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School of Business and Management
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Master's thesis

ADVERTISING THROUGH INSTAGRAM INFLUENCERS: THE EFFECT OF DISCLOSURE ON CONSUMER ATTITUDE

Taru Hakkarainen, 2018

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to find out how advertising disclosure effects on consumer attitude in the context of influencer marketing on Instagram. Based on the previous theoretical findings, it is assumed that adding a disclosure weakens the consumer attitude towards the ad and the brand. Also, source credibility and endorser-brand congruence are evaluated as moderators as they have been found as significant building blocks for consumer attitude in earlier studies related to celebrity endorsements.

In the empirical analysis, 446 participants were randomly assigned to two groups – the other group saw an Instagram product recommendation post with a clear ad disclosure and the other group saw the exact same post but without the disclosure. The results of this study suggest that disclosing the commercial nature of the post doesn’t affect consumers’ attitude towards the ad or the brand, at least when the influencer is familiar to the viewer. Source expertise and endorser-brand congruence however have a significant positive effect on consumer attitude. Based on these results, instead of worrying about ad disclosure weakening the advertising effect, companies should worry about finding a credible influencer that is a good fit to the brand.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	Taru Hakkarainen
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Tämän tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, kuinka mainosmerkintä vaikuttaa kuluttajien asenteisiin, kun tarkastellaan vaikuttajamarkkinointia Instagramissa. Aiempien teoreettisten löydösten perusteella tutkimuksessa oletetaan, että mainosmerkinnän lisääminen heikentää kuluttajien asenteita sekä mainosta, että brändiä kohtaan. Myös lähteen uskottavuutta ja suosittelijan ja brändin välistä yhdenmukaisuutta tutkitaan moderaattoreina, sillä aiemmissa tutkimuksissa, jotka käsittelevät tunnettujen henkilöiden suosituksia, niiden on huomattu olevan selkeässä roolissa kuluttajien asenteiden rakentamisessa.

Empiirisessä analyysissä 446 osanottajaa jaettiin satunnaisesti kahteen ryhmään – toiselle ryhmälle näytettiin Instagram-tuotesuositusjulkaisu selkeällä mainosmerkinnällä, ja toinen ryhmä näki saman julkaisun ilman merkintää. Tuloksien perusteella julkaisun kaupallisen luonteen paljastaminen ei vaikuta kuluttajien asenteisiin mainosta eikä brändiä kohtaan. Lähteen asiantuntijuus sekä suosittelijan ja brändin välinen yhdenmukaisuus sen sijaan vaikuttavat positiivisesti kuluttajien asenteisiin. Sen sijaan, että yritykset pelkäisivät mainoksen vaikuttavuuden heikkenemistä mainosmerkinnän lisäämällä, niiden tulisi ennemmin huolehtia uskottavan ja brändille sopivan vaikuttajan löytämisestä.

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There are so many people I want to thank for being able to finish this project. Firstly, thank you my supervisors Sanna-Katriina Asikainen and Anssi Tarkiainen. A year ago, I had an idea about what I would like to research in my thesis but had no idea how to do it, so thank you Anssi for showing me the way and giving me very precious feedback and ideas always when I asked for them. Secondly, thank you Johannes for your patience as this thesis has taken a large share of my focus during the last year. Also, thank you mom for always asking me how my thesis is progressing – even though I most often gave you a frustrated answer, it surely has motivated me to keep on going. Thank you Heini for sitting with me in the library so many Thursdays and Fridays and providing me some peer support when I needed it the most. Thank you my beloved RELEX marketing team for being super flexible about my work so I was able to get the time I needed for graduating.

In Helsinki, November 18th 2018

Taru Hakkarainen

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1 INTRODUCTION

Millennials have grown up in a world where following well-known people has been made easier than ever. Social media have brought celebrities closer to consumers and many people might even feel like they know the celebrity well by following their daily activities on different channels. This has brought a whole new way for well-known people to make money: making their social media accounts advertising platforms for individual ads or even becoming brand ambassadors with systematic collaboration with different brands.

When you open your Instagram and start scrolling the feed of new posts, you might see a celebrity you follow eating a recently launched snack bar and telling in the description how delicious it is and how great its nutritional values are. The next photograph you see might be a good friend of yours testing a new pizzeria in your home town and praising its customer service in the photo caption. These two are both endorsements but the difference is that the first one is a paid advertisement and the second one is a genuine recommendation. These might get mixed up in consumer's minds and it could be one reason why influencer marketing has been found so effective. It was a clear buzzword among marketers last year and has been listed as one of the big marketing trends for 2018 as well by for example Forbes Communications Council (2018).

1.1 Background of the study

Advertising on Instagram has increased simultaneously with the increased user base – where there are consumers there are ads. An American musician Selena Gomez had the most liked photo on Instagram during 2016 (Ahmed, 2016). It is natural that a global superstar like her has the most followers but what makes the most liked post special is the fact that it is an advertisement by Coca-Cola. The photo has collected 6,8 million likes and 280,3 thousand comments (Instagram, 2016). As liking on Instagram has been found to be very selective behavior (Hayes, Carr & Wohm, 2016), this most liked photo flips the presumption of advertising being commonly ignored and disliked completely upside down.

Regardless of popularity and profitability of influencer marketing, much of its success has been criticized for consumer unawareness. The tactic or content itself might not be so outstanding in these marketing activities, but consumers are simply not aware that the message they are seeing is an advertisement. (Evans et al., 2017) While getting older and more experienced, consumers create a type of a shield around them when it comes to being a target to advertising (e.g. Friestad & Wright, 1994) – we usually know well when we're seeing an advertisement in commercial breaks on TV or in billboards along the highway. But when we see an advertisement in an environment where we're not used to seeing one this shield is a lot weaker due to lack of experience.

Due to rapid increase in advertising efforts combined with new kind of environment has resulted in confusion whether the ads should be marked as ones and how to do that in a proper way. Some companies don't want to disclose their advertisements, some don't know, and some probably just don't care. Federal Trade Commission has started sending notes to influencers about their disclosure practices and Instagram has created new ways for users to mention the commercial collaboration within the software in order to make it more transparent (Ad Age, 2017). To complicate this puzzle even more, it has to be noted that Instagram is a global social network and the most popular influencers have followers from all parts of the world, so a specific country's regulations might have worldwide causations.

A recent exploratory study conducted by European Union (2018) wanted to evaluate social media marketing in order to identify possible solutions for problematic advertising practices that are identified. Particularly heavy users thought they are able to recognize commercial content on social media even if they are designed to blend in without much of alarm. Light users were less confident with their abilities to spot advertisements. What made all participants hesitant on recognizing ads was the absence of a clearly visible brand or product in the content, the absence of a link to the business' website, and the use of text or visuals that are not immediately associated with commercial purposes. All three are practices widely used in influencer marketing.

The EU study finds two reasons why influencer marketing is especially effective (and less likely for consumers to identify as an advertisement): firstly, the content is published by an individual person instead of a business, and second, it is typically presented as a personal endorsement rather than the direct and clearly identifiable promotion of a product, so it often appears to consumers as a spontaneous, non-commercial post. In principle, failures to disclose commercial intent are covered by the EU legal framework, but it’s lacking the guidance on the legality of specific types of practices, such as how much disclosure is required and who is responsible for it (European Union, 2018)

During recent years, advertisers have also faced a new problem with their online ads: ad blockers. Ad blockers block for example display ads, video ads and pop-up ads on websites which of course makes marketers lives a little bit more difficult and forces them to rethink their efforts. For example, in the USA the amount of Internet users using ad blocker has increased from 14% in 2014 to 27,5% in 2017 (eMarketer 2017). This is not the only reason why marketers are moving towards native advertising, in which paid advertising takes the specific form and appearance of editorial content from the publisher (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016), but it is definitely a significant element in this advertising transition. Advertisers need new tactics to get their message through to consumers.

1.2 The aim of the study & research problem

This study aims at increasing knowledge about a novel type of advertising and about the effect it has on consumers. For companies, this knowledge is relevant and not so easily accessible. On the digital marketing era marketers are used to getting data about all their efforts but marketing via influencers on Instagram brings some challenges when it comes to tracking. A specific amount of sales cannot be allocated to specific influencer campaign so knowing how consumers response to it is useful. This study also provides insights for authorities that create legislation and guidelines for companies in their marketing activities.

The main research question of this thesis is:
What is the effect of disclosure on consumer attitude towards persuasion attempts through Instagram influencers?

The main research question is divided into three sub-questions that are:

1) ***What makes consumers aware of the commercial intent of an advertisement?***
2) ***What is consumer’s attitudinal response to covert marketing?***

3) Which source characteristics influence consumer attitude formation?

These sub-questions break the main problem into smaller sections which helps gathering and analyzing the existing literature and hence form hypotheses that are tested in the experimental study.

1.3 Preliminary literature review

Literature review aims at providing a brief overview of the existing literature about the main topics of the study. Thus, this part will summarize what has been discussed in academia about consumers' awareness of commercial intents, covert marketing, advertising disclosures, consumer attitude, and influencer marketing.

Most of the research focusing on consumers' awareness of commercial intents relies on persuasion knowledge, which was first brought up by Friestad & Wright (1994). In studies before that the target of an advertisement has been handled as a passive object who is just receiving information, so the researchers wanted to address that the target also actively utilizes knowledge they have about the advertiser and the persuasion attempt that they're currently facing. Since that, persuasion knowledge has been a broadly studied topic in different contexts. Friestad & Wright deepened the concept later on by providing a conceptual study about using persuasion knowledge in everyday life.

Campbell & Kirmani (2000) wanted to dig deeper into persuasion knowledge and find out in which kind of situations people use it. They studied how the target's cognitive capacity and accessibility affect the activation of persuasion knowledge. This study was conducted in an interpersonal sales setting, using a retail interaction between a salesperson acting as the influence agent and a consumer acting as the influence target. However, it has implications to other areas of business as well. The researchers' interest towards the target's perspective in persuasion knowledge model continued and they made a conceptual study about it some years later (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009).

Many of the studies about persuasion knowledge have been conducted in the form of TV advertising (Boush, Friestad, & Rose, 1994; Campbell, 1995; Boerman, Reijmersdal & Neijens, 2012; Boerman, Reijmersdal & Neijens, 2014) since it has traditionally been a popular channel to insert for example product placements. However, also video games (Lorenzon & Russell, 2012; Van Reijmersdal, Rozendaal, & Buijzen, 2012; Panic, Cauberghe, & De Pelsmacker, 2013), radio (Wei, Fischer & Main, 2008), online media (Tutaj & van Reijmersdal, 2012; Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold 2013; Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa 2017), and print media (Kirmani & Zhu, 2007) have been used as an advertising channel when studying the topic. Moore & Rodgers (2005) used all of them and compared advertising credibility in newspapers, television, radio, magazines and the Internet by using persuasion knowledge as a base.

Friestad & Wright (1994) suggested that multiple research methods should be used when studying persuasion knowledge. Ham, Nelson & Das (2015) studied how persuasion knowledge has been measured in the previous studies from 1994 to 2014 coming to the conclusion that most of them have been conducted using experimental research method and surveys with only a couple of exceptions. They state that most researchers measure subjective persuasion knowledge with explicit assessments to measure short-term effects.

For the nature of its concept, it is quite understandable that persuasion knowledge has been linked to covert marketing tactics. Wei, Fisher & Main (2008) noticed that most of the persuasion knowledge research has been conducted in a sales setting and thus wanted to know whether it works the same way with embedded brands – they studied the effect of persuasion knowledge on consumer response to covert marketing. Campbell, Mohr & Verlegh (2013) wanted to know whether and when disclosure reduces the effect of covert marketing on consumers. Gbel, Meyer, Ramaseshan & Bartsch (2017) pointed out that the previous covert marketing literature linking to persuasion knowledge has been focusing on traditional media (e.g. print, TV, movies) so they wanted to study whether persuasion knowledge is applicable to covert marketing in the context of social media. There is also some debate over the ethics of covert marketing (Gupta & Gould, 1997; Rotfeld, 2008; Cain, 2011; Martin & Smith 2013).

Advertising disclosure studies have also been often linked to persuasion knowledge. Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa (2017) have studied disclosure's effect on persuasion knowledge and electronic word of mouth in the context of Facebook. Studies have been conducted regarding disclosure's timing (Campbell, Mohr & Verlegh, 2013), duration

(Boerman, Rejsmersdal & Neijens, 2012), position and language (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016; Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun, 2017). Carr & Hayes (2014) have studied how disclosures of a third-party influence effect on an opinion leader's credibility and electronic word of mouth.

Consumer attitude has been involved in many of the studies listed above, but there are a few more that should be mentioned as they are relevant for this study. The basis for many consumer attitude studies has been formed in Kelman's article (1958) about the three processes of attitude change: compliance, identification, and internalization. Attitude towards the ad has been studied as a mediator of consumer brand choice (Shrimp, 1981) and advertising effectiveness (MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986). Hedonic and utilitarian dimensions of consumer attitude were introduced by Ahtola (1985) and have later been studied by Batra & Ahtola (1991), and Voss, Spangenberg & Grohmann (2003). Spears & Singh (2004) have studied how attitude towards brand is measured.

Influencer marketing as a defined concept is rather novel and thus the research is yet limited to the recent years. Khamis, Ang & Welling (2016) have studied self-branding, "micro-celebrity" and the rise of social media influencers. During the last year, influencer marketing has also been studied on Twitter (Bokunewicz & Shulman, 2017), Instagram (Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun, 2017) and Facebook (Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa 2017). This indicates that the academia is slowly warming up for the topic and the future years will likely bring many more studies about influencer marketing from different perspectives.

Bloggers are a type of influencers that have been utilized as a marketing channel ever since they started gaining popularity. A good share of blog marketing literature has been focusing on credibility of blogs compared to other types of media (Johnson & Kaye, 2004; Chiang & Hsieh, 2011; Colliander & Dahlén 2011). Some eWoM studies have also been conducted in the blog context (Lee & Yon, 2009; Kulmala, Mesiranta & Tuominen, 2013). Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund (2015) focused on how Generation Y responds to suspected covert and overt blog marketing and found out that overt marketing had a negative effect on behavioral intentions whereas covert marketing did not affect the intended behavior.

Even though influencer marketing and blog marketing are still rather novel concepts, the idea of utilizing an influential person in advertising is not new – celebrity endorsement has been studied for decades (Erdogan, 1999) and has a lot of implications that are relevant for influencer marketing as well. Bergkvist & Zhou (2016) identified that celebrity endorsement studies can be categorized into six areas: celebrity prevalence, campaign management, financial effects, celebrity persuasion, non-evaluative meaning transfer, and brand-to-celebrity transfer. It is rather obvious that not all of these categories are relevant for this study, but I will dig deeper into what kind of studies have been made about celebrity persuasion.

According to Bergkvist & Zhou (2016), majority of the celebrity endorsement studies fall within the category of celebrity persuasion by investigating the effect of celebrities on consumer's brand evaluations after being exposed to an endorsement. This effectiveness has been studied by evaluating e.g. the endorser characteristics (Friedman & Friedman, 1979; Kahle & Homer, 1985; Silvera & Austad, 2004, Amos, Holmes & Strutton, 2008; Spry, Pappu & Bettina Cornwell, 2011), the number of products endorsed (Tripp, Jensen & Carlson, 1994), the message form (Kamins, Brand, Hoeke & Moe, 1989) and the way the endorser's personality resonates with the consumer's own self (Choi & Rifon, 2012).

Source credibility has been studied quite a lot (e.g. Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Dholakia & Shernthal, 1977; Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell, 2000), but no studies can be found in which it would be linked to consumer attitude. Therefore, source credibility was chosen as a moderator in the empirical study. As source credibility has been connected in some studies (Kim & Na, 2007; Lee & Koo, 2015) to endorder-brand congruence, that is involved as a second moderator.

In Table 1 are listed the main studies that are used in this thesis. These studies are the core of the thesis and are supported by plenty of other studies from the areas of consumer persuasion, covert marketing and influencer marketing.

Table 1. The main academic literature used in this study

Author & year	Focus	Theory	Method	Key findings	Future research
Friestad & Wright (1994)	How people cope with persuasion attempts	Persuasion Knowledge Model	Conceptual	The model was formed	-
Campbell & Kirmani (2000)	Target's accessibility and cognitive capacity	Persuasion Knowledge Model	Experimental	Cognitively busy targets use less persuasion knowledge	The generalizability of the phenomenon to other situations
Rotfeld (2008)	The stealth influence of covert marketing	Covert marketing	Conceptual	Covert marketing creates consumer skepticism and commercial clutter	-
Wei, Fischer & Main (2008)	Consumer response to covert marketing	Persuasion Knowledge Model	Experimental	Knowing about covert marketing changes consumers' response	Other factors to be considered in covert marketing education
Kirmani & Campbell (2009)	Target's perspective on PKM	Persuasion Knowledge Model	Conceptual	The target may i.e. examine agents' motives and effort, recognize tactics, and cope cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally	-
Campbell, Mohr & Verlegh (2013)	Consumers' resistance of covert persuasion	Persuasion Knowledge Model, Covert marketing	Experimental	Instructions to avoid influence and disclosure of sponsorship can decrease brand recall & attitude	The effects of disclosures when the persuasive intent is more readily detectable
Carr. & Hayes (2014)	Opinion leader's credibility and eWoM after disclosure of third-party influence	Influencer marketing, eWoM, Covert marketing	Experimental	No statistical difference in credibility between no-mention and explicit-mention conditions	The assumed influences on bloggers and reviewers in social media
Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun (2017)	Disclosure language to advertising recognition, attitudes, and behavioral intent	Influencer marketing, Covert marketing	Experimental	"Paid Ad" added ad recognition and mediated the effect of disclosure language on attitude toward the brand and sharing intention	Additional language or placement variations in other influencer contexts
Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa (2017)	Disclosure of sponsored content on Facebook	Influencer marketing, Covert marketing, Persuasion knowledge	Experimental	A sponsorship disclosure only influences the use of persuasion knowledge when the post is from an influencer	How sponsorship disclosures can be made noticeable

1.4 Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework summarizes the key concepts of the study in one figure and shows their relations to each other. The theoretical framework of this thesis can be found in the Figure 1. The key concepts in this study are influencer marketing, advertising disclosure, source credibility, endorser-brand congruence, and consumer attitude. These concepts are briefly defined in the next sub-chapter and explained in more detail in the theoretical part.

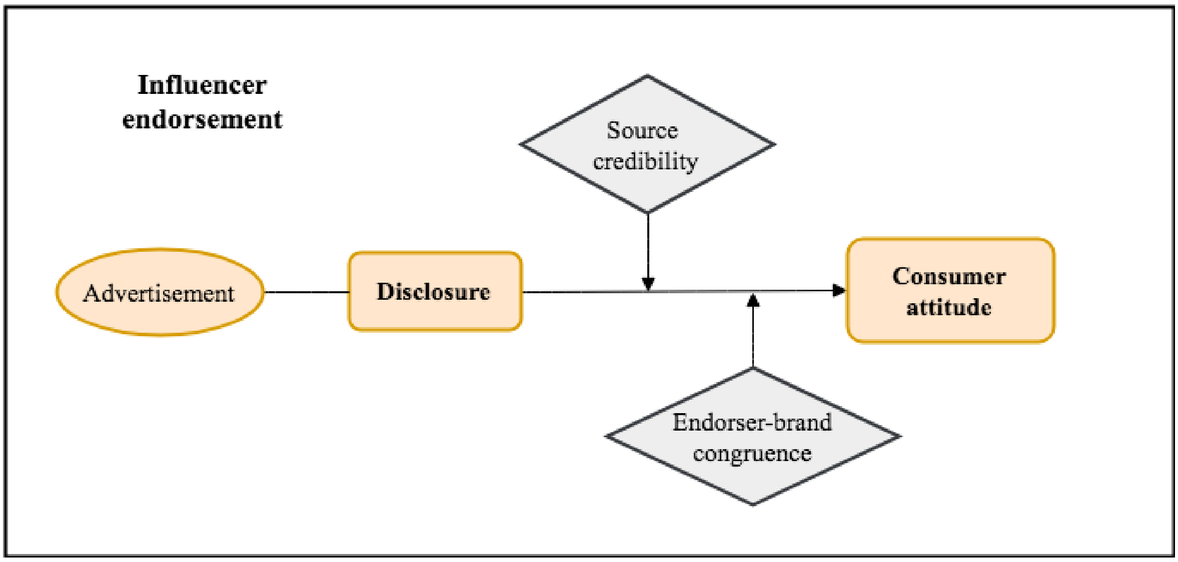

Figure 1. Theoretical framework

1.5 Definitions of the key concepts

It's common that in marketing and psychology literature one phenomenon is called with different names in different papers. This section gathers together the main concepts, informs about the names that will be used in this study and defines them.

Covert marketing refers to masked marketing practices, that do not reveal the true relationship with the company that produces or sponsors the marketing message. The messages are embedded into outlets that consumers typically don't consider as advertising terrain. (Wei, Fischer & Main, 2008; Martin & Smith, 2013; Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund, 2015).

Overt marketing means informing the consumer directly that a company is involved in the creation of the content (Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund, 2015).

Advertising disclosures are signals, cues or other means of informing consumers about a commercial intention, so in other words making the marketing effort overt. They reduce misleading impressions from advertising claims, messages or other cues, and allow consumer to make a most informed decision that is possible. (Grubbs Hoy & Andrews, 2004; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016; Evans et al., 2017)

Attitude is a person's tendency to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to an object, person, institution, or event (Ajzen, 2005, 3).

Source credibility is the extent to which the message source is trusted by and believed in by its audience. It includes three dimensions: trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977).

Endorser-brand congruence is the extent to which there is a corresponding relationship between the endorser and the endorsed product (Kim & Na, 2007).

Influencer marketing means identifying key individuals who hold influence over potential buyers of a brand or product and using these people in the marketing activities of the brand. (Evans et al., 2017)

Instagram is a mobile application that is used to sharing bits and pieces of one's life in the form of pictures and videos (Meikle, 2016, 39).

1.6 Delimitations of the study

There are certain delimitations that have an effect for the applicability of this thesis. The context of this study focuses on Instagram and the results might differ when evaluating the same phenomenon in different social media channels. Instagram was chosen due to its increasing popularity and familiarity to the writer of this thesis.

Akdoğan & Altuntaş (2015) divide marketing techniques into four categories based on the covertness of the real source and covertness of the message. Traditional techniques (advertisements, personal selling, sales promotions, etc.) disclose both the source and message, masked techniques (celebrities, viral marketing, editorials, etc.) disclose the message but hide the real source, indirect techniques (product placements, manipulation, social networks, etc.) disclose the source but hide the message, and fox techniques (subliminal messages, forums & chat rooms, etc.) hide both the source and the message. In this study, the focus is on masked techniques, since the marketing occurs via an influencer and the real source of the persuasion might be hidden.

This study builds on the assumption that a post with advertising disclosure is perceived more as an ad than one without one. Disclosures can be handled in different ways on Instagram. Federal Trade Commission (FTC, 2017) has given clear guidelines concerning the use of endorsements and testimonials in advertising, and they state that endorsers can use hashtags #ad or #sponsored in their captions to reveal the commercial intent. If they don't want to use hashtags, they can otherwise clearly indicate that the post is sponsored. Instagram has also given the possibility to mark the sponsorship by adding a text "Paid partnership with…" with the tagged sponsor above their picture. In order to get a clear distinction between the overt and covert version of the Instagram post, this study uses this disclosure method in the manipulation. Using hashtags is probably still more common way to disclose the sponsorship, especially when the influencer is particularly popular, but it is not as clear as the mention about paid partnership.

1.7 Research methodology

The purpose of this research is explanatory, since it focuses on explaining the relationship between variables (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 176). In order to probe causal relationships, experiment was been chosen as the mode of observation. The experiment is created around a real Instagram post, in which an athlete (well-known in his own sport) endorses a recently released sports shoe model by a leading sports apparel brand Nike. The data is gathered with an online survey tool Qualtrics and the respondents are recruited from a topic-related Facebook-group.

The main experiment is a between-subject design, which means that participants belong to either the experimental group or control group but in no case both (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 181). Respondents of the survey are randomly assigned to these groups by the survey tool. The change in experimental stimulus (advertising disclosure) is assumed to make changes in the consumer attitude (A_{ad} and A_b). Rest of the survey is identical in both of the scenarios in order to minimize other factors influencing the results.

The manipulated independent variable in the experiment is advertisement disclosure – either the advertisement is marked as an ad or it's not. There are two dependent variables, attitude towards ad and attitude towards brand, and in addition there are two moderator variables, source credibility and endorser-brand congruence. A manipulation check will be used in order to check whether the change in independent variable indeed has an effect in the participants. More about the research method and data collection can be read in the chapter four.

1.8 Structure of the study

This study is divided into two parts: theoretical part and empirical part. The theoretical part is presented in the chapters two and three, and the empirical part is presented in chapters four and five. Chapter six summarizes the whole thesis with discussion and conclusions.

As you probably noticed, chapter one is an introduction about why this study has been conducted, what this study wants to find out, which theories and concepts are linked to the topic, which scholars have been writing about them, what are the delimitations of this study, and finally, what the methodology is that will bring the results.

Chapter two focuses on what is known about the concepts and theories that are relevant to this study. It explains what is known about advertising disclosures by explaining covert marketing, persuasion knowledge, and consumer attitude. Chapter three focuses then on the context of this study which is influencer marketing on Instagram. This chapter also includes summary of the hypotheses that are drawn based on previous studies and that are then tested in the empirical part.

Chapter four introduces the quantitative research methodology and research design. It explains how the data is collected and analyzed, what kind of pre-testing was conducted, how the measures are defined, as well as gives a note on reliability and validity of the research.

Chapter five presents the research findings by first explaining the results of the manipulation check, then going through the results each hypothesis at a time. Chapter six then brings these results to real life by taking the findings from the empirical part and reflecting them to the theories that were presented in previous chapters. It answers the research questions and it gives an answer to the question “what’s in it for me?” for different stakeholders in influence marketing activities. It also provides suggestions for future research around this topic and discusses the limitations that this study has.

2 ADVERTISING DISCLOSURES

According to some estimations, people get exposed to up to 10.000 marketing communications messages on a daily basis (Marshall, 2015). It's of course not possible to recall seeing such a massive amount of information, so consumers are becoming better and better at shutting out these messages in their heads or using technology as a help (i.e. the previously mentioned ad blockers). Only less than 100 of these messages make it to the other side of our 'attention wall' which makes it harder for an advertiser to get their message through (Marshall, 2015).

According to Boerman, Reijmersdal & Neijens (2012), "When viewers recognize the persuasion attempt, they may realize that the program and the brand are not neutral and are trying to persuade. This awareness can make the viewer more critical towards the sponsored content". They trace this kind of behavior back to the reactance theory, introduced by Brehm (1966), that states that if the freedom in individual's behavior is threatened, he or she will be motivationally aroused to regain it.

Advertisers have noticed the increasing amount of ignorance, and they are using their full imagination in order to come up with creative ways to pass the consumer's attention threshold. They try to mask their messages in a way that consumers wouldn't recognize that they have a commercial motive. Consumer advocates try to keep up with new advertising methods to make sure consumers don't get fooled by companies, and in these situations advertising disclosures play a leading role.

Advertising disclosures are signals, cues or other means of informing consumers about a commercial intention. They reduce misleading impressions from advertising claims, messages or other cues, and allow consumer to make a most informed decision that is possible. (Grubbs Hoy & Andrews, 2004; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016; Evans et al., 2017) This chapter is not that much about different ways of disclosing an ad, but it rather looks at the bigger picture – why disclosures are needed, what makes consumers to recognize a persuasion attempt, and how consumers react on ads that are disclosed or ones that are not.

2.1 The effects of covert marketing

When being a target for persuasion attempt, consumer often has some knowledge about the topic (let's say smartphones), the way the persuasion is happening (a sponsored article on a popular online medium for tech-minded people), and about the brand (Samsung). By hiding the sponsor, covert marketing undermines two of these three types of knowledge and potentially takes away some defense mechanisms that typically guard the consumers when encountering marketing communications (Martin & Smith, 2013).

Consumer advocates are eagerly regulating the ways companies are disclosing their advertisements because of the effects that covert marketing has been found to have on consumers. Covert marketing (also referred as stealth or hidden marketing) refers to undercover marketing where due to low level of visibility, the target is unaware of the marketer's actions (Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010). Covert marketing builds on the premise that word-of-mouth is still the most effective form of promotion and that peer group recommendation is the best weapon in marketing (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004). Word-of-mouth is explained in more detail in the section 3.1.

Covert marketing practices are often in the grey area when it comes to regulations since they don't give consumers a chance to decide how they want to cope in a persuasive situation. Often public interest research groups, other third parties, regulatory agencies, or even a retailer will play the role of an ombudsman in shady situations (Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010). Consumer watchdog groups criticize companies using stealth marketing of going too far and intruding people's privacy (Kaikati & Kaikati, 2004).

Some practitioners, scholars, consumers and their advocates think that some, if not all, covert marketing activities are ethically unacceptable, but defining which forms of it and why are still not well conceptualized. Covert marketing is often justified by companies by stating that there are no adverse consequences. However, the consequences for the target are often underestimated: false judgements about brands or products, feeling of being tricked, distrust of marketing or business in general, and social harm of sincere human interactions proving to be inauthentic. (Martin & Smith, 2013) Even though there are mostly negative associations when it comes to the ethics of covert marketing, it has also been used for doing good for society and for earning the goodwill of customers (Roy & Chattopadhyay, 2010).

Many companies use covert marketing by using celebrities, when the celebrity is paid secretly and is requested to promote a company's products. An example of this could be that a sports brand pays a professional athlete to wear the brand's apparel in his or her games or other occasions. According to Akdoğan & Altuntaş (2015), brand ambassadorship means using ordinary people, often trendsetters that consumers often listen to before buying a product or a service, that promote the brand's products voluntarily to other people in their environments. However, the term 'brand ambassador' is nowadays used quite often also in situations where an influencer collaborates with a brand with a longer timeframe than just for one campaign. And it often also involves compensation from the company to the influencer.

During recent years, blogs have become a popular channel for brands to get recommendations. The whole scene has commercialized a lot and brand collaborations in popular blogs are more of a rule rather than exception. According to Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund (2015), despite this commercial rise, the past research has not recognized consumers suspecting covert marketing whenever a blogger recommends a product or service without revealing who paid for it. Overt collaboration in blogs negatively affects consumers behavioral intentions, including future interest in the blogger, engaging in word-of-mouth, and purchasing (Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund, 2015).

2.2 Persuasion knowledge model

In the beginning of this chapter it was mentioned that if people recognize a persuasion attempt, they may react to it in a negative way. Whenever consumers evaluate the brand, the source, the advertised topic, and the advertising tactic, they use persuasion knowledge, which is a theory that will be covered in this sub-chapter.

2.2.1 Persuasion knowledge model

Persuasion knowledge model (PKM) was developed by Friestad & Wright (1994). They criticized the previous literature for dealing the target as a passive object that doesn't know anything about being influenced. In real life, this is not the case – we don't watch TV advertisements just absorbing all the things we are told totally unknown that we're a target of a persuasion. The persuasion target is an active participant in a bilateral interaction with the persuasion agent (e.g. salesperson or advertiser) in which both parties try to attempt their own goals, and consumers as targets have intuitive theories that they use to evaluate and cope with the attempts (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009).

PKM is presented in the Figure 2. Target is the person or group of people that the attempt is intended for. Agent is whomever the target holds responsible for designing and constructing the attempt. In the middle, there is persuasion attempt which might be an advertisement, sales presentation or other message that the target sees as agent's strategic behavior aiming at influencing the targets beliefs, attitudes, decisions, or actions. Coping behavior is basically what the target tries to do in response to the attempt. Persuasion episode, the overlapping area of persuasion attempt and coping behavior, is defined as the part of the attempt that is directly observable by the target. (Friestad & Wright, 1994)

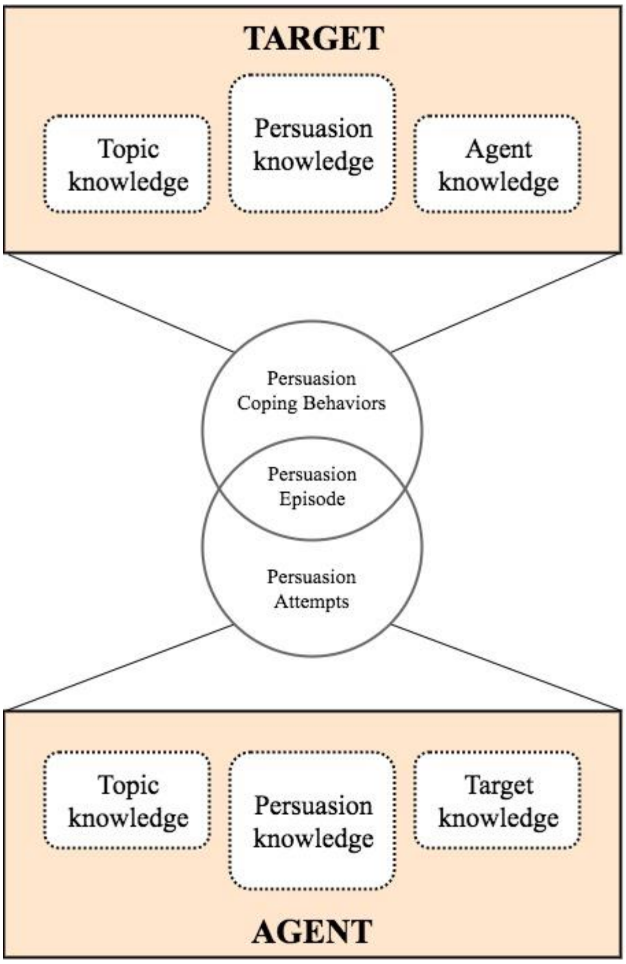

Figure 2. Persuasion Knowledge Model (Friestad & Wright, 1994)

Both target and agent use knowledge they have about persuasion and knowledge they have about the specific topic in their actions. Besides these, the target uses the knowledge he or she has gained during his or her life about the persuasion agent (e.g. brand) and vice versa. (Friestad & Wright, 1994) Agent knowledge could be for example previous ads from the brand or the salespeople in that particular brand's brick and mortar stores.

Persuasion knowledge is a combination of interrelated beliefs about the psychological events occurring in the persuasion attempt, the causes and effects of them, the importance of them, the ability to control one's psychological responses, the temporal course of the persuasion process, and finally the effectiveness and appropriateness of the used persuasion tactics. Persuasion knowledge evolves throughout one's lifespan, and at some point, adult's persuasion knowledge will resemble a model or theory of a "common-sense psychology" of persuasion. (Friestadt & Wright, 1994)

PKM has a heavy emphasis on target's perception so even if agent defines its strategy in a certain way the persuasion attempt might still not be it if the target perceives it in some other way (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Kirmani & Campbell (2009) point out that this is the exact reason why PKM stands out from other persuasion models.

In the context of this study, it is easy to determine the target – it is the consumer that follows influential people on Instagram. However, the agent might be different depending on whether the target views the attempt as an advertisement, when the agent is brand, or just a recommendation from a "friend", when the agent is influencer.

2.2.2 Development of persuasion knowledge

Development of persuasion knowledge depends on the maturity of some basic cognitive skills and experiences that an individual has from his or her social encounters or from discussions about persuasion, advertising or psychological events. Therefore, the development of persuasion knowledge continues during the target's life span, starting from point zero and evolving into an increasingly interrelated and valid structure of causal–explanatory beliefs about advertisers' psychological and behavioral goals, advertising tactics, coping tactics to self-manage the persuasion attempt's effects, as well as persuasion-control goals. (Friestad & Wright, 1994; Wright, Friestad & Boush, 2005)

Age is of course an easy way to reflect the persuasion knowledge development, but even more accurate measurement for that would be experience. Age often brings experience, so these two definitely don't exclude each other but it doesn't matter how old a person is if the environment is completely new. A person having more experience in that type of advertising has more persuasion knowledge about that than someone who is 20 years older but sees that type of advertising for the first time in his or her life. So, even though age is a good indicator for the development of persuasion knowledge, it might be a dangerous assumption that older people have more persuasion knowledge when studying new advertising methods.

Due to changing advertising landscape, persuasion knowledge also changes over time and geographical areas, so that each generation's and culture's thinking may differ somewhat from that of past generations and other cultures. People also actively switch between the roles of target and agent on a daily basis and the knowledge a person gains in each role he or she uses also when acting in the other role. (Friestad & Wright, 1994)

Friestad & Wright (1999) mention two goals that people have in developing and learning to skillfully use persuasion knowledge in everyday life. First one is to have self-control over the attempted interventions into one's private self and public life by other people. Another one is to effectively build and maintain relationships with others who sometimes try to persuade a person in certain directions and who that same person periodically tries to persuade.

In the first paper that introduced the concept of persuasion knowledge, Friestad & Wright (1994) assumed that people use it for many purposes. First of all, people use it for evaluating claims about the advertised product or service – people often make a quick judgement about whether the observation is or is not a persuasion attempt. Secondly, people use persuasion knowledge to make a judgement about the persuasion agent. Thirdly, people use persuasion knowledge out of pure interest in marketing or persuasion in general. They want to observe how advertisements and sales presentations are constructed the way they are. (Friestad & Wright, 1994)

Just like many other psychological perceptions, persuasion knowledge is believed to consist of two dimensions: a cognitive and an affective dimension (Boerman, Van Reijmersdal, and Neijens 2012; Rozendaal et al. 2011). Cognitive dimension of persuasion knowledge includes the ability to recognize commercial content from neutral content, understanding of advertising's persuasive intent and advertising tactics and appeals, the recognition of bias and deception, and the ability to use cognitive defenses against advertising. Cognitive persuasion knowledge is also referred as conceptual persuasion knowledge and it is the first step of persuasion knowledge. (Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa, 2017)

Affective dimension of persuasion knowledge, also referred as attitudinal persuasion knowledge, is more about consumers' tendency to disbelief or dislike advertising (Boerman, Van Reijmersdal, and Neijens 2012; Rozendaal et al. 2011). Affective persuasion knowledge develops as a feeling of skepticism and distrust towards advertising, but it can be applied to a commercial message and can be target's persuasion coping behavior. In order to use affective dimension of persuasion knowledge, the target needs to first activate their cognitive persuasion knowledge and therefore the effect of disclosure on cognitive persuasion knowledge us expected to influence the level of affective persuasion knowledge. (Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa, 2017)

2.2.3 Activation of persuasion knowledge

PKM emphasizes that people need to be aware of the persuasion attempt in order to activate persuasion knowledge (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The surrounding conditions however have a big role in the process and thus is important to investigate which characteristics limit and which factors encourage consumers' use of persuasion knowledge.

As mentioned earlier in this study, persuasion knowledge is something that evolves during person's life span. Children lack the experience and thus can't activate persuasion knowledge, but while growing up, they develop more understanding of the persuasion process and relative effectiveness and fairness of different advertising tactics. They need to gain practical experience in recognizing, evaluating and responding in different ways to the marketing tactics they most often get exposed to. (Wright, Friestad & Boush, 2005) So in general older people should have more knowledge about advertising and thus use it to resist persuasive attempts more often compared to younger people, but what matters even more is the experience a person has in that specific advertising tactic. So, in social media, younger people might often have more experience and thus their persuasion knowledge could be better.

The degree of how significant the disclosure is, has different effect on different types of people. Kirmani & Zhu (2007) researched this topic in the context of regulatory focus theory. The regulatory focus theory by Higgins (1997) divides people into two categories: promotion-focused and prevention focused. Promotion-focused people need nurturing, have strong ideals, and view situations based on what can be gained. In contrast, prevention-focused people need safety, have strong oughts, and view situations based on what can be lost (Higgins, 1997). In their study, Kirmani & Zhu (2007) showed that prevention-focused people are more skeptical towards ads and activate persuasion knowledge easier than promotion-focused people. Promotion-focused people only activate their persuasion knowledge if the manipulative intent is highly salient.

Accessibility of persuasion motives and the cognitive capacity of the consumer also effect the persuasion knowledge activation. When the persuasion motive is highly salient, both cognitively busy targets and unbusy observers activate persuasion knowledge to evaluate the agent. When motive is less salient, cognitively busy targets are less likely to activate persuasion knowledge seeing agent sincerer than cognitively unbusy observers. (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000) The study has been made before the era of social media and there has been a lot of discussion about social media and smartphones affecting peoples' cognitive functioning during recent years. There are no conclusive results about it, but media headlines encourage a public perception that smartphones have negative effect on our cognitive functions (Wilmer, Sherman & Chein, 2017).

In order to manage a persuasion attempt's effects on them, targets in PKM will develop beliefs about the cognitive, emotional, or physical actions they can execute to "fight back" (Friestad & Wright, 1994). However, sometimes their judgement is inaccurate. People tend to think that they are more immune to persuasive communication in the mass media than other people, and thus think that other people are more likely be influenced by them (e.g. Davidson, 1983; Paul, Salwen & Dupagne, 2000; Sun, Pan & Shen, 2008; Eisend, 2015). This phenomenon is called third-person perception (TPP) and it can occur even if there is no evidence of the persuasive intent of the media message (Gibbon & Durkin, 1995).

According to Eisend (2015), research shows that TTP particularly depends on subjective knowledge. So, in the context of this study, the more consumers *think* they know about the advertised product, the advertising itself or the agent (influencer or the brand), the more they think themselves to be able to cope with the advertisement without letting it affect their judgement. However, people are not accurate judges of their own liability to be influenced (Gibbon & Durkin, 1995).

2.3 Consumer attitude towards persuasion

An empirical evidence from a long time shows that about 70% of consumers think that advertising is often dishonest, and they assume it is mostly trying to benefit the seller instead of the consumer. In contrast, advertising is also found to be a significant source of information about the product range that is available in the market and can be thought as consumer education. (Calfee & Ringold, 1994) Over time, consumers will develop beliefs about marketers' possible end goals and parallel beliefs about the possible end goals they can pursue themselves in their coping activities. Persuasion knowledge is relevant to the goals of forming attitudes about products that are being promoted, judging what type of future relationship to have with the marketer on the basis of the marketer's persuasion behaviors, and gaining general insights about persuasion tactics. (Friestad & Wright, 1994)

The skepticism that consumers have towards advertising results in that the most common coping response to advertising by consumers is ignorance (Obermiller, Spangenberg & MacLachlan, 2005). However, credibility has a big role in whether the advertisement is ignored or not (Moore & Rodgers, 2005) and if there is enough credibility and the advertisement passes the consumer's attention threshold, consumer might form an attitude towards it.

Ajzen (2005, 3) defines attitude as "a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event". The formal definitions of attitude vary, but most social psychologists agree that the characteristic attribute is the evaluative nature and the fact that it has some sort of an object (Ajzen, 2005, 3). Attitude also is relatively enduring compared to emotions which are transitory (Spears & Singh, 2004). A funny TV-commercial might make you joyous (emotion), but it usually fades within minutes, or even seconds, compared to if the commercial makes you feel suspicious about the brand (attitude) – that feeling probably will follow you to the next time you see the brand's product on the store shelf. In this study, the goal to learn what is the attitude that persuasion target has towards a) the persuasion attempt, which is the ad, and b) the persuasion agent, which is the brand or the influencer depending on how consumers perceive it.

MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch (1986) define attitude towards the ad (A_{ad}) as a "predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion". Attitude towards the brand (A_b) is defined as "a relatively enduring, unidimensional summary evaluation of the brand that presumably energizes behavior" (Spears & Singh, 2004). These two affects are separate, yet highly linked to each other – A_{ad} has a strong positive influence on A_b, meaning that the more positive the attitude is towards the ad, the more positive is the attitude towards the brand (MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986). Machleit & Wilson (1988) object this generalization and suggest, that this relationship is moderated by brand familiarity: for unfamiliar brands this influence is significant but for familiar brands it is not. However, in Shimp's study (1981), A_{ad} has been found to be a significant mediator of consumer brand choice without making a distinction in brand familiarity. A_{ad} also has an effect on the favorability of cognitive reactions to the brand, those being the things that the target thinks during the persuasion attempt, and this relationship is independent from A_b (MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986).

Not many studies have looked into the effects that persuasion knowledge activation has on consumer attitude. Previously there was just underlying view that brands utilizing covert marketing practices would get unfavorable response from consumers, but Wei, Fischer & Main (2008) wished to have hard evidence on the matter. They conducted three experimental studies that do support this common mindset, but they found the negative effects are moderated by perceived appropriateness of covert marketing tactics and again brand familiarity.

Based on the persuasion knowledge literature and previous studies on consumer attitude, it can be assumed that the more consumers think a persuasion attempt is an ad, the less they like it. And since A_{ad} has been found strongly effecting A_b, the hypotheses 1a & 1b are formed as follows:

H1a: *Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{ad}.*
H1b: *Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_b.*

Batra & Ahtola (1991) suggest that there are two distinct components in A_b: hedonic and utilitarian. Hedonic determinant is based on the consumer's own evaluation of how much pleasure he or she gets whereas utilitarian determinant is based on consumer's evaluation of the "instrumental value of the brand's functional attributes". Their study suggest that the utilitarian component can be measured with semantic differential items useful/useless, valuable/worthless, beneficial/harmful, and wise/foolish, and the hedonic component by the items pleasant/unpleasant, nice/awful, agreeable-disagreeable, and happy/sad. They state that items good/bad, positive/negative, like/dislike and favorable/unfavorable measure general attitudes, but that they can sometimes load on the hedonic component. This distinction will be used when choosing the items measuring consumer attitude in the empirical study to get as comprehensive set of items as possible.

Consumers reflect their self to the brand personality and endorser's personality. Pradhan, Duraipandian & Sethi (2016) studied how celebrity-brand-user personality congruence affects brand attitude. They found out that user-brand and brand-celebrity personality congruence have a significant impact on A_b, but user-celebrity congruence does not. So, for consumers, it's important that the brand's personality resonates with theirs, and that the brand's personality resonates with the celebrity's one. Endorser-brand congruence is discussed more thoroughly in the section 3.2.2.

People want to influence and also allow themselves to be influenced in nearly every interpersonal segment of their lives (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Social influence means the change in a person's activities, emotions or actions that is resulted by his or her relations with other people (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Accepting social influence serves multiple goals: to behave effectively, to build and maintain relationships, and to manage self-concept. (Cialdini & Trost, 1998; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004) The extent to which people potentially accept influence is a combined function of a) the relative importance of the anticipated effect, b) the relative power of the influencing agent, and c) the prepotency of the induced response. (Kelman, 1958). Kelman (1961) also states that "opinions adopted under different conditions of social influence, and based on different motivations, will differ in terms of their qualitative characteristics and their subsequent histories". He claims that there are three processes of social influence: compliance, identification and internalization and these will be discussed further next.

Compliance occurs when a person accepts influence from others hoping to get a favorable response from someone else. In this case, people don’t adopt a certain behavior because they believe in it, they do so in order to get a satisfying social effect as a result. (Kelman, 1961) According to Cialdini & Trost (1998), there are six psychological principles that seem to influence behavioral compliance situations most powerfully. These principles include: 1) getting a gift or favor in return, 2) being consistent with prior commitments, 3) following the lead of similar others, 4) accommodating the requests of those we know, 5) conforming to the directives of legitimate authority, and finally 6) seizing opportunities that are hard to get your hands on. Compliance as a social influence process is not necessarily so relevant in the context of social media influencers compared to the two following processes.

Identification occurs when a person adopts behavior from someone hoping to become more like the influencing agent, since the relationship somehow defines the persons self-image (Kelman, 1961). We look up celebrities that have both good and bad characteristics and behavioral attributes and let them act as our role models having enormous social influence. Media consumers of all ages try to emulate the appearance and behaviors of media characters by wearing the same clothes, using the same products, and acting like them. (Fraser & Brown, 2002) Identification differs majorly from compliance when it comes to motivation of being influenced: in identification process people adopt values, beliefs and behaviors because they believe in them, whereas in compliance they adopt them just to obtain a favorable reaction from someone else (Kelman, 1958).

Internalization occurs when people adopt certain behaviors because they are aligned with their value systems and they are rewarding as such. The behaviors resonate with the influencing target’s existing values and the satisfaction comes from the content of the new behavior. (Kelman, 1958) In internalization, the influencing agent’s credibility plays an important role (Kelman, 1961), so one could assume that especially when influencer’s level of expertise is valued, the process of conformity will happen in this manner.

3 INFLUENCER MARKETING ON INSTAGRAM

Using celebrities for promoting products and services is a popular marketing strategy (Choi & Rifon, 2012) and it has been that for quite some time now. However, from the early 2000s it hasn't been just celebrities promoting products – also 'ordinary' people have taken the advantage of social media to build themselves a plausible self-brand and utilizing their follower base in marketing activities (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2017). By doing that, these ordinary people are then able to earn money, free products and services by promoting brands for their network.

As was indicated in the background of this study, influencer marketing has been hyped a lot during recent years so it's crucial to look into what makes this type of marketing communication effective and how it is utilized by companies in their marketing activities. This chapter also explains what kind of social medium Instagram is, and lastly presents a final synthesis of the theoretical part of the study including the hypotheses that will be tested in the empirical part.

3.1 Word-of-mouth communication

The previous chapter focused on how consumers form opinions about brands and ads. These opinions are often not just something people keep to themselves but rather something they are willing to share with others. When we're in a need of advice, we often turn to our friends and family, and looking for new products or services is not an exception. The riskier we feel about the purchase, the more we seek for information from others, and the closer relationship we have with the information provider or the stronger the expertise possessed by the information provider, the more we are likely to act according to their recommendations (Bansal & Voyer, 2000).

Word-of-mouth (WoM) is the common term for the communication that consumers have with each other about products and services (Lee & Youn, 2009). Explaining the rationale of WoM is crucial when trying to understand influencer marketing as a marketing tactic since that is the method of communication in the influencer endorsement process. WoM as a concept has been around for a long time but the development of network technology and the rise of the Internet have moved the traditional WoM communication that happens face-to-face to electronic WoM (e-WoM) communication happening on online channels (Lee & Koo, 2012). Consumers share their opinions on different platforms: company websites, online forums, social networking sites, blogs, etc., and they also rely on the Internet when it comes to finding out important product information or advice online (Pan & Chiou, 2011). WoM has crucial role in the market formations of new products and services, and it is especially important in the introductions of new high-tech innovations (Cho, Hwang & Lee, 2012).

Dichter (1966) studied the motives that people have for WoM from both listener and speaker perspectives. He found out that people talk about a brand if the talking itself or the expected listener behavior that will follow create some kind of satisfaction to the speaker. Further investigated he found four involvement categories for speaker motivation: product-involvement (confirming pleasurable or non-pleasurable experience of ownership or discovery), self-involvement (self-confirmation to e.g. gain attention, “spread the gospel” or feel like a pioneer by converting others to use the product), other-involvement (sharing enthusiasm of things enjoyed together with other people), and lastly message-involvement (people accept advertisement’s effects and its value as an entertainment and talk about it). Listener motivation depends on two conditions: if the speaker is interested in the listener and his or her well-being, and if the speaker has knowledge and expertise about the product that the listener finds convincing. (Dichter, 1966)

These motives show that WoM can be natural means of communication where consumers share their thoughts with purely psychological motives. However, it can also be long-thought activity initiated by companies with commercial interests rewarding the speakers also monetarily. In WoM marketing companies promote their products via opinion leaders, who have large network and are looked up by their peers. These opinion leaders might give their audience product information, give recommendations or comments about a particular product or topic related to it and receiving a compensation from this action. (Li & Du, 2011)

According to Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund (2015), there are five different types of monetary compensation that are used in blogger collaborations, which are mostly applicable in the context of other social media influencers as well. Firstly, the influencer can recommend a product using their own money & resources and without receiving any compensation for it – the goal of this could be attracting future sponsors. Secondly, the influencer can receive products for free, with or without instructions for promoting them. Thirdly, influencers are offered money or gift cards as a return for promoting products. Fourthly, influencers can get money for directing traffic for websites or sales points. Fifth and last tactic for bloggers is selling advertising space in the blog website for example in the form of banners or pop-ups. (Liljander, Gummerus & Söderlund, 2015)

WoM marketing is seen as more credible than other forms of marketing (e.g. Lee & Youn, 2009; Li & Du, 2011; Lee & Koo, 2012). This might result from the situation where the information sender has no obvious link to the brand and thus consumers think the message is subjective and independent. Another reason why WoM marketing is seen so credible is that the message can also be more persuasive, since the information sender possibly knows his or her audience better than the brand would know (Li & Du, 2011). Bloggers know their audience well based on the feedback they get and analytics they have access to, so they might be better at coming up ways to persuade their readers than the people behind the brand.

The Internet however provides a new dimension to the credibility, since in many platforms the communication is anonymous. For example, on product review page of an ecommerce site you can't know if the person who's leaving a comment has a connection to the brand or not. And even if the writer has no connection to the brand, there might still be lots of people writing about products without actually having any experience of the usage. It is so common that there is a term 'trolling' that describes messaging with no purpose, to create contradictions or just to annoy other Internet-users. The WoM that occurs in digital channels is known as electronic word of mouth (eWoM).

The high level of credibility in eWoM is not necessarily as clear as in offline channels due to the factors mentioned above. What makes consumers believe in these online messages then? Park, Wang, Yao & Kang (2011) propose a framework of 4C's for evaluating eWoM credibility. Their framework suggests that the source credibility is determined by the relationship between the speaker and the listener (community), combined with their experience levels (competence), while message credibility is evidenced through the substance of the communication (content) and how it resonates with the receiver (consensus).

Pan & Chiou (2011) found that the type of relationship between the people discussing has an effect on the message credibility both in positive and negative WoM. For experience goods (e.g. wine or a beauty product), the information-seekers find messages more credible if the discussants have a close social relationship with each other, even if the discussants are unfamiliar to them. For credence goods (e.g. nutritional supplements), people find negative messages more credible if the discussants seem to have a close relationship. They also found that when all else is equal, negative messages are seen as more credible for experience goods. (Pan & Chiou, 2011)

There are inconclusive results if valence has an effect on the message credibility (Lee & Koo, 2012). Consumers are more likely to trust on eWoM communication, if there is consensus between the discussants (Doh & Hwang, 2009). So naturally, it’s more trustworthy if most of the people agree that this new type of sports watch is, or is not, functioning as it was promised at the point of sales. However, if the overall direction of the eWoM communication is positive, the trustworthiness is replaced with suspiciousness, if there aren’t any negative messages.

3.2 Endorsement effectiveness

Now that we’ve evaluated the benefits of utilizing WoM communication, it’s time to go through what makes people believe in an endorsement. When it comes to endorsements, there are two commonly reported components that effect their effectiveness: source credibility and endorser-brand congruence (e.g. Kirmani & Shiv, 1998; Choi & Rifon, 2012). These components are chosen as moderators in the empirical study, and they are therefore now discussed in more detail.

3.2.1 Source credibility

A highly credible source has been found to be more persuasive than one with low credibility (e.g. Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Horai, Naccari & Fatoullah, 1974) even though it has also been suggested that that only applies when it comes to attitude change – low credibility sources might actually be more effective in changing one's behavior (Dholakia & Sernthal, 1977). This inconclusiveness seems to be characteristic for source credibility studies so no one absolute truth is available. Scholars have examined for example expertise, bias, trustworthiness and accuracy when evaluating source credibility (Moore & Rodgers, 2005), but commonly reported dimensions of source credibility are expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness (e.g. Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell, 2000; Choi & Rifon, 2012). These three dimensions are also used in this study and are explained next.

Like common sense would probably suggest, the source has been found to be more credible when holding expertise on communication topic compared to a non-expert source (e.g. Maddux & Rogers, 1980; Wilson & Sherrell, 1993). However, also low-expertise sources have been shown to affect opinion change positively (Homer & Kahle, 1990). The source is also more credible when providing supporting arguments, and this is independent and additive to the credibility that expertise creates (Maddux & Rogers, 1980).

The most opinion change is created by trustworthy source that is also considered as an expert, however, the trustworthy source is more persuasive whether they are considered as an expert or not (McGinnies & Ward, 1980). This could be summed up that trustworthiness is even more important than expertise when it comes to persuasion.

Artz & Tybout (1999) however claim that the message characteristics can influence whether agent's credibility enhances, undermines, or has no effect on persuasion. If the agent has expertise, the persuasion is stronger when the message includes quantitative information since experts are assumed to support their advocacy with such detailed data that they have access to. Non-experts are assumed to not have access to such data and thus they are expected to limit their arguments to their own evaluations. If the level of expertise and type of argument conflict, the target most likely makes a careful review on the agent in order to explain the mismatch. If in these conflict situations the target focuses on the source bias (consistent with PKM), the target is likely to make negative inferences about the agent. (Artz & Tybout, 1999)

Based on these findings, it can be assumed that if overtness of the ad has a negative effect on consumer attitude, the effect is not as drastic when the target finds the influencer trustworthy or expert. Thus, the hypothesis 2a is formed as follows:

H2a: *The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.*

The evidence of physical attractiveness effecting on source credibility is not unanimous. Kelman (1961) states that whether attractiveness effects the source's power to change opinions depends on identification: "An agent is attractive if he occupies a role which the individual himself desires or if he occupies a role reciprocal to one the individual wants to establish or maintain". Maddux & Rogers (1980) found no evidence for attractiveness alone affecting to persuasion but combined with expertise or argumentation it might help to persuade. According to Joseph's experiment (1977), source attractiveness is a persuasive asset only if the target has no prior convictions about the promoted product or service.

As the previous studies give somewhat conflicting results, not a clear hypothesis can be drawn regarding source attractiveness moderating the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude. For this study, hypothesis 2b is formed as follows:

H2b: *The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.*

3.2.2 Endorser-brand congruence

Endorser-brand congruence, also in some studies known as the 'match-up hypothesis', means the fittingness between the endorser and the brand (e.g. Kamins, 1990; Till & Busler, 2000). Many studies on endorser-brand congruence overlap with the previous section, as congruence is explained through traditional source characteristics such as attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness. Kirmani & Shiv (1998) however criticize this approach and suggest that endorser-brand congruence is rather based on the specific endorser-related attribute associations. For example, an actor that has starred in multiple action-movies as a tough person is a better match-up to a hard-core energy drink than some actor who's known as a Disney prince.

As one could probably guess, it's been found that a good match-up is more effective when creating more positive outcomes from advertising compared to a bad match-up (e.g. Kamins, 1990; Misra & Beatty, 1990; Rifon, Choi, Trimble & Li, 2004; Choi & Rifon, 2012). Rifon et al. (2004) also found that the relationship between congruence and attitude towards the brand is mediated by brand credibility. When explaining endorsement effectiveness, congruence between brand and celebrity has been shown to be as effective as celebrity likability (Fleck, Korchia & Le Roy, 2012).

Rice, Kelting & Lutz (2012) studied the effects of endorser-brand congruence on consumer attitude in two situations: when the brand has multiple endorsers and when a celebrity does multiple endorsements for different brands. They found out that under low involvement conditions brand attitudes become more positive with multiple endorsers and more negative when a celebrity endorses many different brands. In high involvement conditions this negative effect of multiple brands is overridden by strong source congruence.

Based on the rather unanimous empirical evidence on endorser-brand congruence, this study assumes that that if overtness of the ad has a negative effect on consumer attitude, the effect is not as drastic if the match-up between the endorser and the brand is good. Thus, the hypothesis 3 is formed as follows:

H3: *The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees there is a fit between the endorser and the brand.*

3.3 Influencer endorsement as a marketing tactic

Casadesus-Masanell & Ricart (2010) define tactics as "the residual choices open to a firm by virtue of the business model that it employs". Marketing tactics thus are the actions that companies take in order to reach their specific marketing goals. There are many different marketing tactics that can be used in online environment, but this sub-chapter focuses on explaining the tactic of advertising through influencers.

3.3.1 The relationship between influencers and their followers

Utilizing the power of influential people is not a new marketing tactic – using celebrities in product endorsements goes all the way back to late 19th century (Erdogan, 1999). According to McCracken (1989) a celebrity endorser is "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement." This definition holds still true, but Bergkvist & Zhoua (2016) modified it slightly to match today's environment even better: "celebrity endorsement is an agreement between an individual who enjoys public recognition (a celebrity) and an entity (e.g., a brand) to use the celebrity for the purpose of promoting the entity." This considers the fact that celebrity endorsement is not only used in advertising but also in for example social media posts and celebrity-branded products.

The new social media era has brought new group of influential people that people like to follow but aren't necessarily widely considered as celebrities. According to Chae (2017) micro-celebrity involves "the practice of self-presentation on social media, which is accomplished by the creation of one's own online image and the use of that image to attract attention and a large number of followers". These micro-celebrities are also often called social media influencers and they could basically be anyone ranging from unknown actors, models, friends of celebrities, yoga teachers, wealthy people living a luxurious life and pretty high school girls (Chae, 2017). While mainstream entertainment industry celebrities may feel distant, social media influencers interact more with their followers and feel more accessible, believable, intimate and thus easy to relate (Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017). Social media influencers are often famous among a niche group of people, but totally unknown to most (Marwick, 2015; Abidin, 2016). For example, a photographer can be a micro-celebrity among people who like photography, but masses might have no idea who that person is.

Following a person's life through social media for a long time might give a feeling of actually knowing that person. Para-social interaction (PSI) occurs when a person has an illusion of a face-to-face relationship with a media character (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Every encounter creates some sort of a PSI but strong feelings about an influencer's personality don't happen overnight – they form after numerous encounters (Auter, 1992). Naturally one could assume that the longer a person has followed an influencer's life on social media, the stronger the PSI is. Also, the more influencers reveal what's going on in their lives, the stronger the PSI most likely is. The whole following relationship has a positive light in people's minds since they don't feel any obligation, effort or responsibility over the them as they are free to withdraw from the relationship at any moment (Horton & Wohl, 1956).

There have been multiple studies about PSI in different social media. Frederick, Lim, Clavio & Walsh (2012) studied the development of PSI on Twitter and found that the more social the influencer (in this case an athlete) is on the social media channel, the higher the PSI is. Their study also showed that if the influencer shows means of interaction (following back, replying to comments, etc.), his or her followers feel like they are closer and are more willing to engage in further dialogue. Thorson & Rodger's (2006) study also support the argument that perceived interactivity of the influencer has an effect on PSI formation. Colliander & Dahlén (2011) studied the degree of PSI in blogs and compared it to online magazines. They found out that blogs create a higher PSI than online magazines, and since on Instagram many influencers post on a daily basis, one could assume that it would also result in stronger PSI.

3.3.2 Influencer endorsement vs. display ads

To further highlight the characteristics of influencer marketing as a tactic, it is next compared to more traditional type of online marketing: display advertising. Display advertising typically includes banner advertisements on websites, and during recent years they have evolved to include many visual and audio features instead of just showing a still image (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011). These advertisements can be placed on the sides of the web page, in the middle of the content, or for example opening as a pop-up when opening the page. Some people state that display advertising is the same as online advertising, but in this section the term display advertising is used in order to avoid confusion with search engine advertising.

Both display advertising and influencer endorsement are not limited to consumer goods – they both are tactics widely used in all business areas: B2C goods and services, B2B goods and services, non-commercial entities as well as non-profit organizations (Bergkvist &

Zhoua, 2016). However, they are quite different by nature. Some marketing tactics are better for reaching one type of goal, but other tactics work better with other goals – it is impossible to say which tactic is better than the other. Thus, the following paragraphs gather together different perspectives from which influencer endorsements differ from display ads and this way come up with situations where influencer endorsements are particularly suitable. The main differences are also listed in the Table 2 at the end of this section.

Visibility

Display advertisements on websites can often be blocked with an ad blocker that is an extension that one can add to their web browser. The extension then blocks all the third-party content that it finds in the website content and leaves blank spaces to their spots. As already mentioned in the introduction chapter, ad blockers are becoming more and more popular and this has created a problem for advertisers since they are not getting their message through and they are losing millions of dollars in revenue because of it (Statista, 2018a).

When banner ads are not disabled with ad blockers and actually are visible for web users, they may not feel so obtrusive since consumers are aware that they exist, they know where they usually are located, and in many cases, they can ignore them if they want. In comparison, when scrolling their Instagram feed, people first see the photo or video and after that read the caption, so users get exposed to an advertisement before they know that they are watching one. For people with high desire of control this might be a problem. (Liu & Shrum, 2002)

Another aspect related to visibility in display advertising is that companies can't always decide which websites their advertisements will be featured on. This might create awkward situations for brands if their message is not in line with the website content. For example, news sites use lots of display banners to finance their free content, and it might happen that a news article about drunk driver causing a horrible accident features a beer advertisement.

Frequency

Frequency means how many times each individual gets exposed to the advertisement. The characters of Instagram are further introduced in the next sub-chapter, but the design of the app makes it inconvenient for followers to get exposed to an influencer's post again –

meaning that in order to get higher frequency for their ad, brands need to pay the influencer to post multiple times (which might irritate his or her followers) or pay many different influencers that have similar kind of follower base to publish the advertisement. For display advertisements, it's easier to reach higher frequency since media space provider networks might enable you to target specific people, so no matter what pages they browse in, they will still see the advertisement.

Obtrusiveness

Consumers find sponsored content more informative, more amusing and less irritating compared to display advertising (Tutaj & van Rejmersdal, 2012). When the advertisement is planted in a surrounding where it doesn't pop out, it doesn't irritate viewer as much. This again links to persuasion knowledge theory: when the advertisement doesn't pop out, it's more likely to be perceived as normal content instead of persuasion attempt and thus seen in a positive light.

Trust/authenticity

People rather trust people than brands when it comes to learning about products and services, and this was quite broadly already discussed in the sub-chapter addressing WoM. Influencers are also able to bring a context to a product (Woods, 2016). The ability to applicate the product to real life is something that differentiates influencer endorsements from banner ads. Instead of being introduced to a product, consumer is able to see how the product is used and who uses it.

The words might not always be enough when it comes to convincing consumers. According to Dichter (1966), "The real meaning of a product and of its effect to the user is revealed not only through the choice of the speaker's words, but also through the discharge of emotions in inflection, face, and body expressions, and gestures." Even though display ads can include images of people as well, they won't seem as genuine as a post made by an influencer since the message source is clearly a company with commercial purposes. However, display advertising effectiveness is higher when consumer is familiar with and already trusts the company behind the advertisement (Bleier & Eisenbeiss, 2015). This also supports the argument presented earlier in this study that influencer marketing (or WoM marketing) works well in new product introductions, since even if the brand isn't trusted yet, the influencer might be which also increases the trust to the new product.

Action

Display advertisements are clickable, so they often lure consumers to land on the advertiser's web page. Taking action after the exposure is a lot easier when seeing a display advertisement compared to an influencer advertisement on Instagram since Instagram doesn't allow to have links in captions. Thus, the only way to connect the brand's own channel to the post is by tagging their Instagram profile on the photo. Think about a scenario where you see a nice pair of shoes in a banner ad and by clicking it you end up on a page where you can straight away add those shoes to your basket and click them home. Compare that scenario to another one, where you see the shoes you like worn by an influencer on Instagram, where you click the brand that is tagged to the post, continue to their profile, click a link leading to their home page, and start searching for the shoes you just saw – and all this on a mobile device. The latter scenario has a lot longer path from exposure to purchase and thus a lot more crucial points to lose the consumer. Taking this into account, one could say that influencer endorsements on Instagram are more suitable for building brand awareness and positive brand attitudes than to create direct sales.

Engagement/interactivity

While display ads lead a straighter path to conversion, they provide less room for interactivity, which is "the degree to which two or more communication parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, and on the messages and the degree to which such influences are synchronized" (Liu & Shrum, 2002). In display advertisements, interactivity could mean for example that a web user can choose a destination where the ad will show flight deals, which in Campbell & Wright's study (2008) significantly affected consumer's attitude towards the online ad, website, and the product that is featured in the advertisement. Influencer endorsements on Instagram provide a platform for discussion where consumers can take part in or like the post.

Risk/creative control

One could say that influencer endorsements are riskier for companies than display advertisements. Display advertisements are created by the company itself or if using an agency, the brand has at least the final say when it comes to the design of it. When using influencers as an advertising channel, the brand can just give guidelines about the end result, but the final execution is done by the influencer, so companies lose some creative control (Woods, 2016). Successful influencer endorsement has to seem like it is written by the influencer, not the company, so it also makes sense to give the control to the influencer even with a little bit of risk.

Also choosing the correct influencer is somewhat risky. There should not be any contradictions in what the influencer says and what the brand says, and any negative associations with the influencer can lead to negative associations with the brand. (Woods, 2016). An example of this is a sports drink brand Gatorade dropping its sponsorship with famous golf player Tiger Woods after Woods got into headlines because of a sex scandal in 2009 (Pepitone, 2010). Associating a brand with a person is risky since the person's actions now and in the future are out of the brand's control.

Cost

The common rule for evaluating cost of advertising is that the more people you reach with your advertisement, the more it costs. This applies both to advertising through influencers and to display advertising. Influencer marketing is more cost-effective than display advertising, and in many cases due to ad blockers, display ads won't even show up for consumers (East, 2016).

Influencer endorsement contracts have a positive impact on stock returns and thus it is viewed as a worthwhile investment in advertising (Agrawal & Kamakura, 1995). Companies choose the influencers they use in their marketing activities for example based on viewers per month, linkages, post frequency, media citation score, industry score, social aggregator rate, engagement index, subject related posts, and quality of the posts (Booth & Matic, 2011).

Table 2. Comparison between display advertising and influencer endorsements

	Display advertising	**Influencer endorsements**
Visibility	Depends on ad blockers, brands don't always know which sites the advertisement will be featured on	Always visible for consumers
Ignorance	Often easier to ignore by force of habit	The commercial nature of the post disclosed after the exposure
Frequency	Easier to make a consumer to see the advertisement several times	Have to use different influencers with similar follower base to increase frequency
Trust	Consumers have to trust the advertiser beforehand	People rather trust people
Action	Short and easy path to direct sales	More suitable for building awareness, since taking action requires many steps
Interactivity	Design of the ad can be interactive, so that consumer can affect the final advertisement	Possibility for true conversation between consumers, brands and influencers
Creativity control	Brand has full control of the end result	Brand has control over which influencer is chosen but the influencer controls the end result
Cost	Lots of money wasted due to ad blockers	The most cost-effective advertising tactic

3.3.3 Consumer responses to influencer marketing

According to the study by Tripp, Jensen & Carlson (1994), the number of products that a celebrity endorses has a negative effect on endorser credibility and likability as well as attitude towards the ad. Independent from this relationship, they also found that the number of exposures to the celebrity endorser has a negative effect on attitude towards the ad and purchase intention. This is an interesting notice regarding this thesis since influencers typically promote many different brands and rather often. However, the exposure is not so high since most of the followers probably only see the advertisement once when scrolling through their feed of new posts.

Wood & Burkhalter (2014) studied the use influencers on Twitter and found out that sponsored tweets by well-known people work well in capturing attention and giving information about the brand, but they don't have much impact on changing brand opinions. Thus, they recommend using this tactic with unfamiliar brands rather than familiar ones.

As was noticed in the sub-chapter 3.2, endorser credibility plays an important role in consumer attitude formation, but corporate credibility matters is equally important. Findings from Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell's study (2000) suggest that corporate credibility plays an important role in consumers' reactions to advertisements and brands, independent of endorser credibility. This means that if the brand has lost its credibility in the consumer's eye, it cannot be gained back by using an endorser that he or she likes.

Besides choosing the right endorser, also the message matters. One-sided messaging in advertising includes only positive effects or features of the product or brand whereas two-sided messaging includes positive claims on important features or effects, but also adding negative aspects on attributes with less significance to the consumer (Kamins & Assael, 1987). Kamins et al. (1989) studied one-sided versus two-sided messaging in celebrity endorsements and they found out that two-sided communication, meaning that the endorsement includes both positive and negative comments, increased advertising credibility and effectiveness significantly, and also resulted in a significant increase in intended use of advertised service.

3.4 Instagram

Instagram is a mobile application available for the iOS and Android operating systems (Marwick, 2015). "Instagram is a fun and quirky way to share your life with friends through a series of pictures. Snap a photo with your mobile phone, then choose a filter to transform the image into a memory to keep around forever. We're building Instagram to allow you to experience moments in your friends' lives through pictures as they happen. We imagine a world more connected through photos." (Meikle, 2016, 39)

As already mentioned, Instagram is nowadays an extremely popular social medium, and the rapid growth of its active user base can be seen in the figure 3. Its use is the most popular among young adults. 59% of online adults ages 18-29 use it, whereas among 30-49-year-olds it is only 33% (Pew Research Center, 2016). This popularity is also shown in the everyday language of millennials – if people have lots of followers on Instagram, they are ‘insta-famous’, and if a breakfast looks extremely delicious, it is ‘insta-friendly’.

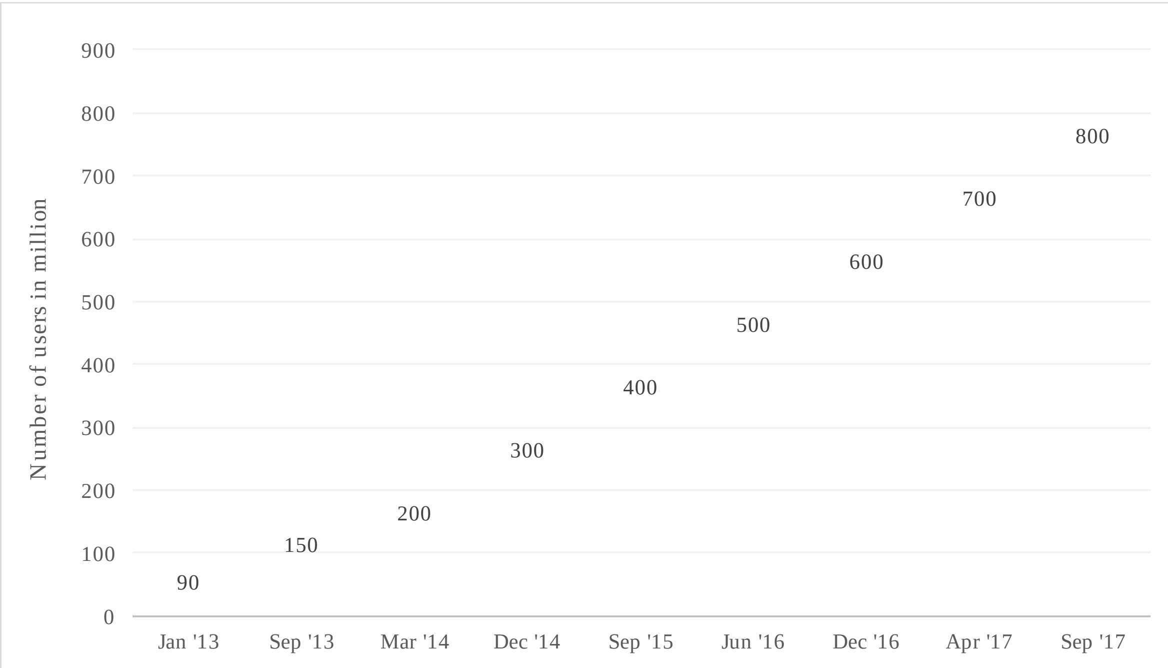

Figure 3: Number of monthly active Instagram users (Statista, 2018b)

The main functionality of the app is that it lets users upload photographs and videos, edit them by using famous retro-style filters or just adjusting them manually, and publish them for public. Then people who follow the person who just published a photo will see the photo in their feed and the app lets them to like or comment the photo. Users can add hashtags to their photos so that the photo can be found among other photos about the same topic. Instagram also enables its users to send each other direct and private chat messages, and one of the newest features is that it lets its users to publish short real-time video stories that will be visible for only 24 hours.

Following an account on Instagram is one-way activity, meaning that a user can follow another user without permission (unless the profile is private), and there is no mutual expectation of ‘following back’ (Hu, Manikonda & Kambhampati, 2014). This model creates an environment, where fans or curious strangers can casually follow any account that looks appealing (Marwick, 2015). This functionality makes Instagram a well-suited environment for high degree of PSI, which was defined and described in the previous sub-chapter.

On average, people under age of 25 spend more than 32 minutes a day on Instagram, while people age 25 and older spend more than 24 minutes a day (Instagram, 2017). This is a significant amount of time and it’s important to understand what the motivation behind the usage is. According to the theory of uses & gratifications (Katz, Blumer & Gurevitch, 1973), individual differences affect the motivation that people have for using different media. Sheldon & Bryant (2016) identified four motives for Instagram use in their study. The most influential reason behind the usage was “Surveillance/Knowledge about others”, meaning that many people use social media to keep up with what other people are doing, whether they are friends, family or strangers. The second most important motive was “Documentation”, so many people use it as sort of a virtual photo album for important moments of their lives. “Coolness/Popularity” was also significant motivator, meaning that people use it because it provides cool features, it’s popular among their peers, and it provides a platform to gain popularity via self-promotion. The fourth identified motive was “Creativity”, but it was the least influential one. (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016)

Instagram users post photos of basically anything. Hu, Manikonda & Kambhampati (2014) studied Instagram photo content and user types, and they came up with 8 categories for all the photos posted: friends, food, gadget, captioned photo, pet, activity, selfie and fashion. The most popular categories were friends, activity and selfie, whereas pet and fashion were the least popular categories. They were able to cluster users based on the photos they publish and as one might guess, there are for example users who mostly just post selfies (self-portraits) and users who focus on photos about food. Hu, Manikonda & Kambhampati (2014) also investigated whether the number of followers correlates with the user cluster, for example if ‘selfie-lovers’ tend to have more followers than other types of users but the study didn’t show any statistical significance over that. According to Bakshi, Shamma & Gilbert (2014), there are two social engagement feedback factors: comments and likes. Results from their study suggest that Instagram photos with human faces are 38% more likely to get likes and 32% more likely to get comments. The number, age or gender of the faces has no effect though.

3.5 Summary of hypotheses

Below, you can find a summary of all the hypotheses drawn from the theoretical section, as well as a conceptual map, which locates the hypotheses to the theoretical framework that was originally presented in the part 1.4. These hypotheses will now be tested in the empirical part.

H1a: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{ad}.

H1b: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_b.

H2a: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.

H2b: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.

H3: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees there is a fit between the endorser and the brand.

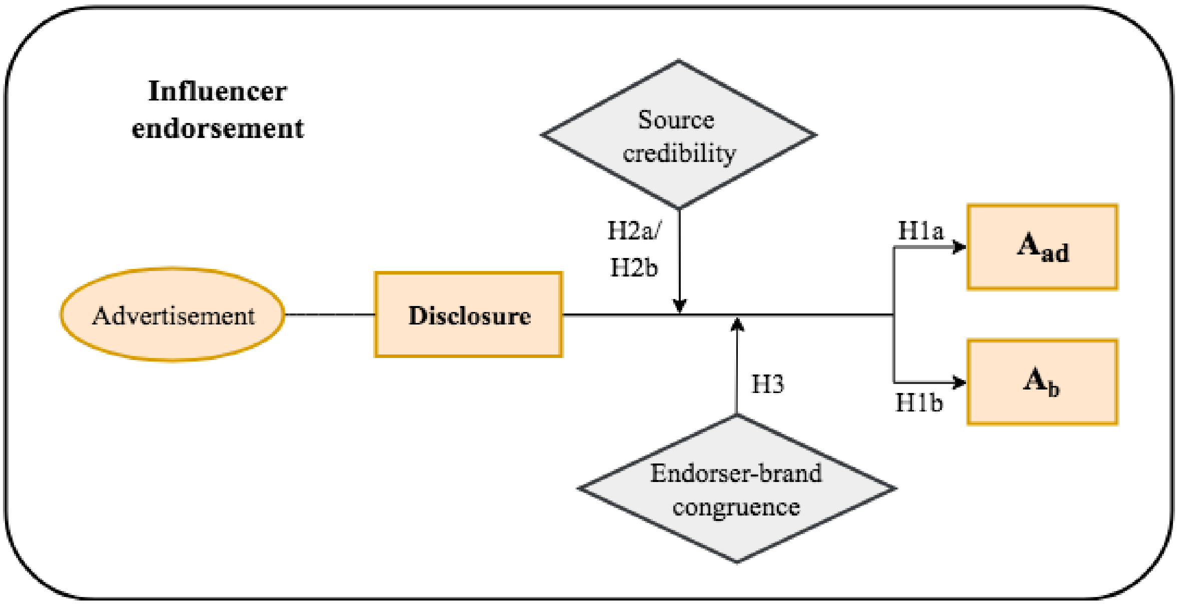

Figure 4. Conceptual map with hypotheses

4 RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODS

This chapter will explain how the empirical part of the study has been carried out. First sub-chapter will go through what kind of research design has been chosen in order to approach the hypotheses that were created in the previous chapters. Pre-testing is also briefly discussed in this part, followed by data collection methods and data analysis methods. The chapter closes with discussions about reliability and validity of the research.

4.1 Research design

The purpose of this research is explanatory, in which the focus is to study a situation or a problem to explain the relationship between variables (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 176). The most suitable research strategy for this study is experiment. Experiment is a form of research that studies the probability of change in an independent variable (IV) causing change in another, dependent variable (DV) (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 178). Experiments are especially suitable for hypotheses testing, and they are better suited for explanatory purposes (Babbie, 2004, 221). The roots of experiments go back to natural sciences, but it is widely used in psychological and social science research (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 178). In many cases experiments are conducted under controlled environment (such as laboratory) but they "can also take advantage of natural occurrences to study the effects of events in the social world" (Babbie, 2004, 220).

In this study, the experiment was created around a real Instagram post, in which an athlete (well-known in his own sport) endorses a recently released sports shoe model by a leading sports apparel brand Nike. This experiment follows two fundamentals of the classical experiment (Babbie, 2004, 221-222): it includes independent and dependent variables, as well as experimental and control groups. The third component, pre-testing and post-testing of the dependent value, will not be executed in this study, since one can't evaluate attitude towards an advertisement before seeing the actual advertisement.

Table 3 summarizes the variables that are used in this study and explains the differences between them.

Table 3. Variables used in the study (Adapted from Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 179)

Type	Variable	Meaning
Independent	Overtness of the ad	Variable that is being manipulated or changed to measure its impact on a dependent variable.
Dependent	Consumer attitude (A_{ad} & A_b)	Variable that may change in response to changes in other variables; observed outcome or result from manipulation or another variable.
Moderator	Source credibility, endorser-brand congruence	A new variable that is introduced which will affect the nature of the relationship between the IV and DV
Control	Age, Income, Instagram usage, Gender, Familiarity of the endorser	Additional observable and measurable values that need to be kept constant to avoid them influencing the effect of the IV on the DV

The main experiment is a between-subject design, which means that participants belong to either the experimental group or control group but in no case both (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 181). Within-subject design could have worked as well by exposing the target audience to several posts with different disclosure practices, but that would have made completing the experiment longer and heavier when it comes to workload, which in turn might have resulted in fewer responses or unfinished surveys in the hectic online environment. The procedure of the experiment is shown in the figure 5.

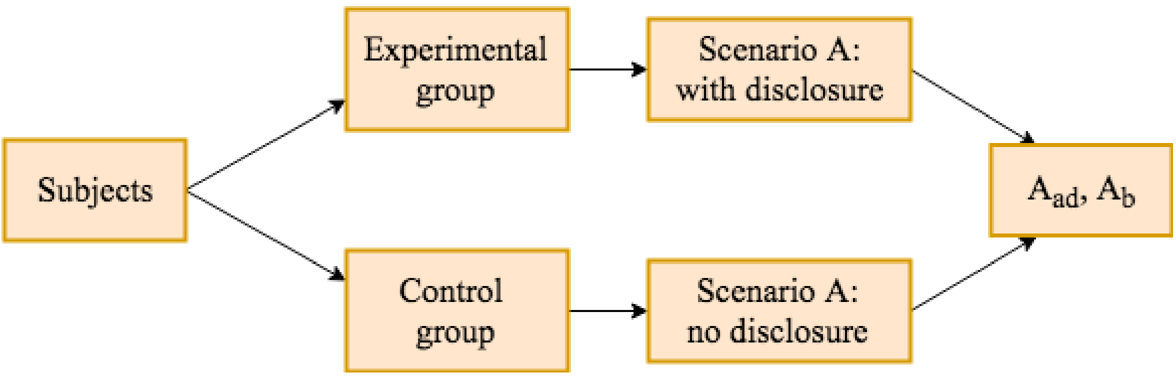

Figure 5. Experimental procedure

Respondents of the survey were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups by the survey tool. The control group sees the original Instagram post, which doesn't include any disclosure that it would be an advertisement. The experimental group sees the same post, but it includes an experimental stimulus (ad disclosure) by mentioning "Paid partnership with @nike" above the photograph. This change is assumed to make changes in the consumer attitude (A_{ad} and A_b). Rest of the survey is identical in both of the scenarios in order to minimize other factors influencing the results.

4.2 Data collection methods

The empirical data used in this study is from a dataset that was collected through a self-completed online questionnaire. The reason for this choice is that questionnaires are particularly good data collection method for explanatory research trying to find cause-and-effect relationships (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 439) and they are cost-effective and a simple way to gather large pool of responses. The data was collected in the summer 2018 so the used time-horizon is cross-sectional, meaning that the phenomenon is studied at a particular time (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 200). Longer timeframe would be more suitable if the aim was to see any development or change in the variables over time, which is not in the focus of this study.

The target group of this study is the Finnish crossfit community. The group was easily accessible through a Facebook group called "CF Suomi" and it provided a good platform for the phenomenon of micro-influencers. The Facebook group consists of 6,713 members (as on Jul 25, 2018) and has members from good variety of age groups and geographical locations. The group is a closed group meaning that each member has to be accepted by someone else in the group before joining. A link to the survey was posted on the group feed and the survey was live for 2 weeks' time.

A total of 446 responses were received making the response rate 6,6 %. The sample was self-selected meaning that the members of the target group were able to choose individually whether they wanted to take part in the research. There was no incentive in responding the survey. The participants also did not know what the survey was about until they had finished it – the title and introduction text just said it's a survey about following athletes on Instagram.

The questionnaire was created with Qualtrics Survey Software and it was created in Finnish since majority of the communication in the target group happens in Finnish. In the questionnaire most of the claims were following the 5-point Likert scale, and the ones regarding attitude were in the form of semantic differential scale.

The dataset was exported as an Excel file which was first cleaned up and then imported to SAS EG (version 6) for further analysis.

4.3 Pre-testing

In order to make sure the manipulation works as wished, a pre-test was conducted to a hand-picked sample of 20 people and the manipulation check was done to the pre-test data. The point of manipulation check is to find out if changes made in the independent variable affect other variables in the experiment. So, in this study the manipulation check tested whether experimental group in the pre-test perceived the Instagram post more as an advertisement than the control group. This way it's possible to find out whether any conclusions can be made on the rest of the variables.

The manipulation check was done by using a simple independent sample t-test. T-test is typically used for comparing two groups for some feature to see if they are sufficiently dissimilar that one could say they don't belong to the same population (Black, 1999, 402). The sample (20 people) ended up being smaller than what often would be recommended for t-test, but as it is only a pre-test, the statistical power of the results do not have a heavy emphasis yet.

The pre-test survey had two questions that worked as manipulation checks: a) "This Instagram post was an advertisement" and b) "The brand (Nike) has been mentioned in the post because it has paid the athlete for it". Neither of the differences were statistically significant, but there was a large difference between them, as can be seen in the table 4. The means also changed pointed to the right direction so that the experimental group saw the post more as an ad than the control group. However, it seems that both groups still perceive the post as an ad. The second claim shows more difference in the means of the two groups, and 1-tail t-test almost shows statistical significance.

Table 4. Results from the pre-test

Claim	Mean EG	Mean CG	t-test 2-tail	t-test 1-tail
This Instagram post was an advertisement	4.64	4.56	0.7727	0.3864
The brand (Nike) has been mentioned in the post because it has paid the athlete for it	4.82	4.33	0.1150	0.0575

After completing the experiment, the pre-test recruits were asked some feedback about the clarity of the questions or any other comments that they had. Based on the comments, the questionnaire was modified and got its final form and was distributed to the earlier mentioned Facebook group.

4.4 Data analysis methods

Before any analysis, the dataset was cleaned up. Variables were operationalized to a numeric form and some items were reversed so that small number indicated negativity and bigger number positivity. The manipulated variable (overtness of the ad) was included as a dummy, having 0 if the respondent belonged to the experimental group (EG) and saw the ad disclosure and 1 if they belonged to the control group (CG) that did not see the disclosure.

4.4.1 Defining measures

To analyze the measures, the variables regarding A_{ad}, A_b and source credibility were put through a factor analysis with the following results. In all cases the principal component analysis was done by using an orthogonal varimax rotation.

Attitude towards ad

In the questionnaire, A_{ad} was measured with seven 5-point Likert semantic differential scale items. The respondent was asked how they felt about the Instagram post with items good-bad, useful-useless, pleasant-unpleasant, boring-interesting, informative-uninformative, and annoying-not annoying. How they align with the different dimensions of consumer attitude can be seen from the table 5.

Table 5. A_{ad} items

Item	Type of attitude
good-bad	Neutral
useful-useless boring-interesting informative-uninformative	Cognitive
pleasant-unpleasant annoying-not annoying	Affective

An overall measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) of this factor analysis is 0.810 which is rather good. The analysis shows that all items align to one factor only, so even if previous studies suggest that consumer attitude has several dimensions, in this case the items correlate so strongly that A_{ad} can be seen as one variable only. The results of this factor analysis are shown in table 6.

Table 6. Factor analysis of A_{ad} variables

Item	Factor1	Communalities	MSA
good-bad	**0.83734**	0.701	0.811
useful-useless	**0.81084**	0.505	0.743
boring-interesting	**0.75377**	0.657	0. 813
informative-uninformative	**0.71085**	0.568	0.886
pleasant-unpleasant	**0.66639**	0.257	0.741
annoying-not annoying	**0.50696**	0.444	0.770
Eigenvalue	3.133		
Cum%	0.5222		
Cronbach alpha	0.81		

However, the correlation with total for 5th item (pleasant-unpleasant) is only 0.378 so it was decided to be left out from the final factor. After eliminating the item, Cronbach alpha increased slightly from 0.806 to 0.817 and leaving any other item out would weaken the reliability of the measure. All other items were merged into one factor, attitude towards ad.

The results of the new factor analysis were validated with a 50-50 random sample. First split gave similar results forming only one factor and having relatively similar loadings as the full sample, but the second split gave different results. It formed two factors: the item useful-useless had a heavy cross-loading for both of them and the informative-uninformative item was loaded to the second factor. Both of those items belong to the cognitive type of attitude, so this shows a slight indication that it would exist in some samples.

Attitude towards brand

In the questionnaire, A_b was measured with eight 5-point Likert semantic differential scale items. The respondent was asked how they felt about Nike as a brand. The items were meaningful-meaningless, invaluable-valuable, useful-useless, important-not important, favorable-unfavorable, negative-positive, good-bad, and I like it-I don’t like it. How they align with the different dimensions of consumer attitude can be seen from the table 7.

Table 7. A_b items

Item	**Type of attitude**
meaningful-meaningless favorable-unfavorable	Affective
useful-useless invaluable -valuable important-not important	Cognitive
negative-positive good-bad I like it-I don’t like it	Neutral

An overall MSA of this factor analysis is 0.891 which is also rather good. Just like in A_{ad}, this analysis shows that all items align to one factor only, so in this case the items correlate so strongly that A_b can be seen as one variable only. The results of this factor analysis are shown in table 8.

Table 8. Factor analysis of A_b variables

Item	Factor1	Communalities	MSA
favorable-unfavorable	**0.86572**	0.749	0.859
negative-positive	**0.82842**	0.686	0.890
I like it-I don't like it	**0.81211**	0.660	0.888
invaluable-valuable	**0.80685**	0.651	0.910
good-bad	**0.78963**	0.624	0.901
meaningful-meaningless	**0.70403**	0.496	0.897
important-not important	**0.69364**	0.481	0.905
useful-useless	**0.29385**	0.294	0.901
Eigenvalue	4.433		
Cum%	0.5541		
Cronbach alpha	0.88		

However, the correlation with total for 3rd item (useful-useless) is only 0.235 so it was decided to be left out from the final factor. The means from all items are between 3.6 and 4.2 so there is not as much variation in the responses as could be hoped. After eliminating the item, Cronbach alpha increased slightly from 0.876 to 0.898 and leaving any other item out would weaken the reliability of the measure. All other items were merged into one factor, attitude towards brand.

The results of the factor analysis were validated with a 50-50 random sample. Both splits gave the same results that all items only form one factor and the useful-useless item having distinctly lower loading to the factor. The other loadings vary a bit, but not in a way that would change the interpretations from the full sample factor analysis.

Source credibility

In the questionnaire, source credibility was measured with seven 5-point Likert scale items in which 1 represented “totally disagree” and 5 represented “totally agree”. The respondent was asked whether they think the athlete who posted the picture is honest, trustworthy, implausible, professional, experienced, good-looking, and ordinary. How they align with the different dimensions of source credibility can be seen from the table 9.

Table 9. Source credibility items

Item	**Credibility dimension**
honest trustworthy implausible	Source trustworthiness
professional experienced	Source expertise
good-looking ordinary	Source attractiveness

An overall MSA of this factor analysis 0.682. Since the last item (*ordinary*) had a bit poor MSA (0.525) and it created its own factor, it was dropped out. The results of this factor analysis are shown in table 10.

Table 10. First factor analysis of source credibility variables

Item	**Factor1**	**Factor2**	**Factor3**	**Communalities**	**MSA**
experienced	**0.86717**	0.13944	0.00671	0.771	0.680
professional	**0.77170**	0.27752	-0.08864	0.680	0.715
good-looking	**0.72705**	0.03314	0.04776	0.532	0.811
trustworthy	0.40416	**0.79652**	-0.18778	0.833	0.645
honest	0.36501	**0.79278**	-0.22968	0.814	0.637
implausible	-0.11196	**0.73126**	0.26869	0.619	0.895
ordinary	0.03135	-0.02574	**0.94687**	0.8982	0.525
Eigenvalue	2.9665	1.1404			
Cum%	0.4944	0.6845			
Cronbach alpha	0.75	0.73			

A new factor analysis was conducted after eliminating the item. An overall MSA of this factor analysis was 0.682. Factors with a higher eigenvalue than 1 were retained for the further analyses. By eliminating the last item, it was possible to increase the Cronbach alpha from 0.643 to 0.758. The third item (implausible) could have been eliminated based on the reliability, but as the total alpha is high enough, it fits the factor well and factor's alpha is good, it was kept for the further analyses. The results of the second factor analysis are shown in table 11.

Table 11. Second factor analysis of source credibility variables

Item	Factor1	Factor2	Communalities	MSA
experienced	**0.86398**	0.13131	0.764	0.681
professional	**0.77717**	0.27606	0.680	0.718
good-looking	**0.72017**	0.02414	0.519	0.812
trustworthy	0.41860	**0.80888**	0.830	0.644
honest	0.38309	**0.80773**	0.799	0.638
implausible	-0.13279	**0.70532**	0.515	0.923
Eigenvalue	2.96650505	1.14043069		
Cum%	0.4944	0.6845		
Cronbach alpha	0.75	0.73		

The results of the new factor analysis were validated with a 50-50 random sample and the validation check gave somewhat confusing results. Both splits form 2 factors just as the full sample factor analysis but the loadings vary and the items falling into each factor change a bit. Implausible is the only item that is in the second factor in all three cases. In the first split good-looking has heavy a cross-loading with both factors but second split showed parallel results as the full sample. The trustworthy item falls into the second factor in full sample but in both splits it has loadings of 0.82 for the first factor.

Source attractiveness, the third component of source credibility, was measured in the questionnaire with items *good-looking* and *ordinary*. After evaluating the items in the factor analysis, it was found that that the latter was not measuring what it was meant to and thus was removed from the further analysis, so the upcoming regression test uses only the item *good-looking* when evaluating source attractiveness.

4.5 Reliability and validity

When evaluating whether results of a study are credible or not, it’s important to discuss the reliability and validity of the research design. Reliability refers to replication and consistency

– would similar findings be achieved if the research design would be replicated (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 202). Important characteristics of reliability include also transparency over the data analysis and careful wording in the questionnaire and conducting a pilot test. (Saunders Lewis & Thornhill, 2009, 156, 374; Bell 2010, 119)

This thesis provides transparent explanation to how the analysis was conducted and also included a pre-test to make sure the questionnaire wording is easily understandable. This thesis also provides all the relevant information in order to evaluate the research and results and even to replicate it. It's still good to notice that Instagram is an agile platform that rapidly changes according to the latest trends and developments, so the context of this study may, or is even likely to, change over time.

When evaluating validity of a study, the focus is on whether the study actually studies the phenomenon it's supposed to, meaning appropriateness of the used measures, accuracy of the analysis, and generalizability of the findings (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, 202). The biggest weakness of experiments is related to their artificiality – the results that are gotten in a laboratory setting might not necessarily occur in more natural setting (Babbie, 2004, 239).

Validity, or invalidity can be examined from two perspectives: internally and externally. Internal invalidity refers to the possibility that the conclusions drawn from the experiment results may not accurately reflect what went on in the experiment itself (Babbie, 2004, 230). As the experiment was not conducted in a laboratory, it is not possible to be fully sure about the situation the respondents were in while completing the survey – there might have been distractions in the process and one can't be sure if they have found out more about the influencer meanwhile and so on. Also, the stimulus in the questionnaire was not in its normal environment, which might affect the results.

External invalidity refers to the possibility that the conclusions drawn from the experiment results may not be generalizable to the 'real' world (Babbie, 2004, 233). The experiment was built on an existing post by an existing influencer. Therefore, the stimulus indicates the real phenomenon of influencer marketing well. Influencer marketing can take different forms with different influencers and target groups, so the results of this study are not necessarily feasible for all influencer marketing activities. It also happens in other channels as well, so these results would not necessarily be aligned with a similar study conducted on Facebook.

5 RESULTS

This chapter discusses the results of the data analysis. It starts with descriptive statistics of the variables that are used in this study. Then, manipulation check results are presented, and then each of the hypotheses are tested and the results presented in tables. After going through all of them, a summary of the results is shown with information whether each hypothesis was supported or rejected.

5.1 Descriptive statistics

The main data consists of 446 overall answers, from which 72 % are women and 28 % are men. The age of the median participant falls into the category of 26-35 years, but there is at least one respondent to each age group. The average participant has used Instagram for 3-4 years and uses the app a few times a day. There are only nine respondents that have used the app for less than a year and only seven respondents don’t use the app on a daily basis. Familiarity aspect was also measured as a control variable, and an average participant knows the influencer and follows him on Instagram. Only 2 % report they don’t know the influencer and less than 1 % say they’re not sure if they know him or not.

An average participant finds the influencer quite high in terms of expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness and congruent with the brand, as is visualized in the figure 6. Especially attractiveness and congruence have really high means.

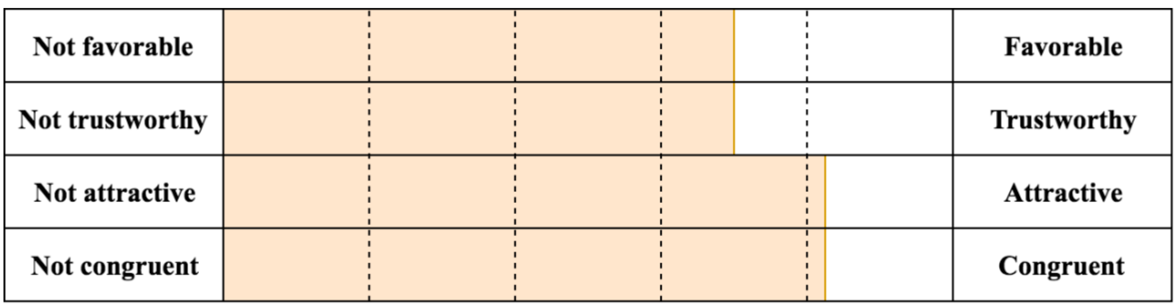

Figure 6. Means of source characteristic variables

The variables measuring consumer attitude are not as heavily leaned to the positive side as the source characteristic variables. Attitude towards the ad is just slightly over halfway and attitude towards brand is a bit more positive.

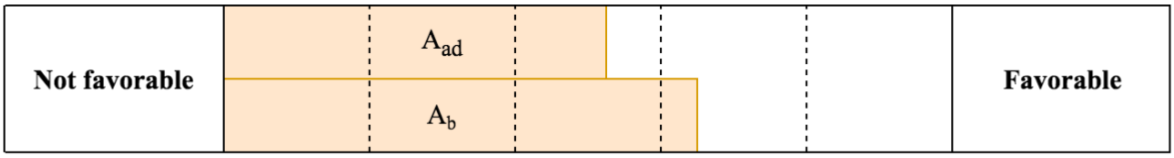

Figure 7. Means of consumer attitude variables

More statistics (mean, standard deviation, variance, minimum value, maximum value and median) on all the variables that are used in this study can be found in the table 12 below.

Table 12. Descriptive statistics of the variables

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	Variance	Min	Max	Median
Gender	1.2802691	0.4496350	0.2021716	1.0000000	2.0000000	1.0000000
Age	3.1121076	0.7966145	0.6345946	1.0000000	7.0000000	3.0000000
Usage length	3.2062780	0.7510628	0.5640953	1.0000000	4.0000000	3.0000000
Usage frequency	4.4192825	0.8381282	0.7024588	1.0000000	6.0000000	4.0000000
Overtness (dummy)	0.5011236	0.5005615	0.2505618	0	1.0000000	1.0000000
Manipulation check 1	4.2062780	1.0695189	1.1438706	1.0000000	5.0000000	5.0000000
Manipulation check 2	4.4013453	0.9541856	0.9104701	1.0000000	5.0000000	5.0000000
Familiarity	3.6659193	0.6310718	0.3982516	1.0000000	4.0000000	4.0000000
Congruence	4.3904110	0.7414497	0.5497477	1.0000000	5.0000000	5.0000000
Expertise	1.12018E-16	1.0000000	1.0000000	-5.0006471	1.9224639	0.0696585
Trustworthiness	-1.92173E-16	1.0000000	1.0000000	-4.7899169	1.8903411	0.1115843
Attractiveness	3.5000000	0.9738041	0.9482945	1.0000000	4.0000000	4.0000000
A2ad	-1.71349E-16	1.0000000	1.0000000	-2.8160811	2.3811771	-0.0084051
A2b	7.98953E-17	1.0000000	1.0000000	-4.0156726	1.3186959	0.0217019

5.2 Manipulation check

A big part of this study relies on the assumption that the experimental group sees the Instagram post as an advertisement and that the control group doesn't. A manipulation check was conducted to see whether the manipulation works as wished the same way as it was done in the pre-testing phase. This step assures that any conclusions can be made on the rest of the variables.

The manipulation check was conducted using a two-tailed independent sample t-test. Just like the pre-test survey, final one had two questions that worked as manipulation checks: 1) "This Instagram post was an advertisement" and 2) "The brand (Nike) has been mentioned in the post because it has paid the athlete for it". As can be seen from the results in the table 13, in both cases there's statistical difference between the two groups when $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 13. T-test results of manipulation check

Manipulation check 1		**t = 3.05**	**p = 0.002**	**DF = 425.56**		
	N	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Std. Err.**	**Min**	**Max**
Experimental group	222	4.36	0.94	0.06	1.00	5.00
Control group	223	4.05	1.17	0.08	1.00	5.00

Manipulation check 2		**t = 4.43**	**p = <.0001**	**DF = 402.66**		
	N	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Std. Err.**	**Min**	**Max**
Experimental group	222	4.60	0.77	0.05	1.00	5.00
Control group	223	4.21	1.07	0.07	1.00	5.00

Even if there is a statistical significance, it is important to consider that in both cases and both groups the means are rather high (> 4). This indicates that the control group that doesn't have the disclosure in the post does perceive the post as advertising and does think that the brand was mentioned in the post because there is a financial transaction between the brand and the influencer.

5.3 Testing hypotheses

After confirming that experimental group and control group view the stimulus in different ways, this study moves on to testing the actual hypotheses that were introduced in the theoretical part. The hypotheses are divided into two parts since they are tested in slightly different ways.

5.3.1 Disclosure effects on consumer attitude

The hypotheses answering the main research question are tested in this part. They both were tested by using a linear regression model. Tests used OLS as an estimation method and used $\alpha = 0.05$. However, also variables that are significant at $\alpha = 0.10$ are discussed and marked in the tables with a mark *. When it comes to the assumptions of linear regression, a White test was used to check homoscedasticity.

H1a: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{ad}.

A linear regression was calculated to predict A_{ad} based on overtness of the advertisement. The dependent variable A_{ad} was formed in a factor analysis, which was further explained in the section 4.4.1. First, a test was conducted without any control variables just to see whether there is any correlation whatsoever. Results of this test can be found in the table 14.

Table 14. First linear regression results of H1a

	Dependent variable: A_{ad}			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	0.00152	0.06803	0.02	0.9821
Overtness (dummy)	-0.00150	0.09588	-0.02	0.9875
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0000	-0.0023	0.00	0.9875

White test showed that the model is homoscedastic with p-value 0.4711 (>0.05) and residuals were normally distributed. As can be seen from the results, F is small whereas p-value is nearly 1 so the model is extremely far from being statistically significant. H1a can be thus rejected but further analysis was made in order to find out whether including the dummy variable actually increases or decreases the coefficient of determination when there are some other control variables involved. A gradual linear regression model was formed, in which a first test was conducted with only the following control variables as explanatory variables: familiarity of the source, Instagram usage length, Instagram usage frequency, respondent’s age and gender. A second test conducted after that was otherwise identical, but the dummy variable was added as an explanatory variable in addition to those. Results of this test can be found in the table 15.

Table 15. Second linear regression results of H1a

Test 1	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-0.51095	0.49504	-1.03	0.3026
Familiarity	0.12973	0.07656	1.69	**0.0909***
Usage length	0.07959	0.06666	1.19	0.2331
Usage frequency	0.03681	0.06129	0.60	0.5484
Age	-0.08851	0.06356	-1.39	0.1645
Gender	-0.08304	0.10819	-0.77	0.4432
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0238	0.0125	2.11	**0.0637***

Test 2	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-0.50333	0.50947	-0.99	0.3237
Overtness (dummy)	-0.01383	0.09659	-0.14	0.8862
Familiarity	-0.08613	0.10909	-0.79	0.4302
Usage length	-0.08762	0.06406	-1.37	0.1721
Usage frequency	0.08154	0.06691	1.22	0.2236
Age	0.03529	0.06170	0.57	0.5676
Gender	0.13030	0.07677	1.70	**0.0904***
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0239	0.0103	1.76	0.1064

The results show that adding the dummy variable weakens the model but increases the R square very slightly by 0.0001. The first test regression model is nearly statistically significant but none of the single explanatory variables were significant.

H1b: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_b.

A linear regression was also calculated to predict A_b based on overtness of the advertisement. Just like with A_{ad}, the dependent variable A_b was formed in a factor analysis that was explained in the section 4.4.1. First, a test was conducted without any control variables just to see whether there is any correlation whatsoever. Results of this test can be found in the table 16.

Table 16. First linear regression results of H1b

	Dependent variable: A_b			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	0.05005	0.06796	0.74	0.4618
Overtness (dummy)	-0.09941	0.09578	-1.04	0.2999
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0025	0.0002	1.08	0.2999

White test showed that the model is homoscedastic, and residuals were close to normally distributed. This model isn't statistically significant either, but it's better compared to A_{ad}. Thus, also H1b can be rejected but similar further analysis was made in order to find out whether including the dummy variable actually increases or decreases the coefficient of determination when there are some other control variables involved. A gradual linear regression model was again formed, in which a first test was conducted with only the same control variables as explanatory variables: familiarity of the source, Instagram usage length, Instagram usage frequency, respondent's age and gender. A second test conducted after that was otherwise identical, but the dummy variable was added as an explanatory variable in addition to those. Results of this test can be found in the table 17.

Table 17. Second linear regression results of H1b

Test 1	**Dependent variable: A_b**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-0.88800	0.48583	-1.83	**0.0683***
Familiarity	0.03054	0.07514	0.41	0.6846
Usage length	0.04743	0.10618	0.45	0.6553
Usage frequency	-0.13301	0.06237	-2.13	**0.0335**
Age	0.11972	0.06542	1.83	**0.0679***
Gender	0.16917	0.06015	2.81	**0.0051**
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0598	0.0489	5.49	**<.0001**

Test 2	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-0.77562	0.49957	-1.55	0.1213
Overtness (dummy)	0.02818	0.07528	0.37	0.7083
Familiarity	0.03631	0.10697	0.34	0.7345
Usage length	-0.13904	0.06281	-2.21	**0.0274**
Usage frequency	0.11968	0.06561	1.82	**0.0688***
Age	0.16375	0.06050	2.71	**0.0071**
Gender	-0.09316	0.09471	-0.98	0.3259
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0619	0.0488	4.73	**0.0001**

The results show that adding the dummy variable increases the R square slightly by 0.021. In both cases the model is statistically significant and single explanatory variables that are significant are usage frequency (Test 1 & 2), age (Test 2) and gender (Test 1).

5.3.2 Source credibility and congruence as moderators

The rest of the hypotheses are tested in this part by investigating interaction effects in linear regression model. The tests have used OLS as an estimation method and $\alpha = 0.05$. However, also variables that are significant at $\alpha = 0.10$ are discussed and marked in the tables with a mark *.

H2a: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.

A linear regression was also conducted to evaluate the interaction effect of source trustworthiness or expertise in the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude. Factor analysis in the section 4.4.1. suggested that the questionnaire items related to source credibility should be divided into two factors: trustworthiness & expertise. Those factors that were formed before, were used in this regression model. Results of these analyses for A_{ad} as a dependent variable can be found in the table 18.

Table 18. Interaction effect of source expertise & trustworthiness for A_{ad}

Source expertise	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	0.00373	0.06565	0.06	0.9547
Overtness (dummy)	-0.00171	0.09254	-0.02	0.9853
Source expertise	0.30920	0.06912	4.47	**<.0001**
Overtness*expertise	-0.07327	0.09356	-0.78	0.4340
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0728	0.0664	11.34	**<.0001**

Trustworthiness	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-0.04175	0.06515	-0.64	0.5220
Overtness (dummy)	0.41038	0.06618	6.20	**<.0001**
Source trustworthiness	0.05922	0.09176	0.65	0.5190
Overtness*trustworthiness	-0.22104	0.09147	-2.42	**0.0161**
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0988	0.0925	15.82	**<.0001**

As can be seen, the interaction term for source expertise and ad overtness is not statistically significant, but source expertise correlates strongly with A_{ad}. However, the interaction term for trustworthiness and ad overtness is statistically significant. Similar tests were conducted to A_b and those results can be seen from the table 19.

Table 19. Interaction effect of source expertise & trustworthiness for A_b

Source expertise	**Dependent variable: A_b**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	0.04956	0.06667	0.74	0.4577
Overtness (dummy)	-0.09699	0.09397	-1.03	0.3026
Source expertise	0.28194	0.07019	4.02	**<.0001**
Overtness*expertise	-0.17380	0.09501	-1.83	**0.0680***
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0444	0.0378	6.70	**0.0002**

Trustworthiness	**Dependent variable: A_b**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	0.03234	0.06732	0.48	0.6312
Overtness (dummy)	-0.05956	0.09482	-0.63	0.5303
Source trustworthiness	0.15796	0.06839	2.31	**0.0214**
Overtness*trustworthiness	0.05535	0.09452	0.59	0.5585
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0381	0.0314	5.71	**0.0008**

As can be seen, the interaction term for source expertise and ad overtness is nearly statistically significant, and that source expertise correlates strongly with A_b as well. The interaction term for trustworthiness instead isn't statistically significant. Source trustworthiness correlates strongly with A_b though.

H2b: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.

A linear regression was also conducted to evaluate the interaction effect of source attractiveness in the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude. Results of this analysis for A_{ad} as a dependent variable can be found in the table 20.

Table 20. Interaction effect of source attractiveness for A_{ad}

Source attractiveness	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-1.14309	0.27223	-4.20	**<.0001**
Overtness (dummy)	-0.05939	0.39141	-0.15	0.8795
Source attractiveness	0.01088	0.09504	0.11	0.9089
Overtness*attractiveness	0.28784	0.06630	4.34	**<.0001**
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0809	0.0745	12.70	**<.0001**

As can be seen, the interaction term for source attractiveness and ad overtness is statistically significant and H2b is supported on this part. The same analysis conducted to A_b can be found in the table 21.

Table 21. Interaction effect of source attractiveness for A_b

Source attractiveness	**Dependent variable: A_b**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-1.03238	0.27765	-3.72	**0.0002**
Overtness (dummy)	0.51268	0.39921	1.28	0.1997
Source attractiveness	0.27155	0.06762	4.02	**<.0001**
Overtness*attractiveness	-0.15449	0.09693	-1.59	0.1117
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0443	0.0377	6.70	**0.0002**

As can be seen, the interaction term for source attractiveness and ad overtness is not statistically significant in the case of A_b and H2b is not supported on this part.

H3: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees there is a fit between the endorser and the brand.

A linear regression was also conducted to evaluate the interaction effect of endorser-brand congruence in the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude. Endorser-brand congruence was measured in the questionnaire with a simple 5-point Likert scale item: *"In my opinion the brand seen in the image (Nike) fits the athlete's constitution"*. Results of this analysis for A_{ad} as a dependent variable can be found in the table 22.

Table 22. Interaction effect of brand-endorser congruence for A_{ad}

Congruence	**Dependent variable: A_{ad}**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-1.62334	0.42511	-3.82	**0.0002**
Overtness (dummy)	0.28393	0.56448	0.50	0.6152
Congruence	0.36829	0.09502	3.88	**0.0001**
Overtness* congruence	-0.06184	0.12668	-0.49	0.6257
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.0616	0.0551	9.47	**<.0001**

As can be seen, the interaction term for brand-endorser congruence and ad overtness is not statistically significant and H3 is not supported on this part. Congruence however seems to have a strong correlation with A_{ad}. The same analysis conducted to A_b can be found in the table 23.

Table 23. Interaction effect of brand-endorser congruence for A_b

Congruence	**Dependent variable: A_b**			
Explanatory variable	**Parameter estimate**	**Standard error**	**t value**	**Pr > |t|**
Intercept	-1.81841	0.41094	-4.42	**<.0001**
Overtness (dummy)	-0.42617	0.54567	-0.78	0.4352
Congruence	0.42279	0.09186	4.60	**<.0001**
Overtness* congruence	0.08028	0.12245	0.66	0.5124
Model fit	**R Square**	**Adj. R sq**	**F (d.f.)**	**Pr > F**
	0.1235	0.1174	20.33	**<.0001**

The results of this analysis follow the same pattern as with A_{ad}, so the interaction term for brand-endorser congruence and ad overtness is not statistically significant, but congruence also has a strong correlation with A_b. H3 is not supported on either of the dimensions of consumer attitude, so rejection of the null hypothesis is failed.

5.4 Summary of the results

Hypothesis	Result
H1a: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{ad}.	*rejected*
H1b: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_b.	*rejected*
H2a: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.	*partly supported*
H2b: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.	*partly supported*
H3: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees there is a fit between the endorser and the brand.	*rejected*

This study failed to support three of the five hypotheses and partly supported two. No single hypothesis was fully supported so it can be said that the existing theories do not explain this phenomenon in this context well enough.

6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

This thesis studied if there is a relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude in the context of influencer marketing on Instagram, and whether source credibility and endorser-brand congruence act as moderators in that relationship. The purpose was to provide further understanding about consumers' perceptions of the quite novel, yet increasingly popular marketing tactic as many companies fail to meet the disclosure practice regulations that are set in many countries.

This chapter will answer the research questions and evaluate how the empirical results align with the previous literature. The managerial implications are assessed to see who could benefit from the findings that this study provides and how. Last sub-chapter critically reviews the limitations that the results have and suggests some areas that could be further researched in the future.

6.1 Theoretical contributions

This sub-chapter evaluates whether the theories presented in the second and third chapter support the empirical results that were drawn in the previous chapter. As there were several research gaps in the previous literature, this sub-chapter also presents any new findings that the study has been able to generate. The results are reviewed by answering first the main research question and then each sub-question.

What is the effect of disclosure on consumer attitude towards persuasion attempts through Instagram influencers?

The effect of disclosure on consumer attitude was approached with the following hypotheses:
H1a: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{ad}.
H1b: Overtness of the advertisement has a negative correlation on A_{b}.

Even though there was a significant difference between the experimental group and control group when it comes to their persuasion knowledge activation, that was measured with a statement “This post is an advertisement”, both of the groups were well aware of the commercial nature of the post. We therefore know what consumers attitude is when persuasion knowledge is activated. This study fails to give information about the people who are unaware of the post being an advertisement therefore it can’t be really said whether these findings support Friedstad & Wright’s Persuasion Knowledge Model (1994). The main presumption of PKM is that the more the consumer knows about the product, advertising method, and the persuasion agent, which in this case was the influencer, the more they can cope with the advertisement, and in a way form a shield around them that protects them from advertising influence.

There are not many studies about how activation of persuasion knowledge effects on consumer attitude. The only clear findings on this topic have been provided by Wei, Fischer & Main’s (2008) as they proved that activation of persuasion knowledge would lead to more negative consumer attitude. So as was just mentioned, the results of these studies can’t be fully compared though since both groups of this study had persuasion knowledge well activated even though the disclosure was shown only to the other group. It therefore seems that all the participants had quite a high persuasion knowledge when it comes to this type of advertising.

One reason why there wasn’t any results for the hypotheses above could be that there are so many factors that affect consumer attitude and overtness of the ad is just one of them. This was shown when testing the hypotheses in the section 5.2.1 when the regression model was first run without the overtness variable and then again after adding the variable. Adding overtness of the ad did increase the R-square for both A_{ad} and A_b, but only fractionally.

What makes consumers aware of the commercial intent of an advertisement?

As we’ve learned from Wright, Friestad & Boush (2005), persuasion knowledge is something that evolves throughout person’s lifespan – people need practical experience in recognizing, evaluating and responding in different ways to the marketing tactics they most often get exposed to. The participants of this study were quite familiar with Instagram as a social medium. The median of the length of the time they've used Instagram was 3, on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being "less than a year" and 4 being "5 years or more"). Besides the years they've used the app, also the usage frequency naturally affects the familiarity. The median of the usage frequency was 4, on a scale of 1 to 6 (1 being "once a week or fewer" and 6 being "several times in an hour"). Besides being familiar with the platform, the participants were really familiar with the influencer. The median of the influencer familiarity was 4 on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 being "I don't know the athlete that has published the post" and 4 being "I know the athlete and I follow him on Instagram").

It seems that consumers do not need a clear disclosure if they are familiar with the influencer and they are familiar with the platform. They have built a broad knowledge about the persuasion and about the agent and therefore are able to recognize even a covert persuasion attempt. Again, as mentioned, when it comes to this research question, the results of this study lack the people who are unaware of the commercial intent, so no further conclusions can't be made about some specific features that would make consumers to activate their persuasion knowledge.

What is consumer's attitudinal response to covert marketing?

Persuasion knowledge literature suggests that if consumers recognize that they are tried to be persuaded, the advertisement isn't as effective and there is evidence that persuasion knowledge activation leads to less favorable attitude towards the brand and the ad. Even though the participants were able to see the commercial nature of the post, both the attitude towards the ad and the brand were overall quite neutral and even positive. On a scale from 0 to 5, the median for A_{ad} would be 3,6 and the median for A_b would be as high as 4,3. This clearly indicates that activation of persuasion knowledge doesn't necessarily mean negative consumer attitude.

However, in this study, attitude towards the ad seems to have a negative correlation with the usage length suggesting that the longer people use Instagram, the more negative their attitude is towards the ad. This supports the theory of persuasion knowledge rather well – by time, consumers learn the commercial intentions after getting exposed to similar ads and start building knowledge about advertisers and their methods.

Which source characteristics influence consumer attitude formation?

The source characteristics influencing consumer attitude formation were approached with the following hypotheses:
H2a: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy or expert.
H2b: Source attractiveness alone doesn't moderate the relationship between ad overtness and A_{ad} and A_b.
H3: The relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude is mitigated when target sees there is a fit between the endorser and the brand.

The previous literature does not provide any findings on source credibility affecting consumer attitude and this research gap was intended to be filled with the results of this study. Overall the previous studies related to source credibility seem to have rather inconclusive results, and the findings of this study definitely support the inconclusiveness. The concept of source credibility was divided into three dimensions (Goldsmith, Lafferty & Newell, 2000; Choi & Rifon, 2012): expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness and these dimensions were tested as moderators for the relationship between overtness of the ad but also their independent effect on consumer attitude is being evaluated. As no relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude was found, the most important findings will be drawn from the independent effects.

Source expertise did not interact with the relationship between ad overtness and the consumer attitude, but the source expertise variable was found to have a positive correlation with both attitude towards the ad and attitude towards the brand. Person holding expertise has been found to be more credible (Maddux & Rogers, 1980; Wilson & Sherrell, 1993) and in this case this results in more favorable consumer attitude as well. This result is probably quite intuitive, but again the overall results emphasized high expertise as on a scale from 0 to 5, median of the source expertise variable would be 4,7. This indicates that almost all the respondents found the influencer expert and the results would be more credible if there wouldn't be as much skewness.

There are no previous studies about the relationship between source trustworthiness and consumer attitude, but opinion change has been studied: according to McGinnies & Ward (1980), trustworthy source is more persuasive whether they are considered as an expert or not. In this study, trustworthiness seems to moderate the relationship between advertisement overtness and attitude towards the ad but not with attitude towards brand. The interaction effect is negative, so the relationship between ad overtness and A_{ad} indeed is mitigated when target sees the source as trustworthy. Trustworthiness also has a direct positive effect on attitude towards the brand, which is in this case even more important finding.

Source attractiveness seems to moderate the relationship between advertisement overtness and A_{ad} but not with A_b. The interaction is positive, so it strengthens the relationship. Source attractiveness as an independent variable doesn't have an effect on A_{ad}, but it has a positive effect on A_b. As the previous findings on source attractiveness aren't unanimous, it can't be said whether these results are totally in line with them. Maddux & Rogers (1980) found no evidence for attractiveness alone affecting to persuasion but combined with expertise or argumentation it might help to persuade. Also, according to Joseph (1977), source attractiveness is a persuasive asset only if the target has no prior convictions about the promoted product or service. This study however proved that source attractiveness has a significant positive effect on attitude towards the brand, even when other variables are not considered.

Besides different dimensions of source credibility, it was also tested whether endorser-brand congruence affects the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude, as well as an independent variable effecting consumer attitude. There was no interaction effect on the relationship between ad overtness and consumer attitude, but significant positive correlation was found between endorser-brand congruence and both attitude towards the ad and attitude towards the brand. This is aligned with many studies (e.g. Kamins, 1990; Misra & Beatty, 1990; Rifon, Choi, Trimble & Li, 2004; Choi & Rifon, 2012) that state that a good match-up is more effective when creating more positive outcomes from advertising compared to a bad match-up.

When explaining endorsement effectiveness, congruence between brand and celebrity has been shown to be as effective as celebrity likability (Fleck, Korchia & Le Roy, 2012). In this study, endorser-brand congruence had the largest parameter estimate amongst all source characteristic variables both on A_{ad} and A_b. In this case endorser-brand congruence seems to have the strongest effect on consumer attitude. But again, it is needed to point out the skewness of the responses, as on a scale of 1 to 5, median for congruence responses was 5.

Overall, it seems, that source expertise and endorser-brand congruence have the strongest effect on consumer attitude. Next, the results will be evaluated from another perspective – who benefits from these findings and how?

6.2 Managerial implications

Even if the hypotheses were not fully supported, this thesis provides important insights to different parties in the field of marketing. Some studies (e.g. Evans et al., 2017) claim that much the success of influencer marketing is not caused by better content, but rather by unaware consumers not realizing that what they see is advertising. That was not the case in this study though; it can be said that consumers have overall quite well-developed media literacy on Instagram since even the group that didn't have the disclosure in the post had a mean over 4 (scale 1-5) when they were asked if what they're seeing is advertising.

Good level of media literacy doesn't mean though that it doesn't matter whether there is a disclosure or not. Surreptitious marketing is forbidden by law, but it is still quite common problem in different platforms. Sometimes companies behind the advertisements are afraid the overt advertisement isn't as effective as a covert one and influencers can be hesitant with marking ads with the fear of losing authenticity or trust and thereafter losing their followers. As this study suggests, there is no significant difference in consumer attitude between the overt and covert ad so these worries that companies have might be unnecessary. In the end, companies have the responsibility to make sure their ads are clearly marked as ones, so based on the results of this study, they should not hesitate to do that.

What companies should focus on, is to find an influencer that the audience sees an expert and that fits the brand as both of them had a significant positive effect on consumer attitude both towards the brand and towards the brand. Also, influencer attractiveness had a significant positive effect on consumers' attitude towards the brand. Some customer research or utilization of modern technology solutions is most likely needed to make sure how the target audience sees the particular influencer.

6.3 Limitations and future research

It is important to note that this thesis is not without some limitations. The sample demographics do not fully follow the overall demographics of all global Instagram users: women were overrepresented with 72% when the overall gender split should be close to 50-50, whereas age group 18-24-year-olds was a little underrepresented (Statista, 2018a). One reason why the age range is not completely aligned with the overall Instagram users is probably the fact that crossfit is not the most affordable hobby, so it’s natural that when people’s income increases, they are more likely to join the crossfit classes.

This study was strictly limited to sports. Therefore, no conclusions can be made that similar results would be drawn when evaluating fashion influencers, actors/actresses, artists, beauty bloggers, etc. There is also no certainty that similar results would be found if the study context was in other social media channels.

The manipulation in the research model worked out as wished since there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups when they were asked whether what they are seeing is an advertisement or not. However, the mean for both groups was over 4 (on a scale from 1 to 5) which means that the set up was not optimal as even the group with no disclosure perceived the post as an ad. Thus, in further research I would suggest outing more effort in finding a stimulus that wouldn’t seem that much as an advertisement without disclosure. This is applicable also to many other variables, as it seemed that majority of the respondents found the influencer clearly as an expert, trustworthy, attractive, and congruent with the brand. More variance in the responses would have given possibilities for better results.

The influencer in this case was rather well-known among the participants (mean 3,67 on a scale 1-4) and the brand has actually been sponsoring the athlete for some years already. Therefore, the participants have most likely seen similar kind of posts by the athlete before and therefore if there had been more variance in familiarity, there could have been more variance also in other responses. However, on the good side, the familiarity also makes the set-up quite realistic since the influencer marketing posts they normally see in their feeds are also by influencers they know already. The results would not be as reliable if majority of the respondents wouldn’t know the influencer.

It would be interesting to see if similar results would be found with a brand that hasn’t been associated with the influencer before or by comparing two different influencers with different amounts of previous commercial activity in their profile. Besides the advertisement and the brand, it would also be interesting to see whether these results would be aligned with the attitude consumers have towards the influencer. Another possible research around this topic could be evaluating the attitude change longitudinally from first time seeing the influencer to after having followed them for a while.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The survey questionnaire (in Finnish)

Hei!
Olen markkinoinnin maisterivaiheen opiskelija Lappeenrannan teknillisessä yliopistossa ja kirjoitan parhaillani lopputyötäni, jonka aihe liittyy urheilijoiden seuraamiseen Instagramissa. Tämän kyselyn vastaukset ovat tärkeässä osassa tutkimustani, joten toivon, että vastaat kysymyksiin rehellisesti juuri sillä tavalla kuin itse asiasta ajattelet. Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie aikaasi noin viiden minuutin verran. Vastaukset ovat täysin anonyymejä ja niitä käsitellään ainoastaan tämän tutkimuksen yhteydessä.

Kiitos jo etukäteen vastauksistasi!

Sukupuoli

○ Nainen (1)

○ Mies (2)

Ikä

▼ 13-17 vuotta (1) ... 65 vuotta tai yli (7)

Bruttoansiot vuodessa

▼ Alle 5 000 € (1) ... 3 Osa-aikatyössä (alle 15 tuntia viikossa) (12)

Kuinka kauan olet käyttänyt Instagramia?

○ Alle vuoden (1)

○ 1-2 vuotta (2)

○ 3-4 vuotta (3)

○ 5 vuotta tai enemmän (4)

Kuinka usein käytät Instagramia?

○ Kerran viikossa tai harvemmin (1)

○ Muutaman kerran viikossa (2)

○ Kerran päivässä (3)

○ Muutaman kerran päivässä (4)

○ Kerran tunnissa (5)

○ Useita kertoja tunnissa (6)

Tutki alla näkyvää Instagram-julkaisua ja vastaa sen pohjalta esitettyihin väittämiin ja kysymyksiin.

Experimental Group

Control group

Tämä Instagram-julkaisu on mainos

◯ 1 = Täysin eri mieltä (1)

◯ 2 (2)

◯ 3 (3)

◯ 4 (4)

◯ 5 = Täysin samaa mieltä (5)

Kuvassa näkyvä brändi (Nike) on mainittu julkaisussa, koska se on maksanut urheilijalle siitä

- 1 = Täysin eri mieltä (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 = Täysin samaa mieltä (5)

Tiedätkö kuvan julkaisseen urheilijan entuudestaan?

- Kyllä, seuraan häntä Instagramissa (1)
- Kyllä, mutta en seuraa häntä Instagramissa (2)
- En ole varma (3)
- En tiedä urheilijaa entuudestaan (4)

Kuvan julkaissut urheilija on mielestäni

	1 = Täysin eri mieltä (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 = Täysin samaa mieltä (5)
Rehellinen (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Luotettava (2)	○	○	○	○	○

Epäuskottava (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Asiantunteva (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Kokenut (5)	○	○	○	○	○
Hyvännäköinen (6)	○	○	○	○	○
Tavallinen (7)	○	○	○	○	○

Tämä Instagram-julkaisu on mielestäni

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	
hyvä	○	○	○	○	○	huono
hyödyllinen	○	○	○	○	○	hyödytön
miellyttävä	○	○	○	○	○	epämiellyttävä
tylsä	○	○	○	○	○	kiinnostava
informatiivinen	○	○	○	○	○	epäinformatiivinen
ärsyttävä	○	○	○	○	○	ei ärsyttävä

Mielestäni kuvassa näkyvä brändi (Nike) sopii urheilijan olemukseen

- 1 = Erittäin huonosti (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 = Erittäin hyvin (5)

Nike on brändinä mielestäni

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	
merkityksellinen	○	○	○	○	○	merkityksetön
turha	○	○	○	○	○	arvokas
hyödyllinen	○	○	○	○	○	hyödytön
tärkeä	○	○	○	○	○	ei lainkaan tärkeä
epämieluisa	○	○	○	○	○	mieluisa
negatiivinen	○	○	○	○	○	positiivinen
hyvä	○	○	○	○	○	huono
pidän brändistä	○	○	○	○	○	en pidä lainkaan

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