Parasocial Relationships with Influencers on YouTube: Relatability and Trust as Predictors and Manifestations of PSI and PSR

Carolina Perez
PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH INFLUENCERS ON YOUTUBE: RELATABILITY AND TRUST AS PREDICTORS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF PSI AND PSR

By

CAROLINA PEREZ

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Carolina defended this thesis on April 7, 2021.

The members of the supervisory committee were:

Sindy Chapa
Professor Directing Thesis

Arienne Ferchaud
Committee Member

Juliann Cortese
Committee Member

The Graduate School has verified and approved the above-named committee members and certifies that the thesis has been approved in accordance with university requirements.
I dedicate this thesis, its work, and its fulfillment to my parents, who always strove for me to pursue an education and get a master’s degree.
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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore the impact that YouTube as a social media platform has in facilitating Parasocial Interactions (PSI) and Parasocial Relationships (PSR) between audience members and YouTuber influencers. This thesis looks at the antecedents of PSR, and the ways trust and relatability impact PSR. This study also investigates the interplay between PSI and PSR and their effect on audiences is explored through testing for these phenomena (PSI and PSR) separately to uncover how the resulting phenomena compare among audience members. The purpose of this study is to gauge whether or not a strong parasocial relationship manifests itself as a result of trust and relatability working together. An online survey was administered to 121 college-aged participants, PSI and PSR were measured separately across participants’ favorite YouTube influencers. Later with these YouTubers in mind, participants were assessed on their relatability and trust levels with the YouTuber. Three Hypotheses and one Research Question were presented. Following the analysis, it was found that relatability and trust were both significant predictors of PSR, relatability and trust were both strongly correlated with one another, and that trust was more significant predictor of PSR than relatability was. In addition to this, the instances of PSI and PSR among the sample population were explored and tested for differences in their means and consistency of measurement. Finally, results were tested across gender and ethnicity for further interpretation. This research presents significant findings suggesting that further research of the predictors of PSI and PSR are needed, as well as more reliable validation measures for these phenomena. This research also hints that further regulation of messages from these YouTube influencers to ensure ethical communication is expressed for their trusting audiences.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of Web 2.0 and the structural and cultural shifts happening in our society, the pervasiveness of influencers has not only come to dominate the social media realms, but interpersonal ones as well, as we have come to relate to and see these influencers as close and intimate friends of ours, whom we can trust (Berryman & Kavka, 2017). All in one, they have become the celebrities that the consumers envy, the people some aspire to emulate, and the friends that people put their faith in for [seemingly] sincere recommendations that could benefit their livelihood. Through Parasocial Relationships with these YouTube Influencers, a term first described by Horton and Wohl, which describes the perceived bond and understanding an audience member has with a performer, through repeated interactions (through repeated PSI’s) that are one-sided in nature (1956). With the strengthening of these bonds, these parasocial relationships can start to feel as intimate and as intense as face-to-face relationships (Perse and Rubin, 1989), mimicking and functioning similar to interpersonal relationships (Kim & Song, 2016). This can have significant effects on young and impressionable audiences.

While the effect of influencers’ interactions on audience consumer behavior has been heavily accounted for in research, there is still debate in what exactly is at the root of this effect. That is why this thesis aims to fill a gap in the research literature by assessing the predictors of Parasocial Relationship (PSR) phenomenon. This thesis will be exploring the link between PSR’s with Influencers, specifically with those on YouTube, for the unique way in which users tend to bond with these specific influencers (Berryman & Kavka, 2017).
The literature states that a parasocial relationship (PSR) is the perceived interpersonal relationships on the part of an audience member with a mass media persona (Perse & Rubin, 1989) in this media context, the influencer serves as the performer. Parasocial relationships between the social media influencers and consumers impart trust between brands and the influencer puts trust in (i.e., Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity, & Luoma-aho, 2020; Breves, et al., 2019; Daniel, et al., 2018; Ballatin & Martin, 2005). As indicated in parasocial relationship literature, it is the disclosure of the personal anecdotes that are shared face-to-face that creates trust (Wellman, 2020; Breves et al., 2019), and this exchange is commonplace in YouTube videos. Nevertheless, a gap in the literature was identified in understanding users’ trust and relatability and the ways they predict parasocial relationship formation. This thesis aims to explore those antecedents and their effects.

Using the framework of Parasocial Relationship Theory, this thesis will investigate how parasocial relationship with YouTubers, affects perceived influencer’s trustworthiness and relatability, and how these variables aid in the strengthening of a PSR. The expected contributions of this investigation are rich in terms of theory and aim to aid in the understanding of Parasocial relationships and contribute to current research.

Therefore, this thesis aims to explore the impact that the YouTube, as a social media platform, has in facilitating Parasocial Interactions and Relationships audience members and influencers. The interplay between Parasocial Interactions and Parasocial Relationship and the effect it has on audiences’ perception of a YouTube influencer. The purpose of this study is to gauge whether or not a strong Parasocial relationship can be better predicted by relatability or trust with an influencer. A secondary aim of this study, is to compare the expressions of PSI and PSR through the relatability and trust values to see if there is a significant difference in the
outcomes of these variables on audiences members. These two phenomena, which research still oftentimes confusingly measures similarly, or on the same measures, will be explored as two distinct interactions, in an effort to gauge the different ways trust and relatability manifest through both dependent variables (PSI and PSR). This is explored through a research question. Additionally, the role that relatability and trustworthiness have on building Parasocial Relations with a YouTuber influencers is studied.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Background: Influencers, A Tale as Old as Time

The significance and impact of Influencers can date back to the royal palaces of 16th century France. The French monarchs set the standard for dress; the nobility would use royalty as examples to mirror to elevate their own status, by imitating what royalty wore and what was illustrated in their portraits (Gray, 2019). Thanks to the increasing prominence of technology and social media, the conditions for influencers to grow and gain prominence were made possible (Sermon & Sims, 2020). While today's influencers look different, their essence remains virtually the same. Sermon and Sims also emphasize that new modes of communication facilitating information flow between bloggers and followers, has also paved the road for influencers to flourish (2020).

However, who classifies as an influencer can vary widely. Most tend to define influencers in terms of their job title. Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, and Freberg define Social Media Influencers (SMI’s) as representing a new type of identity, a third-party endorser, shaping audience’s attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of social media (2011). While it is important to understand the way that influencers utilize social media within the context of their marketplace value, it is also imperative to consider influencers as more than being labeled solely by their profession, as their influence did not begin with products originally. That is why a more encompassing definition is necessary in fully understanding the place of influencers in the minds of their followers. A more holistic definition is provided by an influencer-marketing firm, which defines an influencer simply as a user generated-content creator with a significant social
media following (Media Kix, 2020). Simple, yet encompassing, this definition serves to identify what all influencers do, whether they create promotional media or not: create content. Media Kix further defines influencers as individuals who create and drive social conversation, engagement, and trends, which then provides them opportunities to work with brands and create sponsored content (2020). This definition encapsulates the complexities attached to the term, detached from the limiting perspective of the more traditional definitions, and thus, is the definition guiding this study.

**YouTube Influencers**

To begin talking about YouTube influencers, the evolution of YouTube as a platform must first be discussed. With its humble beginnings as a platform trying to remove barriers to video sharing and uploading, YouTube has grown significantly since its inception in 2005 (Burgess and Green, 2009). This transition from everyday user platform into the ‘virtual village’ is now where now amateurs, professionals, and brands all come together (Kim, 2012). A major reason for the development of YouTube into the platform that it is today, stems from its acquisition from Google and how they were competing with other competing platforms of entertainment content (Cunningham, Craig, & Silver, 2016). A significant reason for why influencers were able to thrive on such a platform, was not only the simplicity of the platform, but the liberating space created by this platform through the inherently creative media that is user generated content (UGC) all in conjunction with technological shifts (Kim, 2012).

This notion of YouTube influencers also remains congruent with the previous definition provided, which constitutes an influencer as creators of their own UGC, and thus are able to acquire their following. In addition to this, the social nature of YouTube as prescribed by its
status as a media sharing platform, as well as its features that allow for social interaction like liking and commenting, have allowed it to develop into the social scene it is today (Van Dijck, 2013) rather than just an information based one. For this reason, YouTube

**Parasocial Interactions (PSI)**

Scholars have explored what keeps users coming back for more, and how the intense trust for influencers is produced (i.e. Reinikainen, Munnukka, Maity, & Luoma-aho, 2020; Breves, et al., 2019; Daniel, et al., 2018; Ballatin & Martin, 2005). In order to understand the role of trust and relatability users have with influencers, the role of parasocial relationships must first be defined to aid in understanding the feedback loop between audience and influencers. To better understand parasocial relationships, it is first imperative to understand parasocial interactions as a whole. The Parasocial Interaction Theory (PSI) was first defined by explaining a seeming face to face interaction between performers and spectators (Horton and Wohl, 1956). It is a seemingly face to face interaction, because there is a sensation that the communication is direct, even through it is one sided throughout the entire interaction.

The PSI theory indicates that through a PSI with performers, audience members can perceive the relationship as similar to one with a friend or counselor, despite the one-sided nature of the relationship (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Horton and Wohl also claimed that audience members feel as if they know the performer in a similar fashion as an individual knows a friend, understanding his or her varying interpretations of his/her gestures, speech, and his/her manner in various situations (1956). In the case of YouTube influencers, the various contexts of their generated content are what prescribe meaning to their audiences.
In the PSI analogy, performers are also said to aid in their presentation to their audiences (whether intentionally or not) by replicating a face-to-face encounter with their message construction and presentation (Horton & Wohl, 1956). This is similar to what is have done on YouTube (Johnston, 2017). Although, this sole representation imbues a sense of a seemingly direct communication, Horton and Wohl explained that when a viewer is alone in front of a screen, and a performer looks through the screen and speaks out direct to it, this action further simulates this intimacy of a one-to-one interaction with the audience (1956). This interaction is strikingly similar to that of YouTube bloggers who sit in front of their camera and speak to it as if there was a real person behind it.

Parasocial Relationship (PSR)

In the same way that friendships can grow stronger through repeated exposure and a deeper understanding of an individual (Fehr, 1996), the same applies to Parasocial Relationships (PSR’s). Therefore, through repeated exposure to the social media influencer’s content, audiences strengthen their parasocial bond or parasocial relationship (PSR) with the performer (Horton & Wohl, 1956); who in turn believe they “know” and “understand” the influencer on a deeper level (Berryman & Kavka, 2017). This unique “knowing” and “understanding” that the users come to form results in leading them toward similar attitudes and behaviors that happen in interpersonal relations (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Therefore, it is expected that things like copying the performer’s gestures and mannerisms, to appreciating -- and at times-- adopting similar values and beliefs are created as them can all stem from a strong PSR (Horton and Wohl 1956). Within the context of social media, this may feel as though you have an interpersonal relationship with that particular stranger, for the purpose of this study: the influencer.
YouTube is platform rich in opportunity for PSR’s to grow. YouTube influencers have the advantage of utilizing a video platform, and video is a medium through which parasocial bonds can become stronger (Kurtin, O'Brien, Roy, & Dam, 2018). YouTubers also have the advantage that in conjunction with this video medium, they often engage in direct address (looking directly at the camera simulating a direct conversation between them and the viewer) which helps simulate more trustworthiness (Johnston, 2017). This direct address enhances the already held perception by the audience that the communication is reciprocal in nature.

**Relatability and Trust in Parasocial Relationships**

Influencer content appeals to audiences as it is inherently catered to a specific market with specific interests (Labrecque, 2014). More importantly, though, influencers portray seemingly ordinary individuals, given their transparent and clear rise to fame, almost implying that anyone can become their own brand and achieve what they have (Khamis, Ang, & Welling, 2017). This extra level of relatability perpetuates a sense of trustworthiness toward influencers than traditional celebrities might not produce (Reinikainen et al., 2020). So, it is said influencer’s product reviews have more weight on an audience’s purchasing behavior that celebrity endorsers do (Schouten, Janssen & Verspaget, 2020). Schouten et al. have even found in their investigations that reviews done by seemingly ordinary people, such as these relatable influencers, are perceived as more credible than celebrity endorsements (2020).

Relatability of the source or spokesperson increases when the source has the ability to sympathize with viewers (Schouten et al., 2020). This usually occurs when they seem more at ease with the ordinary people (Schouten et al., 2020). Contrary, it is said that consumers could be skeptical of celebrity endorsements, dislike the ad and the brand, backfiring the likelihood of
intention to purchase the product (Bailey, 2007). However, the relatability consumers have with the social media influencer increases brand trust and decrease skepticism (Bailey, 2007). This strong sense of relatability with an influencer and trust in their recommendations arises because of strong bonds that audiences can sometimes form with influencers by means of PSR (Eyal, & Dailey, 2012). For this reason, trust and relatability were investigated at predictors of PSR for this study.

Social Media Influencers versus Celebrity Endorsement Similar Effect, Different Roots

Influencers are not necessarily celebrities. Even though they can be perceived as them or even be celebrities who also create content in order to communicate with their fans following (Agnihotri & Bhattacharya, 2020). It is very important to always remain cognizant they are content generators first, and that is how to truly distinguish them. While it can happen that one can be both an influencer and a celebrity, the key distinction highlighted in the aforementioned definition of an influencer is the element of creating your own content (Media Kix, 2020).

Another fundamental difference between celebrities and influencers is the methods through which their careers flourish; while traditional celebrities can have prominence on social media, influencers built their careers upon their online presence and were unknown to the greater public before their online engagement on their social platform (Schouten et al., 2020). An interesting example is the case of Kim Kardashian who is mistakenly called an influencer. Kim is called an influencer given her trend setting tendencies and her vast quantity of followers, yet her rise to fame did not burgeon as a result of producing their own, unscripted, user-generated content; instead, her fame came from her family’s status and her success on reality television, and then later through her social media presence. Whatever influence she has amassed, occurred because of her previous popularity created outside social media. This would exclude her from being
defined as an influencer for this study; her influence did not come through her own content-generated efforts.

Influencers attract and grow their audiences by engaging with followers on various social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter and YouTube (Wellman 2020; Sokolva & Kefi, 2020; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Arora, Bansal, Kandpal, Aswani, & Dwivedi, 2019); Rome, 2020; Coates et al, 2020; Sokolova & Perez, 2021) They share content that comes from their various interests, but usually remaining and catering to the interests of their followers within one or few specific niches (Chapple and Cownie, 2017). So, to categorize influencers the two things to consider are: does the individual in question create their own content? -- and secondly-- do they have a sway with an audience in a particular niche built upon an intentional connection, if so then as defined in this study, they are an influencer (Chapple and Cownie, 2017).

To further explain this phenomenon Hearn and Schoenhiff explain that, “the Social Media Influencer (SMI) works to generate a form of “celebrity” capital by cultivating as much attention as possible and crafting an authentic “personal brand” via social networks, which can subsequently be used by companies and advertisers for consumer outreach (2016)”. Jin, Muqaddam, and Ryu confirm that influencers can be, and oftentimes are, considered celebrities because of the similar ways in which they are perceived and trusted by their audiences (2019). This does not mean though, that all celebrities are influencers. Therefore, while SMI’s interact in a similar way with audiences as celebrities, they primarily build their own brands through the continued use of their own platforms and narrative creation through their content, instead of the fame attributed to them off other endeavors.
This distinction is important because of the ways influencers are coming to dominate popular culture and the marketing sphere (Gray, 2019). Recent findings indicate that 19 percent of American consumers have purchased something because of an influencer compared to the 10 percent of people reporting they bought something because of a celebrity (Gray, 2019). Other studies have also found that influencer endorsement in marketing can have a significant impact on brand attitudes and purchasing behaviors, greater than that of celebrities (Schouten et al., 2020). Consumer purchasing behavior is enhanced by the brand’s ability to gain and foster trust by means of a parasocial relationship with social media influencers (SMIs). A parasocial relationship, as will later be discussed, is crucial in forming relationships with the brand, because it simulates a consumer trust formed in a face-to-face relationships and interactions (Wellman, 2020; Breves et al., 2019). With this knowledge in mind, it was deemed important by the researcher to further investigate how parasocial relationships form.

**Relationship between Influencer and Brand Trust, Attitudes, and Behavior**

In order to better understand the way this process works; it must first be understood what Influencer marketing is and how it had become relevant to social media today. Influencer marketing, as defined by Forbes, can be defined as a form of marketing that utilizes the relationship and audience of a key influential individual to communicate with a specific audience in order to expand your message reach (Hall, 2015). It is basically using the already existing platform of an social media influencer (SMI) to better leverage a product or service in a more appealing way. For this reason, influencer marketing and appeals serve as the modern electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM), since we trust and respond well to people with which we identify (Farmer, 2019). It is akin to endorsement at the smallest and most personal level (Hall, 2015) as
this e-WOM operates in an identical way to the way the traditional WOM and can in face-to-face relationships; it can even circumvent some of the limitations of in-person WOM (Jalilvand, Esfahani, & Samiei, 2011). This is due to the ways eWOM can have a wider reach from its use on the internet and because it is not limited to private one-on-one conversations (Jalilvand et al., 2011). This is one of the many factors that have led to influencers having a more prominent role in modern marketing strategies. (Impact on e-wom on attitudes and behavior)

As the landscape of marketing has changed over time, brands have been quick to adapt under pressure of being left behind. So much so, that it did not take long for marketers to hop on the influencer marketing train. With the advent of Web 2.0, also came this now need for information seeking from consumers, one of the various ways to do this was through social media, with influencers (Karp, 2016). Marketers understand the important levels of influencer marketing hierarchies and adjust their strategies now to become more competent at communicating through influencers (to their audience), and thus reaching their target market (Harridge-March & Quinton, 2009). This can be seen through the strong attachment and loyalty followers feel with an influencer (Tsiotsou, 2015) as well as the intense trust felt with and influencers, this same trust oftentimes transferring over the brands influencers rave about (Reinikainen et al., 2020).

In addition to the fact that influences opinions of brands can readily become or shape the influencers of their following, influencers are better perceived among followers regardless of promotional practices. Research has shown that influencers perceived to be very sincere by their following, had a significant role in shaping their attitudes about a product (Lee & Eastin, 2020). Even though the importance of influencer marketing in our modern world is commonly acknowledged, there is a lack of research in this field in fully understanding how these
relationships manifest at micro levels and across platforms (Farmer, 2019). That is why it is important to understand how these relationships take hold of consumers’ perceptions, in terms of who they trust, and the effect it has on consumers’ attitudes and behaviors.

While these findings are accepted and widely known, these findings relate to the way PRS’s manifest themselves within the context of Instagram only (Lou & Yuan, 2019), (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017), (Schouten, et al., 2020). The very nature of YouTube as a platform though, the emergence of lifestyle vlogging, and the sheer greater length of YouTube videos compared to Instagram posts -- all contributing measure that can lead to increased PSR--merits that research be done specifically on the ways PSR’s manifest themselves differently across YouTube influencers and their audiences. This study will explore the way PSR’s manifest themselves between YouTube influencers and their audiences, and in turn affect the brand trust, attitudes, and purchase intentions of their audiences.

Influencers Utilizing Social Networking Sites and the Effect on Parasocial Relationships

While these PSR’s, and the subsequent underpinnings with the performer, which will be defined for the purposes of this research as the influencer (their performance being their online presence on social media), develop in a one-sided fashion based on the perspective of the audience (Wellman, 2020). In turn, an influencer can help with the relational maintenance and development of these relationships, with little effort of their own, as audience members support the majority of relational maintenance (Wellman, 2020). Perceived similarity (otherwise known as relatibility) is one of the key components through which parasocial bonds intensify on social networking sites (Tsai and Men, 2017). In addition to relatibility, trustworthiness, and self-disclosure also play a moderating factor in the formation and strengthening of PSR’s (Chung, S.,
& Cho, H. 2017). This elucidates the significant role that influencers contribute not only to their own identity formation that attracts followers to them, but also that keeps the audience returning. In a market where relationship marketing is in a period of resurgence, as customers demand an exchange of value rather than just a product (Payne & Frow, 2017), these interactions between influencer and audience can prove monumental to their success, and that of brands. In chapter 3, theories of parasocial interaction, social identity, and two-step flow theory of communication will be used to explain the effect of such relationships.
CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the impact and the relationship that parasocial relationships bear on YouTube influencer trust and relatability, and consequently the audience members’ intent to purchase, the reasoning for such attachments and behaviors must be discussed. Through the scope of Parasocial Interaction Theory, Social Identity Theory, and Two-Step Flow, Theories of Communication, the hypotheses for this study are developed.

Parasocial Interaction Theory

Parasocial Interaction theory describes the phenomenon where people engage in interactions with media personalities in a way where they feel an illusion of a conversation or some sort of response is perceived (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Despite the non-reciprocal nature of the phenomena, it still remains nothing more than that, an illusion. While some scholars have come to interpret both Parasocial Interaction (PSI) and Parasocial Relationship (PSR) as the same thing (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985; Grant, Guthrie, & Ball-Rokeach 1991), contemporary scholarship distinguishes PSI and PSR.

PSI is defined by Horton and Wohl as “one-sided, nondialectical, controlled by the performer, and not susceptible of mutual development” (1956). PSI’s are fleeting and the feeling of an exchange last only as long as the viewer is engaged and watching the performer, unlike a PSR which can endure past the interaction. This is because PSR’s operate similar to interpersonal relationships, only built in one’s head (Giles, 2002). A PSR also is more involved than a PSI, as they usually have spectators (in this case, followers) engaging in relational maintenance and committed to continuing interactions with the performer (Eyal, & Dailey,
The same way you can miss seeing a friend, you can hope to see a person you have PSR with.

Giles asserts that this distinction is necessary since PSI only happens through viewing a performer and feeling as though you are having an exchange within a single exposure to media, whereas PSR manifests through a perceived, maintained relationship more involved in nature (2002). For this reason, this study will be assessing parasocial interactions and parasocial relationships as two distinct variables. One is akin to the exchanges we have strangers passing by, like those people you click with at coffee shops, and the other is more like those co-workers whose company you enjoy and wish you know more about.

**Social Identity Theory**

Social Identity Theory explains that human beings innately wants to belong and thus associate themselves with members of group to guide identity formation an in-group and an outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Hogg, & van Knippenberg, 2003). Social identity theory thus asserts that when people interact with others, they will subconsciously side with those they consider as part of their in-group (Billig, 1976). In the context of Social identity theory, people feel the need to feel connected with members of a group, and thus people will relate to members within their in-group. It has even been shown that sometime in-group identification can drive consumer behavior (Wang, 2017). This process occurs in interpersonal interactions, instantaneously and subconsciously (Billig, 1976).

As stated in the literature, relatability of the source is the ability to sympathize with consumers and is found when they (influencers) seem more at ease with the ordinary people than celebrities (Schouten, et al., 2020)). Previous studies also suggest relatability perpetuates a sense
of trustworthiness toward influencers (Reinikainen et al., 2020). Based on the Parasocial Relationship framework and the Parasocial Interaction and Social Identity theories, it can be used assumed that influencers’ relatability is a key driver in the PRS. That is, the parasocial and interaction theories support the content that an engagement between the influencer and the follower is needed (Eyal, & Dailey, 2012), the social identity suggest that in-group identification is part of one’s need. Subsequently, it is expected that a relationship between influencer’s relatability and PRS exist. That is, it is estimated that individuals with high level of relatability, or affinity for influencers, will be more prone to engage in a PSR. Therefore, the following hypothesis is presented:

**H1:** Relatability with a YouTuber positively affects user’s perceived PSR

The literature in parasocial interactions and relationships suggests that the increased affinity will aid in heightening the strength of a PSR (Hartmann, Stuke, & Daschmann, 2008). Furthermore, Reinikainen and colleagues claimed PSR’s allows influencers’ trustworthiness to grow as the relationship grows (Reinikainen et al., 2020). This means the higher the level or PSR the higher the level of trustworthiness. Yet, the literature in relatability suggests that influencer’s trustworthiness affects individuals’ likelihood to relate with the source (Jin, et. al, 2019). Therefore, it is assumed that influencer’s trustworthiness affects PSR mediated by relatability, while it can be affected as well by the PSR. Thus, the following hypothesis are proposed:

**H2:** Trustworthiness of YouTuber positively affects perceived PSR

**H3:** Influencer’ trustworthiness positively relates to user’s relatability with the YouTube influencer
Finally, since it is known that PSI’s are one-time occurrences and PSR’s happen continually off the course of repeated exposure and later form into relationships (Slater, Ewoldsen, & Woods, 2018). A research question that will be investigated through the course of this study will be:

**RQ** Do User’s engaged in a PSR will show higher levels of YouTuber trustworthiness and or relatability than users who engage in a PSI? Is this because the stronger nature of the relationship, or because trust is predictor of PSR?

This is investigated because, previous literature discusses PSR, trust, and relatability together, and since it is also known that PSI’s are one-time occurrences; these left researchers wondering if the independent variables would manifest differently among the two dependent variables. After all, the dependent variables are two distinct phenomena (Giles, 2002), so they should be investigated as such.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology

This study was quantitatively researched, through an online survey. Since there is already theory and measures to describe the phenomenon within this study, a quantitative approach is well-suited framework for this study’s deductive approach (Lundstedt et al., 1998). The survey was created to gauge the predictors of a PSR and better understand the innerworkings of these relationships and interactions, specifically through the lens of relatability and trust. Already developed and validated scales were used in the questionnaire. In addition, questions about participants’ socio-demographics were included to measure the individual characteristics of the participants. Finally, a validation check on questions was included in the questionnaire to measure the reliability of the participants.

An application and the research protocol were submitted to the FSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of the study. A consent form was scripted to inform about the purpose of the study, participant’s rights and researcher’s contact information. See Appendix B & C. Once the IRB was approved (see Appendix C), the data collection was initiated.

Instrument

To accurately assess the four variables relevant to this study (PSI/PSR, influencer trust, influencer relatability), established and reliable scales were used to help construct and inform the survey questions. As discussed previously, participants were measured for PSI and for PSR in regard to their perceptions about their favorite YouTube Influencer. To measure for PSI, a scale from Kim, Kang, & Lee (2018) was used to measure for participant’s PSI with the influencer.
This scale tests for Parasocial Interaction using 8 different items, adapted to measure how users experience parasocial interactions with an individual through their presence in a video. While Kim et al. used a 5-point Likert scale, to increase variability with data, the scale was adapted to a 7-point one. In order to measure PSR, the scale developed by Hartmann, Stuke, & Daschmann was used (2008). This scale was also be adapted to a 7-point scale, in order to be consistent with the rest of the measures in the study. Additionally, because Hartmann et al.’s measure was used to test the parasocial relationships with racecar drivers (2008), the language was adapted to measure the impact of YouTube influencer.

To test for relatability between influencers and audiences a scale testing perceived similarity through the Audience-Persona Interaction Scale, developed by Auter & Palmgreen (2000) was used. A 6-item factor for identification was used to measure influencer relatability for this study. Although originally it was tested on a 5-point scale, this measure was converted to a 7-point scale to maintain consistency with the other constructs on the questionnaire. To test for YouTube influencer trustworthiness, an adapted endorser’s trustworthiness scale by Roobina Ohanian was used (1990). This 5-item scale was also adapted to a 7-point scale and gauged the viewer’s perception of the influencer’s trustworthiness as endorsers of products and brands.

**Sampling and Data Collection**

This study utilized a non-probabilistic convenience sample technique. Participants were recruited through SONA systems; a widely used platform on colleges and universities which allows for student participation in scientific research. Thus, the sample frame were college-aged students from Florida State University. College-aged (Gen-Z and Millennial) students are the proper population for this study as they comprise a major portion of the viewing audience for
YouTube influencers (Droesch, B., 2020). The data collection was performed during the spring of 2021 during a period of 10 days.

Participants were first asked to describe their favorite influencer following the provided definition outlined earlier in this study that an influencer was a person who acquired a significant platform by producing their own user generated content for the exchange of ideas (Media Kix 2020). This was done to aid in getting them in the mindset of how they feel about this YouTuber, which would help them in answering questions about their PSR, with their favorite influencer as well as their levels of relatability and trustworthiness with this YouTuber. After answering their favorite influencer, participants were asked about their interactions and relationships with this influencer by answering questions from the PSI (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2018) and PSR (Hartmann, Stuke, & Daschmann, 2008) scales. Participants also answered questions assessing how relatable they found the influencer through the Audience-Persona-interaction scale by Auter & Palmgreen (2000) and how trustworthy they found them through the Credibility Scale developed by Ohanian (1990).

Sample Characteristics

A total of 143 responses were collected. After checking through the validation measure and eliminating the invalid responses, 121 responses were cleared for analysis. This sample of 121 participants consisted of 13.2% male respondents (16), and 86.8% female respondents (105). The majority of respondents were age 18-22, corresponding to the 94.2% of the sample. The age groups of the remaining participants were aged 23-29 (5.8% of the sample). The racial and ethnic background of participants broken down as: 70.2% Non-Hispanic White, 16.5% Hispanic, 6.6% African American, 4.1% Asian, and 2.5% Other.
Validation of the Measures

To validate the scales and measure for reliability, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Cronbach’s Alpha’s were conducted for all four measures: PSI, PSR, Trust, and Relatability. Cronbach’s alphas were run to measure the reliability of the study as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994; whereas EFA was conducted to validate the dimensionality of the scales adapted for YouTube influencers as suggested in the literature (Hoteling, 1957).

Parasocial Interaction and Parasocial Relationship (PSR)

Parasocial interaction was included as exploratory measure to answer the research question (RQ1). First, an Exploratory Factor Analysis was run. The 8-point scale (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2018) was analyzed using Principal Component method with a varimax rotation to cross-validate the dimensionality of the scale (Jolliffe & Morgan, 1992). The results of the EFA indicated that there were three components being measures across the PSI scale (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2018). Using an item elimination criterion with a loading cutoff point of .30, three items were eliminated. These items were removed from the PSI scale due to low loading levels that were below the .30 desired minimum cutoff point (Hair, 2009) were: “This person’s YouTube Channel shows me what They are like”, “I find this person to be likeable” and “I mostly agree with this person”. After removing these variables and repeating the EFA, results then indicated that the remaining measures were accurately describing one component. This reduction also increased the percentage of variance being explained from 39.5% to 53.6% of that data and increased the Cronbach’s alpha slightly from $\alpha = .77$ to $\alpha = .78$ following removal of those three measures. Thus, the remaining five measures were used in the data analysis (See Tables 1 and 2 for reference).
In order to validate PSR, the scale adapted from Hartmann, Stuke, & Daschmann was used (2008), the 10-item scale were factor analyzed using Principal component methods with a varimax rotation. The results indicated that the scale had two components describing 45.8%. Items with low loadings and cross loading were eliminated. Thus, the following items were eliminated: “If there were a story about this person on TV or in an article I would watch/and/or read it”, “I would like to meet this person in real life”, I admire this person for their achievements”. Then, the items were analyzed to ensure validity of the measure. The scale was found to describe the data along one component and now the items were describing 57.7% of the variance, above the .50 recommended (Hair, 2009). Further, a Cronbach’s analysis was tested. The results indicated a good and reliable scale ($\alpha = .86$), with an alpha above the recommended level of .70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Finally, 7 items were used to measure PSR, and can all be seen in Table 4 and Appendix A.

Later an Exploratory Factor Analysis was run with both scales, (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2018) (Hartmann, Stuke, & Daschmann, 2008) and was analyzed using Principal Component method with a varimax rotation to cross-validate the dimensionality of the scale (The results of the EFA indicated that there were four components and 6 cross loading items reflected, indicating these items were not consistently testing the same measure.

**YouTube Influencer’s Relatability**

Relatability was measured using a 7-item scale (Auter & Palmgreen, 2000). The seven items were analyzed using Principal Components with a Varimax rotation method to cross validate the dimensionality of the scale. Once again, the scale showed to be accurately measuring the intended dimension. The items’ loadings ranged between .48 to .58, and the total of the
variance explained was 57.13%, above the .50 recommended minimum, (Hair, 2009). Further, the Cronbach’s analysis test was performed to test for reliability. The results showed an alpha of .84, above the minimum criterion of .70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). In sum, the 7-item scale reached the internal validity and were all used to measure the relatability variable.

**Trust toward the YouTube Influencer**

Trust was measured using a 5-item scale (Ohanian, 1990). The five items were analyzed using Principal Components and Varimax rotation to cross validate the dimensionality of the scale. The results showed one-dimensionality with loadings ranging between .76 to .86. The total of the variance explained was 65.58% above the minimum .50 suggested in the literature (Hair, 2009). Thus, the Principal Component Analysis validated the use of 5 items used in this study to measure trust. Subsequently, a Cronbach’s analysis showed a reliable scale with an alpha of .87, above the minimum criterion of .70 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Thus, the scale by Ohanian (1990), was used without modification.
CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This thesis proposed to measure the antecedents of Parasocial Relationship (PSR), through exploring relatability and trust as determinant factors. In addition to this, the difference between PSR and PSI was also explored. Thus, three hypotheses and one research questions were presented, and will be analyzed in this section. To test the impact that relatability and trust have on PSR, a Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was performed. Multiple Linear Regression analysis were appropriate to measure the determinants which could explain PSR (Hair, 2009). To answer the research question regarding the differences between PSR and PSI, a Pearson Correlation Matrix was used. Additionally, to explore the participant groups differences Independent T-tests were performed. Finally, to explain differences among PSI and PSR a Pearson Correlation and a paired samples t-test was run. The following sections present the results.

Hypotheses Testing Results

Multiple Linear Regression analyses were conducted to investigate the relationships between relatability and trust on PSR, and the weight each variable had in predicting PSR. The Correlation test was run to assess the correlations of the different variables across PSR and PSI measures. Finally, the Independent t-tests were run to explore the difference in means across different demographic factors like sex and racial identity with relatability and trust measures.

The Effect of Relatability and Trust toward the YouTube Influencer

Hypothesis 1 stated that relatability with a YouTube influencer would positively affect the perceived PSR with that influencer. A Multiple Linear Regression test was run to determine the
predictive power of relatability and trust on PSR. The results of the regression test indicated that relatability is indeed a significant predictor of PSR, \( b = .20, t(119) = 62.47, p < .05 \). Overall, Relatability was found to explain a significant portion of the variance of PSR scores. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is supported. See Table 5.

Hypothesis 2 stated that trust with a YouTuber would positively affect PSR. The regression analysis suggested that trust significantly predicted a portion of variance with PSR measures in the data, \( b = .54, t (119) = 6.55, p < .01 \). These results also indicated that trust explained 54% of PSR, such that \( R^2 = .44, F (1,119) = 85.37, \text{ and } p < .01 \). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported (See Table 6).

**Relationship between Trust and Relatability**

Hypothesis 3 stated that influencer trustworthiness would positively relate to user’s relatability with a YouTuber. The Regression analysis indicated relatability is a significant predictor of trustworthiness such that \( b = .45, t (119) = 7.11, p < .01 \). Relatability, it was found, significantly predicted a segment of the data with its relationship to trust, where \( R^2 = .30, F (1,119) = 50.66, p < .01 \). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported (See Table 7).

**Trust and PSR Versus PSI**

The research question presented in this study inquired about the relationship between trust and PSI as well the relationship between trust and PSR. A Pearson’s correlations test was run to test for the relationship among the variables of PSI, PSR, relatability, and trust. According to the correlations test, it was found that trust was significantly correlated with PSR with \( r = .65, p < .01 \) and with PSI results yielding \( r = .44, p < .01 \). Comparing these \( r \) values, this shows that there is a higher correlation of trust between users engaging in a PSR than those engaging in PSI.
suggests that trust can significantly predict PSR with greater certainty than relatability can when compared to its impact on PSI. (See Table 7.)

**Additional Findings**

Additionally, independent t-tests were run to explore group differences across variables. Independent t-tests were run between gender (male and females), and ethnic groups (Non-Hispanic Whites and Non-Whites). Independent t-test method was appropriate to compare two groups as this test determines whether or not two means are significantly different from one another.

**Gender Differences**

First, a t-test was run to compare males versus females across the three variables: trust relatability and PSR. It was found there was not a significant difference between the development of PSR between females and males, such that t(119) = -1.00, p = .30.

**Difference between Ethnic Groups**

This study measure ethnicity by asking participants to identify with one out of six ethnic groups (Whites, Hispanics, African American, Asian American, and those who had selected “Other”, for this category. The representation of Non-Whites and Whites were the only two ethnic groups with a sufficient sample size to explore for group difference. Thus, independent t-test was appropriate to compare these two groups. The test was run comparing mean differences across the three variables: Trust, relatability and PSR. No significant difference was found when comparing PSR and trust. However, there was a significant difference when comparing relatability between Non-Whites (M = 4.82, SD = .81) and Whites (M = 4.43, SD = 1.15)
participants t(119)= -2.126, p = < .05. The findings showed that levels of relatability are significantly higher among Non-Whites than Whites. This means that relatability can be a more important predictor of PSR for Non-Whites than it is for Non-Hispanic Whites.

**PSI Versus PSR**

This study supports the assumption that PSR and PSI are not the same, yet there are highly correlated. To observe the difference between these two measures a paired samples t-test was comparison t-test was run to compare the differences in the means of the two variables of PSI and PSR. The result showed that the difference between PSI (M = 4.80 , SD = 1.13 ) and PSR (M = 5.94 , SD = .75) was statistically significant (t(120) = -15.18, p <.001). The correlation matrix run across variables also indicate that PSI and PSR related differently to relatability (r = .40) at p <.001 and (r = .50) at p <.001 respectively. The same differences were found for correlation measures across trust for PSI (r = .44) at p <.001 and for PSR (r = .65) at p <.001 (See Table 7 for further information).
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Theoretical Contributions

There has been research discussing and assessing the measures that accurately describe Parasocial interaction phenomenon and how oftentimes those scales, while validated, are not precisely describing one phenomenon (Dibble, Hartmann, & Rosaen, 2016), (Giles, 2002). Because PSI and PSR are so closely related, combined with the that one was developed from the other. This study provides evidence that suggest that these two phenomena might operate in separate and distinct ways, and measures should be taken in order to treat them as such. This study measured PSR and PSI distinctly and saw significant differences in the way trust and relatability impacted both.

With Hypothesis 2 and 3 being supported, it was found that not only did trust significantly relate to PSR formation, but that trust also corresponded to relatability. The relationship found between trust and PSR, and between trust and relatability suggests that there is a certain path in which these relationships strengthen. That is, it is suggested the relationship starts with relatability with the YouTuber, then to trusting of the YouTuber, and finally, leading to an intensifying a PSR. While further research and cross-validation is needed, the evidence suggesting a stronger relationship between trust and PSR suggests a stronger connection between these two variables than between relatability and PSR. Nevertheless, the importance of relatability cannot be ignored, as it was also proven to have a statistically significant relationship with trust (H1) as well as with PSR (H3). That is, relatability is an important predictor, and more should be done to investigate the relationship between these two variables and other predictors of PSR. Relatability is also an important measure to take into account, as it was a significant
predictor of PSR, especially for Non-Whites within the sample, which prompts further investigation for PSR formation across different ethnic and racial groups.

Finally, in distinguishing the two phenomena of PSI and PSR, the findings of this study suggests that participants’ perceptions toward the variables of PSI and PSR are uneven (as observed by the paired samples t-test). For instance, if PSI were evaluated equally to PSR, then there would not be a significant different in the means. The findings are consistent with the paired samples test (see table 8). Therefore, they are both important as they each hold immense power at different interaction junctions. The power of PSI should then not be devalued, as it should be acknowledged that it reaels the viewer in instances, establishing a powerful connection with just one exposure (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Conversely, lumping PSR together with PSI undermines the valuable and enduring effects of a PSR and the crucial components it takes to build one, as well as the effort to maintain one.

In addition to this, the need for a distinction between scales measuring PSI and PSR as the findings showed a lack of reliable and valid scales to measure PSI and PSR. The results showed different correlations levels across the relationships between trust with PSI, trust with PSR, as well as between relatability with PSI, and relatability with PSR. These results implied the presence of discriminant validity between PSI and PSR, representing different measures. Furthermore, The EFA Principal Components analyses, used to validate the scales, showed both scales had to be adjusted to ensured that the items were only measuring one component. That is, to validate the scales, several issues were eliminated due to low and cross loadings. It is important to have one consistent, reliable, and validated measure for each concept, which was not found with the scales originally as show by the differences in cross loadings. Future research is needed to explore and validate the scales to measure these two phenomena.
Managerial Implications

Knowing the amount of sway that these YouTubers have with their audiences (Tsiotsou, 2015) (Schouten et al., 2020) (Reinikainen et al., 2020) further intensifies the need for young viewers to be made aware of and be protected from the varying messages delivered to them through their favorite YouTuber’s. This study stated that trust positively predicts PSR, and that a significant correlation also exists between trust and PSI. This indicates trustworthiness is an important factor when selecting influencers to endorse a product. Subsequently, it is important to recognize that a lot of faith is put into these YouTube influencers, as participants’ responses were compiled thanks to the lasting impressions, they had about influencers they have seen and followed. Practitioners should look to better regulate messages and information spread by these high-profile influencers, as they are often regarded and act as opinion leaders (Lee & Eastin, 2020; Szczurski, 2017). These influencers can have a serious impact on their audiences (Casaló, Flavián, & Ibáñez-Sánchez, 2018) therefore it is important that practitioners and law makers should regulate and enforce sponsorship and advertising policies on YouTube and influencers. That is, to enact more restrictions to ensure influencers only address their consumers ethically, by endorsing only safe products and services when they are marketing to minors.

Another point worth noting while discussing the impact these YouTubers can have on marketing, is that this far-reaching trust can sometimes backfire. Brands might look to YouTube influencers to promote their brands but must proceed with caution in doing because of the high level of trust perceived by consumers, which could even allow influencers to easily turn consumers against brands (Bravo, 2020).
Finally, relatability, as expressed in the additional findings was found to be a stronger predictor of PSR for minority consumers than for Non-Hispanic Whites. This could have to do with the fact that representation matters more in minority populations feeling valued and understood. Marketers could use this to this advantage and keep in mind in future campaigns that having someone who their target market can positively relate to can really help in boosting the reception of their messages.

**Limitations and Directions for Further Research**

This study faces limitations in that the sample comprised of a vast majority of females (105) to males (16). This invariably leads the researcher to a limited understanding of the PSR formation phenomenon, as mainly women are providing the raw data that was analyzed in this study. Therefore, future research should use a larger sample with a more equitable representation of the gender.

Another limitation is the disparity among the ethnic representation across groups presented in the study. Most of the respondents identified as Non-Hispanic White (85) as opposed to those who identified with any other ethnic groups (36). Future research should use a quota sampling to secure an equal representation of ethnic groups. Given the evidence in the findings which indicated relatability was significant different between Non-Hispanic Whites and Non-White users like African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and other individuals not identifying as White. These findings raise a concern and a need for future research that aims at fully understanding the effect of ethnicity in the relationship between trust and PSR, and relatability and PSR.
Another limitation was the sample technique. The sample was limited to a convenience sample using a student’s-based sample frame. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized. Future studies should replicate the study in a different geographical location or nationwide with a more heterogenous representation of the population.

In addition, the findings of this study do not relate to a specific type of influencer or product category. This study measured trust and relatability, PSR and PSI in a general way, with no reference to a specific influencer or product. Researchers could consider manipulating or controlling the impact of influencers’ type, across different product categories in future studies.

Finally, as addressed in chapter 5, the measures for PSR and PSI used in this study did not reach the internal validation, and thus items had to be removed from each scale to ensure unidirectionality. After further review of the literature, the results, and the measures themselves, it was concluded that the measure for PSI did not express face validity. Face Validity, as defined by Taherdoost, is when a measurement accurately and linguistically assesses the variable measured (2016). While the validation measures for PSI found it reliably tested the variable for parasocial interaction, the questions on the PSI scale were similar and overlapping with some of the measures on the PSR scale that was used for comparison. This ultimately made the findings across both measures less generalizable and more overlapped than intended. Future research can be done to develop better and reliable measures for PSR and PSI and in the future researchers should be wary of the way measures compare to one another, not just how well they measure variables separately.
Conclusion

This purpose of this study was to explore the predictors of relatability and trust on PSR and PSI. A secondary aim of this study was to explore the ways that both PSI and PSR are predicted and related to the variables of relatability and trust. Three hypotheses and one research question are proposed and tested. Multiple statistical methods were employed to support the hypotheses and answer the research question. The study found that that relatability with a YouTube influencer positively affect the perceived PSR with that influencer, supporting H1. Further, the findings support the assumption that trust positively affect PSR, thus H2 is supported. Next, this study suggests that trust and relatability are correlated and supports H3. Additionally, it was found that females were partially more prone to show higher levels of PSR than males, and relatability was more important for Hispanics than Non-Hispanic white participants.

Overall, this study supports the contention that the importance of the relationships one builds online, even with those one does not know, should not go without notice. Particularly when these relationships are based on trust and relatability, which can lead to a PSR and inadvertently affect someone’s behavior. Understanding the predictors of PSR is not only important to truly understand the nature of one’s relationships with others (both in person and through a screen), but it is also necessary in understanding the ways that media can affect consumers. Practitioners should carefully evaluate the levels of trust and reliability when selecting YouTuber’s endorsements.
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1

Survey on Relationships with YouTuber's

Consent Form: Survey on Relationships with YouTuber's
If you are 18 years old or older residing in the United States, we invite you to take part in a research study at Florida State University. The purpose of this study is to understand possible Media Effects on frequent viewers of certain content. Please take as much time as you need to read the information below.

Study procedures: If you agree and are eligible to participate in this study, we will ask you to do the following: complete a one-time, online survey which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Risks of study participation: The study has no physical risks involved and poses no psychological risks either. Regardless of this, you as a participant are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.

Benefits: The answers provided by participant will benefit students and scholars to better understand media effects processes.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Your participation is anonymous, and your responses will be stored in a secure database at the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication at FSU.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions for the study team about the research You may ask any questions you have now, or if you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact the principal investigator Carolina Perez at [email protected] or at [contact number], or you can contact the supervisor of the research Dr. Sindy Chapa, Director of the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication and investigator at schapa@fsu.edu or (850) 645-8129.

Contact information for questions about your rights as a research participant If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, or regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at telephone number 850-644-7900. You may also contact this office by email at humansubjects@fsu.edu, or by writing or in person at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B,
Suite 276, FSU Human Subjects Committee, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742.

**Indicate below if you consent to participate in this study:**

- Yes (4)
- No (5)

Q2 Do you have a favorite YouTube influencer that you follow closely?

- Yes (5)
- No (6)

Q3 Think of your favorite YouTube Influencer. This study defines a YouTube Influencer as a person who became widely known on YouTube for their original, self-made content, usually catering to (but not always) a specific niche audience (Beauty, Gaming, Lifestyle, etc.) Please name them below:

Q4 What kind of product does this "YouTube influencer" promote? (Select all that apply)

Q5 How long have you been following this person?

- less than a month (1)
- more than a month, less than 3 months (2)
- more than 3 months, less than 6 months (3)
- more than 6 months, less than a year (4)
- more than a year, less than 2 years (5)
- more than 2 years, less than 3 years (6)
- 3 years or more (7)

Q6 Please explain why this person (your favorite YouTube influencer) is your favorite influencer
PSI Questionnaire

Q7 I think of this person like an old friend

Q8 This person makes me feel as though I am comfortable with friends

Q9 I think about this person even when I am not on YouTube

Q10 I miss this person if I have not seen them on YouTube for a long time

Q11 I feel that I know this person very well

Q12 This person's YouTube channel shows me what they are like

Q13 I find the person to be likeable

Q14 I mostly agree with this person

Q15 For this Question, answer "somewhat disagree"

PSR Questionnaire

Q16 If there were a story about this person on TV or in an article I would watch and/or read it

Q17 I would like to meet this person in real life

Q18 I admire this person for their achievements

Q19 I look forward to watching this person in an upcoming video

Q20 This person makes me feel comfortable, as if I was a friend

Q21 When interacting with this person I feel included

Q22 I can relate to this person

Q23 I like hearing what this person has to say

Q24 I care about what happens to the person in the video
Q25 I hope this person can achieve their goals

**Trust Scale**

Q26 I find this person (Extremely Dependable – Extremely Not Dependable)

Q27 I find this person to be: (Extremely Honest – Extremely Dishonest)

Q28 I find this person to be: (Extremely Reliable – Extremely Unreliable)

Q29 I find this person to be: (Extremely Sincere – Extremely Insincere)

Q30 I find this person to be: (Extremely Trustworthy – Extremely Untrustworthy)

**Relatability Scale**

Q31 This person reminds me of myself

Q32 I have the same qualities as this person

Q33 I seem to have the same beliefs or attitude as this person

Q34 I have the same problems as this person

Q35 I can imagine myself as this person

Q36 I can identify with this person

**Demographic Questions**

Q49 *We are almost done! The following questions are for classification purpose only.*

What is your martial status?

▼ Never married (1) ... Prefer not to answer (7)
Q50 Which of the following best describes your ethnic background or heritage?

- Non Hispanic White (1)
- Hispanic (2)
- African American/Black (3)
- Asian American (4)
- Native American (5)
- Pacific Islander (6)
- Other (7)

Q51 What is your biological sex/gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Not listed (3)

Display This Question:
If What is your biological sex/gender? = Not listed
Q52 What would you classify you gender identity as?

- Cisgender (1)
- Transgender-man (2)
- Transgender-woman (3)
- Agender (4)
- Nonbinary (5)
- Third Gender (6)
- Genderfluid / Genderqueer / Genderflux (7)
- Other(s) ________________________________
- Prefer not to answer (9)

Q53 What is your age group?

- Under 18 (11) ...
- 65 or older (18)

Q54 In which state do you live?

- AL (1) ...
- WY (50)

Q55 Do you consider the community you live in to be? (permanent address)

- Urban (1)
- Rural (2)
- Suburban (3)

Q56 What is the total number of people including you living in your household?

- 1 (1) ...
- 10+ (10)
Q57 Are you the parent or guardian of any children 17 or younger living in your household?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:
If Are you the parent or guardian of any children 17 or younger living in your household? = Yes

Q58 How many children 17 years of age or younger live in your household?

- ▼ 1 (1) ... more than 7 (7)

Q59 Which of the following do you currently reside in?

- ▼ Townhouse (1) ... Prefer not to answer (6)

Q60 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ▼ Elementary school (1) ... Prefer not to answer (7)

Q61 What is your employment status?

- ▼ Employed full time (1) ... Prefer not to answer (5)

Q62 What is your annual household income?

- ▼ Less than $10,000 (1) ... More than $150,000 (12)

Q63 Which of the following best describes your political orientation?

- ▼ Very Conservative (1) ... Prefer not to answer (6)

Q64 What is your religion?

- ▼ Christian (1) ... I prefer not to answer (8)
February 19, 2021

Carolina Perez, [Redacted]

Dear Carolina Perez:

On 2/19/2021, the IRB staff reviewed the following submission:

| Type of Review: | Exempt  
| (3)(i)(A) Benign behavioral interventions (non-identifiable) |
| Title: | PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH INFLUENCERS ON YOUTUBE: An investigation of the predictors of PSR formation and its implications |
| Investigator: | Carolina Perez |
| Submission ID: | STUDY00002023 |
| Study ID: | STUDY00002023 |
| Funding: | None |
| Grant ID: | None |
| IND, IDE, or HDE: | None |
| Documents Reviewed: | • Questionnaire for IRB .pdf, Category: Survey/Questionnaire;  
• Carolina , Category: Recruitment Materials;  
• Consent form Revised , Category: Consent Form;  
• IRB Protocol Revision, Category: IRB Protocol; |
The IRB staff determined the protocol qualifies for exemption, effective on 2/19/2021. Your study conforms to FSU policy on COVID-19-related requirements and restrictions related to research activities that involve in-person interventions or interactions with human research participants.

Note that once the COVID-19-related requirements and restrictions are lifted and IF you plan to substitute remote interactions or interventions with in-person alternatives, or IF you plan to include as human subjects persons who were previously excluded due to their high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 or ages 65 or more years, please be sure to submit a modification to the IRB for its review of these substitutions. If however you only plan to discontinue other COVID-19-specific risk mitigation (e.g., social distancing, screening, use of PPE), then no study modification request need to be submitted to the IRB for review before these changes may be implemented. For all other study modifications, see notes below.

You are advised that any modification(s) to the protocol for this project that may alter this exemption determination must be reviewed and approved prior to implementation of the proposed modification(s).

Modifications to the research may invalidate the exemption determination (because the research no longer meets the exemption criteria described in HRP-312 – WORKSHEET – Exemption Determination).

Examples of minor changes to exempt research that would not alter the exemption determination and should therefore not be submitted to the IRB for further review include the following:

- Making administrative (formatting, grammar, spelling) revisions to the protocol, consent or recruitment materials or other study documents
- Adding or revising non-sensitive questions or non-identifiable response options to a survey, interview, focus group or other data collection instrument
- Increasing or decreasing the number of study subjects—unless adding a new study sample such as children or prisoners or adding a new source of data or records
- Making study team/personnel changes—except a change in Principal Investigator (PI)

Examples of changes to exempt research that do require prospectively submitting a modification to the IRB before implementing changes include the following:

- Making substantive revisions or additions (e.g., change in PI; funding source; sample; source of study subjects or their data; study sites or settings; procedures, interventions or interactions with study subjects; use of any drug, device, supplement or biologic; study subjects’ time or duration spent performing or participating in study activities) to the protocol, consent or recruitment materials or other study documents
- Adding or revising sensitive questions or identifiable response options to a survey, interview, focus group or other data collection instrument
- Adding a new study sample such as children or prisoners or adding a new source of data or records
- Obtaining, using, studying, analyzing, generating, storing or maintaining identifiable information or identifiable biospecimens in addition to or in lieu of de-identified or anonymous information or specimens
- Change in study risks (e.g., impact upon study subjects; impact upon students’ opportunity to learn educational content or assessment of educators who provide instruction; any disclosure of study subjects’ responses outside of the research may
place study subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to subjects’ financial standing, employability, educational advancement or reputation

- Change in Principal Investigator (PI) or (for students) faculty advisor
- New or change in financial interest
In conducting this protocol, you are required to follow the applicable requirements listed in the Investigator Manual (HRP-103), which can be found by navigating to the Library within the RAMP IRB system.

Sincerely,

Office for Human Subjects Protection (OHSP)
Florida State University Office of Research
2010 Levy Avenue, Building B Suite 276

Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742
Phone: 850-644-7900
OHSP Group Email: humansubjects@fsu.edu
OHSP Web: https://www.research.fsu.edu
APPENDIX C

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

I Consent Form

Survey on Relationships with YouTuber's

Consent Form:

Survey on Relationships with YouTuber's

If you are 18 years old or older residing in the United States, we invite you to take part in a research study at Florida State University. The purpose of this study is to understand possible Media Effects on frequent viewers of certain content. Please take as much time as you need to read the information below.

Study procedures: If you agree and are eligible to participate in this study, we will ask you to do the following: complete a one-time, online survey which will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Risks of study participation: The study has no physical risks involved and poses no psychological risks either. Regardless of this, you as a participant are allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.

Benefits: The answers provided by participant will benefit students and scholars to better understand media effects processes.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Your participation is anonymous, and your responses will be stored in a secure database at the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication at FSU.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relations with the University. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions for the study team about the research You may ask any questions you have now, or if you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact the principal investigator Carolina Perez at [email protected] or at [phone number] or you can contact the supervisor of the research Dr. Sindy Chapa, Director of the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication and investigator at schapa@fsu.edu or (850)645-8129.
Contact information for questions about your rights as a research participant If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, or regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the FSU IRB at telephone number 850-644-7900. You may also contact this office by email at humansubjects@fsu.edu, or by writing or in person at 2010 Levy Street, Research Building B, Suite 276, FSU Human Subjects Committee, Tallahassee, FL 32306-2742.

Indicate below if you consent to participate in this study:

- Yes
- No.

II Recruitment Flyer

Dear Faculty,

I would like to invite your student to participate in my online survey through SONA systems as a part of my research study required for completion of my master’s thesis.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and greatly appreciated. There are no inherent risks attached to participation in this study and your student’s confidentiality will be maintained throughout the entire lifetime of this research process.

Any information gathered will be strictly used for research purposes only and no participants entry into this study will be disclosed.

This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board and deemed ethical in nature.

If your students wish to participate in this survey, they are welcome to click on this link to participate:

https://fsu-com.sona-systems.com/webstudy_credit.aspx?experiment_id=94&credit_token=82ca75b1cf91487aa0d03729727713dd&survey_code=${e://Field/id}
Once they have an account linked to the Sona Systems, they can access my study by looking for my name as the primary researcher.

I thank you for your time and effort in delivering my survey to your students.

Best,

Carolina Perez
MA Student
# APPENDIX D

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLE 1
Factor Analysis Table PSI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSI Questionnaire</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think of this person like an old friend</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel as though I am comfortable</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think about this person even when I am not on YouTube</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I miss this person if I have not seen them on YouTube</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for a long time</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I know this person very well</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person’s YouTube channel show me what they are like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find this person to be likeable</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I mostly agree with this person</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>3.161</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Variance</td>
<td>39.512 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Variance</td>
<td>69.103 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2
Factor Analysis Table PSI After Elimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSI Questionnaire</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think of this person like an old friend</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel as though I am comfortable</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think about this person even when I am not on YouTube</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I miss this person if I have not seen them on YouTube</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for a long time</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>2.682</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Variance</td>
<td>53.638 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Variance</td>
<td>53.638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3
Factor Analysis Table PSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSR Questionnaire</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If there were a story about this person on TV or in an article I would watch and/or read it</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to meet this person in real life</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I admire this person for their achievements</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look forward to watching this person in an upcoming video</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel comfortable, as if I was a friend</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When interacting with this person I feel included</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can relate to this person</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing what this person has to say</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care about what happens to the person in the video</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope this person can achieve their goals</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>4.580</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Variance</td>
<td>45.796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Variance</td>
<td>59.433%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4
Factor Analysis Table PSR After Elimination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSR Questionnaire</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I look forward to watching this person in an upcoming video</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel comfortable, as if I was a friend</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When interacting with this person I feel included</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can relate to this person</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing what this person has to say</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care about what happens to the person in the video</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope this person can achieve their goals</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eigenvalue</th>
<th>4.038</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Variance</td>
<td>57.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Variance</td>
<td>57.692</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 5

**Factor Analysis Table PSI & PSR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSI and PSR Questionnaire (Combined)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Communality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think of this person like an old friend</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel as though I am comfortable with friends</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I think about this person even when I am not on YouTube</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I miss this person if I have not seen them on YouTube for a long time</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.29</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I know this person very well</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person’s YouTube Channel shows me what they are like</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find this person to be likable</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>-.50</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I mostly agree with this person</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>-.32</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there were a story about this person on TV or in an article I would watch and/or read it</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to meet this person in real life</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I admire this person for their achievements</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look forward to watching this person in an upcoming video</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This person makes me feel comfortable, as if I was a friend</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When interacting with this person I feel included</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can relate to this person</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.52</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like hearing what this person has to say</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I care about what happens to the person in the video</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hope this person can achieve their goals</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>-.43</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eigenvalue</td>
<td>6.90</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total Variance</td>
<td>38.30</td>
<td>10.64</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Variance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>63.99%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 6

Regression Analysis Summary For Trust & Relatability Predicting PSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.89 - 3.28</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatability</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.03 -.25</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.32 -.60</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistically significant at the .05 level $R^2$ adjusted = .44 CI = Confidence Interval

### TABLE 7

Correlations of Relatability & Trust Across PSI & PSR Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Trust</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relatability</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.55*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PSR</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.65*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PSI</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.44*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.68*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistically significant at the .01 level (2 tailed)

### TABLE 8

Paired Samples T- Test Results Comparing Means of PSI & PSR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t-cal</th>
<th>t-crit</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>-15.18</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSR</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


Gardner, M. P. (1985). Does attitude toward the ad affect brand attitude under a brand evaluation set?. *Journal of Marketing Research, 192-198*


Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument; how to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in a research. *How to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in a research (August 10, 2016)*.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Carolina Perez
Graduate Research Assistant

Florida State University

Driven and energetic student curious about understanding the various ways media impacts society. Interested in media effects studies, intercultural communication, media representations, the political economy of media, and consumer behavior. Inquisitive researcher keen on investigating these interests to help inspire a more equitable society. Passionate teacher, inspired to become a professor to one day help students find their calling and pursue it.

Educational History

Masters of Arts in Integrated Marketing Communication | Expected May 2021 | GPA 3.83
Advisor: Dr. Arienne Ferchaud

Coursework in
- COM 5312 Research Methods in Communication
- COM 5348 Qualitative Methods in Communication
- COM 5316 Statistical Methods in Communication
- ADV 5416 Multicultural Marketing Communication
- MMC 5646 Political Economy of Media

Bachelor of Arts Dual Degree in Communication and International Affairs | May 2019 | GPA 3.56

Coursework in
- COM 2740 Contemporary Issues in Communication
- IFS 2070 Global Perspectives in Communication
- MMC 4602 Mass Media and Society
- ISS 4304 Contemporary Social Issues

Research


Chapa Sindy, Perez Carolina, Lootens Lauren, Khan Talalah, & Giordano Caroline (2021). The Refrigeration Market in Latin America: Exploring the consumption of condensing Units in Colombia, Mexico, Panama, and Brazil. Industry Sponsored Research by Emerson Co. (In progress)

Zang Qijia, Hamad Hajrah, Perez Carolina, Chapa Sindy, & Christopher Routzong (2020). The Intention to Purchase Vintage Apparel Among Gen-Y and Gen-Z, Across Ethnicities. (Accepted to AMA)

Experience

Graduate Research Assistant ~ Fall 2020- Spring 2021

- Supported Dr. Sindy Chapa in consumer market research as part of the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication at FSU
- Prepared materials for surveys, solicited participants, gathered data and outside research to inform the questionnaire, and set up interviews for research purposes
- Helped translate survey questions into Spanish to be distributed to Hispanic Consumers
- Helped in organizing team meetings

Graduate Teaching Assistant ~ Spring 2020

- Taught undergraduate students necessary Public Speaking skills to fulfill a university requirement and allow them to succeed professionally
- Created lesson plans and learning activities to help engage students with course materials, such as logical planing of a speech, emotional appeals, and effective language usage
- Worked on skills building and confidence to improve student speech skills and presentation

Marketing Intern ALMMACR Media Group ~ Summer 2020- Spring 2021

- In charge of creating and updating marketing materials on the website and disseminating them
- Collaborated with team members to help with conference organization and preparation.
- Assisted in organizing meetings and codifying jobs and tasks in the meeting minutes

Marketing Coordinator at The Center For Hispanic Marketing Communication - Florida State University ~ Spring 2020- Spring 2021

- In charge of updating all of The Center for Hispanic Marketing’s social media channels, including Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook
- Helped in creating Graphics and promoting upcoming events for The Center
- Promoted The Center through community outreach and writing about events in the semester newsletter

Communications Officer for HiGSA (Hispanic Graduate Student Association) Spring 2020- Spring 2021

- In charge of all communications and marketing efforts for HiGSA
- Assisted in organizing events and promoting them on all of HiGSA’s social media pages and around campus
- Assisted in preparing graphics for major events to help promote them
- Collaborated with other officers in HiGSA to in presentations, organizations events, and budgeting.

Skills Summary

- Fluent Spanish Speaker
- Conversational Greek Speaker
- Public Speaking
- Research Design
- Teaching
- Course Materials Development
- Marketing Communication
- Questionnaire Development
- Market Research and Analysis
- Quantitative Analysis
- Qualitative Analysis
- Proficient with Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and SPSS

Awards Received

- Pablo J. Lopez Scholarship for a student in Hispanic Marketing Communication (September, 2020)
- Currently Pursuing a Certificate in Multicultural Marketing Communication at Florida State University
- Archangel Michael Award for Service awarded by St. Andrews Greek Orthodox Church (2015)