibility, privacy security, and payment security on Instagram, Instagram would become an effective shopping tool for Saudi consumers.

*Keywords: Instagram, Online Shopping Channel, Purchase Involvement, Materialism, Self-Esteem, Website Credibility, Saudi Consumer*

I n an increasingly computerized world, consumers receive information through numerous venues, the number of which is increasing due to social networks. Each type of social media generates significant impacts on consumers' opinions. Facebook and Twitter are two typical examples of relatively elder forms of social media in comparison with other newer social media networks, such as Instagram. Consumers can also employ certain types of social media for different purposes based on their individual preferences. Some use social networks for seeking information and entertainment, while others utilize them to purchase merchandises online. The role of social media becomes more important in different aspects of electronic commerce.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media could be an advanced and unique interactive platform for businesses to promote their products, identify what consumers need, maintain consumer relationship, and interact with target consumers during crises. Social networks can also influence the development of digital marketing considerably around the world in the past decade.

Because of the large number of online users and the rapid propagation of social media, many organizations and businesses have started to explore more potential marketing capacities of social media. When numerous brands and products are using social media to communicate with their target consumers, active social media users are more likely to find more online information about brands and products (Cao, 2011). Comparing to other social networks, Instagram is a highly useful platform for companies and individuals to promote their brands and products. Instagram marketing becomes an effective approach to promoting products. As the old saying goes, a picture speaks a thousand words (Silva et al., 2013). Moreover, Instagram can be used to save costs for brand design, given that all images for brands and products can be edited and filtered by using Instagram (Herman, 2014).

As stated by Al-Jenaibi (2011), consumers in Saudi Arabia have begun using social media as online shopping platforms. Instagram has become one of the most important and modern tools for online shopping among individuals in Saudi society, especially for those young Saudis, who use Instagram daily. Saudis prefer using Instagram to buy and sell such items as traditional scarves. Websites like Amazon may not provide some cultural diversity for certain items used in Saudi Arabia. In contrast to Amazon, Instagram offers Saudis an opportunity to buy and sell some special items more efficiently online. Furthermore, it is forbidden in Saudi Arabia to make usury from sold items. There is also no tax on purchased items in Saudi Arabia. Thus, both convenience and flexibility make Instagram more feasible for Saudi who want to sell items. The purpose of this study aims to examine why Saudi consumers use Instagram as an online shopping channel and explore key predictors of their involvement with online shopping on Instagram.

## BACKGROUND
### Overview of Saudi Arabia

Founded in 1932, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia covers an area of approximately 830,000 square miles, where the total population is 30,770,375 (Central Department of Statistics, 2015). Moreover, Saudi Arabic-speaking Saudis comprise approximately 20,702,536, with the rest being foreign workers and tourists. Arabic is the official language of Saudi Arabia although English is widely spoken and considered a second language. Saudi Arabia comprises five regions containing 13 provinces and diverse populations. Every region has unique local customs and different histories.

The national currency is the Saudi Riyal, which is pegged to the U.S. dollar to stabilize its value and facilitate the extensive economic cooperation between two countries. Saudi Arabia is also an original member of the United Nations since 1945, and a member of the G20. It hosts 101 embassies in Riyadh, in addition to consulates and other diplomatic missions in Jeddah and Dhahran. The economy of Saudi Arabia depends principally on oil production and to a lesser extent natural gas and other mineral resources (Saudi Embassy, 2016). According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration (2015), Saudi Arabia has almost 16% of the world's proven oil reserves, and is the largest producer and exporter of total petroleum liquids in the world. Likewise, it has "the world's fifth-biggest characteristic gas holds." In 1938, vast amounts of oil were found, causing an economic boom in the area. Today, all companies in Saudi Arabia belong to the government. The most prominent of which is the oil industry, but the government is currently making plans to diversify the economy (Saudi Embassy, 2015).

### Online Shopping in the Middle East

Schulze and Baumgartner (2001) defined online shopping as an activity to purchase or receive information about customer goods through websites. Kaynak, Tatoglu, and Kula (2005) suggested that any economic transaction occurs where the buyer and seller come together through the electronic media on the Internet, form a contractual agreement concerning the pricing and delivery of particular goods and services, and complete the transaction through the delivery of payments and good or services as contracted. Lee and Lin (2005) further stated that online shopping is a complex process that depends on a number of elements, such as searching for information, online transactions, and consumer interactions. The potential benefit of online shopping is the quality of electronic services,

because it is easy for consumers to compare quality and prices via online shopping websites. Furthermore, it is the most recent phenomenon in the field of business that most modern companies have used social media to sell their services and products (Richa, 2012). In fact, online shopping is one of the most popular business activities via the Internet (Keisidou, Sarigiannidis, & Maditinos, 2011).

Social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, are frequently used for digital marketing in the Middle East. Numerous studies demonstrated that social media become an effective tool because of the increased use of the Internet and social networks throughout the Arab world. Regarding the importance of social media in business practices, Al-Jenaibi (2011) suggested that the role of social media in the United Arab of Emiratis (UAE) is consistent throughout the Middle East. Al-Jenaibi stated that social media play a major role in sending the information that creates a positive impact on businesses in the UAE. In order to keep up with the rest of the world, people in the UAE have recognized the popularity of social media platforms. Al-Jenaibi found that the younger generations are the most active users of social media in the UAE. As a result, companies have to develop social media platforms as marketing channels, so that they can interact with their consumers and promote their business.

According to Faraj (2014), Egypt is one of the leading countries in the Middle East to adopt social media for digital marketing. Abdelsamea (2012) believed a strong relationship between increasing tourism in Egypt and increasing users of Facebook and Twitter in Egypt. This study also claimed that social media networks have a major impact on increasing tourism in Egypt. The study demonstrated that traditional marketing tools do not attract consumers as much anymore. Consequently, people recognize social media as a more effective method for better communication, because Egyptian society is inclined to have more direct and constant communication between consumers and businesses. Abdalsameea found that many companies in Egypt use social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, to promote the best tourist places. Effective communication with consumers via social media gives these companies a more effective approach to attracting more tourists in comparison to traditional methods. Koshy (2013) argued that social media networks become a powerful tool for communication among people in the UAE. A

significant increase in the use of social media occurs in the UAE, which generates a greater opportunity for companies to connect with their consumers more easily.

Consumers in the Middle East, including Saudis, are concerned about the unknown effects of their online shopping behavior. They have reservations about online shopping because they fear it could be less secure (Hill et al., 1998). However, several studies indicated that Saudis may respond well to online shopping. Many activities for people in Western countries, such as movie theaters, bars, and nightclubs, are not allowed in Saudi Arabia for cultural reasons. Consequently, Saudis are more likely to utilize their computers to look at recreational opportunities and spend more time shopping online (Long, 2005). According to Al-Jenaibi (2011), social media attract many Saudis, and become an important part of their daily lives and a key source for their decision making. Furthermore, Al-maghrabi and Dennis (2010) found that high quality content, good design, simple navigation, ease in finding necessary information, and ease of communication are the most common elements that make women tend to accept online shopping. They also claimed that the strongest factor toward online shopping among Saudi Arabian women is enjoyment. Thus, online sellers should increase their site quality to make online shopping channels more secured and enjoyable.

Faraj (2014) noted that social media, especially Facebook and Twitter, become an "extremely popular tool in Saudi Aribia. Faraj found that some Saudi companies adopt social media to communicate with their consumers. By using social media, many companies attempt to replace traditional ways to communicate with their target consumers. The attractiveness of social media creates opportunities for companies in Saudi Arabia to be an important part of digital marketing practice. However, businesses in Saudi Arabia do not fully understand the power of social media in digital marketing (Bayt.com, 2012). If Saudi companies can better understand the popularity of social media networks, the extension of their business would be more successful (Faraj, 2014).

## LITERATURE REVIEW
### Website Credibility

According to Tseng and Fogg (1999), credibility is believability and credible information is believable information. Moreover, Castillo, Mendoza, and Poblete (2011) used credibility in their research, defining it as "offering reasonable grounds for being

believed". Moore and Rodgers (2005) define credibility as the objective and subjective elements of the believability of a source or message. Media credibility can be defined as the degree to which the customer believes or trusts in the media. There are three factors that determine media credibility, namely source, message, and medium itself (Metzger et al., 2003). Source credibility involves how the processing of media messages is influenced by multiple source characteristics. It focuses on a message source's ability or reasons to supply correct and real information (Burgoon, 1976). By message credibility, the aspects of the message involve information quality, accuracy, structure, and content. Message credibility consists of research on the mechanisms by which characteristics of the message impact its perceived credibility (Greer & Pan, 2015). Finally, medium credibility cares about the channel that delivered the message. Medium credibility is the degree of credibility that people perceive a specific medium to have, such as newspapers, television, the Internet, or blogs. (Xie & Zhao, 2014).

Numerous studies have investigated website credibility, how audiences consider sources to be credible and trustworthy, and variables that contribute to people's attitudes toward messages from various sources. Rainie and Horrigan (2007) showed no credibility gap among individuals, especially among those who usually use the Internet. They found that the Internet source was judged as more believable than traditional news. Most of the participants agreed that it is more likely to find reliable information from the Internet than print news or TV news.

Another study by the Pew Research Center in 2008 showed that the Internet was the most important source for news among people under 30 in the United States. In regards to social media credibility, Schwarz and Morris (2011) found that displaying information to users about the estimated credibility of online content is very beneficial and valuable to them. Moreover, Castillo et al. (2011) found that inexperienced users are easily misled by unreliable information and that online tweets are considered more credible, especially during crises. They also found it becomes important to provide tools to validate the credibility of online information during emergency situations and important events.

Putri (2015) examined consumers' online search intention and online purchase intention on Instagram. Putri found that online shopping sites play a key role to influence consumers' online purchase intention. These sites should focus more on providing useful

and attractive information about products, build brand trust through favorable online experiences, and attract more consumers for site visits by maximizing search features (Pan & Xu, 2009). According to a survey by Indonesia Internet Service Provider Association, numerous reasons make consumers hesitate to buy products online. These reasons include fraud risk, expensive, uninterested, unsecured, impractical, and the customer does not have sufficient knowledge to do online shopping. Thus, online shopping sites should present more web credibility and foster brand trust.

## Materialism

Materialism is defined as how consumers attach to worldly possessions (Belk & Pollay, 1985) and used to describe people's value orientation and the importance people attach to material property (Richins & Dawson, 1992). Materialism is usually viewed as greed, but it is not seen as completely negative or socially unwanted (Goldberg et al., 2003). Scott, Martin, and Schouten (2014) found an apparent interest in the relationship between individual and material possession. Goldsmith, Flynn, and Clark (2011) examined the interplay between materialism and shopping motivations. They concluded that more consumers embrace material values; the more likely they are to shop. Furthermore, the more consumers see brands as a means of expressing self-concept, the more likely they shop. Burroughs and Rindfleisch (2002) suggested that materialism is connected with long-term negative consequences both for groups and individuals in terms of happiness or comfortable feelings. However, Scott et al. (2014) suggested it is hard to ask consumers to be less materialistic, even as materialism is harmful to individuals and society.

## Self-Esteem

Self-esteem refers to how individuals evaluate their attitudes toward themselves (James, 1980). According to Dong and Cao (2006), self-esteem is adolescents' evaluation of their self-worth or satisfaction with three dimensions, namely their physical appearance, romantic attractiveness, and ability to form and maintain close friendships. Gecas and Burke (1995) defined self-esteem as a major aspect of self-concept. People with high self-esteem usually have respect for themselves and consider themselves worthy, while people with low self-esteem are more likely to feel self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction and self-contempt (Rosenberg, Schooler, & Schoenbach, 1989).

Numerous studies investigated a key association between self-esteem and social media use. For example, Valkenburg, Peter, and Schouten (2006) found that the use of social media can have a positive impact on how people feel about themselves and their well-being. Moreover, teenagers who receive positive feedback on their social media profiles exhibit higher self-esteem and better well-being. Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) found that the use of social media leads to positive social benefits for those who typically have low life satisfaction. Buechel and Berger (2012) further suggested that people who are unstable emotionally use social media to get social support and to repair well-being after negative emotional experiences. Wilcox and Stephen (2013) examined the interplay between social networks and self-esteem, indicating that social media have significant effects on consumer judgment and decision making. Moreover, people experience greater self-esteem when they focus on the image they are presenting to strong ties in their social media. In this vein, the use of social media only yields little effect on people's self-esteem when they focus on their images to weak relationships in their social networks.

## Purchase Involvement

Purchase involvement refers to the level of interest that individuals attach to a product and how likely they are to purchase a product of a specific brand. Purchase involvement is a scale that measures purchase involvement as a constant individual difference variable (Slama & Tashchian, 1985). According to Dong and Cao (2006), purchase involvement can be studied by analyzing the interaction between media exposure and self-esteem. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1993) further found a positive relationship between consumer activities and consumer involvement, indicating that consumer behavior is a strong factor in increasing consumer involvement. Yavas and Babakus (1995) developed a scale to measure purchase involvement using data from a sample of Saudi women. This scale includes five essential elements, namely importance of the decision, relevance of the decision, level of interest in the decision, appeal of the decision, and usefulness of the decision. This measure exhibits evidence of pragmatic validity, indicating that Saudi women are highly involved in household purchase decisions. Dong and Cao (2006) investigated the impact of American media exposure and self-esteem on Chinese urban adolescents' purchase involvement. They found no

relationship between the two. Another study by Karaatli (2015) suggested that people with higher purchase involvement spend more time using the Internet than those with lower purchases involvement.

## Current Study

This study examines how Saudis employ Instagram as a marketing channel and why they prefer Instagram for online shopping over other social media platforms. The level of trust in information and endorses on Instagram is also examined. Additionally, the study aims to explore self-esteem and materialism as two key factors that affect consumers to utilize Instagram for online shopping. These unique variables related to Instagram would influence Saudis who use Instagram as an online shopping channel and be used to construct the following four hypotheses:

**H1:** Saudi consumers who perceive Instagram as more credible exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram.

**H2:** Saudi consumers who perceive Instagram sellers as more credible exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram.

**H3:** Saudi consumers with higher materialism exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram.

**H4:** Saudi consumers with higher self-esteem exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram.

Finally, the study attempts to look for the most significant predictor toward Saudi consumers' purchase involvement when Instagram is used as an effective online shopping tool. Therefore, one research question is proposed in the following:

**RQ1:** When several factors generate significant influences on Saudi consumers' purchase involvement, which predictor would play the most influential role toward Saudi consumers' purchase involvement on Instagram?

## METHODS
### Design

The purpose of this study was devised to understand how Saudi consumers utilized Instagram as an online shopping channel and explore key predictors of their purchase involvement on Instagram. An online survey was designed because this method was considered as the most appropriate approach to collecting data from Saudi consumers who

had an Instagram account. The sample was drawn using an online snowball sampling method. According to Singleton and Straits (2018), snowball sampling is more direct and purposeful than other non-random sampling techniques, such as convenience sampling, which would only focus on the most easily identified and reachable members of target population. In the snowball sampling method, the participants were asked to answer a survey questionnaire and then to pass it on to their friends or relatives via any social media by posting a link to this online questionnaire and forwarding it to their friends. This online questionnaire was delivered to all reachable members of the target population, including family and friends through Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. Because of this snowball sampling method, a web-based survey can be distributed through the Internet and the data analyzed, it was an advantage over a print questionnaire. In addition, this method is more cost-effective than traditional methods, and all participants' responses would be entered into the system automatically when they answered the questions.

An online questionnaire was presented on Survey Monkey and delivered via social media platforms. The participants were told about the purpose of this study with informed consent mentioning that the participation was completely voluntary and there would be no penalty for not completing this online questionnaire. They were also informed that there was no reward for completing this questionnaire. A total of 1,671 Saudis were recruited as valid samples for the final analysis, with 896 males (53.6%) and 775 females (46.4%). Moreover, the majority of the participants (68%) was in the age group of 18 to 30 years old, followed by 31 to 42 years old (25%), 43 to 55 years old (5%) and 55 and above (2%). All participants were recruited based upon online referrals and voluntary to answer this online questionnaire with no financial incentives or physical rewards.

## Measured Variables

In order to answer the research questions, the survey instrument was divided into several sections that measured different variables. These variables are Instagram credibility, Instagram seller credibility, materialism, self-esteem, purchase involvement and other variables of interest, namely frequency of Instagram shopping, privacy security, and payment information security.

*Instagram credibility* and *Instagram seller credibility* were measured by adapting McCroskey and Treven's source credibility scale (1999). For Instagram credibility, six

items were used to look at participants' feelings toward Instagram, including *Reliable*, *Informed*, *Qualified*, *Intelligent*, *Valuable*, and *Expert*. For Instagram seller credibility, another six items were adopted to measure participants' feelings toward Instagram seller, including *Honest*, *Friendly*, *Pleasant*, *Unselfish*, *Nice*, and *Virtuous*. The participants were asked to indicate the level of agreement with these items on seven-point scales. All scores from six items were summed and averaged. Higher scores from both measurements indicated that the participants would perceive Instagram as more credible ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 1.00$) as well as Instagram seller as more credible ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.00$). Cronbach's alpha was .72 for Instagram credibility and .73 for Instagram seller credibility.

*Materialism* was assessed by using Richins' (1987) materialism scale. Richins' measure was included with six statements that were scored on a seven-point Likert-type format from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. All scores from six statements were summed and averaged. Higher scores indicated that the participants would hold higher material values ($M = 2.28$, $SD = .70$). Cronbach's alpha was .70.

*Self-esteem* was measured by using Rosenberg, Schooler, and Schoenbach's (1989) self-esteem scale. This scale contained ten statements that asked participants to indicate their responses to ten statements on a five-point Likert scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree.* All scores from six statements were summed and averaged. Higher scores indicated that the participants would have higher self-esteem ($M = 2.22$, $SD = .62$). Cronbach's alpha was .78.

*Purchase involvement on Instagram* was gauged by adapting McQuarrie and Munson's (1986) purchasing involvement scale. The study adopted ten items from McQuarrie and Munson's scale, including *Important to me*, *Boring to me*, *Relevant to me*, *Exciting to me*, *Means nothing to me*, *Appealing to me*, *Fascinating to me*, *Worthless to me*, *Involving to me*, and *Not needed by me*. The participants were asked to indicate the level of agreement with these items on seven-point scales. All scores from ten items were summed and averaged after some items were reversed. Higher scores indicated that the participants would exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 1.09$). Cronbach's alpha was .82.

Other variables of interest, including *frequency of Instagram shopping*, *privacy security*, and *payment information security*, were measured by asking participants three

multiple-choice questions about how frequently participants would shop via Instagram, how confident they felt that their payment information was kept secured when buying products via Instagram, and how confident they felt that their privacy was kept confidential when purchasing products via Instagram.

## Statistical Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was used to predict the value of purchase involvement on Instagram as a linear combination of the values of seven independent variables—Instagram credibility, Instagram seller credibility, materialism, self-esteem, frequency of Instagram shopping, privacy security, and payment information security. This statistical analysis would first examine which independent variables were linearly related to purchase involvement on Instagram. Then, the analysis would yield multiple regression models to identify a subset of independent variables that were useful for predicting Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram in order to serve the purpose of this study.

## RESULTS

**H1** was proposed to examine whether Saudis' perception of Instagram would impact their purchase involvement on Instagram. As indicated in Table 1, the results showed that Saudis who perceived Instagram as more credible would exhibit higher purchase involvement on Instagram ($r = + .55$, $p < .01$). Moreover, Table 2 suggested that Saudis' perception of Instagram was the second most powerful predictor toward purchase involvement on Instagram (*Beta* = .38, $t = 19.25$, $p < .01$), while their frequency of Instagram shopping was the most powerful factor (*Beta* = .45, $t = 23.28$, $p < .01$).

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Purchase Involvement on Instagram

| Variables | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Purchase Involvement | .55** | .53** | .14** | .02 | .60** | .40** | .37** |
| 2. Instagram Credibility | - | .62** | .06** | .04 | .38** | .39** | .37** |
| 3. Seller Credibility | | - | .05* | .16** | .36** | .32** | .30** |
| 4. Materialism | | | - | -.13** | .08** | .05* | .02 |
| 5. Self-esteem | | | | - | .07** | .03 | .02 |
| 6. Frequency of Instagram Shopping | | | | | - | .46** | .46** |
| 7. Privacy Security | | | | | | - | .74** |
| 8. Payment Information Security | | | | | | | - |

*Note.* $^*p < .05$; $^{**}p < .01$.

**H2** was used to investigate whether Saudis' perceptions of Instagram sellers would impact their purchase involvement on Instagram. The results also suggested that Saudis who perceived Instagram sellers as more credible would also show higher purchase involvement on Instagram ($r = + .53$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, their perception of Instagram sellers was the third most significant predictor toward purchase involvement on Instagram (*Beta* = .22, $t = 9.50$, $p < .01$).

**H3** was aimed to explore whether Saudis' material value would influence their purchase involvement on Instagram. The results found that Saudis with a higher level of materialism would indicate higher purchase involvement on Instagram ($r = + .14$, $p < .01$). Also, their level of materialism was another significant predictor toward purchase involvement on Instagram (*Beta* = .08, $t = 4.74$, $p < .01$) that was loaded in a significant regression model.

Table 2

Multiple Regression Models

| Predictors | Model Statistics | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1** | | Model 2** | | Model3** | | Model 4** | | Model 5* | | Model 6* | |
| $F$ | 897.64 | | 739.97 | | 548.60 | | 422.57 | | 340.38 | | 285.49 | |
| $R^2$ | .36 | | .48 | | .51 | | .51 | | .51 | | .52 | |
| $R^2$ Change | .36 | | .12 | | .03 | | .01 | | .002 | | .002 | |
| Predictors | Beta | t | Beta | t | Beta | t | Beta | t | Beta | t | Beta | t |
| Constant | | 11.47*** | | 3.11** | | 1.95 | | -.59 | | -.77 | | .63 |
| Frequency of Instagram Shopping | .60 | 29.96** | .45 | 23.28** | .42 | 21.96** | .42 | 21.82** | .40 | 19.58** | .40 | 19.69** |
| Instagram Credibility | -- | -- | .38 | 19.25** | .25 | 11.02** | .25 | 10.98** | .24 | 10.33** | .24 | 10.12** |
| Seller Credibility | | | -- | -- | .22 | 9.50** | .22 | 9.53** | .21 | 9.41** | .22 | 9.71** |
| Materialism | | | | | -- | -- | .08 | 4.74** | .08 | 4.73** | .08 | 4.36** |
| Privacy Security | | | | | | | -- | -- | .05 | 2.49* | .05 | 2.45* |

**H4** was proposed to look at whether Saudis' self-esteem would activate their purchase involvement on Instagram. The results suggested that Saudis' self-esteem would not significantly impact their purchase involvement on Instagram ($r = +.02$, $p = .23$). However, self-esteem was loaded in a significant regression model (*Beta* = .08, $t = 4.74$, $p < .01$), indicating that self-esteem may play a key role in influencing purchase involvement on Instagram, while frequency of Instagram, Instagram credibility, Instagram seller credibility, materialism, and privacy security were considered to influence purchase involvement on Instagram.

**RQ1** was proposed to explore the most significant predictor toward Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram. As demonstrated in Table 2, multiple linear regression analysis yielded six significant models of Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram. The first model ($F = 897.64$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$) excluded six predictors, but only contained frequency of Instagram shopping as a key antecedent factor (*Beta* = .60, $t = 23.28$, $p < .01$). The second model only included frequency of Instagram shopping and Instagram credibility as two most significant predictors toward purchase involvement on Instagram ($F = 739.97$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$). The third model did not only contain frequency of Instagram shopping and Instagram credibility, but also Instagram seller credibility ($F = 548.60$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$). The fourth model ($F = 422.57$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$) added materialism (*Beta* = .08, $t = 4.74$, $p < .01$) as another key predictor toward purchase involvement on Instagram, beside those factors loaded in the third model. Finally, the fifth model ($F = 340.38$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$) and sixth model ($F = 285.49$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$) were also significant in multiple linear regression analysis, but they were less significant than previous four models, given that self-esteem (*Beta* = .05, $t = 2.49$, $p < .05$) and privacy security (*Beta* = -.04, $t = -2.43$, $p < .05$) were loaded to generate somehow significant influences on purchase involvement on Instagram.

## DISCUSSION

This empirical study suggested six key antecedent factors in directing Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram, namely frequency of Instagram shopping, Instagram

credibility, Instagram seller credibility, materialism, privacy security, and self-esteem. Among these six factors, frequency of Instagram shopping, Instagram credibility and Instagram seller credibility were emerged as three strongest predictors, followed by materialism, privacy security, and self-esteem. Moreover, frequency of Instagram shopping was more powerful than Instagram credibility and Instagram seller credibility in leading Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram. Specifically, Saudis who purchased products through Instagram more frequently would report higher purchase involvement on Instagram. Similarly, Saudis who perceived Instagram and Instagram seller as more credible would show higher purchase involvement on Instagram. The study was along the line of Schwarz and Morris (2011), indicating that displaying information to online users about the credibility of online content was very beneficial and valuable to online users. Furthermore, the credibility of online content was very efficient to lead Saudis to higher purchase involvement on Instagram. To put it simply, three experiential factors (e.g., their experiences in Instagram shopping and perceptions of Instagram and Instagram seller) were significantly found to yield positive influences on how Saudis would be involved with online shopping on Instagram.

The study did not find two personality factors—materialism and self-esteem—as powerful as other experiential factors. Indeed, materialism was emerged to impact purchase involvement on Instagram in the fourth regression model, but self-esteem was loaded in the sixth regression model. As stated by Goldsmith, Flynn, and Clark (2011), more consumers embraced material values; the more likely they were to like shopping. However, their hypothesis may not accurately occur in the context of Instagram shopping, given that Instagram shopping was involved with Instagram users' shopping experience and their perceptions of Instagram and Instagram seller. Instagram users may be led by their material values to be involved with offline shopping, but not online shopping. On the other hand, self-esteem can play a somewhat significant role in leading Saudis' purchase involvement on Instagram. As indicated in the sixth regression model, self-esteem generated some impact on purchase involvement on Instagram when other variables were also loaded in this model. Although Wilcox and Stephen (2013) suggested that people with greater self-esteem would focus more on the image they would like to present in their social networks, their greater self-esteem did not directly lead to higher purchase

involvement on Instagram, especially when other experiential and personality variables were not included to generate interactive effects with self-esteem on purchase involvement on Instagram. Thus, it is fair to state that self-esteem may not produce direct effects on purchase involvement on Instagram, but could interact with other variables to influence how Saudis would be involved with online shopping on Instagram.

Finally, other variables of interest, including frequency of Instagram shopping, privacy security, and payment information security, were examined in relation to purchase involvement on Instagram. While frequency of Instagram shopping was the strongest predictor, Saudis' attitudes toward privacy security on Instagram also generated some direct and indirect influences on purchase involvement on Instagram. Moreover, the impact of privacy security on purchase involvement on Instagram was diminished when other key predictors were added in the model. Similarly, Saudis' attitudes toward payment information security on Instagram generated direct influences on their purchase involvement on Instagram, but such influences were minimalized as nonsignificant when other key predictors were included to impact purchase involvement on Instagram. Therefore, marketing channel planners who intend to use Instagram as a key online shopping tool should strive to secure shopping privacy and payment safety on Instagram in order to activate Saudi consumers to shop more frequently on Instagram, perceive Instagram and Instagram seller as more credible, and finally exhibit more positive attitudes toward privacy security on Instagram.

## Limitations and Implications

Although several insights were generated, some limitations still emerged. First of all, several participants indicated that there were many questions in the questionnaires. Some did lose their patience and skip some questions, while approximately 22% did not complete the questionnaires, which resulted in a major limitation for this study. Second, the sample may also restrict the generalization of the results in this study. As stated previously, most valid samples were young adults in the age group of 18 to 30 years old (68%). It became the fact that the participants were younger than the target age group due to the elimination of several incomplete questionnaires. Therefore, the sample may not generalize the population appropriately. Future research may examine how the certain age of Saudis would influence their Instagram shopping behaviors and whether their

materialism and self-esteem would vary significantly to mediate the impacts of Instagram credibility and Instagram seller credibility on their purchase involvement on due to their age difference.

Next, this study only focused on Saudi consumers' purchase involvement with online shopping on Instagram, but did not compare Saudi consumers with other consumers from a cross-cultural perspective. Future research can consider cultural differences that may contribute to how consumers in different cultures and regions would perceive Instagram as an online shopping channel. Furthermore, this study can be replicated in other countries to examine whether consumer cultures in different countries would affect the perception of trust in Instagram. Finally, some personality traits may play another key role in Saudis' involvement with online shopping on Instagram. Future research could investigate personality traits as predictors toward purchase involvement in the context of Instagram shopping. This study found a positive relationship among materialism, self-esteem, and purchase involvement on Instagram, but the study did not look at some interaction effects between personality predictors and other experiential predicators on purchase involvement on Instagram. Future research may focus on the impacts of other personality traits related to consumer behavior, such as behavioral inhibition/activation and propensity to plan, and examined whether consumers with various levels of these consumer personalities would lead to different levels of purchase involvement on Instagram in the context of Instagram online shopping.

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## Funding and Acknowledgements