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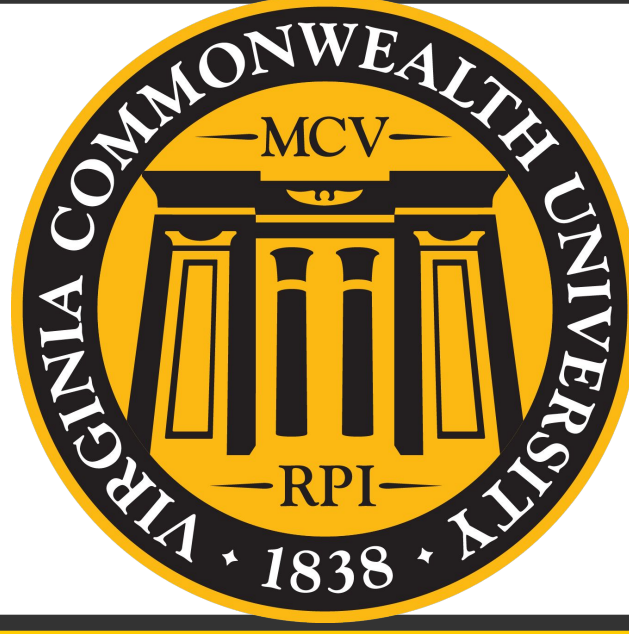
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Advertising and Consumer Behaviors: Evaluating Microinfluencers on Social Media

Julianne Eubanks, Mattie Hedgebeth, and Jennifer A. Joy-Gaba, PhD.
Virginia Commonwealth University



Introduction

Given that the average individual spends 142 minutes a day on social media applications (Global Web Index, 2019), many find themselves exposed to digital advertisements. However, individuals, particularly Millennials, are also disengaged and distrust traditional advertisements (The Nielsen Company, 2017).

Micro-influencers vs. Influencers

On social media applications, there are two types of “influencers”.

- Influencers have a large following online and/or offline (100,000+ followers online). AKA name-brand, household celebrities.
- Micro-influencers have 1,000-100,000 followers online. Often have higher engagement rates, as well as niche audiences. (Main, 2017).

Research Questions

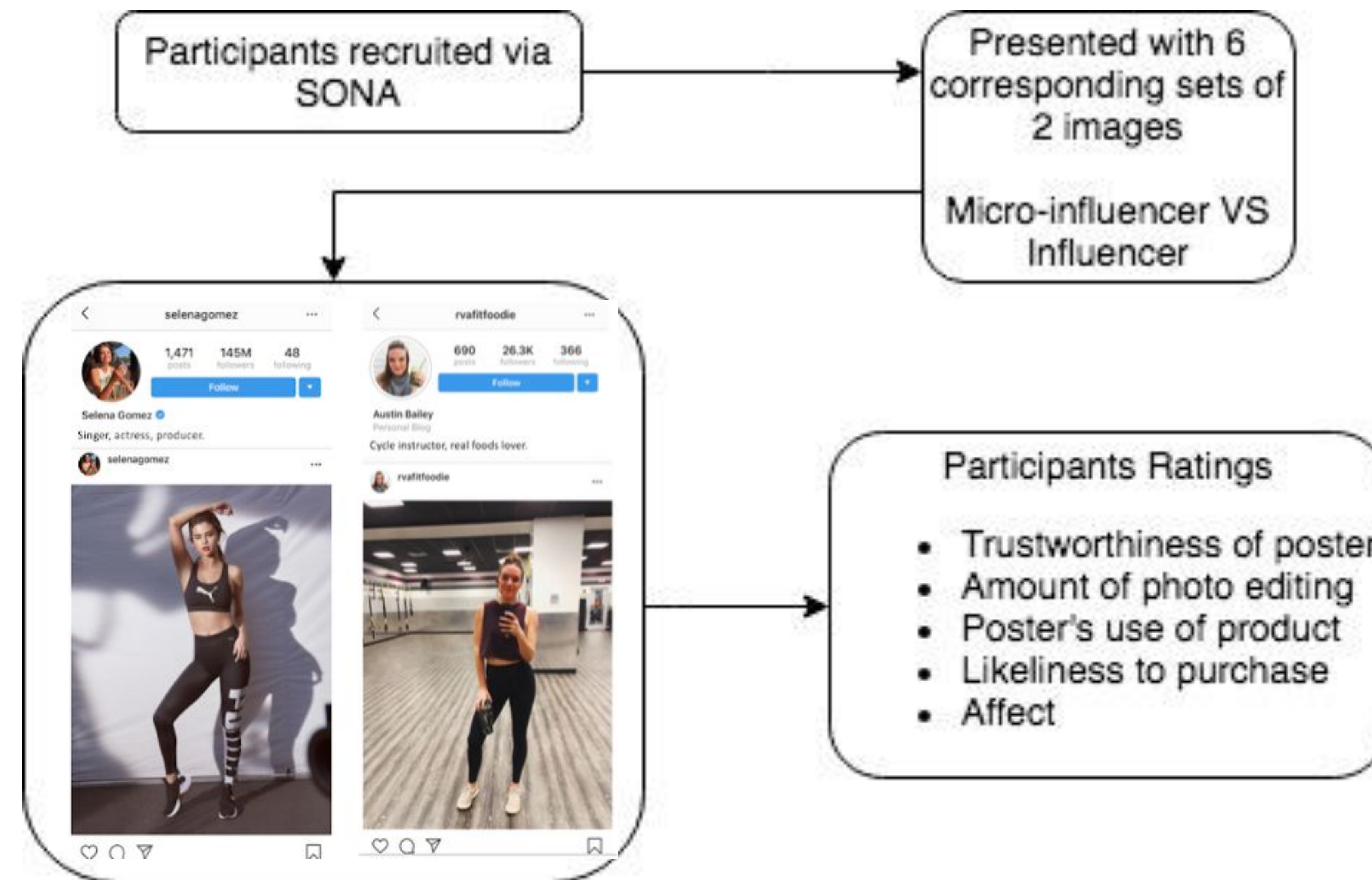
1. Will participants perceive micro-influencers as more trustworthy and authentic than ‘household name’ celebrities?
2. Will participants be more likely to purchase a product when suggested by a micro-influencer rather than by a celebrity?

Hypotheses

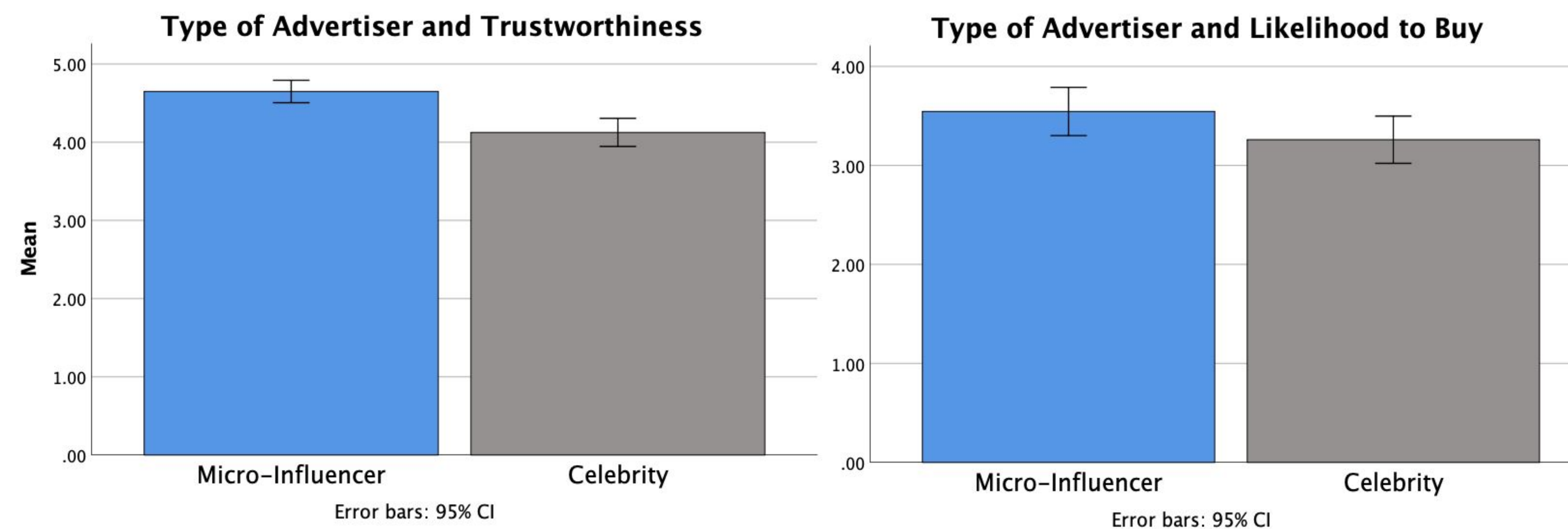
H1) Participants will rate the micro-influencers as more trustworthy and authentic than celebrities

H2) Participants will be more likely to want to purchase the products advertised by micro-influencers.

Method



Results



Participants rated the micro-influencers as more trustworthy ($M = 4.65, SD = 0.76$) than the celebrities ($M = 4.12, SD = 0.96$)
 $t(111) = -4.88, p < .001$

Participants were more likely to want to try the product advertised by micro-influencers ($M = 3.54, SD = 1.30$) rather than the products advertised by celebrities ($M = 3.26, SD = 1.27$)
 $t(111) = -2.65, p < .001$

Discussion

These results suggest that advertisements may be more effective when posted by micro-influencers rather than celebrities, and that micro-influencers successfully cultivate a sense of trust and authenticity with their followers.

Limitations

- Sample skewed towards younger population
- No behavioral measures

Future Directions

- Within-subjects study with identical materials but altered numbers of followers.
- Perceived photo modification - will participants be able to tell if a photo has been modified when it is a micro-influencer VS celebrity?

References

- Global Web Index (2019). *Social Media Flagship Report*.
- Main, S. (2017). *Micro-Influencers Are More Effective With Marketing Campaigns Than Highly Popular Accounts*.
- The Nielsen Company. (2017). *Case Study: The Evolution of Video*.

Acknowledgments

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