

Louvain School of Management

*Does it Pay to be Authentic in
Online Influencer Marketing? An
Investigation of the Effects of
Message Sidedness, Sponsorship
Disclosure and Authenticity on
Customer Engagement*

Author: Margaux Schallier

Supervisor: Simon Hazée

Academic year 2022-2023

Dissertation for the master [120] in Business Administration with a specialized focus, conducted in collaboration with the CEMS Master in International Management.

Master subject and focus: Online Influencer Marketing

Daytime schedule

Abstract

Over the past decade, Online Influencer Marketing (OIM) has witnessed a significant rise. However, the determinants of its effectiveness have yielded mixed results in existing literature. Particularly, research on message sidedness in traditional marketing has shown conflicting findings. This study therefore aims to address these gaps by investigating the impact of two-sided message strategies in the realm of OIM. Additionally, we explore the potential role of authenticity as an underlying mechanism in OIM success, and the possible moderating effect of sponsorship disclosure.

Through an online survey and an experimental 2 (message sidedness: One-sided vs. Two-sided) x 2 (sponsorship disclosure: Presence vs. Absence) design (N = 186), we presented participants with a fake Instagram post by a fictitious influencer and analyzed their responses. The findings indicate that incorporating both favorable and unfavorable arguments in the caption of a sponsored Instagram post does not significantly affect purchase intentions or brand attitude. However, it positively impacts electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) intentions. Interestingly, the presence or absence of a sponsorship disclosure does not moderate this relationship, and SMI's authenticity does not appear to play a role as an underlying mechanism.

Our study therefore sheds light on factors that do not significantly impact OIM effectiveness, ruling out message sidedness as a factor influencing consumer engagement, authenticity as a potential mediator, and sponsorship disclosure as a potential moderator. From a practical standpoint, this study provides some clarity for marketers looking to optimize their OIM strategies regarding social media influencers' content and characteristics. Additionally, this research contributes to the growing body of knowledge in this ever-evolving field and opens up new avenues for future investigation.

Keywords: *Online Influencer Marketing, Social Media Influencer, Message Sidedness, Sponsorship Disclosure, Authenticity, Instagram.*

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Simon Hazée, for providing me with invaluable advice, help, and support throughout the entire process of writing my master's thesis. His constant availability and guidance have been crucial in improving my work week after week.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Clément Laloux for his tremendous assistance in helping me develop the statistical analyses of my thesis. His willingness to address all my numerous queries and correct all my results during these past few weeks has been incredibly valuable.

I am also indebted to my parents for their critical support throughout this entire process, despite my decision to extend my curriculum for an extra year in order to complete this thesis. Thank you for approving my decision, your unwavering support has honestly meant the world to me.

Additionally, I also want to express my deep gratitude to my friends, especially Lorène, Julia, Lionel, and Nathan. Throughout this challenging period of writing our master's thesis, we have come together to organize countless Teams meetings and library sessions, motivating and supporting one another every step of the way. Your constant encouragement and camaraderie were truly priceless on this journey.

Finally, I would like to thank all the respondents who took the time to participate in the online survey, without whom this thesis would have never seen the light of day.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
PART 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW	2
Chapter 1 - Online Influencer Marketing.....	2
1. What is OIM?	2
2. How Unique is OIM?	4
3. Main Use of OIM and Associated Benefits/Risks	6
3.1. Use.....	7
3.2. Benefits of OIM.....	7
3.3. Risks of OIM.....	9
4. Factors Affecting OIM Effectiveness	10
4.1. Influencer Characteristics.....	11
4.1.1. SMIs authenticity	12
4.2. Psychological Related Influential Factors.....	13
4.3. Content Attributes.....	14
Chapter 2 - The Role of (Perceived) Authenticity in OIM.....	15
1. What is Authenticity?	15
2. Factors Influencing Authenticity	17
2.1. A SMI Perspective.....	17
2.2. A Customer Perspective.....	20
2.2.1. SMI's Individual Differences and Sponsorships Disclosure	20
2.2.2. PSI Between SMIs and their Followers	21
2.2.3. Intrinsic Motivation, Creative Control and Congruence	22
2.2.4. Contextual Cues of Influencers Posts	23
2.2.5. Influencer's Popularity	24
PART 2 - HYPOTHESES (& Integrative Conceptual Framework)	28
HYP 1:.....	28
HYP 2:.....	29
HYP 3.....	30
PART 3 – METHODOLOGY	32
1. Materials and Procedures.....	32
2. Measures.....	36
2.1. Dependent Variables	36
2.2. Mediating Variable (MV)	37
2.3. Covariate variables	37

3. Manipulation of MS and SD.....	38
4. Participants	38
PART 4 – RESULTS	40
1. Manipulation Checks.....	40
1.1. Robustness Checks: Internal Analyses	40
2. Selection Bias	42
3. Confounding Factors	43
4. Hypotheses Testing	43
4.1. Hypothesis 1	45
4.2. Hypothesis 2	46
4.3. Hypothesis 3	48
4.4. Analysis of Hypotheses Considering Confounding Variables	49
PART 5 - DISCUSSION	50
1. Summary of the Study	50
2. Theoretical Implications.....	51
2.1. Hypothesis 1	51
2.2. Hypothesis 2	52
2.3. Hypothesis 3	53
3. Managerial Implications.....	54
4. Limitations and Future Research.....	55
BIBLIOGRAPHY	58
APPENDICES	73

List of appendices

APPENDIX A : Message Sidedness Existing Literature	73
1. Moderators and Mediators of Message Sidedness Effectiveness: A Comprehensive Review of Previous Findings.....	73
2. Message Sidedness Effectiveness in OIM: A Comprehensive Review of Previous Findings	77
APPENDIX B : Survey	79
APPENDIX C : Statistical Analyses	92
1. Reliability Analysis.....	92
2. Manipulation Checks	92
2.1. Message Sidedness	92
2.2. Sponsorship Disclosure	93
3. Selection Bias Check	94
3.1. Gender	94
3.2. Level of Education	94
3.3. Age	94
4. Confounding Factors Analysis	95
5. Hypotheses Testing.....	95
5.1. Homogeneity of Variances Analysis	95
5.2. Hypothesis 1 and 3	96
5.2.1. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV for Each Condition of SD.....	97
5.3. Hypothesis 2.....	98
5.3.1. Normality QQplot of Residuals for the Relationship Between MS and SMI Authenticity	99
5.3.2. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and PI.....	99
5.3.3. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and BA.....	100
5.3.4. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and eWOM	101
6. Confounding Factor Analysis.....	102
6.1. Hypothesis 1 and 3	102
6.2. Hypothesis 2.....	103
6.2.1. Impact on PI	103
6.2.1.1. Mediation Model and QQplot.....	103
6.2.2. Impact on BA	105

6.2.2.1. Mediation Model and QQplot.....	105
6.2.3. Impact on eWOM.....	106
6.2.3.1. Mediation Model and QQplot.....	107

List of abbreviations

OIM = Online Influencer Marketing

(e)WOM = (electronic) Word-of-Mouth

SMI = Social Media Influencer

PSI = Parasocial Interaction

MS = Message Sidedness

1S = One-Sided

2S = Two-Sided

(n)SD = (non-)Sponsorship Disclosure

PI = Purchase Intention

BA = Brand Attitude

FGC = Firm-Generated Content

PR = Public Relations

IV = Independent Variable

DV = Dependent Variable

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, social media platforms have become increasingly significant in society, shaping the daily lives of billions (Knoll, 2016). As individuals increasingly rely on digital devices for information and recommendations, leaving traditional media behind, brands have been compelled to adapt by exploring online marketing techniques to remain relevant and capture consumers' attention (De Veirman et al., 2017; Jafari et al., 2011). One such technique, Online Influencer Marketing (OIM), allows companies to engage with potential customers through influential users known as Social Media Influencers (SMIs). This approach has now become an integral component of brands' marketing strategies (Leung et al., 2022a).

The growing popularity of OIM has led to numerous marketing research studies exploring its impact and benefits (e.g., Borchers, 2019; Hudders et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2022a, 2020b). Additionally, researchers have also investigated the factors contributing to its effectiveness, such as influencer characteristics (e.g., Breves et al., 2019; Ladhari et al., 2020; Schouten et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2019), psychological factors (e.g., Hu et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2019; Martínez-López et al., 2020; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020), and content attributes (e.g., Casaló et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2019; Ki & Kim, 2019). However, despite the growing interest in OIM, the literature has not yet provided a complete understanding of its mechanisms, especially in terms of the opportunities and challenges it presents for firms (Leung et al., 2022a). Moreover, the increasing number of research papers on this topic has led to mixed and contradictory results, particularly regarding the underlying factors contributing to OIM effectiveness. Therefore, in order to contribute to this ongoing debate and provide some clarity, we have delved into some of these factors in the hope of shedding further light on the subject.

This thesis is structured into five main parts. The first part is the literature review, which consists of two chapters. The first chapter focuses on OIM, covering its usage, benefits, risks, and factors influencing its effectiveness. The second chapter examines the role of SMIs' perceived authenticity, exploring its definition and the factors influencing it. In the second part, three hypotheses are developed, which will be tested through an experimental study. The results of this study will be discussed later part 4, following the methodology discussed in the third part. Finally, the findings of the study will be discussed in the fifth and final part. This section will also include a discussion of the limitations faced during the experimental process and potential directions for future research.

PART 1 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 1 - Online Influencer Marketing

1. What is OIM?

As highlighted in the introduction, influencer marketing has gained immense popularity among marketers. To lay the groundwork before diving deeper into the subject, let's begin by defining what a Social Media Influencer is and what Online Influencer Marketing entails.

An influencer, also known as a SMI, is an ordinary user who has gained a considerable following on social media platforms due to their ability to influence the opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of their followers (Burke, 2017; Carter, 2016; Freberg et al., 2011). They are recognized as digital opinion leaders and can even attain a form of (micro-)celebrity status (Gaenssle & Budzinski, 2020; Leung et al. 2022a). As trusted tastemakers, online influencers hold a significant impact over their followers' decision-making, a fact that brands are well aware of and seek to leverage (De Veirman et al., 2017; Hudders et al., 2021). Consequently, a new marketing communication tool known as OIM has emerged. Although the concept of social media influencers traces back to the mid-2000s during the blogging era (Borchers, 2019), the practice of OIM is relatively new and has gained widespread popularity only in recent years (Kádeková & Holienčinová, 2018).

OIM is often seen as a modern take on traditional product placement. This marketing strategy involves collaborating with various influencers, primarily on Instagram and YouTube, to promote brands products or services (Guilleux, 2021). The objective is to shape consumers attitudes, boost sales, and enhance brand recognition (Freberg et al., 2011; Leung et al., 2022a, 2022b; Muntinga, 2016; Vrontis et al., 2021). In other words, brands now use influencers as independent third-party endorsers to drive product or service promotion, increase website traffic, and ultimately generate higher sales (De Veirman et al., 2017; Freberg et al., 2011). Through these partnerships, brands can leverage the influencers' credibility, influence, large follower base, content creativity, personal positioning, and earned followers trust to boost their overall performance (Leung et al., 2022a).

However, influencers do not provide their online fame to brands without any form of compensation and typically require incentives, either in the form of material rewards (free products) or financial compensation (money) (Campbell & Farrell, 2020; Vrontis et al., 2021).

Besides, compensation to the influencer in exchange for featuring the brand's product or service in their social media post or video is the first out of two criteria that the European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) outlines to classify a practice as a form of advertising utilized in commercial communication. The second one is that the advertiser has control over the content of the said post or video (EASA, 2018).

In terms of effectiveness, OIM has proven to be highly influential due to the influencers' specific audience. This enables brands to not only reach a large number of people but also individuals who align with their targeted demographic (Leung et al., 2022a). Additionally, brands, a bit like in native advertising, appear seamlessly into the influencer's content, mirroring the look and feel of the platform, which therefore creates a fully integrated experience for the audience (Campbell & Grimm, 2019; De Veirman et al., 2019; Lee & Eastin, 2021). Moreover, the influencer's positive image further elevates the positive image of the brand's sponsored product or service. Such marketing technique also often mirrors word-of-mouth (WOM), as SMIs connect at an intimate level with their audience and form a kind of relationship where both can interact with each other (Breves et al., 2019; Escobar-Rodríguez & Bonsón-Fernández, 2017). Lastly, a study by Lou et al., (2019) demonstrated that content endorsed by SMI receives far more engagement and positive sentiment compared to direct brand communication. This finding supports previous claims made by Escobar-Rodríguez and Bonson-Fernandez, asserting that information conveyed by personal sources holds more weight in shaping a business's than information directly provided by the business itself. Consequently, consumers tend to place greater trust in influencers than in companies.

Lastly, despite being a relatively recent phenomenon, OIM has rapidly gained momentum in recent years with the growth of social media platforms. According to Geysers' (2023) benchmark report on the current state of influencer marketing (Geysers, 2023), with nearly 60% of the global population using social media, OIM has transformed into a multi-billion-dollar industry. It is projected to reach \$21.1 billion by 2023, a 29% increase from 2022. Furthermore, 82% of respondents plan to allocate a specific budget for OIM in 2023. Among the platforms utilized, TikTok takes the lead at 55.5%, followed by Instagram (50.8%), Facebook (42.1%), and YouTube (38.3%) (Geysers, 2023). With TikTok leading the charge, surpassing Instagram for the first time, advertisers can now reach billions of users on these platforms. Specifically, they can now engage with 20.3% of all internet users via Instagram and 13.6% of users aged 18+ on TikTok (Data Reportal, 2023b, 2023c). Ultimately, all these figures provide clear evidence of OIM's status as a well-established and growing strategy, rather than a passing trend.

2. How Unique is OIM?

Early research on OIM was heavily influenced by findings from more traditional communication strategies such as product placements, celebrity endorsements, and even word of mouth (WOM) practices (e.g., Fowler & Thomas, 2023; Hudders et al., 2021; Lee & Eastin, 2021). In more recent studies, researchers have tried to understand whether the key mechanisms of these strategies hold true for OIM as well. While some characteristics proved to be similar, recent research has also highlighted several differences that set OIM apart as a unique strategy.

Firstly, unlike celebrities, influencers often cultivate a more approachable, trustworthy, and relatable image by consistently sharing personal experiences and engaging directly with their followers (Abidin, 2016; Schau & Gilly, 2003). This sets OIM apart from traditional marketing strategies like celebrity endorsements or native advertising, as OIM prioritizes audience building and promotes deeper engagement (Haenlein & Libai, 2017). Such interaction often results in a **para-social relationship (PSI)**, where followers perceive a personal connection with the influencer, making them more receptive to the influencer's opinions and behaviors (Colliander & Dahlén, 2011; Knoll et al., 2015). Building such a bond involves influencers revealing personal aspects of their lives, a concept known as the "*celebrification of a private self*" (Raun, 2018, p. 106), and actively engaging with consumers for promotional goals (Leung et al., 2022a). This distinctive mode of interaction further separates influencers from mainstream celebrities, positioning them as unique digital micro-celebrities (Hudders et al., 2021).

Another distinction arises from how influencers and celebrities attain their **fame**. Celebrities often achieve recognition from accomplishments in areas like acting, music, or sports (McQuarrie et al., 2013). On the other hand, influencers, initially deemed "ordinary internet users" (Abidin, 2015, p.1) become famous by accumulating followers. This growth stems from their active content sharing and their integration of brand endorsements that appear in an authentic way and which adds value to their followers' consumption experience (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Unlike the distant allure of celebrities, SMIs establish their position as opinion leaders by coming of as more relatable, approachable, and socially accessible (Jin et al., 2019; Schouten et al., 2020). Hence, influencers must focus on self-promotion practices to attain celebrity status rather than simply being famous (Marwick, 2013), highlighting the concept of **self-branding** as a key factor that sets SMIs apart from traditional celebrities. Additionally, their popularity

often remains limited to niche groups, whereas conventional celebrities are recognized by a wider audience (Abidin, 2015; Zhang et al., 2020).

A third difference lies in the **budget** required to implement these marketing strategies (Leung et al., 2022a). Firms often find influencer marketing to be more cost-effective compared to hiring famous celebrity endorsers, especially when they collaborate with micro-influencers (Leung et al., 2022b). However, while firms intentionally select and compensate online influencers to spread word-of-mouth about their offerings in OIM, it is still pricier than organic WOM (Leung et al., 2022a).

Furthermore, OIM offers a distinct advantage by enabling companies to access the influencer's follower network, leveraging the trust these followers place in the influencer to market their products. Indeed, OIM harnesses **the influencer's positioning and content** as a promotional tool for the firm's offerings. Additionally, SMIs possess the unique capability to create content that aligns with their audience's aspirations, making it more relevant and less intrusive compared to traditional advertisements – a real advantage for endorsing brands (Leung et al., 2022a). Moreover, as pointed out in studies by Jung (2017) & Varnali (2014), such an approach can positively influence consumers' attitudes towards the content and lead to better behavioral responses.

Another significant contrast arises in terms of **creative control**. While celebrities merely represent the brand's persona, SMIs have creative liberty when crafting promotional messages for their social media channels (Hudders et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2022a; Pöyry et al., 2019). Although firms often provide content briefs outlining the campaign's objectives, key messages, and deliverables, they also allow influencers to tailor content that aligns with their personal positioning so that it resonates with their followers. This creative freedom, crucial for successful influencer marketing (Leung et al., 2022b), sets SMIs as content creators with legal responsibility for their advertising content (Hudders et al., 2021). This is unlike celebrity endorsements and seeding marketing, where firms have full control and provide the agent with firm-generated content (FGC) to be promoted (Leung et al., 2022). Likewise, in viral marketing, it is the firm that creates and shares the message to stimulate brand awareness through WOM (Hinz et al., 2011; van der Lans et al., 2010). In contrast, OIM promotes authenticity and trust, as influencers' content and recommendations are perceived as self-motivated and real. Unlike celebrity endorsers who read scripted lines, influencers provide credible and honest reviews, contributing to their authenticity (Gerdeman, 2019).

Last but not least, studies consistently show that **OIM is more effective than traditional celebrity endorsements** (e.g., de Vries et al., 2012; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Giles, 2017). For instance, Jin et al. (2019) found that influencers' social presence cultivates trust as SMIs appear more genuine than celebrities. Schouten et al. (2020) revealed that participants felt a greater sense of similarity and connection to influencers compared to celebrities, leading to higher trust in their recommendations. And Pöyry et al. (2019) further emphasized that influencers' photos had a greater influence on purchase intentions compared to those of general celebrities. This is potentially due to the stronger social identification SMIs can foster among followers, leading to a more engaged and relevant audience compared to mainstream celebrities (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Gong & Li, 2017). Moreover, Moulard et al. (2015) identified truthful endorsements, visibility, and sincerity as unique dimensions contributing to an **SMI's authenticity**, which are inapplicable to celebrity authenticity. As such, SMIs are often perceived as fellow consumers, while traditional celebrities are not (Lee & Eastin, 2021). By demonstrating a friendly personality, showcasing shared life experiences, and providing honest product recommendations, influencers can foster an intimate connection with their audience, boosting their perceived authenticity and creating a sense of closeness, which makes their brand recommendations more trustworthy (Audrezet et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). These findings demonstrate that effective influencer marketing campaigns require familiarity, authenticity, and visual congruence with the target audience, rather than relying on celebrity endorsements to showcase the superiority and uniqueness of a brand (Argyris et al., 2020). With such findings, Lee & Eastin (2021) concluded that OIM success is based on authenticity and SMIs are well aware of that fact. Indeed, Duffy (2017) noted that influencers often use authenticity management strategies to strengthen this relationship and appeal to brand managers.

3. Main Use of OIM and Associated Benefits/Risks

Recognizing the unique nature of OIM over traditional communication tactics explains why brands are increasingly preferring to invest in this type of strategy. Moreover, as consumers grow skeptical of brands' direct marketing efforts, trusting traditional advertising methods less (Gerdeman, 2019), firms see OIM as a promising alternative. However, while its use can bring many advantages, one must not neglect the associated risks.

3.1. Use

Before exploring the pros and cons of OIM, let's first recall why firms opt for such an approach. This strategy involves brands leveraging influencers' resources, such as their network, creative content, personal positioning, and follower trust (Leung et al., 2022a). The aim is to utilize these resources for product or service promotion, with the objective of shaping consumer perceptions, increasing sales, attracting and engaging customers, and elevating brand recognition and awareness (Vrontis et al., 2021). Moreover, brands may also use OIM to refresh their outdated images, reach untapped markets, or even act as an innovation lab for new products (Backaler, 2018). Some even enlist the help of influencers to improve negative brand perceptions or co-created products, utilizing the influencers' unique perspectives, networks, and skills. Lastly, businesses often engage influencers to achieve both marketing and PR objectives (Borchers, 2019; Hudders et al., 2021). This partnership helps in reaching the target audience, potentially strengthening positive brand perceptions, and boosting brand awareness, sales, and customer engagement, all with the ultimate objective of enhancing the company's performance (Leung et al., 2022b).

3.2. Benefits of OIM

Recent studies highlight various benefits of leveraging influencers as a marketing approach. Specific attributes of OIM and influencer traits can indeed enhance its performance. When done right, OIM consistently shows benefits in terms of **consumer engagement** (Argyris et al., 2020; Casaló et al., 2020; Elton & Lopez, 2018; Hughes et al., 2019; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Valsesia et al., 2020), **influencer and brand perception** (De Veirman et al., 2017; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Ki & Kim, 2019; Silva et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2019; Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014), **purchase intentions** (Fink et al., 2020; Ki & Kim, 2019; Ladhari et al., 2020; Lee & Eastin, 2021; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Rao Hill et al., 2017; Torres et al., 2019; Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014) and even **public opinions** (Hudders et al., 2021).

Moreover, in terms of **marketing and PR objectives**, SMIs wear multiple hats: they act as intermediaries, content distributors, creative producers, community managers, endorsements, strategic consultants, and event hosts. This multifaceted role consolidates diverse responsibilities into one individual, opening up new avenues for strategic communication and fostering valuable synergistic effects (Borchers, 2019; Hudders et al., 2021).

As previously stated, although increased **affordability** is not the only benefit of OIM, it is a significant advantage over traditional celebrity endorsements. Studies have shown that it is often a more economical choice for firms, as influencers not only create compelling content but also share it with their deeply engaged and highly targeted audience (Carter, 2016; Enke & Borchers, 2019). Furthermore, anecdotal evidence from Ahmad (2018) suggests that OIM can yield higher sales and better return on investment than traditional marketing methods.

Leung et al. (2022a) identified four more OIM advantages: **targeting, positioning, creativity, and trust benefits**. First, OIM can target specific consumer segments through influencers, who create naturally segmented consumer groups due to their distinct personal brands. Moreover, firms can leverage influencers' follower networks to reach changing consumer segments and adapt to evolving preferences. Second, OIM can also complement a firm's overall positioning strategy by leveraging influencers' market-tested positioning, creating or reinforcing desired brand associations, achieving differentiated positioning, and experimenting with alternative positioning strategies. Third, through close influencer-follower relationships, firms gain unique insights for creating original, relevant, and creative influencer-generated content. This content is often seen as less intrusive and elicits more positive consumer responses. Finally, in an era where traditional marketing skepticism is high, OIM utilizes the authenticity and unbiased stance of influencers to improve brand outcomes. These combined benefits ultimately enhance marketing communication effectiveness.

Brands can also leverage these authentic relationships that SMIs share with their audience to create a **rub-off effect**. According to Lin et al. (2018), influencers can heighten a product's emotional appeal by associating their own emotional attachment and status with it. Moreover, previous research on celebrity endorsements has demonstrated that consumers' perceptions of endorsers can shape their evaluations of endorsed products due to their pre-existing beliefs about the endorsers (McCracken, 1989; Miller & Allen, 2012; Silvera & Austad, 2004; Thwaites et al., 2012). Similarly, Park et al. (2021) realized that followers' perception of certain micro-influencers' authenticity could be transferred to the brands and products they promoted.

Similarly, brands utilizing OIM can also experience a positive impact through the **doppelganger effect**. Ki & Kim's (2019) study suggests that followers tend to mimic influencers' behavior and follow their product recommendations as they view them as role models. Jin et al. (2019) propose that these mimetic behaviors might also stem from a sense of envy evoked by the influencers' appealing lifestyles.

3.3. Risks of OIM

While there are numerous benefits to OIM, Leung et al. (2022a) also point out two potential drawbacks: **content control and customer retention threats**. Firstly, although OIM's creative freedom can be beneficial, it can lead to inconsistent content quality and confusion if the influencer-generated content diverges from the official brand message, potentially damaging the brand's credibility. Secondly, while OIM can foster initial trust in a brand, it does not guarantee long-term brand loyalty, making it a good strategy for attracting new customers but less effective in retaining them. These drawbacks could potentially undermine the effectiveness of marketing communication.

Secondly, while the doppelganger effect offers benefits, it is crucial to remember that influencers, like celebrities, are also susceptible to attract **negative publicity** impacting an organization's reputation (Hudders et al., 2021). Therefore, the optimal strategy may be distancing from the influencer (Sng et al., 2019), though this can provoke follower backlash, as shown in Lancome's case (Mak & Song, 2019). Lastly, companies should also be cautious about involving influencers in order to repair their reputation after an organizational crisis, as it could decrease brand trust due to the perception of manipulative intent. However, disclosing a value-driven motive could mitigate this last negative effect (Singh et al., 2020). Essentially, navigating influencer relationships can be complex, significantly affecting a brand's reputation.

Moreover, relying on influencers who post excessive sponsored content presents a risk to OIM as well, as it can erode **audience trust and engagement** (Martínez-López et al., 2020). In fact, followers tend to unfollow influencers who post too many advertisements (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019). In a study on the strategic use of social media, Hudders et al. (2021) also discovered that sponsored content could harm consumer trust by painting influencers as less genuine and authentic. However, the consumers' realization that sponsored content could also benefit them as viewers mediated those results, as it allowed the influencer to create higher quality content (Van Dam & van Reijmersdal, 2019).

Lastly, in addition to major challenges, working with influencers can bring other smaller issues. As per a study by Hudders et al. (2021), advertising professional expressed concerns about **legal requirements** (such as the sponsorship disclosure), the **integration of influencer marketing into a traditional agency structure** (including content and creative responsibilities), and the difficulty of **selecting suitable influencers** (such as determining what characteristics are relevant). Furthermore, **high costs** associated with certain influencers were also a worry, which

contradicts studies claiming OIM is more affordable than conventional marketing tactics. However, this can be attributed to the surge in popularity and demand for OIM, resulting in higher fees for influencers. Finally, similarly to the content control threat identified by Leung et al. (2022a), there is a notable concern about **balancing content control and influencer creativity**, which could pose a high risk to brands such as posting inappropriate or illegal content.

4. Factors Affecting OIM Effectiveness

As discussed in the above section, OIM can offer a multitude of benefits, such as influencing some sort of behavioral change in consumers, which is a primary objective for firms. Yet, understanding the driving factors behind these benefits is crucial. Fortunately, the rapidly expanding literature stream devoted to influencer marketing has already been deeply examined, with six literature reviews to date (Chang et al., 2020; Fowler & Thomas, 2023; Hudders et al., 2021; Levesque & Pons, 2020; Vrontis et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2021). Among these reviews, Vrontis et al. (2021) developed a comprehensive framework summarizing the factors influencing consumer behavior, including antecedents, mediators, moderators, key contextual factors, and underlying mechanisms. Drawing from their extensive research, we have tailored one of their tables to scrutinize the antecedents that drive OIM effectiveness:

	Antecedents	Consequences	Effect	Key citations
Source characteristics	Credibility	Post attitude, brand attitude, brand image (long term), brand trust, PSI, purchase intention	+	(Breves et al., 2019; Fink et al., 2020; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Sakib et al., 2019)
	Physical attractiveness	PSI	+	(J. E. Lee & Watkins, 2016; Sakib et al., 2019)
	Attractiveness (familiarity and likeability)	Brand attitude, influencer-brand congruence, attitude towards the endorsement, purchase intention	+	(Torres et al., 2019; Trivedi & Sama, 2020)
	Expertise	Brand attitude, attitude towards the influencer (taste & opinion leader), blog post engagement	+	(Hughes et al., 2019; Ki & Kim, 2019; Trivedi & Sama, 2020)
	Trustworthiness	Attitude towards the ad, product attitude, purchase intention	+	(Schouten et al., 2020)

	Popularity	Purchase intention, trustworthiness, expertise	+	(Ladhari et al., 2020; Rao Hill et al., 2017)
Psychological related influential factors	PSI	Luxury brand perceptions, stickiness to influencer, wishful identification, compliance intention, purchase intention	+	(Hu et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2019; Lee & Watkins, 2016; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020)
	Endorser-product-brand fit	Influencers' trustworthiness, post credibility, interestingness about the content, willingness to search for more info, engagement, attitude towards the endorsement/brand/product, purchase intention	+	(Breves et al., 2019; Martínez-López et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2019)
Content attributes	Visual congruence	Engagement with influencer post	+	(Argyris et al., 2020)
	Post's commercial orientation	Influencers' trustworthiness, post credibility, interestingness about the content, willingness to search for more information	-	(Martínez-López et al., 2020)
	Informative content	Competence need fulfilment, attitude towards the influencer (opinion leader)	+	(Ki & Kim, 2019; Ki et al., 2020)
	Interactive content	Attitude towards the influencer (opinion leader)	+	(Ki & Kim, 2019)
	Quality content	Engagement, intention to consume	+	(Casaló et al., 2020; Magno, 2017)
	Originality	Intention to interact, recommend the account and follow the advice	+	(Casaló et al., 2020)
	Uniqueness	Intention to interact, recommend the account and follow the advice	+	(Casaló et al., 2020)

Source: adapted from Vrontis et al. (2021)

4.1. Influencer Characteristics

The most commonly variables used in OIM effectiveness are influencer traits (Fowler & Thomas, 2023). Indeed, several studies have highlighted the importance of specific influencer traits and features of OIM in boosting consumer engagement (Argyris et al., 2020; Casaló et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2019; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Valsesia et al., 2020), influencing influencer evaluation and brand attitudes (De Veirman et al., 2017; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Torres et al., 2019; Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014), and promoting purchase intentions (Lee & Eastin, 2021; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

For instance, purchase intentions are heavily influenced by positive attitudes towards the SMI. Firstly, influencers' **perceived credibility** shape consumers' perceptions and attitudes toward them, thereby impacting their followers' purchasing behavior (Al-Emadi & Ben Yahia, 2020; Munnukka et al., 2018; Reinikainen et al., 2020; Sakib et al., 2019; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Secondly, influencers' **trustworthiness**, arising partly from SMIs' perceived **authenticity**, boosts consumer engagement and cooperative interaction, enhancing the effectiveness of OIM (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Schouten et al., 2020; Uzunoğlu & Kip, 2014). Thirdly, **popularity**, largely influenced by **emotional attachment** to an influencer and their perceived **attitude, values, and appearance**, also plays a significant role in shaping those behaviors (Ladhari et al., 2020; Rao Hill et al., 2017).

4.1.1. SMIs authenticity

Speaking of authenticity, it is a widely discussed concept in recent SMIs and OIM literature, which has been shown to deliver positive outcomes for influencers, brands, and consumers alike (Audrezet et al., 2020; Luoma-aho et al., 2019; Tolvanen et al., 2013). This key element fosters **trust, credibility, and engagement among audiences** (Enli, 2014; Lee, 2020). When influencers are perceived as authentic, consumers are more **receptive** to their messages and recommendations (Brown et al., 2003; Labrecque et al., 2011). This authenticity not only enhances the **perceived quality** of endorsed products (Moulard et al., 2015), but also nurtures a **strong emotional connection** with the brand, driving **positive WOM** recommendations and advocacy (Morhart et al., 2015). Ultimately, authenticity has been associated with an increased **intention to buy** (Kapitan et al., 2022).

Furthermore, previous studies on conventional marketing have also demonstrated the positive influence of brand authenticity on both **brand trust** (Schallehn et al., 2014) and **consumers' behavioral intentions** (K. Fritz et al., 2017). These studies further suggest that SMIs' perceived authenticity holds a stronger predictive value for consumer purchase intentions than mere familiarity with traditional celebrities (Ilicic & Webster, 2016).

Taking all of this in consideration, Lee & Eastin (2021) concluded that perceived authenticity is pivotal to OIM success, as it significantly shapes consumer attitudes towards influencers and their sponsored content. Authenticity is also considered as a key driver of OIM effectiveness by Borchers (2019). Similarly, according to Hudders et al. (2021), influencers must exhibit

authenticity, along with expertise and intimacy, to enhance their appeal in attracting more followers and impact on follower decision-making.

However, it is also important to remember that authenticity and expertise are intertwined. Establishing an **authentic identity** is essential for gaining expertise in a given field (Carter, 2016; Marwick & boyd, 2011). Therefore, the combination of high authenticity and expertise may be key in understanding why some influencers are more successful and influential than others, particularly when it comes to persuading others (Wellman et al., 2020).

Overall, perceived authenticity has a significant impact on consumers, SMIs, and brands, enhancing message effectiveness, strengthening brand-consumer relationships, and influencing consumer behavior. Understanding the importance of authenticity in influencer marketing can guide brands and SMIs in building genuine connections with their audiences and achieving favorable outcomes in terms of consumer engagement, brand perception, and business success. In this sense, authenticity has really become a new business imperative, making an authentic consumer experience a real competitive edge for marketers using OIM (Bruhn et al., 2012; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Lee & Eastin, 2021; Pöyry et al., 2019).

4.2. Psychological Related Influential Factors

Next, some psychological factors like PSI or SMI-product-brand congruence are also known to be key antecedents in the SMI literature. For instance, a strong **fit between the endorser, the brand, and the product** (Breves et al., 2019; Martínez-López et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2019) boosts consumer engagement towards the brand. Furthermore, influencer-product congruence not only enhances **trust and post credibility** but also generates greater interest and information-seeking intent (Martínez-López et al., 2020). Consequently, a lack of alignment between influencers and brands, resulting in content incongruence, can cause confusion and damage the **brand's credibility**, and therefore decrease the effectiveness of marketing communication (Pitt et al., 2008).

Additionally, **PSI**, driven by feelings of **similarity**, perceived **social attractiveness** of the influencer, and **shared values** further influences consumer behavior and purchase decisions (Hudders et al., 2021; Lee & Watkins, 2016; Sakib et al., 2019), with **influencer credibility and brand perceptions** acting as key mediators (Lee & Watkins, 2016; Reinikainen et al., 2020).

4.3. Content Attributes

Certain characteristics of the content can also play a crucial role in enhancing OIM effectiveness. For instance, **visual congruence** between the influencer and his followers' posts enhances consumer engagement towards the sponsored influencer (Argyris et al., 2020). Moreover, a **unique and original** influencer's post encourages consumers to engage with the influencer, follow their advice, and recommend them to others, therefore benefiting sponsoring brands that choose to sponsor such influencers (Casaló et al., 2020).

Furthermore, **high endorser-brand-product fit**, along with positive attitudes towards SMIs as a taste and opinion leaders, can also drive purchase intentions due to the followers' desire to mimic the influencer, especially if the SMI provides **visually appealing, prestigious informative and interactive content** (Breves et al., 2019; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Ki & Kim, 2019; Martínez-López et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2020).

Moreover, the research done by Leung et al. (2022a) reveals that collaborating with creative influencers who produce **original, creative, and relevant content** leads to less intrusive posts than traditional advertising, resulting in more positive consumer responses. A study conducted by the same authors in collaboration with Li and Zhang (2022b) further investigated these factors and discovered a positive correlation between **influencer originality, follower size, sponsor salience**, and OIM effectiveness. Their study also revealed the moderating effects of **influencer activity, follower-brand fit, and post positivity** on the overall OIM effectiveness.

Challenging earlier assumptions about **sponsor visibility** stating that excessive sponsor visibility could reduce engagement by making SMIs appear too commercial and less authentic (Stubb, 2018; Tellis et al., 2019), their findings revealed that enhancing the visibility of sponsorship within influencer posts can, in fact, boost content value and thereby enhance OIM effectiveness. Similarly, Sah et al. (2018) argues that disclosures can cultivate greater trust in an influencer's expertise, leading to positive persuasion outcomes. Other studies also highlight positive outcomes such as improved brand recall and increased intention to interact with the post (Boerman, 2020), heightened brand liking (De Jans et al., 2020), and an enhanced likelihood of purchase (Kay et al., 2020). However, others have discovered negative repercussions on brand attitude and the influencer's credibility (De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2020). Interestingly, a recent study reported that sponsor disclosure in TikTok influencer marketing videos had no discernible impact on brand outcomes in

adolescents (van der Bend et al., 2023). Further research therefore seems useful to understand the true impact of sponsorship disclosure on OIM effectiveness.

Furthermore, the same authors argue that a **combination of positive and negative content** can be the most effective approach, contrary to previous literature emphasizing the viral nature of positive content (Berger & Milkman, 2009). Given consumers' awareness of paid endorsements, relying solely on positive feedback may raise concerns about influencer authenticity (McQuarrie et al., 2013). Moreover, traditional marketing research suggests that using such a two-sided message strategy tends to enhance perceptions of advertiser honesty, thereby increasing its credibility (Eisend, 2006). Also, such balanced messages have proven to be more effective and persuasive in terms of credibility than one-sided messages (e.g., Smith & Hunt, 1978; Swinyard, 1981; Wilkie & Farris, 1975).

Chapter 2 - The Role of (Perceived) Authenticity in OIM

Mentioning the critical role of authenticity in OIM in our previous section, it is clear that scholars consider an influencer's perceived authenticity as vital for the success of influencer marketing campaigns. Thus, it becomes essential to understand the 'how' and 'why' behind its significant role. In this second part of the literature review, we will therefore explore this topic and examine the underlying reasons behind its importance.

1. What is Authenticity?

As mentioned earlier, this trait observed in SMIs is increasingly appealing to brands seeking to enhance their online marketing efforts. However, before delving further, let's first solidify our understanding of "authenticity."

Literature has given rise to multiple definitions of this concept. Some academics consider it an intrinsic characteristic of an individual, thus interpreting it from an objective perspective (Grayson et al., 2004). In contrast, others view it as subjective and socially constructed, underlining a more constructivist perspective (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Marwick, 2013). Furthermore, authenticity is also recognized by some as a dynamic concept that can evolve over time, resulting in a multitude of interpretations (Wang, 1999).

Firstly, the objective standpoint ascribes to an individual inherent attributes such as originality, realness (being real/genuine), and uniqueness (in the sense of being rare and one-of-a-kind) (Grayson et al., 2004; Moulard et al., 2015). Additionally, authenticity strongly relates to sincerity, honesty, and genuineness (Molleda, 2010). According to Goffman's (1959) social interaction framework, these traits reflect an individual's beliefs and behaviors exhibited when alone, as opposed to their public display aimed at maintaining a positive image (Kapitan et al., 2022). Supported by factors Deci & Ryan's (2008) self-determination theory, authenticity is determined by intrinsic motivations that are independent of external judgment or factors. Similarly, in social psychology, authenticity is seen as a result of how individuals perceive and represent themselves. There is a widespread consensus that authenticity involves "*being true to oneself*," which refers to consistently behaving in alignment with one's behavior and character (e.g., Fritz et al., 2017; Marwick, 2013; Moulard et al., 2015; Vannini & Franzese, 2008). Put simply, authenticity involves consistently presenting oneself as truthful and honest (McCormack & Peckham, 2011). This idea extends to the realm of celebrity endorsement where a strong fit or congruence between the endorser and the product enhances endorsement effectiveness (Kahle & Homer, 1985; Kamins, 1990; Kim & Na, 2007; Till & Busler, 1998). In the context of SMI, the same definition has been commonly employed and expanded to include how individuals are perceived in terms of their originality, sincerity, genuineness, realness, and truthfulness (Audrezet et al., 2020).

In the constructivist perspective, individuals perceive authenticity based on their unique expectations, shaped by their own "*dreams, stereotyped images, and expectations*" (Wang, 1999, p. 351). For instance, Moulard et al. (2015) found that perceptions of celebrity authenticity are influenced by talent, originality, discretion, as well as consistency, honesty, and morality. Personal interpretations of reality, truth, and knowledge also play a role in these perceptions (Schwandt, 1994; Wang, 1999). For instance, SMIs perceived as authentic often exhibit distinct communication styles, such as engaging in personal discussions with their followers (Marwick, 2013; Shane, 2018), and sharing unedited content to appear more natural and therefore more genuine (Hall, 2009; Moulard, 2015). Additionally, various factors contribute to consumers' perception of authenticity, including visual, verbal, and behavioral cues related to the influencer's personality (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010), as well as the style and design of advertisements. Collectively, these factors shape consumers' assessment of an influencer's authenticity and the authenticity of their content (Beverland et al., 2008).

Consequently, authenticity, shaped by objective and constructivist perspectives, is best understood as a multidimensional concept. (Bruhn et al., 2012; A. Hall, 2009; Morhart et al., 2015). However, in this paper, we will follow the definition of **authenticity among social media influencers** proposed by Vannini and Franzese (2008, p. 1621), which is "*the feeling and practice of being true to one's self or others.*"

2. Factors Influencing Authenticity

As we have seen in the preceding section, authenticity seems to play a vital role in enhancing OIM success. Therefore, it is crucial for marketers to prioritize authenticity when seeking to improve the effectiveness of their OIM strategies. In this section, we will thus explore in-depth the creation, effects, and reasons behind authenticity. We will begin by examining why and how SMIs create and manage their authenticity, then shift our focus to the customer perspective, uncovering the ways in which authenticity influences them and the underlying reasons for its significant impact.

2.1. A SMI Perspective

Authenticity has not only emerged as a critical factor demanded by both followers and brands, but it also plays an equally significant role from the influencer's perspective. In fact, recent research by Terakeet (2017) has revealed that the driving force behind SMIs' motivation to share content is not just financial gains, but rather stems from their desire for creative expression and authentic audience connection. Additionally, Audrezet et al. (2020) define an authentic influencer as one who engages in and finds genuine fulfillment in the entire content creation process.

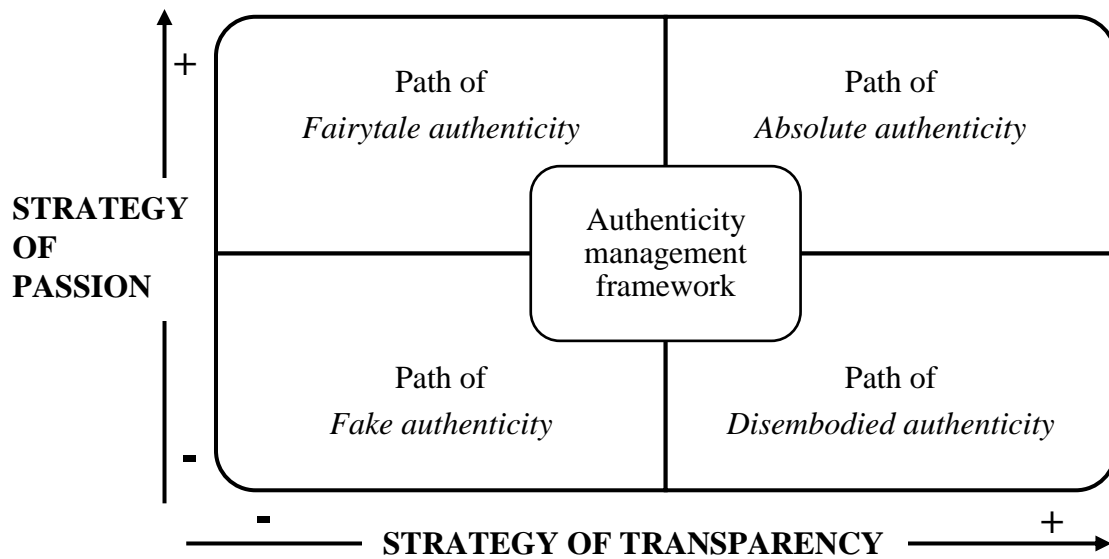
However, influencers are well aware of the importance of authenticity for brands. They understand that it fosters a sense of closeness with their audience and, thus, enhance trust in their recommendations (Audrezet et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017), which can therefore be very beneficial for brands. Consequently, some employ strategies to appear more authentic, aiming at attracting numerous brand deals (Lee & Eastin, 2021). Yet, this strategic self-presentation raises a paradox: can strategic authenticity still be genuine? It seems contradictory, as Duffy (2017) and Marwick (2013) pointed out, since being dishonest and

strategic about self-presentation goes against the very definition of authenticity. Even when an influencer aligns their actions with their personal desires, ideals, and values, authenticity becomes something that is strategically negotiated to meet both audience and brand expectations. This begs the question: How do influencers create and maintain authenticity under these pressures?

Firstly, Duffy (2017) observed that influencers often reveal their "**backstage self**", openly discussing personal matters such as problems, flaws, relationships, and even health issues, in order to portray an authentic image.

However, Abidin (2017) argues that influencers often use a technique known as "**calibrated amateurism**." This strategy involves intentionally creating an artificial sense of authenticity mimicking the raw aesthetic of an amateur. Regardless of their actual amateur status or level of expertise, these individuals carefully craft their content using suitable platforms, available resources, tools, cultural language, and social influence, often focusing on sharing everyday routines to enhance the perception of authenticity.

Furthermore, another approach is the two authenticity management strategies identified by Audrezet et al. (2020): passionate and transparent authenticity. **Passionate authenticity** involves only endorsing brands aligning with the influencer's passions, values, and editorial content. This way, it allows for creative integration of branded content without excessive constraints, allowing influencers to freely express themselves while showcasing their affinity for the endorsed brand. On the other hand, **transparent authenticity** focuses on clear disclosure of sponsored content, honest reviews, and occasionally on sharing unedited content to reflect the influencer's genuine appearance and mood. Both strategies aim to convey that brand partnerships are not solely driven by financial gain or exploiting their network, but rather serve as an extension of the influencer's self by aligning with brands that genuinely inspire them. Based on these two strategies scales, SMIs can be classified into four authenticity paths, as illustrated in the figure below: absolute, fairytale, disembodied, and fake authenticity.



Source: Reprinted from by Audrezet et al. (2020)

Similarly, Wellman et al. (2020) found that authenticity serves as the ethical framework guiding influencers in brand collaborations and sponsored content creation. They prioritize personal branding and cultivate audience relationships by only **selecting fitting brand partnerships**, strategically **crafting content tailored to audience needs**, and **prioritizing transparency in brand relationships**.

Lastly, Balaban & Szabolics (2022) have proposed a model that delves into the self-perception of SMIs' authenticity. According to this model, influencers perceive themselves as authentic when they demonstrate **sincerity, expertise, uniqueness, commitment to their values, and mediated realness**. Similarly, for an influencer to consider their own messages as authentic, factors such as **visibility, communication style, spontaneity, and transparent and creative brand endorsements** are deemed crucial. Finally, **commitment and consistent communication with their followers** signal authenticity in their interactions.

Overall, influencers strive to maintain authenticity through a variety of tactics. These include revealing their personal lives, adopting "calibrated amateurism," and managing authenticity through passion and transparency. They also prioritize brand partnerships reflecting their values, tailor content to audience needs, and maintain consistent communication with followers.

2.2. A Customer Perspective

2.2.1. SMI's Individual Differences and Sponsorships Disclosure

Firstly, Lee & Eastin (2021) identified five factors that shape consumer perceptions of influencers' authenticity, leading to significant effects on consumer behavior. These factors include **sincerity, visibility, expertise, uniqueness, and engaging in truthful endorsements**. According to these authors, when influencers exhibit a warm and sincere personality, openly discuss their personal lives, demonstrate expertise in their niche, stand out from others, and engage in genuine and honest endorsements, they are perceived as authentic. Similarly, Duffy (2017) identified realness, visibility, and uniqueness as factors contributing to the authenticity of microcelebrities. Realness refers to when the SMI's genuine and relatable nature allows others to understand and sympathize with them, sharing a similar lifestyle, concerns, and tastes. Visibility arises when an SMI openly shares their personal life, creating intimacy and a sense of community between themselves and their audience, making them more approachable. Uniqueness is also highlighted by other authors as an important aspect of an influencer's authenticity, as it enables them to differentiate themselves from others (Beverland et al., 2008) and establish an authentic self-presentation by posting original and creative content (Duffy & Wissinger, 2017; Marwick, 2013; Marwick & Boyd, 2011; Savignac et al., 2012).

Regarding the marketer's benefits from these factors, their results revealed that sincerity, uniqueness, and transparency can enhance consumers' attitudes towards them and even increase engagement. Notably, sincerity and transparent product placements can significantly boost followers' purchase intentions.

On the other hand, the literature presents conflicting findings on the effects of **disclosure transparency** on OIM. Some suggest disclosure enhances **authenticity perceptions** (Morhart et al., 2015) and is beneficial for consumers as it allows SMIs to create better content (Van Dam & van Reijmersdal, 2019). Others argue it can cause skepticism, implying influencers are driven solely by monetary gains (Choi & Rifon, 2012; De Jans et al., 2018; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Hudders et al., 2021; Hwang & Jeong, 2016; Kim & Kim, 2021; Schouten et al., 2020). On the other hand, further studies reveal consumers are not bothered at all if influencers receive financial incentives, minimally impacting authenticity (Abreu, 2019) or **credibility perceptions** (Liljander et al., 2015). However, the key element here is the clear and explicit sponsorship disclosure in the SMI's post caption (Lu et al., 2014). For instance, additional

research shows that sponsorship disclosure negatively impacts SMI's persuasiveness (Evans et al., 2017; van Reijmersdal et al., 2016) and credibility when disclosed by a third party (Colliander & Erlandsson, 2015). Yet, this impact can be mitigated if the SMI emphasizes **honesty in their reviews** (Hwang & Jeong, 2016). Additionally, Hudders et al. (2021) also noted that ad disclosing might enhance transparency perceptions and brand recall through increased ad recognition, but potentially harm brand evaluations. Moreover, inconsistencies were observed in how disclosures influence purchase intent, suggesting the role of moderating variables. Abreu (2019) adds that micro-influencers' recommendations are **more trusted when unsponsored**, implying that sponsorship alone can affect perceived authenticity negatively. Overall, the complex relationship between transparency, authenticity, sponsorship disclosure, and the various outcomes in influencer marketing call for more nuanced research.

2.2.2. PSI Between SMIs and their Followers

Furthermore, **PSI between SMIs and their followers**, one of the key factors of OIM effectiveness, is also deemed essential for SMIs' success as opinion leaders (e.g., Chung & Cho, 2017). **Audience participation and communication type** are indeed factors impacting authenticity perceptions (Hayes & Carr, 2015; Molleda, 2010). This relationship, established through a two-way communication involving audience engagement such as commenting, liking, sharing, and subscribing to SMI's content (Hayes & Carr, 2015; Lee & Eastin, 2021), fosters relational trust towards the influencer and enhances their credibility and authenticity (Tolson, 2010; Yang & Lim, 2009). Ultimately, this perceived authenticity of SMIs stems from the friendship they build with their audience, resulting in an emotional connection and active participation from the audience in the communication process (Frederick et al., 2012; Gong & Li, 2017; Lee, 2020; Lee & Eastin, 2021; Lee & Watkins, 2016). As a result, influencers' recommendations are often compared to highly credible WOM (Breves et al., 2019), driving engagement (Lou et al., 2019; Suciu, 2020) and influencing purchase intentions (Ki et al., 2020; Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016; Suciu, 2020). Additionally, it cultivates a sense of closeness, enhancing their brand recommendations' trustworthiness (Audrezet et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017; Lee & Eastin, 2021).

Similarly, brands can build authenticity by establishing consumer relationships, leading to various positive outcomes. Past research in traditional marketing have shown that highly authentic brands promote strong emotional connections with consumers through active

interactions (Liao & Ma, 2009; Napoli et al., 2016), thereby strengthening consumer respect and trust towards the company (Dwivedi & McDonald, 2018; Eggers et al., 2013; Hernandez-Fernandez et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2012; Napoli et al., 2014; Tan et al., 2019). Jun & Yi (2020) suggest this applies to the digital realm when considering the self-branding efforts of influencers, as similar effects have been observed among their audience. Indeed, they also highlight that enhanced perception of authenticity resulting from such interactions nurtures emotional attachment to the influencer, ultimately impacting his own brand trust and loyalty. Additionally, they state that unique interactivity is exclusive to influencer brands and is a key role in shaping the influencer brand equity.

2.2.3. Intrinsic Motivation, Creative Control and Congruence

Intrinsic motivation and creative control in brand and product promotion by influencers significantly influence consumers' perception of their authenticity, sincerity, and credibility. When influencers show that they genuinely have a personal interest and passion for the endorsed products, it significantly drives consumers' willingness to pay for it (Kapitan et al., 2022). However, if consumers perceive the endorsed content as contradictory to the influencer's personality or values, they view the partnership as driven by external motivation (such as financial gain) and may therefore view the influencer as inauthentic (Audrezet et al., 2020).

Such a fit between SMI's posts and their public persona is more commonly known as the concept of **congruence** and is essential for authenticity perceptions. If the content diverges from the followers' established image of the influencer or seems inconsistent with prior posts, it may erode their perceived credibility and authenticity (Pöyry et al., 2019). For instance, greater alignment or similarity between the influencer's usual content and the endorsed product can enhance the audience's attitude towards the brand (De Veirman et al., 2017). Consistency between the product/brand and the endorsing celebrity has also been proven crucial in shaping perceptions of authenticity, further validating that effective communication depends heavily on this factor (Ilicic & Webster, 2016; Molleda, 2010; Molleda & Roberts, 2008). Furthermore, the alignment of the influencer's behavior with his genuine thoughts, beliefs, and values is called "**observational authenticity**" and is said to be the most powerful form of authenticity influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors (Lee, 2020). In addition, intrinsic motivation and congruence displayed by influencers adds credibility to their recommendations, another previously mentioned factor influencing OIM effectiveness as well (Kapitan & Silvera, 2015).

2.2.4. Contextual Cues of Influencers Posts

Furthermore, consumers' perception of influencer authenticity extends beyond just personal characteristics, but also encompasses factors such as post content and format, communication style, and public opinion.

For instance, a study by Kapitan & Silvera (2015) found that audience perception of influencers' authenticity increases when positive cues (comments like “credible,” “unbiased,” “of good quality,” and “worthy of your time”) are **primed**, whereas negative cues (comments like “overly sponsored,” “done only for money,” “pushing the products,” and “a waste of your time”) decrease it. However, encouraging **audience participation** consistently boosts perceived authenticity, surprisingly more so when negative cues are present. Lastly, despite negative cues potentially reducing the perceived authenticity of influencers, it does not have a negative impact on the consumers' attitude towards the product or brand, proving that priming impacts product attitudes differently than influencer authenticity.

Secondly, as mentioned in the influencer perspective, **specific communicative styles**, such as **typographical cues** including punctuation and syntax, are essential in shaping consumer perceptions of an influencer's authenticity (Shane, 2018). These cues help deliver the influencer's distinct voice, showcasing their personality and emotional state (Blood, 2000; Gaden & Dumitrica, 2014) and, thus, authenticity. Moreover, authenticity can also rise from raw, unfiltered, **amateurish features**, promoting relatability (Abidin, 2017). These aspects can range from blurry footage and off-focus shots on Youtube, to spontaneous and fresh posts by ordinary users, who are often seen as more authentic than posts made by professionals (Hall, 2015; Tolson, 2010). Ordinary users are indeed automatically perceived as more authentic than major brands and companies (Coleman & Moss, 2008; Linqia, 2017; Montgomery, 2001; Scott, 2017). Notably, selfies play a significant role in authenticity perception, with **influencers' postures and gestures** (e.g., duck face poses, grimaces) influencing their perceived authenticity. However, staged photos, imitations of celebrity culture, and overly edited visuals are perceived as inauthentic. Therefore, consumers tend to favor amateurish pictures, appreciating their natural, everyday-life portrayal of influencers (Lobinger & Brantner, 2015).

As stated before, maintaining **the right balance between positive and negative content** can enhance OIM effectiveness, as it boosts endorsers' persuasiveness, honesty, and credibility (e.g., Campos, 2017; Eisend, 2006, 2007; Pizzutti et al., 2016; Rucker et al., 2008; Semaan et al., 2018; Uribe et al., 2016). In the context of advertising, this approach, known as a two-sided

message (Winter & Krämer, 2012), has also been linked to higher authenticity perceptions. Findings from Lee & Johnson (2022) indeed affirm that Instagram product reviews with two-sided messages foster higher authenticity, credibility, positive ad attitudes, and eWOM intentions. Lastly, while message-sidedness had a null impact on purchase intention and brand attitudes, and a positive impact on ad attitude, and eWOM intentions, perceived authenticity and credibility of influencers mediated these relationships. However, these authors also noted that factors beyond message-sidedness shape authenticity and credibility, including sponsorship (Evans et al., 2017; Stubb & Colliander, 2019) and distinctiveness (Casaló et al., 2020). As a result, they suggest exploring other message or source characteristics in conjunction with sidedness and self-disclosure. By considering these additional factors, a more comprehensive understanding of how authenticity and credibility are shaped in influencer marketing can be achieved.

2.2.5. Influencer's Popularity

As previously discussed, an **influencer's popularity**, particularly their follower size, has been correlated with higher OIM effectiveness as it increases the influencer's perceived credibility and influence (Leung et al., 2022b). However, when looking at how it affects authenticity perceptions, mixed results can be found.

Some studies support the idea that the spontaneity and freshness of amateurs with smaller followings contribute to a higher perceived authenticity. For instance, Bruns (2018) found that Generation Z individuals (born after 1994) perceived influencers with smaller followings as more authentic due to higher perceived trustworthiness. Similarly, a study by Park et al. (2021) found that the public perceives micro-influencers as more authentic than mega-influencers, who have over 1 million followers. Moreover, the authors also highlighted that this authenticity can be transferred from influencers to brands, as suggested by the rub-off effect, but this only applies to hedonic products and not to utilitarian products. Moreover, Bruns' (2018) study also demonstrates that when a micro-influencer is seen as authentic and resembles their audience, their marketing resembles WOM, resulting in **higher engagement rates and increased marketing responses for the brand**. Recognizing this, marketers are shifting their collaborations from traditional celebrities or mega-influencers to partnerships with micro-influencers (Schouten et al., 2020; Suciu, 2020).

However, a third study yielded somewhat contradictory results. According to De Veirman et al. (2017), a high number of followers can potentially undermine authenticity by creating a perception of non-exclusivity. Nonetheless, their study also revealed that more popular SMIs, those with a greater number of followers, can have a greater positive impact on notoriety, opinions, and likeability. For instance, micro-influencers nearing a following of 100,000 are perceived as more credible while still maintaining a local presence. Since credibility influences authenticity, we can conclude that a higher number of followers can indeed boost perceived authenticity. Thus, the study implies that both the possibility of a high/low number of followers can impact the perceived authenticity.

Furthermore, further research has revealed more neutral results. According to Abreu (2019), most millennial consumers hold a neutral stance when it comes to SMI's follower count, suggesting it doesn't directly affect their authenticity perceptions. Additionally, the follower-follower ratio can also significantly influence how authenticity is perceived. Suspicion of commercial or fake accounts can be triggered when an SMI has a high number of followers while following only a few accounts, which can undermine their perceived authenticity (De Veirman et al., 2017).

Lastly, the role of PSI between SMIs and their followers has been highlighted as an important factor in shaping authenticity. Lee's research (2020) suggests that micro-influencers, who often have more time to interact with their audience, can cultivate a more personal and intimate connection, thereby enhancing their perceived authenticity. Consequently, the author aligns with the conclusions drawn by Bruns (2018) and Park et al. (2021), supporting the notion that a smaller audience can enhance an SMI's perceived authenticity.

To summarize all these findings, we have compiled a comprehensive table that outlines the various factors shaping customers' perceptions of SMIs' authenticity.

Factors	Outcomes for the SMI	Outcomes for brands	Main References
SMI's individual differences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sincerity</i> • <i>Visibility</i> • <i>Expertise</i> • <i>Uniqueness</i> • <i>Engaging in truthful endorsements</i> • <i>Realness</i> 	Consumers perceive SMIs having all of those characteristics as being more authentic, resulting in a positive shift in their attitude and increased engagement toward the influencer.	As a result, consumers' purchase intentions increase.	Duffy (2017); Lee & Eastin (2021)
SMI's intrinsic motivation and creative control	Boosts the sincerity, credibility, and authenticity of SMIs.	Significantly influences consumers' willingness to pay for the sponsored product.	Audrezet et al.(2020); Kapitan et al. (2022)
SMI's popularity	The impact of the number of followers on perceived authenticity is mixed, with both high and low numbers potentially influencing perceptions, but also recent research suggests that such a factor has no significant impact on perceived authenticity.	Micro-influencers generate higher engagement rates, leading to increased marketing responses and benefits for the brand.	Bruns (2018); De Veirman et al. (2019); Park et al. (2021)
PSI between SMIs and their followers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Audience participation</i> • <i>Two-way communication</i> • <i>Sense of Friendship</i> 	Impact on SMIs' trust, credibility, and authenticity perceptions. Key to the success of SMIs as opinion leaders.	SMIs' recommendations are compared to highly credible word-of-mouth. Drives engagement and influences purchase intentions. Cultivates a sense of closeness and enhances trustworthiness of brand recommendations.	Audrezet et al. (2020); Breves et al. (2019); Chung & Cho (2017); Djafarova & Rushworth, (2017); Hayes & Carr, (2015); Ki et al. (2020); Kowalczyk & Pounders, (2016); Lee & Eastin, (2021); Lou et al. (2019); Molleda, (2010); Suciú (2020); Tolson, (2010); Yang & Lim, (2009)
PSI between the sponsoring brand and the consumers		Fosters a strong emotional connection with consumers, which enhances their respect and trust towards the company.	Dwivedi & McDonald (2018); Eggers et al. (2013); Hernandez-Fernandez et al. (2019); Kim et al. (2012); Liao & Ma (2009); Napoli et al. (2014, 2016); Tan et al. (2019)
Congruence between SMI's post and persona	Inconsistency or a mismatch between the influencer's content and their perceived image erodes credibility and authenticity, impacting consumer perceptions.	Observational authenticity plays a significant role in shaping consumer behaviors. Moreover, a strong alignment between the influencer's typical content and the endorsed product, coupled with a large follower base, has a positive impact on brand attitude	De Veirman et al. (2017); Lee (2020); Pöyry et al. (2019)

Contextual cues of SMI's posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priming • Communication style • Features • Message sidedness 	<p><i>Positive priming</i> enhances audience perception of authenticity, while negative priming diminishes it.</p>	<p><i>Typographical cues</i> on Twitter contribute to the authenticity of an influencer's message.</p>	<p><i>Amateurish features</i> in posts foster a sense of relatability and are perceived as equally or more authentic than professional content.</p>	<p>The influencer's <i>posture, gesture, and context of the photo situation</i> influence perceived authenticity.</p>	<p><i>Stylistic features</i> of selfies, such as editing practices and photo filters, also influence authenticity perception.</p>	<p>Instagram product reviews with <i>two-sided messages</i> enhance perceptions of influencer authenticity and credibility.</p>	<p><i>Negative priming</i> does not negatively affect consumers' attitude towards the product or brand compared to positive priming.</p>	<p><i>Two-sided messages</i> do not significantly impact brand attitudes and purchase intentions in the short-term, but they have a positive impact on ad attitude and eWOM intentions.</p>	<p>Abidin (2017); Coleman & Moss (2008); Hall (2015); Kapitan & Silvera (2015); Lee & Johnson (2022); Lobinger & Brantner, (2015); Luoma-aho et al. (2015); Montgomery (2001); Scott (2017); Shane (2018); Tolson (2010)</p>
Sponsorship disclosure	<p>Conflicting perspectives exist in the literature: it may enhance, diminish, or have no impact at all on perceptions of SMIs' authenticity.</p>	<p>Potential enhancement of transparency perceptions and brand recall.</p>	<p>Potential negative impact on brand evaluations.</p>	<p>Inconsistent findings regarding its influence on purchase intentions.</p>	<p>Abreu (2019); Choi & Rifon (2012); De Jans et al. (2018); De Veirman et al. (2019); De Veirman & Hudders (2020); Hwang & Jeong (2016); Kim & Kim (2021); Morhart et al. (2015); Schouten et al. (2020)</p>					

Table 1. Comprehensive Summary of Factors Influencing SMIs' Authenticity Perceptions

PART 2 - HYPOTHESES (& Integrative Conceptual Framework)

HYP 1: *A two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post will elicit higher levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product compared to a one-sided caption.*

Keywords:

- **Two- (vs. one-)sided caption:** *Two-sided messages refer to communications where a source incorporates both positive and negative aspects of a product while emphasizing one side to persuade the audience (Hovland, 1954). In contrast, one-sided messages only present positive information (Crowley & Hoyer, 1994).*
- **Follower engagement:** *measured by purchase intentions, brand attitude and eWOM intentions.*

In the realm of OIM effectiveness, various factors come into play, as outlined in the literature review. Notably, we briefly mentioned the findings by Leung et al. (2022b) highlighting the potential effectiveness of incorporating a mix of positive and negative comments into the sponsored post. Extensive research has been conducted to examine the effectiveness of such strategies, revealing that incorporating both positive and negative information can yield significant benefits compared to only incorporating positive attributes. The majority of past studies have demonstrated that the inclusion of such information enhances credibility and persuasion (e.g., Campos, 2017; Crowley & Hoyer, 1994; Eisend, 2006, 2007; Golden & Alpert, 1978; Kamins et al., 1989; Kamins & Marks, 1987) as well as the belief that the endorsed brand truly possesses the positive traits it claims to have (Golden & Alpert, 1987; Hunt & Kernan, 1984). As a result, it exerts a substantial influence on consumer attitudes and behaviors such as purchase intentions (Eisend, 2007).

While previous research primarily focused on traditional media platforms (e.g., Etgar & Goodwin, 1982; Pechmann, 1992), recent studies have begun to explore the impact of message sidedness in online marketing (e.g., Krouwer et al., 2021). However, there is a notable scarcity of research investigating this phenomenon specifically within the realm of online influencer marketing (Braatz, 2017; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Lee & Johnson, 2022) (refer to appendix A.2 for a summary of findings). Therefore, we aim to fill this research gap by examining the effect of message sidedness on consumer engagement in SMIs' sponsored posts.

HYP 2: *The relation between a two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post and levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product is positively mediated by perceived authenticity.*

Keywords

- **Two- (vs. one-)sided caption:** *cf. HYP1*
- **Follower engagement:** *cf. HYP1*
- **Perceived authenticity:** *authenticity among social media influencers is "the feeling and practice of being true to one's self or others." (Vannini & Franzese, 2008, p. 1621)*

Previous research has shown that authenticity plays a significant positive role in influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors, including engagement with sponsored content (e.g., Audrezet et al., 2020; Kapitan et al., 2022; Lee, 2020; Morhart et al., 2015). However, as mentioned earlier, when consumers are aware that an influencer's post is sponsored by a brand, they may question his authenticity, even more if only positive feedback is provided (McQuarrie et al., 2013). Therefore, incorporating a moderate level of positivity should enhance the SMI's authenticity and the value of the content. Indeed, remember Lee and Johnson's (2022) findings showing that two-sided messages in Instagram product reviews lead to higher perceptions of influencer authenticity. Nonetheless, they found that such a strategy had a null impact on purchase intention and brand attitude and a positive impact on eWOM intention. Nonetheless, due to the contradictory nature of these results compared to previous findings (e.g., De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Hwang & Jeong, 2016; Pizzutti et al., 2016; Uribe et al., 2016) and as they also highlighted the importance of perceived authenticity of influencers in mediating these relationships, we aim to further investigate the impact of authenticity on message sidedness effectiveness. Moreover, Hwang and Jeong (2016) and De Veirman and Hudders (2020) have both highlighted the difficulties in manipulating message sidedness, which could be the reason why literature on two-sided message effectiveness lead to inconsistent results and unsupported predictions. Therefore, we aim to investigate the assertion that a two-sided message could act as a validation cue for influencer authenticity.

HYP 3: *The relation between a two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post and levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product is moderated by sponsorship disclosure, amplifying the positive impact of a two-sided message on engagement.*

Keywords:

- **Two- (vs. one-)sided caption:** *cf. HYP1*
- **Follower engagement:** *cf. HYP1*
- **Sponsorship disclosure:** *Sponsorship disclosure is an explicit declaration that marketers include in social media advertisements to ensure transparency and foster consumer trust (Wang et al., 2022).*

A majority body of research has shown that two-sided messages offer notable advantages compared to one-sided messages. However, previous studies have also revealed mixed results (e.g., Braatz, 2017; Cornelis et al., 2012, 2015, 2020; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Eisend, 2008, 2010, 2013; Huertas & Hanna, 2020; Küster & Eisend, 2016; Pizzutti et al., 2016). Such inconsistencies often indicate the presence of additional moderating factors at play. Indeed, message sidedness effectiveness has been found to be influenced by a range of other factors (refer to Appendix A.1 for a summary of previous findings).

However, the impact of sponsorship disclosure on the relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement has received little attention. Only De Veirman et al. (2017) have explored the link between these variables, revealing that sponsorship disclosure's negative impact on brand attitude is nullified when a two-sided message is used as a moderator. Based on this discovery, we hypothesized that sponsorship disclosure could also play a moderating role in the relationship between two-sided messages and consumer engagement. Furthermore, additional research by Boerman (2020), De Jans et al. (2020), Kay et al. (2020), and Sah et al. (2018) have shown favorable outcomes associated with sponsorship disclosure, including enhanced persuasion, improved brand recall, increased engagement, and greater purchase intentions. Thus, we are expecting that the presence of sponsorship disclosure in the context of a two-sided message will enhance consumer engagement even further, resulting in a more favorable outcome for the brand. Conversely, a two-sided message with no disclosure may be perceived as more biased and less credible, potentially reducing engagement.

In light of those three hypotheses, a conceptual framework was developed in order to better visualize our predicted relationships:

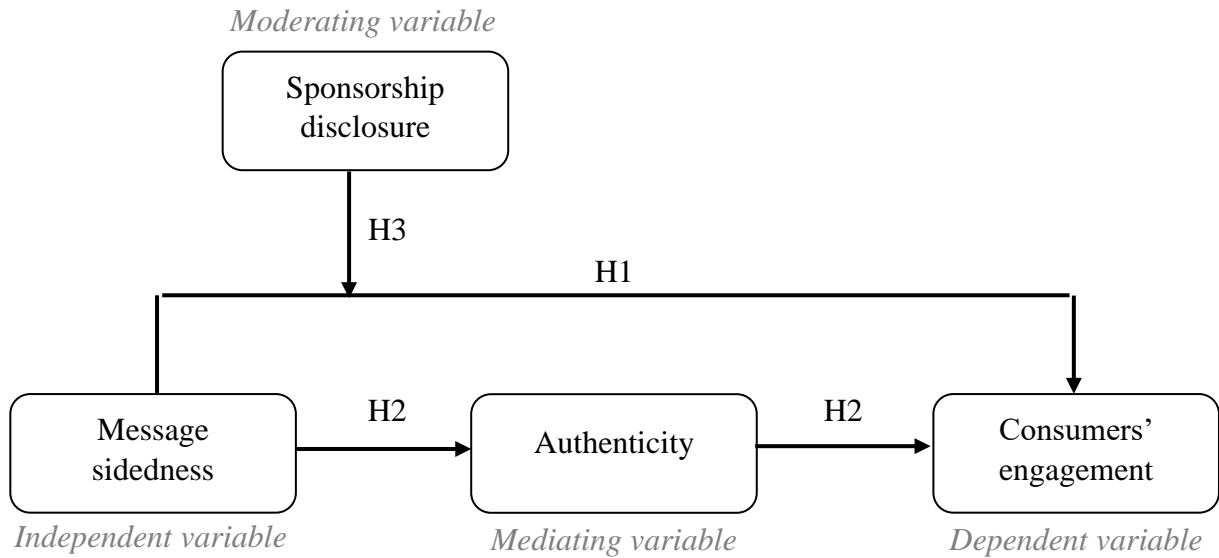


Figure 1. *Integrative Conceptual Framework of our Study*

PART 3 – METHODOLOGY

To examine these three hypotheses, a 2×2 factorial design experiment was conducted to investigate the separate effects of two independent variables (IV) on the dependent variable (DV) (consumers engagement). The IV manipulated were message sidedness (One sided vs. Two-sided) and sponsorship disclosure (Presence vs. Absence).

1. Materials and Procedures

The experiment made through an online survey (refer to Appendix B) utilized four fabricated Instagram posts featuring a fictional female travel influencer named @travels_of_noah. All four stimuli showcased a picture of that influencer by a 3-star hotel pool in Bali. The stimuli varied based on whether they highlighted both pros and cons of the hotel or solely its advantages, and whether they included a sponsorship disclosure (SD) or not (nSD) (refer to Figure 2 and 3).

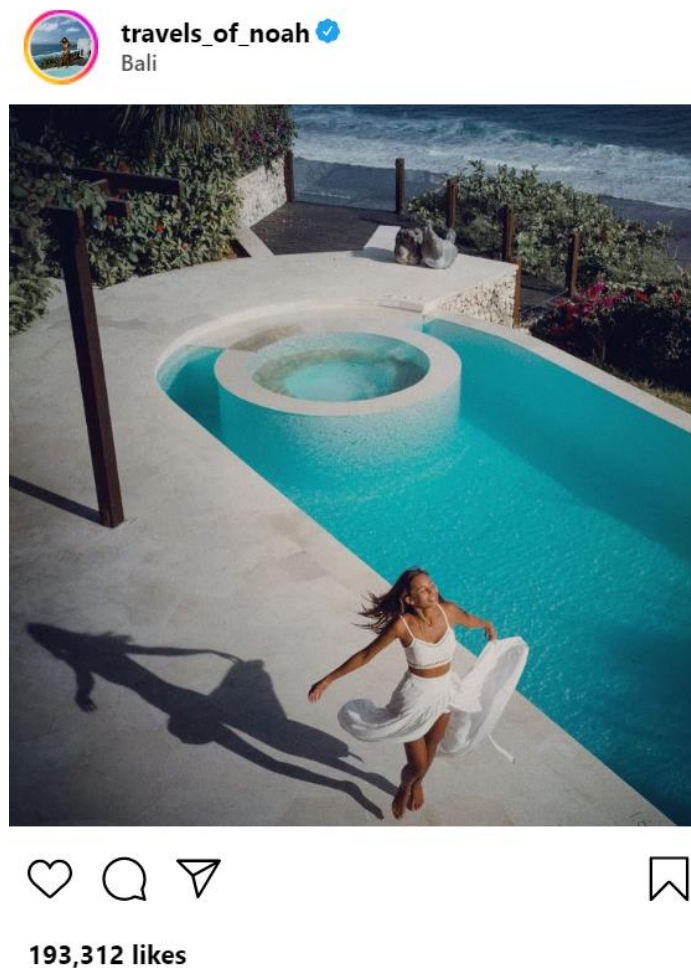


Figure 2. Stimuli – picture of the fake Instagram post

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. However, to fully experience the tranquility of this oasis, it's important to note that the hotel is situated a short distance from the bustling city center, requiring a brief taxi ride to reach the main tourist attractions. Nevertheless, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. While on-site dining options may not be as extensive as in more upscale establishments, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, if you're looking for ways to stay active, gym facilities are available, although quite limited. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ✈️ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🏠 ✨

Thank you to the hotel for providing a complimentary stay in exchange for my honest opinions. Don't forget to visit their website for more details and book your next Bali getaway 🔍
#sponsored

[View all 426 comment](#)

Condition 1:

Two-sided message x Sponsorship Disclosure

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. However, to fully experience the tranquility of this oasis, it's important to note that the hotel is situated a short distance from the bustling city center, requiring a brief taxi ride to reach the main tourist attractions. Nevertheless, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. While on-site dining options may not be as extensive as in more upscale establishments, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, if you're looking for ways to stay active, gym facilities are available, although quite limited. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ✈️ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🏠 ✨

[View all 426 comment](#)

Condition 2:

Two-sided message x non-Sponsorship Disclosure

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. Additionally, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. Plus, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, gym facilities are available if you're looking for ways to stay active. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸➔🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴🌅✨

Thank you to the hotel for providing a complimentary stay in exchange for my honest opinions. Don't forget to visit their website for more details and book your next Bali getaway 🔍

#sponsored

[View all 426 comment](#)

Condition 3:

One-sided message x Sponsorship Disclosure

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. Additionally, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. Plus, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, gym facilities are available if you're looking for ways to stay active. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸➔🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴🌅✨

[View all 426 comment](#)

Condition 4:

One-sided message x Non-Sponsorship Disclosure

Figure 3. Stimuli – captions used in the fake Instagram post

Choosing a Bali hotel for our study was strategic, aiming to appeal to our target sample and increase the likelihood of their engagement with the post (Babin & Burns, 1997; MacInnis & Price, 1987; Unnava & Burnkrant, 1991). Given that most Instagram users fall between 18-34 years (Statista, 2023), a product resonating with this youthful demographic (i.e., teenagers, students, and young graduates) was essential. Moreover, travel influencers have a strong foothold on Instagram (Fejes, 2023), and given the age group's affinity for travel (Sheivachman, 2017), a post about a 3-star hotel in an idyllic location seemed appropriate. Additionally, the hotel choice also ensured gender-neutrality, thereby broadening its appeal to a larger portion of the respondents. Lastly, to eliminate potential biases from prior brand experiences, the hotel's name was intentionally omitted to prevent any contamination of the results.

In addition, the choice to use Instagram as the platform for this study was influenced by several factors. Firstly, influencers are most active on YouTube and Instagram, as both platforms are recognized as the leading platforms in this context (Gaenssle & Budzinski, 2020). Secondly, Instagram, boasting 2 billion monthly active users, is the fourth most popular social media site, according to Statista (2023) and Kepios (Data Reportal, 2023a). Moreover, in influencer marketing, it is second only to TikTok, with a market share of 50.8% compared to TikTok's 55.5%, which makes them the most frequently utilized channel by brands (Geysler, 2023). Additionally, Instagram's user-friendly interface for posting photos and captions further justified our decision to use this platform for implementing our stimuli. However, for convenience and efficiency, we used a website that can generate fake posts, eliminating the need to set up an account with real followers.

Next, to indicate message sidedness, a two-sided caption was used to present both the hotel's advantages and disadvantages, adhering to proven guidelines from prior research on the efficacy of message sidedness. These rules include: 1) Beginning the message with positive arguments (Eisend, 2006; Igou & Bless, 2003); 2) Mentioning drawbacks early but not first (Crowley & Hoyer, 1994; Eisend, 2007); 3) Assigning high importance to positive attributes and low to moderate importance to negative attributes (e.g., Bohner et al., 2003; Eisend, 2007; Pechmann, 1992); 4) Connecting negative attributes with positive ones to establish a correlation (e.g., Eisend, 2006; Pechmann, 1992); and 5) Featuring more positive than negative arguments (Crowley & Hoyer, 1994; Eisend, 2006). Following these principles, our two-sided captions presented a balanced presentation of the hotel's attributes. Conversely, for the one-sided message, the same caption was employed, but all negative attributes were intentionally omitted (refer to Figure 3 for all captions used).

Furthermore, to signify sponsorship disclosure, the caption included the hashtag '#sponsored,' along with the following statement: "Thank you to the hotel for providing a complimentary stay in exchange for my honest opinions". This method has been validated in past research as an effective way to communicate sponsorships (e.g., De Jans et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017).

Finally, participants were randomly distributed across the four conditions using a randomizer tool integrated into the Qualtrics survey platform. This ensured equal opportunity for all in order to avoid any selection bias. The allocation resulted in the following participant distribution: $n = 48$ in the Two-sided x Disclosure condition, $n = 46$ in the Two-sided x Non-Disclosure condition, $n = 46$ in the One-sided x Disclosure condition, and $n = 46$ in the One-sided x Non-Disclosure condition.

2. Measures

After introducing the stimuli, we gathered data on all variables under investigation.

2.1. Dependent Variables

We began by evaluating the DV, which measures consumers' engagement towards the sponsored product. To evaluate this, we drew from established literature, using variables such as purchase intentions and brand attitude, which are frequently used to evaluate consumer engagement with sponsor posts (e.g., Braatz, 2017; Ertz et al., 2021; Ishani, 2019; Lee & Johnson, 2022; Lu et al., 2014). Additionally, Lee & Johnson (2022) further incorporated electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) intentions as a measure of engagement. Thus, these three variables collectively formed our assessment of consumer engagement for this study.

Purchase Intentions (PI) were measured using a scale developed by Putrevu & Lord (1994) and Taylor & Baker (1994). Respondents rated five statements on a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). They responded to the following question: "What are your sentiments regarding booking a room in this 3-star hotel?" with the options being: (1) I would consider booking a room in this hotel, (2) I have no intention to book a room in this hotel, (3) It is possible that I would book a room in this hotel, (4) I will book a room in this hotel the next time I need an hotel in Bali, and (5) If I am in need, I would book a room in this hotel. Moreover, a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85, exceeding the 0.7 threshold, confirms the reliability of our measure (see Appendix C1 for the reliability analysis of all scales).

Brand Attitude (BA) was evaluated using Dabholkar & Bagozzi's (2002) four-item 7-point semantic-differential scale. Participants were asked the following question: "How would you describe your feelings toward this 3-star hotel?" And the scale included the following pairs of endpoints: 'good-bad', 'pleasant-unpleasant', 'harmful-beneficial', and 'favorable-unfavorable'. The reliability analysis indicated $\alpha = 0.88$.

eWOM intentions (eWOM) were measured using Eckler & Bolls' (2011) three-item 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants responded to: "If you were to come across this post on your Instagram feed (assuming you are following this influencer), what would be your intentions or response towards it?" with options: (1) I think this Instagram post is worth sharing with others, (2) I will recommend this Instagram post to others, and (3) I would 'like' this Instagram post. The reliability analysis indicated $\alpha = 0.83$.

2.2. Mediating Variable (MV)

Next, the mediating variable, *SMI's perceived authenticity* (SMI.authenticity), was assessed using a three-item scale crafted by Moulard et al. (2015). These items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants responded to: "How do you feel about this influencer? 'I think this person is...'" with options being: (1) Genuine, (2) Real, and (3) Authentic. The reliability analysis indicated $\alpha = 0.92$.

2.3. Covariate variables

We also included product involvement and Instagram familiarity as control variables to enhance our study's robustness (Kay et al., 2020), ensuring that potential confounding factors were accounted for in the results.

Product involvement (Product.Involvement) was measured to gauge respondents' connection to the 3-star hotel, reflecting its significance based on their needs and values (Zaichkowsky, 1987). We measured product involvement as it has been shown to impact the effectiveness of two-sided advertising strategies (Cornelis et al., 2014). Using a 7-point semantic-differential scale, consisting of five items, adapted from Dabholkar & Bagozzi (2002), participants were asked the following question: "To me, choosing an accommodation while on holidays is..." And the scale included the following pairs of endpoints: 'unimportant decision/very important decision', 'decision requires very little thought/decision requires a lot of thoughts', 'little to lose if I choose the wrong brand/a lot to lose if I choose the wrong brand', 'decision is not mainly logical or objective/decision is mainly logical or objective', and 'decision is not based mainly on functional facts/decision is based mainly on functional facts'. The reliability analysis indicated $\alpha = 0.74$.

Familiarity with Instagram (Insta.familiarity) was assessed through a straightforward question: "Are you currently or have you in the past been using Instagram?" with 'Yes' or 'No' as answers to choose from. This ensured that most respondents were regular users and helped us discern if this variable impacted our findings.

3. Manipulation of MS and SD

Prior to conducting the hypotheses testing, we conducted manipulation checks to ensure the adequacy of our IV manipulations, namely the One-sided vs. Two-sided and Disclosure vs. non-Disclosure conditions for our study.

Message sidedness recognition (MS) was verified with two items adopted from De Veirman and Hudders (2020). Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the following statements: "The Instagram post only presents opinions in favor of the 3-star hotel" and "The Instagram post includes both favorable opinions and arguments against the 3-star hotel." The reliability analysis indicated $\alpha = 0.75$.

Sponsorship disclosure recognition (SD) was verified through a simple and straightforward question: "Do you believe the post was clearly indicated as a sponsored content?" with options 'Yes' or 'No' for participants to choose from.

In addition, participants' attention during the survey was also assessed in two ways. First, after viewing the stimuli, a question was included to verify if participants had carefully read the caption. They were asked, "Did you read the caption below the post? If not, please do so attentively before proceeding to this question, " with a 'Yes' or 'No' response option. Secondly, an attention check question was placed in the middle of the survey to ensure that participants were reading the questions carefully. The question was presented using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), and participants were instructed to select the 'strongly disagree' option.

4. Participants

The study included 186 consumers aged between 18 and 53 years old, recruited from various channels, including personal connections, Facebook groups, and survey exchange platforms such as SurveySwap.io and SurveyCircle.com. As a result, the majority of respondents fell within the desired age group of approximately 26 years old primarily due to the inclusion of close friends who were young graduates. Additionally, a significant number of participants were other students actively seeking respondents for their own thesis surveys, further contributing to the alignment with the target age range.

Out of the initial 304 responses, 118 were excluded for various reasons. These exclusions consisted of participants who did not read the caption (N = 14), who failed the attention check question (N = 15), and who abandoned the questionnaire before the end (N = 89). Of the remaining 186 responses, a significant majority of participants (94%) demonstrated familiarity with Instagram, either as active users or past users.

Towards the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to provide sociodemographic information, including age, gender, and academic level, to enhance our understanding of the sample characteristics. This demographic breakdown consisted of 65,05% of women and 34,95% of men, the average age was 26 years old, and a majority of the participants (63%) were master's degree owners.

PART 4 – RESULTS

In this section, we will detail the outcomes derived from the statistical analyses that we have done in order to validate our hypotheses on purchase intentions, brand attitude, and eWOM intentions, collectively representing consumer engagement. For all the tests performed, it was decided to use a significance threshold of 0.05, as commonly used in statistics.

1. Manipulation Checks

In order to verify if our manipulations for message sidedness (MS) and sponsorship disclosure (SD) were accurately perceived by the participants, we conducted a couple of statistical tests. For MS, we performed an F-test (based on an ANOVA) to compare the mean values across each condition, where a mean close to 7 indicates a one-sided message. In the case of SD, we used a Chi-squared test to compare the proportions of 'yes' versus 'no' responses within each condition. The results of both tests were statistically significant (p -value < 0.05), implying a difference between the two groups in terms of perception of MS ($F(1,184) = 62.4148$, $p < 0.0001$) and SD ($X\text{-squared}(1) = 6.2158$, $p = 0.0127$) (refer to Table 2 and 3).

1.1. Robustness Checks: Internal Analyses

However, a closer examination of the data with descriptive statistics suggested that those differences were not aligned with our expectations for the manipulations.

	MS	M	SD	F_test
1	1S	5.79	1.00	$F(1,184) = 62.4148$
2	2S	4.24	1.59	$p\text{-value} < 0.0001$

Table 2. Manipulation Check of MS

First, it appears that participants struggled to discern the two-sided (2S) captions as containing both positive and negative sentiments. The mean score for this condition was 4.24 (standard

deviation = 1.59), meaning participants could not distinguish if the message was only containing positive sentiments or both. In contrast, the one-sided (1S) captions were more effectively recognized as showcasing purely positive opinions, denoted by a mean score of 5.79 (standard deviation = 1.00). The figure below (Figure 4) clearly highlights this contrast between the two groups. In the 1S group, participants identified the one-sidedness of the message most of the time (all answers between 5 and 7), whereas in the 2S group, the distribution of responses was more dispersed. Indeed, the responses were almost equally distributed between 2 and 6.

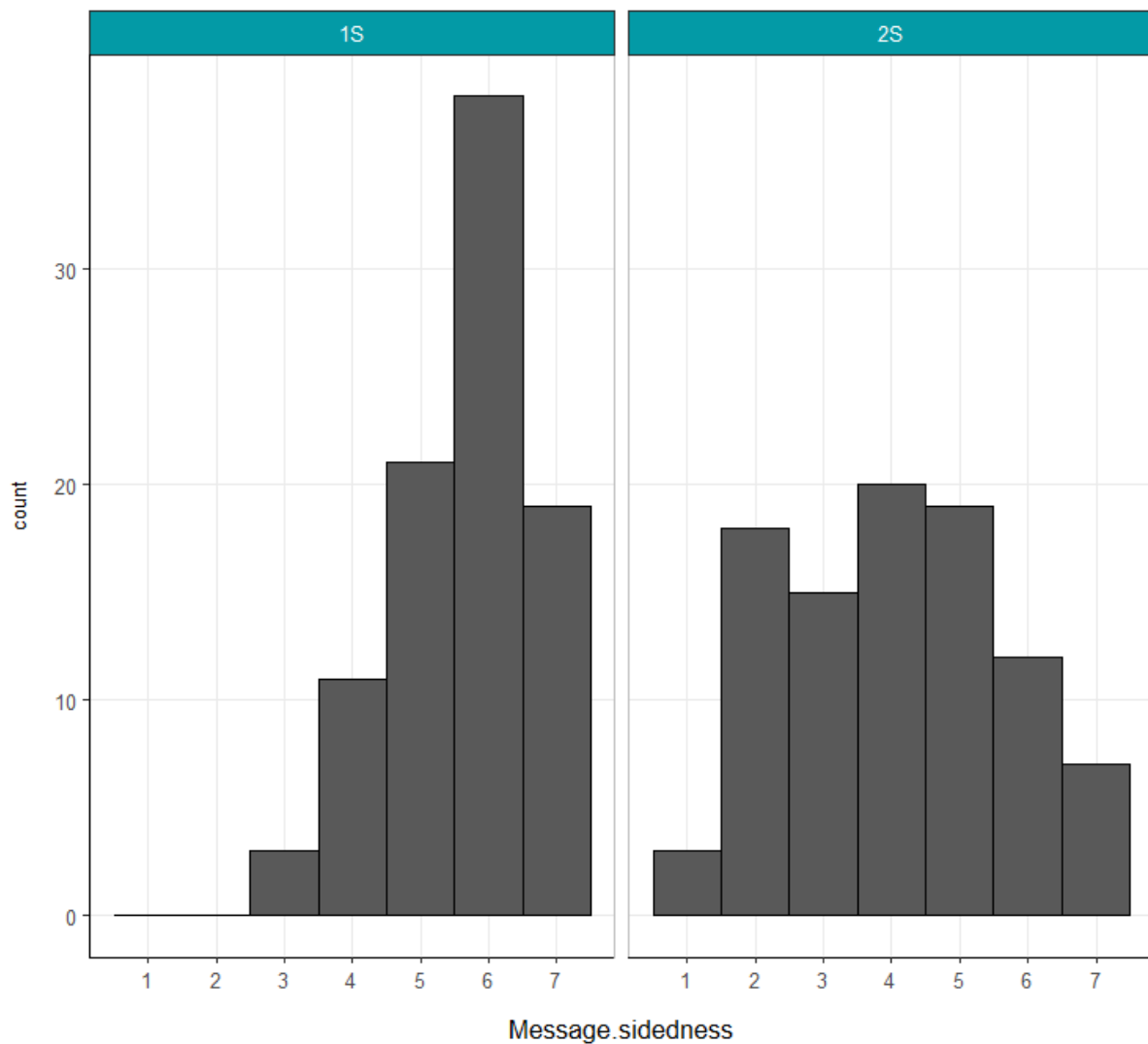


Figure 4. *Distribution of Participants' MS Perceptions in both 1S and 2S Conditions*

Regarding the SD manipulation, a large proportion of participants also seemed to struggle to correctly identify the sponsored condition, with an almost even split between 'yes' and 'no'

responses (YES = 59,57%, NO = 40,43%). This uncertainty was also present in the non-disclosed condition (YES = 40,22%, NO = 59,78%). These findings suggest that our manipulations did not work as effectively as we had hoped.

	Absence	Presence	Total	X-squared
No	55 (59.78%)	38 (40.43%)	93	X-squared(1) = 6.2158
Yes	37 (40.22%)	56 (59.57%)	93	p-value = 0.0127

Table 3. *Manipulation Check of SD*

2. Selection Bias

Prior to testing our hypotheses, we first ensured that there was no selection bias during the participant selection process for the survey. To do so, we checked the distribution of gender and education level across our conditions using Chi-squared tests and compared age means across all conditions using an ANOVA. As detailed in Appendix C.3, the analysis did not reveal any selection bias concerning gender (X-squared(3) = 3.5125, $p = 0.3191$), level of education (X-squared(18) = 11.5347, $p = 0.8703$), or age ($F(3,182) = 0.8186$, $p = 0.4851$). Indeed, all p-values were larger than 0.05, implying no significant differences or dependencies among the examined variables.

	1S_absence	1S_presence	2S_absence	2S_presence	Total	X-squared
M	16 (34.78%)	13 (28.26%)	21 (45.65%)	15 (31.25%)	65	X-squared(3) = 3.5125
W	30 (65.22%)	33 (71.74%)	25 (54.35%)	33 (68.75%)	121	p-value = 0.3191

Table 4. *Examination of Potential Gender Bias*

Regarding gender, a visual inspection of the descriptive statistics (see Table 4) revealed a slight imbalance in the 2S x absence group. However, it was not considered worrisome for the analysis as the number of participants were still close between groups.

3. Confounding Factors

In this analysis, we explored the potential confounding effects of four variables that could have an impact on the responses or interest and potentially affect our conclusions. Two of these covariates were demographic variables (gender and age), and the two others were continuous variables (Instagram familiarity and product involvement, discussed in earlier sections). The potential confounding effect was assessed with a linear regression. For each response of interest, we tested if a covariate had a significant effect. If the F-test of the regression was significant, the variable was considered as a confounding factor.

The analysis of the covariate variables revealed that Instagram familiarity did not significantly impact PI ($F(1,184) = 3.37, p = 0.0681$), brand attitude ($F(1,184) = 0.83, p = 0.3631$), and eWOM intentions ($F(1,184) = 0.39, p = 0.5331$). Similarly, for gender and age, results did not exhibit statistical significance, with all p-values exceeding 0.05 (refer to Appendix C.4).

Rep	Pred	Df_num	Df_denom	F_value	P_Val
PI	Product.Involvement	1	184	11.60	0.0008
BA	Product.Involvement	1	184	4.46	0.0360
eWOM	Product.Involvement	1	184	5.65	0.0185

Table 5. *Analysis of Product Involvement as a Confounding Factor*

However, when looking at Table 5, we found that product involvement significantly affected PI ($F(1,184) = 11.60, p < 0.0008$), brand attitude ($F(1,184) = 4.46, p = 0.0360$), and eWOM intentions ($F(1,184) = 5.65, p = 0.0185$). Thus, it was decided to further investigate if its effect could affect the conclusions on our hypotheses.

4. Hypotheses Testing

To validate our hypotheses, we employed a two-way analysis of variance to test the effect of message sidedness on consumer engagement (HYP1) and the moderator effect of sponsorship disclosure on the previous relationship (HYP3). Additionally, we conducted a mediation analysis for the second hypothesis. For each test, we also verified that the conditions of

application were satisfied. The homogeneity of variances was checked with Levene's tests (refer to Table 6 below) and normality of residuals was checked visually with QQplots (refer to Appendix C.5.2.1-C.5.2.4).

y	Pred	df1	df2	statistic	p	Hyp
PI	MS	1	184	0.00	0.9979	H1
BA	MS	1	184	1.23	0.2679	H1
eWOM	MS	1	184	0.29	0.5892	H1
SML.authenticity	MS	1	184	0.50	0.4793	H2
PI	SD	1	184	1.26	0.2628	H3
PI	MS*SD	3	182	0.34	0.7974	H3
BA	SD	1	184	0.07	0.7884	H3
BA	MS*SD	3	182	2.07	0.1052	H3
eWOM	SD	1	184	3.23	0.0739	H3
eWOM	MS*SD	3	182	1.69	0.1713	H3

Table 6. Homogeneity of Variances Analysis

To ensure clarity, here is a table that summarizes each variable and the corresponding name used in the statistical analyses.

Variable	Name	Explanation
		Grouping of 5 items
Purchase Intentions	PI	<i>Nb:</i> The score of the second item was reversed.
Brand attitude	BA	Grouping of 4 items
eWOM intentions	eWOM	Grouping of 3 items
Product involvement	Product.Involvement	Grouping of 5 items
Instagram familiarity	Insta.familiarity	'Yes' or 'No'
Manipulation of message sidedness	MS or MS(2S)	Grouping of 2 items → the closer it is to 7, the more the message is seen as presenting only favorable opinions (1S).

		<i>Nb</i> : The score of the second item was reversed.
Manipulation of sponsorship disclosure	SD or SD(presence)	'presence' or 'absence'
Perceived authenticity of SMI	SMI.authenticity	Grouping of 3 items

Table 7. Overview Table of Variable Names Utilized in our Statistical Analyses

4.1. Hypothesis 1

The goal of the first hypothesis was to check whether a two-sided message had a positive impact on consumers' engagement. After examining Table 8 in order to look for the influence of MS on PI ($t(182) = 0.00$, $p = 0.5000$), BA ($t(182) = -1.98$, $p = 0.9752$) and on eWOM intentions ($t(182) = 1.82$, $p = 0.0355$), we found that two-sided messages appear to have no impact on PI and BA. Indeed, the analyses did not yield significant results for these two variables.

Rep	Pred	Mod	Effect	Estimate	SE	Df	t_value	P_Val
PI	MS	SD	MS2S	0.00	0.25	182	0.00	0.5000
BA	MS	SD	MS2S	-0.47	0.24	182	-1.98	0.9752
eWOM	MS	SD	MS2S	0.56	0.31	182	1.82	0.0355

Table 8. Two-way ANOVA results for Hypothesis 1

However, it appears that two-sided messages do have a significant positive impact (+0.56) on eWOM intentions. Nevertheless, since we define consumer engagement as a combination of the three variables, we cannot conclusively state that two-sided messages have a positive impact on consumer engagement. The only valid conclusion is that it does have a positive impact on eWOM intentions.

Moreover, the following table presents a detailed breakdown of respondents' perceptions of BA, PI and eWOM intentions based on the MS condition they encountered in the survey (either 1S or 2S):

Variable	MS	Moyenne	StdDev
BA	1S	5.18	1.07
BA	2S	4.75	1.21
eWOM	1S	2.92	1.52
eWOM	2S	2.99	1.49
PI	1S	4.21	1.22
PI	2S	4.06	1.22

Table 9. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV in Each Condition of MS

4.2. Hypothesis 2

In the second hypothesis, we aimed to explore whether authenticity could mediate the relationship between message sidedness and consumers' engagement. Despite our initial expectations, authenticity did not significantly influence consumer engagement based on their perception of message sidedness. For instance, as shown in Table 10, in the relationship between MS and PI, the total effect is -0.15 (p-value = 0.8053) and the indirect effect of authenticity is 0.13 (p-value = 0.0941). However, all results are non-significant, proving the absence of a mediating effect of SMI's authenticity in the relationship between MS and PI.

		Estimate	SE	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	p-value
PI	ACME	0.13	0.10	-0.03	0.30	0.0941
	ADE	-0.28	0.15	-0.53	-0.04	0.9702
	Total Effect	-0.15	0.18	-0.44	0.15	0.8053
BA	ACME	0.10	0.07	-0.03	0.22	0.0941
	ADE	-0.52	0.15	-0.78	-0.27	0.9991
	Total Effect	-0.42	0.17	-0.71	-0.15	0.9941
eWOM	ACME	0.16	0.12	-0.04	0.36	0.0941
	ADE	-0.10	0.18	-0.40	0.20	0.7093
	Total Effect	0.07	0.22	-0.30	0.43	0.3909

Table 10. Mediation Analysis Results in the Relationship between MS and PI/BA/eWOM

The mediation model for this relationship is presented below in Figure 2 (refer to Appendix C.5.2.3 and C.5.2.4 for the two other mediation models involving BA and eWOM).

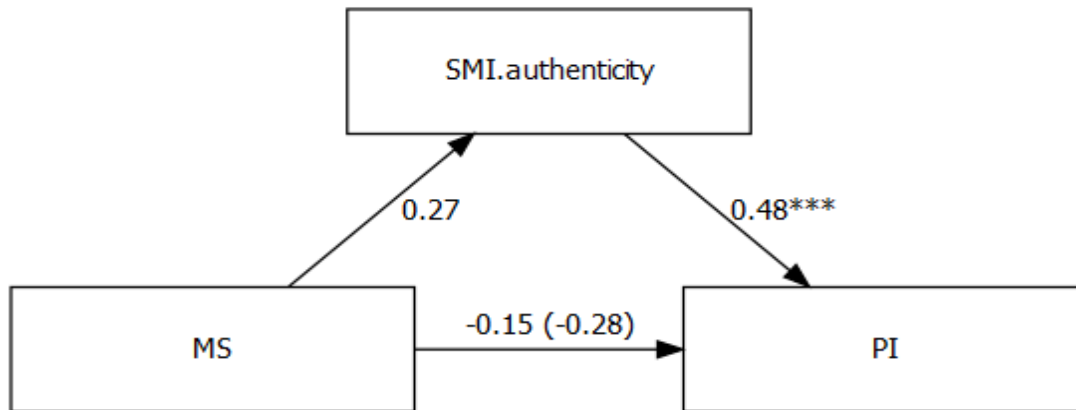


Figure 5. Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and PI

The same non-significant indirect effect was observed in the relationship between MS and brand attitude (0.10, p-value = 0.0941), and between message sidedness and eWOM intentions (0.16, p-value = 0.0941). Hence, we can therefore conclude that the perception of authenticity in SMIs appears to not mediate the relationship between message sidedness and consumers' engagement.

Moreover, the following table presents a detailed breakdown of respondents' perceptions of SMI's perceived authenticity based on the MS condition they encountered in the survey (either 1S or 2S). Upon examination, it is evident that both means are relatively similar to each other, providing further support for our non-significant findings.

Variable	MS	Moyenne	StdDev
SMI.authenticity	1S	3.48	1.36
SMI.authenticity	2S	3.75	1.44

Table 11. Means and Standard Deviation for SMI's Authenticity in Each Condition of MS

4.3. Hypothesis 3

Finally, the third hypothesis assumed that SD would act as a moderating factor in the relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement. Specifically, we expected that message perceived as two-sided would have an even greater impact on consumer engagement when the message was sponsored. Consequently, to validate our third hypothesis, we were in search of a positive moderating influence of sponsorship disclosure, implying that its presence would increase the positive impact of perceived two-sidedness on consumer engagement.

Rep	Pred	Mod	Effect	Estimate	SE	Df	t_value	P_Val
PI	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.29	0.35	182	-0.81	0.7903
BA	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	0.09	0.33	182	0.28	0.3890
eWOM	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.96	0.43	182	-2.23	0.9865

Table 12. *Two-way ANOVA Analysis for Hypothesis 3*

From Table 12, we note that when people perceive a post as sponsored, as the message leans towards presenting favorable and unfavorable arguments, there appears to have no moderating effect of SD on consumer engagement. For instance, the effect of PI is -0.29 ($t(182) = -0.81$, $p = 0.7903$) but the p-value shows non-significant results. The same goes for brand attitude (0.09, $t(182) = 0.28$, $p = 0.3890$), and eWOM intentions (-0.96, $t(182) = -2.23$, $p = 0.9865$). Therefore, we cannot accept our third hypothesis as our results were also not statistically significant.

Moreover, the following table presents a detailed breakdown of respondents' perceptions of BA, PI and eWOM intentions based on the MS x SD condition they encountered in the survey (refer to Appendix C.5.1.1 for a similar table, but solely focused on the SD condition).

Variable	MS	SD	Moyenne	StdDev
BA	1S	absence	5.39	0.91
BA	1S	presence	4.96	1.17
BA	2S	absence	4.92	1.33
BA	2S	presence	4.59	1.08
eWOM	1S	absence	2.93	1.58
eWOM	1S	presence	2.91	1.48
eWOM	2S	absence	3.49	1.60
eWOM	2S	presence	2.51	1.21
PI	1S	absence	4.35	1.16
PI	1S	presence	4.07	1.28
PI	2S	absence	4.35	1.17
PI	2S	presence	3.79	1.21

Table 13. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV for Each Condition of MS x SD

4.4. Analysis of Hypotheses Considering Confounding Variables

Finally, we conducted an analysis for each hypothesis, considering the potential confounding variable of product involvement, which showed significant impact. Nevertheless, incorporating this variable did not alter our overall conclusions, as all results remained non-significant. However, this also means that the previously observed significant relationship between MS and eWOM intentions became insignificant upon introducing the confounding variable. This suggests that our initial findings might have exaggerated the actual association between MS and eWOM intentions, due to the absence of product involvement in the analysis. By introducing product involvement, we were able to see a clearer and perhaps more accurate representation of the effect of MS on eWOM intentions, which appears to be non-significant.

For a comprehensive view of all analyses involving the confounding variable, please refer to Appendix C.6.

PART 5 - DISCUSSION

In the following section, after a quick summary of the study, we will delve into its key findings and outcomes and have a comprehensive discussion about what these results really mean. Along with this, we will also provide recommendations tailored to assist businesses to better navigate the challenges identified. Furthermore, we will present actionable solutions for implementation. Before we bring our thesis to an end, we will acknowledge the limitations of our current study and suggest potential avenues for future exploration and research.

1. Summary of the Study

The primary goal of our study was to uncover which factors could possibly impact OIM effectiveness, with a particular emphasis on the role of authenticity. More precisely, our exploration of existing literature led us to consider a factor that had not been extensively studied in this context: the aspect of message sidedness. To measure its impact on OIM effectiveness, we decided to gauge its effect on consumers' reactions, particularly looking at their purchase intentions for the sponsored product, their attitudes towards the sponsoring brand, as well as their intentions to spread word-of-mouth on social networks.

Concerning SMIs' perceived authenticity, our review of the literature revealed its potential influence on the relationship under investigation. Indeed, previous research suggested that a message with both positive and negative arguments about the sponsored product could impact an influencer's authenticity, which could in turn affect consumer engagement (Lee & Johnson, 2022). Therefore, we hypothesized that an SMI's perceived authenticity mediates positively the relationship between a two-sided message and consumer engagement.

Finally, the literature also suggested that sponsorship disclosure could impact the effectiveness of OIM. However, several contradictory results have led us to verify its impact. Consequently, we included it as a potential moderating factor in the relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement.

To test our theoretical framework, we conducted an empirical phase, collecting data through a survey to validate our hypotheses. However, the statistical analyses did not support any of our three original hypotheses, as shown in Table 13 below.

Hypothesis	Result
HYP 1: <i>A two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post will elicit higher levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product compared to a one-sided caption.</i>	Not supported
HYP 2: <i>The relation between a two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post and levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product is positively mediated by perceived authenticity.</i>	Not Supported
HYP 3: <i>The relation between a two-sided caption of an influencer's sponsored post and levels of engagement from followers towards that sponsored product is moderated by sponsorship disclosure, amplifying the positive impact of a two-sided message on engagement.</i>	Not supported

Table 13. *Summary of Hypothesis Testing*

Firstly, our initial hypothesis yielded non-significant results, suggesting that message sidedness does not seem to directly influence consumer engagement. Similarly, the second hypothesis, investigating the mediating role of SMI's perceived authenticity, also did not find validation, as evidenced by the non-significant results. Lastly, our third hypothesis, which examined the potential moderating effect of sponsorship disclosure between message sidedness and consumer engagement, did not obtain significant results either.

2. Theoretical Implications

2.1. Hypothesis 1

Initially, we expected that the way a message was presented would positively influence consumer engagement in OIM, drawing from earlier research. However, contrary to previous findings indicating positive effects on OIM effectiveness (Braatz, 2017; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Lee & Johnson, 2022; Sheng et al., 2022), our research did not find any significant impact of message sidedness on purchase intentions and brand attitude. However, we did observe a significant positive impact on eWOM intentions. Surprisingly, Lee & Johnson (2022) also reached similar conclusions, suggesting that while message sidedness may not significantly affect purchase intentions and brand attitude, it does have a notable impact on eWOM intentions, further supporting our findings. However, the confounding influence of product involvement revealed that when considering other variables as such, MS does not longer impact eWOM intentions.

The diverse findings in traditional marketing research compared to the limited studies in OIM may explain the discrepancy in our results. For instance, in traditional marketing, two-sided messages are generally perceived as more credible, but they are also associated with less positive attitudes towards the messages (Crowley & Hoyer, 1994; Eisend, 2006). Specifically, Eisend (2006, 2007) pointed out the negative effects of sidedness on attitudes toward ads, without significant impact on purchase intentions. Additionally, similar to our study, some researchers have also failed to find significant evidence supporting the behavioral effects of message sidedness (e.g., Earl & Pride, 1980; Kanungo & Johar, 1975; Swanson, 1987). These findings suggest that other factors influencing the results might be at play. As mentioned earlier, the effectiveness of message sidedness has indeed been discovered to be moderated by various other factors (please refer to *Appendix A.1* for a summary).

An alternative reason could be attributed to the insufficient recognition of two-sided messages by respondents, as revealed in the robustness assessment conducted during the manipulation checks. The fact that people did not fully recognize the two-sided messages as such could have affected the results, making them not significant.

2.2. Hypothesis 2

Given the key role of authenticity in OIM effectiveness, we explored whether two-sided messages could enhance perceived authenticity, thereby increasing consumer engagement. However, even though two-sided messages was found to result in higher perceptions of influencer authenticity (Lee & Johnson, 2022) and authenticity was found to increase consumer engagement (e.g., Enli, 2014; Lee, 2020), our results did not show that influencer authenticity could improve the relationship between a two-sided message and consumer engagement. This suggests that message sidedness may not play a fundamental role in enhancing authenticity, unlike SMI's individual differences (Duffy, 2017; Lee & Eastin, 2021) or PSI the influencer and their followers (e.g., Audrezet et al., 2020; Breves et al., 2019; Chung & Cho, 2017) for instance. Additionally, other researchers have also encountered inconsistent results and unsupported predictions regarding the impact of message sidedness on factors related to authenticity. For instance, Hwang & Jeong (2016) found no main effect on credibility or attitudes from message sidedness, and De Veirman and Hudders (2020) similarly did not find any effect on the credibility of Instagram influencers.

Furthermore, as emphasized by Lee & Johnson (2022) and other authors (De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Hwang & Jeong, 2016) have previously highlighted the challenges in effectively manipulating message sidedness. This could provide another explanation for the lack of significant results in our study. Despite our efforts to create effective two-sided messages (refer to the Methodology section), an internal analysis revealed that our manipulations were not well perceived by the respondents. This lack of clear recognition might therefore have contributed to the non-significant results we obtained.

2.3. Hypothesis 3

In the third hypothesis, we had hypothesized that sponsorship disclosure could boost the positive influence of a two-sided message on consumer engagement, based on previous research showing favorable outcomes associated with the use of sponsorship disclosure (Boerman, 2020; De Jans et al., 2020; Kay et al., 2020; Sah et al., 2018). However, our study's results did not yield significant findings, indicating that the presence of sponsorship disclosure does not, in fact, play a moderating role between message sidedness and consumer engagement.

Our study's findings indicate that the initial relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement did not yield significant results. Consequently, the absence of a significant moderator effect is not surprising. As both the direct effect and the moderator effect are not statistically significant, it suggests that the relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement does not change based on the presence or absence of a sponsorship disclosure. Furthermore, this study is pioneering in using sponsorship disclosure as a moderator in this context, it is challenging to compare our results with existing research. Nevertheless, our results demonstrate that sponsorship disclosure does not exert any significant effect. Hence, future research investigating a significant relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement should consider other potential moderators that might influence this relationship.

Additionally, it is possible that a moderation effect may exist in the studied population, but our experiment might not have had sufficient statistical power to detect it (Visentin et al., 2020). Moderation effects are indeed often small and may require larger sample sizes to be detectable, as highlighted by Fritz & MacKinnon (2007). Moreover, Gelman et al. (2020) notes that detecting an interaction of the same magnitude as the main effect typically demands a sample

size that is four times larger. Similarly, Hempel et al. (2013) found that reliably detecting a meaningful moderator effect (0.2) would require over 200 trials in a data set to achieve a good statistical power (80%) for revealing a significant result. With only 186 respondents in our study, it is possible that the sample size was insufficient to yield enough statistical power, which may have contributed to the lack of significant findings.

Finally, similar to the first hypothesis, a last explanation could be that participants in the study might not have fully recognized the sponsorship disclosure, as shown in our internal analysis (refer to the Manipulation Checks section). This lack of clear recognition could have influenced the results, leading to non-significant findings.

3. Managerial Implications

In the booming field of influencer marketing, maximizing investments through the right influencers is crucial for marketers. For instance, prior research has highlighted several factors that can enhance consumer engagement in OIM, such as credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise (Breves et al., 2019; Hughes et al., 2019; Schouten et al., 2020), strong PSI (Lee & Watkins, 2016), or even unique and original content (Casaló et al., 2020). Our study, however, suggests that message sidedness may not be one of these significant enhancing factors. This implies that brands can guide influencers to promote exclusively positive feedback about their products without compromising consumer engagement, which aligns with prior observations that positive content tends to be more viral (Berger & Milkman, 2009). Nonetheless, earlier studies also warn that posting exclusively positive feedback about a product can be perceived as lacking authenticity (McQuarrie et al., 2013). Additionally, research indicates that a balanced mix of positive and negative content may be the most effective OIM strategy (Leung et al., 2022b). Finally, two-sided messages in influencer marketing can improve influencer credibility, trust, authenticity, persuasion, and can lead to more positive attitudes toward ads and eWOM intentions (Braatz, 2017; De Veirman & Hudders, 2020; Lee & Johnson, 2022). Therefore, marketers should exercise caution when directing SMIs to post solely positive feedback, keeping in mind the importance of authenticity, as consumers may perceive unmitigated positivity as inauthentic.

Furthermore, authenticity is indeed established as a key driver of OIM effectiveness (e.g., Audrezet et al., 2020; Borchers, 2019; Lee & Eastin, 2021). Although our study did not find

evidence of authenticity acting as a mediating factor, prior research underscores its direct influence on consumer engagement, noting its role in boosting trust, credibility, engagement, intention to buy, and positive WOM. Additionally, as a new business imperative (Bruhn et al., 2012; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Lee & Eastin, 2021; Pöyry et al., 2019), we recommend marketers to prioritize collaborations with influencers who demonstrate authenticity on social media. Such partnerships could potentially amplify purchase intentions, brand attitudes, and eWOM intentions. Moreover, our comprehensive review of factors influencing an influencer's perceived authenticity (refer to Table 1 for a summary) can serve as a useful guide for marketers, helping them identify the characteristics that make influencers appear authentic to their followers.

Thirdly, with sponsorship disclosure now a legal requirement, it has become an important debate about its impact on influencer marketing effectiveness. While some studies suggest that it may reduce consumer engagement (e.g., Boerman et al., 2014; Evans et al., 2017; Hudders et al., 2021; Hwang & Jeong, 2016; Naderer et al., 2021; Tellis et al., 2019; Wojdyski & Evans, 2016), while others demonstrate its potential to enhance engagement (e.g., Boerman, 2020; De Jans et al., 2020; Evans et al., 2017; Kay et al., 2020; Van Dam & van Reijmersdal, 2019). Moreover, a recent study found no significant effect of sponsorship disclosure on engagement with TikTok influencers' videos (van der Bend et al., 2023). This finding could imply a potential shift in how consumers perceive sponsored content nowadays. In fact, a study by Van Dam & van Reijmersdal (2019) found that adolescents were becoming well aware of sponsored content in influencer posts but did not show skepticism towards this marketing approach. Therefore, our unconfirmed third hypothesis may reinforce this belief that sponsorship disclosure no longer significantly impacts consumers' perceptions. Consequently, marketers can feel reassured in the face of this relatively new regulation as it does not appear to have benefits or disadvantages.

4. Limitations and Future Research

Our study, like any other, is subject to limitations which might impact the significance and generalizability of our findings.

Firstly, our results revealed a **potential weakness in manipulating message sidedness**, as respondents did not appear to clearly recognize two-sided messages. This may explain why our first hypothesis did not yield significant results for two out of our three dependent variables.

Nonetheless, the significant result we obtained for eWOM intentions hints at the anticipated positive effect (+0.56 when the message is two-sided). This indicates a need for further research to delve deeper into the impact of two-sided messages on consumer engagement, ideally with a more effective manipulation of message sidedness. Moreover, previous research in traditional marketing has documented numerous benefits of two-sided messages (e.g., Eisend, 2006; Smith & Hunt, 1978; Swinyard, 1981; Wilkie & Farris, 1975), calling for exploration of similar effects in Online Influencer Marketing.

Our second hypothesis faced similar issues. Despite prior literature suggesting a connection between message sidedness and SMI's perceived authenticity (Lee & Johnson, 2022), this correlation did not appear in our results. This discrepancy may be due to issues in our experimental manipulations, as many participants did not clearly identify two-sided messages. Furthermore, given the critical role of authenticity in influencer marketing effectiveness demonstrated by prior research, it calls for further research with improved manipulation of message sidedness. A refined presentation of two-sided messages could provide clearer insights into their relationship with perceived authenticity and its effect on consumer engagement.

Our third hypothesis also faced difficulties due to **challenges in manipulating message sidedness and sponsorship disclosure**. Our internal analysis revealed that respondents were not consistently able to accurately identify explicit sponsorship disclosures. Consequently, our non-significant findings regarding the relationship between message sidedness, sponsorship disclosure, and consumer engagement may reflect these challenges. Despite our objective to clarify the effects of sponsorship disclosure on influencer marketing effectiveness, amid mixed results from previous studies (e.g., Stubb, 2018; Boerman, 2020; De Jans et al., 2020; Kay et al., 2020), we could not resolve the conflicting findings. This highlights the ongoing need for further research to fully understand sponsorship disclosure's impact on consumer engagement and its potential moderating role between message sidedness and consumer engagement.

Additionally, the introduction of product involvement transformed the once significant relationship between MS and eWOM intentions into a non-significant one. This indicates that **the influence of MS could be dependent upon other factors**, such as product involvement, underscoring the necessity for future studies to delve deeper into potential factors that could either mediate or moderate this relationship.

Furthermore, the absence of significant findings could be due to **limited statistical power** stemming from a relatively small sample size. To gain more clarity on the relationships we

tested, further research should investigate these variables with a larger sample, helping determine whether the tested variables genuinely have no effect on each other or if our study's insignificant findings resulted from inadequate statistical power. A bigger sample size would provide us with more confidence in the results, allowing us to better understand the relationships under investigation.

Additionally, feedback from our survey participants offered several key takeaways:

Firstly, a follower's existing relationship or **familiarity with the influencer** can potentially affect a follower's willingness to follow his recommendations from sponsored posts. This study's utilization of a fictional influencer means participants did not have a pre-existing connection with them. However, as shown by previous research emphasizing the benefits of strong PSI between influencers and their followers, OIM is more effective when SMIs and their followers share a special bond (e.g., Breves et al., 2019; Ki et al., 2020; Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016; Lou et al., 2019). As such, future studies exploring the relationship between message sidedness and consumer engagement should therefore consider familiarity with the influencer as a potential moderating variable.

Secondly, **product affordability** can also influence consumer engagement. Some participants felt the Bali destination and featured hotel in our fake Instagram post seemed too expensive, hinting at perceived cost as a potential engagement barrier. Thus, future research might benefit from using more universally affordable products. Moreover, product involvement also emerged as a confounding variable. Further research should therefore also delve into high-involvement products, especially since they have proven effective in two-sided messages (Eisend, 2013).

Thirdly, several respondents stated they were not likely to be influenced by SMIs no matter the product and/or the influencer, implying that some individuals are **naturally resistant to influence**. This suggests that a person's own attitudes towards being influenced can change how well influencer marketing strategies work.

Lastly, some respondents mentioned the **length of the caption** as an obstacle, suggesting that long messages might cause readers to lose interest or get distracted. Future studies could therefore explore the impact of message length on consumer engagement in influencer marketing. Moreover, improving how we present two-sided messages, perhaps by making them shorter, could help participants stay focused and correctly identify them as two-sided. This might then assist in determining whether a connection between two-sided messages and consumer engagement exists.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abidin, C. (2015). *Communicative Intimacies: Influencers and Perceived Interconnectedness*. <https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/26365>
- Abidin, C. (2016). Visibility labour: Engaging with Influencers' fashion brands and #OOTD advertorial campaigns on Instagram. *Media International Australia*, 161(1), 86–100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878X16665177>
- Abidin, C. (2017). #familygoals: Family Influencers, Calibrated Amateurism, and Justifying Young Digital Labor. *Social Media + Society*, 3(2), 205630511770719. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305117707191>
- Abreu, R. (2019). Social media micro-influencer marketing and purchasing intention of millennials: The role of perceived authenticity and trust [Dublin Business School]. <https://esource.dbs.ie/handle/10788/3674>
- Ahmad, I. (2018, February 16). The Influencer Marketing Revolution [Infographic]. *Social Media Today*. <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/the-influencer-marketing-revolution-infographic/517146/>
- Al-Emadi, F., & Ben Yahia, I. (2020). Ordinary celebrities related criteria to harvest fame and influence on social media. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, ahead-of-print. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-02-2018-0031>
- Argyris, Y. A., Wang, Z., Kim, Y., & Yin, Z. (2020). The effects of visual congruence on increasing consumers' brand engagement: An empirical investigation of influencer marketing on Instagram using deep-learning algorithms for automatic image classification. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 112, 106443. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106443>
- Audrezet, A., De Kerviler, G., & Guidry Moulard, J. (2020). Authenticity under threat: When social media influencers need to go beyond self-presentation. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 557–569. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.008>
- Babin, L. A., & Burns, A. C. (1997). Effects of Print Ad Pictures and Copy Containing Instructions to Imagine on Mental Imagery That Mediates Attitudes. *Journal of Advertising*, 26(3), 33–44.
- Backaler, J. (2018). *Digital Influence Unleash the Power of Influencer Marketing to Accelerate Your Global Business* (1st ed. 2018.). Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-78396-3>
- Balaban, D. C., & Szabolcs, J. (2022). A Proposed Model of Self-Perceived Authenticity of Social Media Influencers. *Media and Communication*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i1.4765>
- Berger, J., & Milkman, K. (2009). What Makes Online Content Viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1528077>
- Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. J. (2010). The Quest for Authenticity in Consumption: Consumers' Purposive Choice of Authentic Cues to Shape Experienced Outcomes. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(5), 838–856. <https://doi.org/10.1086/615047>
- Beverland, M. B., Lindgreen, A., & Vink, M. W. (2008). Projecting Authenticity Through Advertising: Consumer Judgments of Advertisers' Claims. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(1), 5–15. <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367370101>
- Blood, R. (2000, September 7). *Weblogs: A history and perspective*. Rebecca's Pocket. Retrieved from http://www.rebeccablood.net/essays/weblog_history.html
- Boerman, S. C. (2020). The effects of the standardized Instagram disclosure for micro- and meso-influencers. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 103, 199–207. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.09.015>

- Boerman, S. C., Reijmersdal, E. A., & Neijens, P. C. (2014). Effects of Sponsorship Disclosure Timing on the Processing of Sponsored Content: A Study on the Effectiveness of European Disclosure Regulations. *Psychology & Marketing*, 31(3), 214–224. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20688>
- Bohner, G., Einwiller, S., Erb, H., & Siebler, F. (2003). When Small Means Comfortable: Relations Between Product Attributes in Two-Sided Advertising. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 13(4), 454–463. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327663JCP1304_12
- Borchers, N. S. (2019). Social Media Influencers in Strategic Communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(4), 255–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1634075>
- Braatz, L. (2017, May 22). #Influencer marketing on Instagram: Consumer responses towards promotional posts: the effects of message sidedness [Thesis]. University of Twente. <https://essay.utwente.nl/72365/>
- Breves, P., Liebers, N., Abt, M., & Kunze, A. (2019). The Perceived Fit between Instagram Influencers and the Endorsed Brand: How Influencer–Brand Fit Affects Source Credibility and Persuasive Effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 59, 440–454. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-2019-030>
- Brown, S., Kozinets, R. V., & Sherry, J. F. (2003). Teaching Old Brands New Tricks: Retro Branding and the Revival of Brand Meaning. *Journal of Marketing*, 67(3), 19–33.
- Bruhn, M., Schoenmüller, V., Schäfer, D., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand Authenticity: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Its Conceptualization and Measurement. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 40, 567–576.
- Bruns, I. (2018). Perceived Authenticity’ and ‘Trust’ in Social Media driven Influencer Marketing and their influence on intentions-to-buy of 18-24-year-olds in Ireland [Dublin Business School]. https://esource.dbs.ie/bitstream/handle/10788/3536/mba_bruns_i_2018.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- Burke, K. E. (2017). Social Butterflies: How Social Media Influencers are the New Celebrity Endorsement [Thesis, Virginia Tech]. <https://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/78221>
- Campbell, C., & Farrell, J. R. (2020). More than meets the eye: The functional components underlying influencer marketing. *Business Horizons*, 63(4), 469–479.
- Campbell, C., & Grimm, P. E. (2019). The Challenges Native Advertising Poses: Exploring Potential Federal Trade Commission Responses and Identifying Research Needs. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 38(1), 110–123. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0743915618818576>
- Campos, A. (2017). Two-sided messaging: A quantitative analysis of humorous warmth impacting message attitude, source credibility, and persuasion. Ph.D. thesis. Northcentral University
- Carter, D. (2016b). Hustle and Brand: The Sociotechnical Shaping of Influence. *Social Media + Society*, 2(3), 2056305116666305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305116666305>
- Casaló, L. V., Flavián, C., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2020). Influencers on Instagram: Antecedents and consequences of opinion leadership. *Journal of Business Research*, 117, 510–519. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.07.005>
- Chang, S.-C., Wang, C.-C., & Kuo, C.-Y. (2020). Social Media Influencer Research: A Bibliometric Analysis. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce Studies*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.7903/ijecs.1975>
- Choi, S. M., & Rifon, N. J. (2012). It Is a Match: The Impact of Congruence between Celebrity Image and Consumer Ideal Self on Endorsement Effectiveness. *Psychology & Marketing*, 29(9), 639–650. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20550>
- Chung, S., & Cho, H. (2017). Fostering Parasocial Relationships with Celebrities on Social Media: Implications for Celebrity Endorsement. *Psychology & Marketing*, 34(4), 481–495. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21001>

- Coleman, S., & Moss, G. (2008). Governing at a distance – politicians in the blogosphere. *Information Polity: The International Journal of Government & Democracy in the Information Age*, 13(1/2), 7–20. <https://doi.org/10.3233/IP-2008-0142>
- Colliander, J., & Dahlén, M. (2011). Following the Fashionable Friend: The Power of Social Media: Weighing Publicity Effectiveness of Blogs versus Online Magazines. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 51(1), 313–320. <https://doi.org/10.2501/JAR-51-1-313-320>
- Colliander, J., & Erlandsson, S. (2015). The blog and the bountiful: Exploring the effects of disguised product placement on blogs that are revealed by a third party. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 21(2), 110–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2012.730543>
- Cornelis, E., Cauberghe, V., & De Pelsmacker, P. (2012). The Impact of Message Sidedness on Adolescents' Binge Drinking Intentions after Peer Pressure: The Moderating Role of Issue Involvement (pp. 69–79). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-8349-4291-3_6
- Cornelis, E., Cauberghe, V., & De Pelsmacker, P. (2014). The Inoculating Effect of Message Sidedness on Adolescents' Binge Drinking Intentions: The Moderating Role of Issue Involvement. 44(3), 254–268. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022042613500053>
- Cornelis, E., Cauberghe, V., & De Pelsmacker, P. (2015). The credibility of refutation in two-sided anti-drug messages. *Journal of Social Marketing*, 5, 241–257. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-03-2014-0020>
- Cornelis, E., Heuvinck, N., & Majmundar, A. (2020). The ambivalence story: Using refutation to counter the negative effects of ambivalence in two-sided messages. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(3), 410–432. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1624348>
- Crowley, A. E., & Hoyer, W. D. (1994). An Integrative Framework for Understanding Two-Sided Persuasion. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(4), 561–574.
- Dabholkar, P. A., & Bagozzi, R. P. (2002). An attitudinal model of technology-based self-service: Moderating effects of consumer traits and situational factors.
- Data Reportal. (2023a, April). Global Social Media Statistics. DataReportal – Global Digital Insights. <https://datareportal.com/social-media-users> consulted on 3 May 2023
- Data Reportal. (2023b, May 11). Instagram Users, Stats, Data, Trends, and More. DataReportal – Global Digital Insights. <https://datareportal.com/essential-instagram-stats> consulted on 3 May 2023
- Data Reportal. (2023c, May 11). TikTok Users, Stats, Data, Trends, and More. DataReportal – Global Digital Insights. <https://datareportal.com/essential-tiktok-stats> consulted on 3 May 2023
- De Jans, S., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2018). How an Advertising Disclosure Alerts Young Adolescents to Sponsored Vlogs: The Moderating Role of a Peer-Based Advertising Literacy Intervention through an Informational Vlog. *Journal of Advertising*, 47(4), 309–325. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2018.1539363>
- De Jans, S., Van de Sompel, D., De Veirman, M., & Hudders, L. (2020). #Sponsored! How the recognition of sponsoring on Instagram posts affects adolescents' brand evaluations through source evaluations. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 109, 106342. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106342>
- De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: The impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798–828. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035>
- De Veirman, M., & Hudders, L. (2020). Disclosing sponsored Instagram posts: The role of material connection with the brand and message-sidedness when disclosing covert advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(1), 94–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1575108>

- De Veirman, M., Hudders, L., & Nelson, M. R. (2019). What Is Influencer Marketing and How Does It Target Children? A Review and Direction for Future Research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02685>
- de Vries, L., Gensler, S., & Leeﬂang, P. S. H. (2012). Popularity of Brand Posts on Brand Fan Pages: An Investigation of the Effects of Social Media Marketing. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 26(2), 83–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2012.01.003>
- Deci, E., & Ryan, R. (2008). Self-Determination Theory: A Macrotheory of Human Motivation, Development, and Health. *Canadian Psychology-Psychologie Canadienne - CAN PSYCHOL-PSYCHOL CAN*, 49. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012801>
- Djafarova, E., & Rushworth, C. (2017). Exploring the credibility of online celebrities' Instagram profiles in influencing the purchase decisions of young female users. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 68, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.11.009>
- Djafarova, E., & Trofimenko, O. (2019). 'Instafamous' – credibility and self-presentation of micro-celebrities on social media. *Information, Communication & Society*, 22(10), 1432–1446. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1438491>
- Duffy, B. (2017). (Not) Getting Paid to Do What You Love: Gender, Social Media, and Aspirational Work. In (Not) Getting Paid to do what You Love: Gender, Social Media, and Aspirational Work (p. 308). <https://doi.org/10.12987/yale/9780300218176.001.0001>
- Duffy, B. E., & Wissinger, E. (2017). Mythologies of Creative Work in the Social Media Age: Fun, Free, and “Just Being Me.” *International Journal of Communication (19328036)*, 11, 4652–4671.
- Dwivedi, A., & McDonald, R. (2018). Building brand authenticity in fast-moving consumer goods via consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications. 52(7/8), 1387–1411. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-11-2016-0665>
- Earl, R. L., & Pride, W. M. (1980). The Effects of Advertisement Structure, Message Sidedness, and Performance Test Results on Print Advertisement Informativeness. *Journal of Advertising*, 9(3), 36–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1980.10673329>
- EASA. (2018). EASA Best Practice Recommendation on Influencer Marketing 2023 | EASA – European Advertising Standards Alliance. https://www.easa-alliance.org/publications/best-practice-recommendation-on-influencer-marketing-guidance_v2023/
- Eckler, P., & Bolls, P. (2011). Spreading the Virus. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 11(2), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2011.10722180>
- Eggers, F., O'Dwyer, M., Kraus, S., Vallaster, C., & Guldenberg, S. (2013). The impact of brand authenticity on brand trust and SME growth: A CEO perspective. *Journal of World Business*, 48(3), 340–348. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2012.07.018>
- Eisend, M. (2006). Two-sided advertising: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 23(2), 187–198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijresmar.2005.11.001>
- Eisend, M. (2007). Understanding two-sided persuasion: An empirical assessment of theoretical approaches. *Psychology and Marketing*, 24, 615–640. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20176>
- Eisend, Martin. (2008). Dual-processing and message sidedness: The effects of involvement in two-sided advertising. *Marketing Theory and Applications. AMA Winter Educators' Conference Proceedings 19*: 168–69
- Eisend, M. (2010). Explaining the joint effect of source credibility and negativity of information in two-sided messages: Source and Negativity Effects in Two-Sided Messages. *Psychology & Marketing*, 27(11), 1032. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20372>

- Eisend, M. (2013). The Moderating Influence of Involvement on Two-Sided Advertising Effects: INVOLVEMENT AND TWO-SIDED ADVERTISING. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(7), 566–575. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20628>
- Elton, L., & Lopez, L. (2018). How ELLE leverages customer relationships to deepen brand engagement. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 6(2), 102–109.
- Enke, N., & Borchers, N. (2019). Social Media Influencers in Strategic Communication: A Conceptual Framework for Strategic Social Media Influencer Communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13, 261–277. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1620234>
- Enli, G. (2014). Mediated Authenticity. <https://www.peterlang.com/document/1051094>
- Ertz, M., Jo, M.-S., Karakas, F., & Sarigöllü, E. (2021). Message Sidedness Effects in Advertising: The Role of Yin-Yang Balancing Theory. *Social Sciences*, 10(6), 229. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10060229>
- Escobar-Rodríguez, T., & Bonsón-Fernández, R. (2017). Analysing online purchase intention in Spain: Fashion e-commerce. *Information Systems and E-Business Management*, 15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10257-016-0319-6>
- Etgar, M., & Goodwin, S. A. (1982). One-Sided Versus Two-Sided Comparative Message Appeals for New Brand Introductions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 8(4), 460–465.
- Evans, N. J., Phua, J., Lim, J., & Jun, H. (2017). Disclosing Instagram Influencer Advertising: The Effects of Disclosure Language on Advertising Recognition, Attitudes, and Behavioral Intent. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 17(2), 138–149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2017.1366885>
- Fejes, A. (2023, February 21). Influencer Landscape: Various Types of Influencers and How You Can Benefit from Working with Them. HypeAuditor.Com. <https://hypeauditor.com/blog/influencer-landscape-types-of-influencers-and-how-you-can-benefit-from-them/>
- Fink, M., Koller, M., Gartner, J., Floh, A., & Harms, R. (2020). Effective entrepreneurial marketing on Facebook – A longitudinal study. *Journal of Business Research*, 113, 149–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.10.005>
- Fowler, K., & Thomas, V. L. (2023). Influencer marketing: A scoping review and a look ahead. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 1–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2022.2157038>
- Freberg, K., Graham, K., McGaughey, K., & Freberg, L. A. (2011). Who are the social media influencers? A study of public perceptions of personality. *Public Relations Review*, 37(1), 90–92. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2010.11.001>
- Frederick, E., Lim, C., Clavio, G., & Walsh, P. (2012). Why We Follow: An Examination of Parasocial Interaction and Fan Motivations for Following Athlete Archetypes on Twitter. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 5, 481–502. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ijsc.5.4.481>
- Fritz, K., Schoenmueller, V., & Bruhn, M. (2017). Authenticity in branding – exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. 51(2), 324–348. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-10-2014-0633>
- Fritz, M. S., & MacKinnon, D. P. (2007). Required Sample Size to Detect the Mediated Effect. *Psychological Science*, 18(3), 233–239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.01882.x>
- Gaden, G., & Dumitrica, D. (2014). The ‘real deal’: Strategic authenticity, politics and social media. *First Monday*, 20. <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v20i1.4985>
- Gaenssle, S., & Budzinski, O. (2020). Stars in social media: New light through old windows? *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 18, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2020.1738694>
- Gelman, A., Hill, J., & Vehtari, A. (2020, July 23). *Regression and Other Stories*. Higher Education from Cambridge University Press; Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781139161879>

- Gerdeman, D. (2019, August 26). Lipstick Tips: How Influencers Are Making Over Beauty Marketing. HBS Working Knowledge. <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/lipstick-tips-how-influencers-are-making-over-beauty-marketing>
- Geysler, W. (2023, February 7). The State of Influencer Marketing 2023: Benchmark Report. Influencer Marketing Hub. <https://influencermarketinghub.com/influencer-marketing-benchmark-report/> consulted on 10 May 2023
- Giles, D. (2017). How do fan and celebrity identities become established on Twitter? A study of ‘social media natives’ and their followers. *Celebrity Studies*, 8, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2017.1305911>
- Goffman, E. (1959), *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Anchor Books, New York, NY.
- Golden, L. L., & Alpert, M. I. (1978). The Relative Effectiveness of One-Sided and Two-Sided Communication for Mass Transit Advertising. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 5(1), 12–18.
- Golden, L. L., & Alpert, M. I. (1987). Comparative Analysis of the Relative Effectiveness of One- and Two-Sided Communication for Contrasting Products. *Journal of Advertising*, 16(1), 18–68.
- Gong, W., & Li, X. (2017). Engaging fans on microblog: The synthetic influence of parasocial interaction and source characteristics on celebrity endorsement. *Psychology & Marketing*, 34(7), 720–732. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21018>
- Grayson, K., Martinec, R., & article.], [Dawn Iacobucci served as editor and Eric Arnould served as associate editor for this. (2004). Consumer Perceptions of Iconicity and Indexicality and Their Influence on Assessments of Authentic Market Offerings. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31(2), 296–312. <https://doi.org/10.1086/422109>
- Guilleux, Y. (2021, October 7). Marketing d’influence: Définition, intérêt et étapes (+ exemples). <https://blog.hubspot.fr/marketing/techniques-perfectionner-marketing-influence>
- Haenlein, M., & Libai, B. (2017). Seeding, Referral, and Recommendation: Creating Profitable Word-of-Mouth Programs. *California Management Review*, 59(2), 68–91. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125617697943>
- Hall, A. (2009). Perceptions of the Authenticity of Reality Programs and Their Relationships to Audience Involvement, Enjoyment, and Perceived Learning. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 53(4), 515–531. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838150903310468>
- Hall, K. A. (2015). The authenticity of social-media performance: Lonelygirl15 and the amateur brand of Young-Girlhood. *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, 25(2), 128–142. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0740770X.2015.1057011>
- Hayes, R. A., & Carr, C. T. (2015). Does Being Social Matter? Effects of Enabled Commenting on Credibility and Brand Attitude in Social Media. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21(3), 371–390. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2015.1039178>
- Hempel, S., Miles, J. N., Booth, M. J., Wang, Z., Morton, S. C., & Shekelle, P. G. (2013). Risk of bias: A simulation study of power to detect study-level moderator effects in meta-analysis. *Systematic Reviews*, 2(1), 107. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-2-107>
- Hernandez-Fernandez, A., externe, L. vers un site, fenêtre, celui-ci s’ouvrira dans une nouvelle, & Lewis, M. C. (2019). Brand authenticity leads to perceived value and brand trust. 28(3), 222–238. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJMBE-10-2017-0027>
- Hinz, O., Skiera, B., Barrot, C., & Becker, J. U. (2011). Seeding Strategies for Viral Marketing: An Empirical Comparison. *Journal of Marketing*, 75(6), 55–71.
- Hovland, Carl I. 1954. Effects of the mass media of communication. In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 5th ed. Edited by Susan T. Fiske, Daniel T. Gilbert and Gardner Lindzey. Hoboken: Wiley, vol. 2, pp. 1062–103

- Hu, L., Min, Q., Han, S., & Liu, Z. (2020). Understanding followers' stickiness to digital influencers: The effect of psychological responses. *International Journal of Information Management*, 54, 102169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2020.102169>
- Hudders, L., De Jans, S., & De Veirman, M. (2021). The commercialization of social media stars: A literature review and conceptual framework on the strategic use of social media influencers. *International Journal of Advertising*, 40(3), 327–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2020.1836925>
- Huertas, M. K. Z., & Hanna, E. K. (2020). How Self-confidence Moderates the Effect of Two-sided Messages on Purchase Intention. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 15(3), 235–254. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973258620946548>
- Hughes, C., Swaminathan, V., & Brooks, G. (2019). Driving Brand Engagement Through Online Social Influencers: An Empirical Investigation of Sponsored Blogging Campaigns. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(5), 78–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022242919854374>
- Hunt, J. M., & Kernan, J. B. (1984). The Role of Disconfirmed Expectancies in the Processing of Advertising Messages. 124(2), 227–236.
- Hwang, Y., & Jeong, S.-H. (2016). “This is a sponsored blog post, but all opinions are my own”: The effects of sponsorship disclosure on responses to sponsored blog posts. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 62, 528–535. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.04.026>
- Igou, E. R., & Bless, H. (2003). Inferring the importance of arguments: Order effects and conversational rules. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 39(1), 91–99. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031\(02\)00509-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0022-1031(02)00509-7)
- Ilicic, J., & Webster, C. M. (2016). Being True to Oneself: Investigating Celebrity Brand Authenticity. *Psychology & Marketing*, 33(6), 410–420. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20887>
- Ishani, F. (2019). Instagram influencer's sponsored posts: Measuring users' attitude towards sponsored posts and purchase intentions in the United States—University of Georgia [University of Georgia]. <https://exploro.libs.uga.edu/esploro/outputs/graduate/Instagram-influencers-sponsored-posts-measuring-users-attitude-towards-sponsored-posts-and-purchase-intentions-in-the-United-States/9949334855102959>
- Jafari, N., Aghaie, A., & Alizadeh, S. (2011). Identifying Opinion Leaders for Marketing by Analyzing Online Social Networks. *IJVCNSN*, 3, 43–59. <https://doi.org/10.4018/jvcsn.2011010105>
- Jin, S. V., Muqaddam, A., & Ryu, E. (2019). Instafamous and social media influencer marketing. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 37(5), 567–579. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-09-2018-0375>
- Jun, S., & Yi, J. (2020). What makes followers loyal? The role of influencer interactivity in building influencer brand equity. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 29(6), 803–814. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-02-2019-2280>
- Jung, A.-R. (2017). The Influence of Perceived Ad Relevance on Social Media Advertising: An Empirical Examination of a Mediating Role of Privacy Concern. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.008>
- Kádeková, Z., & Holienčinová, M. (2018). Influencer Marketing as a Modern Phenomenon Creating a New Frontier of Virtual Opportunities. *Communication Today*, 9(2). <http://cejsh.icm.edu.pl/cejsh/element/bwmeta1.element.cejsh-29ccb3e1-8052-4f82-b9f7-b61b1a58fe21>
- Kahle, L., & Homer, P. (1985). Physical Attractiveness of the Celebrity Endorser: A Social Adaptation Perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11, 954–961. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209029>
- Kamins, M. A. (1990). An Investigation into the “Match-up” Hypothesis in Celebrity Advertising: When Beauty May Be Only Skin Deep. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(1), 4–13.

- Kamins, M. A., Brand, M. J., Hoeks, S. A., & Moe, J. C. (1989). Two-Sided versus One-Sided Celebrity Endorsements: The Impact on Advertising Effectiveness and Credibility. *Journal of Advertising*, 18(2), 4–10.
- Kamins, M. A., & Marks, L. J. (1987). Advertising Puffery: The Impact of Using Two-Sided Claims on Product Attitude and Purchase Intention. *Journal of Advertising*, 16(4), 6–15.
- Kanungo, R. N., & Johar, J. S. (n.d.). Effects of slogans and human model characteristics in product advertisements. 7(2), 127–138. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0081901>
- Kapitan, S., & Silvera, D. (2015). From digital media influencers to celebrity endorsers: Attributions drive endorser effectiveness. *Marketing Letters*, 27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-015-9363-0>
- Kapitan, S., Van Esch, P., Soma, V., & Kietzmann, J. (2022). Influencer Marketing and Authenticity in Content Creation. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 30(4), 342–351. <https://doi.org/10.1177/18393349211011171>
- Kay, S., Mulcahy, R., & Parkinson, J. (2020). When less is more: The impact of macro and micro social media influencers' disclosure. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36(3–4), 248–278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2020.1718740>
- Ki, C. 'Chloe,' & Kim, Y. (2019). The mechanism by which social media influencers persuade consumers: The role of consumers' desire to mimic. *Psychology & Marketing*, 36(10), 905–922. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21244>
- Ki, C.-W. (Chloe), Cuevas, L. M., Chong, S. M., & Lim, H. (2020). Influencer marketing: Social media influencers as human brands attaching to followers and yielding positive marketing results by fulfilling needs. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 55, 102133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102133>
- Kim, D. Y., & Kim, H.-Y. (2021). Influencer advertising on social media: The multiple inference model on influencer-product congruence and sponsorship disclosure. *Journal of Business Research*, 130, 405–415. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.02.020>
- Kim, J., Spielmann, N., & McMillan, S. J. (2012). Experience effects on interactivity: Functions, processes, and perceptions. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(11), 1543–1550. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.02.038>
- Kim, Y.-J., & Na, J.-H. (2007). Effects of celebrity athlete endorsement on attitude towards the product: The role of credibility, attractiveness and the concept of congruence. *International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship*, 8(4), 23–33. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSMS-08-04-2007-B004>
- Knoll, J. (2016). Advertising in social media: A review of empirical evidence. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(2), 266–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2015.1021898>
- Knoll, J., Schramm, H., Schallhorn, C., & Wynistorf, S. (2015). Good guy vs. bad guy: The influence of parasocial interactions with media characters on brand placement effects. *International Journal of Advertising : The Quarterly Review of Marketing Communications*, 34(5).
- Kowalczyk, C. M., & Pounders, K. R. (2016). Transforming celebrities through social media: The role of authenticity and emotional attachment. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 25(4), 345–356. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-09-2015-0969>
- Krouwer, S., Poels, K., & Paulussen, S. (2021). “Trust me, I'm an advertiser”. The influence of message sidedness and advertiser credibility on readers' perceptions of native advertisements. In *Advances in advertising research* (Vol. 11, pp. 105–117). Springer Gabler.
- Küster, F., & Eisend, M. (2016). Time heals many wounds – explaining the immediate and delayed effects of message sidedness. *International Journal of Advertising*, 35(4), 664–681. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2015.1052616>
- Labrecque, L. I., Markos, E., & Milne, G. R. (2011). Online Personal Branding: Processes, Challenges, and Implications. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(1), 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2010.09.002>

- Ladhari, R., Massa, E., & Skandrani, H. (2020). YouTube vloggers' popularity and influence: The roles of homophily, emotional attachment, and expertise. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 54, 102027. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.102027>
- Lee, J. A. (2020). What makes social media influencers authentic? Understanding perceived authenticity of social media influencers [Thesis]. <https://doi.org/10.26153/tsw/9891>
- Lee, J. A., & Eastin, M. S. (2021). Perceived authenticity of social media influencers: Scale development and validation. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 15(4), 822–841. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JRIM-12-2020-0253>
- Lee, J. E., & Watkins, B. (2016). YouTube vloggers' influence on consumer luxury brand perceptions and intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, 69. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.171>
- Lee, S. S., & Johnson, B. K. (2022). Are they being authentic? The effects of self-disclosure and message sidedness on sponsored post effectiveness. *International Journal of Advertising*, 41(1), 30–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.1986257>
- Leung, F. F., Gu, F. F., Li, Y., Zhang, J. Z., & Palmatier, R. W. (2022b). Influencer Marketing Effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing*, 86(6), 93–115. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222429221102889>
- Leung, F. F., Gu, F. F., & Palmatier, R. W. (2022a). Online influencer marketing. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 50(2), 226–251. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-021-00829-4>
- Levesque, N., & Pons, F. (2020). The Human Brand: A systematic literature review and research agenda. *Journal of Customer Behaviour*, 19, 143–174. <https://doi.org/10.1362/147539220X15929906305242>
- Liao, S., & Ma, Y.-Y. (2009). Conceptualizing Consumer Need for Product Authenticity. 4.
- Liljander, V., Gummerus, J., & Söderlund, M. (2015). Young consumers' responses to suspected covert and overt blog marketing. 25(4), 610–632. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IntR-02-2014-0041>
- Lin, H.-C., Bruning, P., & Swarna, H. (2018). Using online opinion leaders to promote the hedonic and utilitarian value of products and services. *Business Horizons*, 61, 431–442. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.01.010>
- Linqia (2017). The state of influencer marketing. Retrieved from <http://www.linqia.com/insights/state-of-influencermarketing-2017/> consulter on 21 May 2023
- Lobinger, K., & Brantner, C. (2015). In the Eye of the Beholder: Subjective Views on the Authenticity of Selfies.
- Lou, C., Tan, S.-S., & Chen, X. (2019). Investigating Consumer Engagement with Influencer- vs. Brand-Promoted Ads: The Roles of Source and Disclosure. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(3), 169–186. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2019.1667928>
- Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer Marketing: How Message Value and Credibility Affect Consumer Trust of Branded Content on Social Media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501>
- Lu, L.-C., Chang, W.-P., & Chang, H.-H. (2014). Consumer attitudes toward blogger's sponsored recommendations and purchase intention: The effect of sponsorship type, product type, and brand awareness. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 34, 258–266. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.02.007>
- Luoma-aho, V., Pirttimäki, T., Maity, D., Munnukka, J., & Reinikainen, H. (2019). Primed Authenticity: How Priming Impacts Authenticity Perception of Social Media Influencers. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(4), 352–365. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1617716>

- MacInnis, D. J., & Price, L. L. (1987). The Role of Imagery in Information Processing: Review and Extensions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13(4), 473–491.
- Magno, F. (2017). The influence of cultural blogs on their readers' cultural product choices. *International Journal of Information Management*, 37(3), 142–149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2017.01.007>
- Mak, A., & Song, A. (2019). Revisiting social-mediated crisis communication model: The Lancôme regenerative crisis after the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement. *Public Relations Review*, 45, 101812. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2019.101812>
- Martínez-López, F., Anaya-Sánchez, R., Fernández Giordano, M., & Lopez-Lopez, D. (2020). Behind influencer marketing: Key marketing decisions and their effects on followers' responses. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2020.1738525>
- Marwick, A. E. (2013). *Status Update: Celebrity, Publicity, and Branding in the Social Media Age*. Yale University Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5vkzxr>
- Marwick, A. E., & boyd, danah. (2011). I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience. *New Media & Society*, 13(1), 114–133. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444810365313>
- McCormack, S., & Peckham, A. (2011). Questions of authenticity: Brickwork and “found space.” 15(2), 105–118. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1359135511000534>
- McCracken, G. (1989). Who is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundations of the Endorsement Process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(3), 310–321.
- McQuarrie, E. F., Miller, J., & Phillips, B. J. (2013). The Megaphone Effect: Taste and Audience in Fashion Blogging. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(1), 136–158.
- Miller, F. M., & Allen, C. T. (2012). How does celebrity meaning transfer? Investigating the process of meaning transfer with celebrity affiliates and mature brands. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 443–452. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2011.11.001>
- Molleda, J.-C. (2010). Authenticity and the construct's dimensions in public relations and communication research. 14(3), 223–236. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13632541011064508>
- Molleda, J.-C., & Roberts, M. (2008). The Value of “Authenticity” in “Glocal” Strategic Communication: The New Juan Valdez Campaign. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 2(3), 154–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15531180802178679>
- Montgomery, M. (2001). The Uses of Authenticity: “Speaking from Experience” in a U.K. Election Broadcast. *The Communication Review*, 4, 447–462. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714420109359479>
- Morhart, F., Malär, L., Guèvremont, A., Girardin, F., & Grohmann, B. (2015). Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(2), 200–218. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.11.006>
- Moulard, J. G., Garrity, C. P., & Rice, D. H. (2015). What Makes a Human Brand Authentic? Identifying the Antecedents of Celebrity Authenticity: ANTECEDENTS OF CELEBRITY AUTHENTICITY. *Psychology & Marketing*, 32(2), 173–186. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20771>
- Munnukka, J., Maity, D., Reinikainen, H., & Luoma-aho, V. (2018). “Thanks for Watching.” The Effectiveness of YouTube Vlog Endorsements. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 93. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.12.014>
- Muntinga, D. (2016). Managing Brands in the Age of DIY-Branding: The COBRA approach (pp. 1–20). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-05262-1_28-1

- Naderer, B., Matthes, J., & Schäfer, S. (2021). Effects of disclosing ads on Instagram: The moderating impact of similarity to the influencer. *International Journal of Advertising*, 40(5), 686–707. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2021.1930939>
- Nahapiet, J., & Ghoshal, S. (1998). Social Capital, Intellectual Capital, and the Organizational Advantage. *The Academy of Management Review*, 23. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259373>
- Napoli, J., Dickinson, S. J., Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. (2014). Measuring consumer-based brand authenticity. *Journal of Business Research*, 67(6), 1090–1098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.06.001>
- Napoli, J., Dickinson-Delaporte, S., & Beverland, M. B. (2016). The brand authenticity continuum: Strategic approaches for building value. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(13–14), 1201–1229. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2016.1145722>
- Pang, K. S., Tsi Ying Au, Augustine. (2021). Social Media Influencers as a Crisis Risk in Strategic Communication: Impact of Indiscretions on Professional Endorsements. In *Social Media Influencers in Strategic Communication*. Routledge.
- Park, J., Lee, J. M., Xiong, V. Y., Septianto, F., & Seo, Y. (2021). David and Goliath: When and Why Micro-Influencers Are More Persuasive Than Mega-Influencers. *Journal of Advertising*, 50(5), 584–602. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2021.1980470>
- Pechmann, C. (1992). Predicting When Two-Sided Ads Will Be More Effective than One-Sided Ads: The Role of Correlational and Correspondent Inferences. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 29(4), 441–453. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3172710>
- Pitt, L., Berthon, P., & Campbell, C. (2008). Ad Lib: When Customers Create the Ad. *California Management Review*, 50, 6–30. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166454>
- Pizzutti, C., Basso, K., & Albornoz, M. (2016). The effect of the discounted attribute importance in two-sided messages. *European Journal of Marketing*, 50(9/10), 1703–1725. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-05-2015-0304>
- Pöyry, E., Pelkonen, M., Naumanen, E., & Laaksonen, S.-M. (2019). A Call for Authenticity: Audience Responses to Social Media Influencer Endorsements in Strategic Communication. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13(4), 336–351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1609965>
- Putrevu, S., & Lord, K. R. (1994). Comparative and Noncomparative Advertising: Attitudinal Effects under Cognitive and Affective Involvement Conditions. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(2), 77–91.
- Rao Hill, S., Troshani, I., & Chandrasekar, D. (2017). Signalling Effects of Vlogger Popularity on Online Consumers. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 60, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2017.1400929>
- Raun, T. (2018). Capitalizing intimacy: New subcultural forms of micro-celebrity strategies and affective labour on YouTube. *Convergence*, 24(1), 99–113. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354856517736983>
- Reinikainen, H., Munnukka, J., Maity, D., & Luoma-aho, V. (2020). ‘You really are a great big sister’ – parasocial relationships, credibility, and the moderating role of audience comments in influencer marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 36, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0267257X.2019.1708781>
- Rucker, D. D., Petty, R. E., & Briñol, P. (2008). What’s in a frame anyway?: A meta-cognitive analysis of the impact of one versus two sided message framing on attitude certainty. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 18(2), 137–149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2008.01.008>
- Sah, S., Malaviya, P., & Thompson, D. (2018). Conflict of interest disclosure as an expertise cue: Differential effects due to automatic versus deliberative processing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 147, 127–146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2018.05.008>

- Sakib, M. N., Zolfagharian, M., & Yazdanparast, A. (2019). Does parasocial interaction with weight loss vloggers affect compliance? The role of vlogger characteristics, consumer readiness, and health consciousness. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 52. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.002>
- Savignac, B., Parmentier, M., & Marcoux, J. (2012). Consumer-bloggers mobilized in marketing campaigns: A study of opinion leaders' authenticity management in a streetwear community, in NA - *Advances in Consumer Research Volume 40*, eds. Zeynep Gürhan-Canli, Cele Otnes, and Rui (Juliet) Zhu, Duluth, MN : Association for Consumer Research, Pages: 81-84.
- Schallehn, M., Burmann, C., & Riley, N. (2014). Brand authenticity: Model development and empirical testing. *Journal of Business Research*, 23(3), 192–199. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-06-2013-0339>
- Schau, H., & Gilly, M. (2003). We Are What We Post? Self-Presentation in Personal Web Space. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 30. <https://doi.org/10.1086/378616>
- Schouten, A. P., Janssen, L., & Verspaget, M. (2020). Celebrity vs. Influencer endorsements in advertising: The role of identification, credibility, and Product-Endorser fit. *International Journal of Advertising*, 39(2), 258–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1634898>
- Schwandt, T. A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 118–137). SAGE Publishing.
- Scott, D. M. (2017). *The new rules of marketing & PR: How to use social media, online video, mobile applications, blogs, news releases, and viral marketing to reach buyers directly* (6th edition). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Semaan, R. W., Kocher, B., & Gould, S. (2018). How well will this brand work? The ironic impact of advertising disclosure of body-image retouching on brand attitudes. *Psychology & Marketing*, 35(10), 766–777. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21133>
- Shane, T. (2018). The Semiotics of Authenticity: Indexicality in Donald Trump's Tweets. *Social Media + Society*, 4(3), 205630511880031. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305118800315>
- Sheivachman, A. (2017, October 2). U.S. Millennials Travel the Most but Gen Z Is on the Rise. Skift. <https://skift.com/2017/10/02/u-s-millennials-travel-the-most-but-gen-z-is-on-the-rise/>
- Sheng, X., Zeng, Z., Zhang, W., & Hu, Y. (2022). Vlogger's persuasive strategy and consumers' purchase intention: The dual mediating role of para-social interactions and perceived value. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1080507. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1080507>
- Silva, M. J. D. B., Farias, S. A. D., Grigg, M. K., & Barbosa, M. D. L. D. A. (2020). Online Engagement and the Role of Digital Influencers in Product Endorsement on Instagram. *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, 19(2), 133–163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332667.2019.1664872>
- Silvera, D. H., & Austad, B. (2004). Factors predicting the effectiveness of celebrity endorsement advertisements. *European Journal of Marketing*, 38(11/12), 1509–1526. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560410560218>
- Singh, J., Crisafulli, B., Quamina, L. T., & Xue, M. T. (2020). 'To trust or not to trust': The impact of social media influencers on the reputation of corporate brands in crisis. *Journal of Business Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.03.039>
- Smith, R. E., & Hunt, S. D. (1978). Attributional processes and effects in promotional situations. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 5(3), 149–158. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208725>
- Sng, K., Au, T., & Pang, A. (2019). Social Media Influencers as a Crisis Risk in Strategic Communication: Impact of Indiscretions on Professional Endorsements. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 13, 301–320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2019.1618305>

- Sokolova, K., & Kefi, H. (2020). Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 53, 101742. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011>
- Statista. (2023, January). Instagram: Age distribution of global audiences 2023. Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/325587/instagram-global-age-group/>
- Statista. (2023, January 1). Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2023, ranked by number of monthly active users(in millions). Statista. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>
- Stubb, C. (2018). Story versus info: Tracking blog readers' online viewing time of sponsored blog posts based on content-specific elements. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 82, 54–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.01.001>
- Stubb, C., & Colliander, J. (2019). “This is not sponsored content” – The effects of impartiality disclosure and e-commerce landing pages on consumer responses to social media influencer posts. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 98, 210–222. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.04.024>
- Suciu, P. (2020). Brand ROI from Social Media, *Forbes*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/petersuciu/2020/03/06/brand-roi-from-socialmedia/#408e9e9f2f9c> consulted on 3 June 2023
- Swanson, L. A. (1987). The Persuasive Effect of Volunteering Negative Information in Advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 6(3), 237–248. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.1987.11107022>
- Swinyard, W. R. (1981). The Interaction between Comparative Advertising and Copy Claim Variation. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(2), 175–186. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3150952>
- Tan, B. J., Brown, M., & Pope, N. (2019). The role of respect in the effects of perceived ad interactivity and intrusiveness on brand and site. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 25(3), 288–306. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2016.1270344>
- Taylor, S. A., & Baker, T. L. (1994). An assessment of the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. *Journal of Retailing*, 70(2), 163. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-4359\(94\)90013-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/0022-4359(94)90013-2)
- Tellis, G. J., MacInnis, D. J., Tirunillai, S., & Zhang, Y. (2019). What Drives Virality (Sharing) of Online Digital Content? The Critical Role of Information, Emotion, and Brand Prominence. *Journal of Marketing*, 83(4), 1–20.
- Terakeet (2017). Win in Search with Effective (+unpaid) Influencer Marketing Campaigns. Terakeet, NY, <https://www.slideshare.net/MatthewRaven2/win-in-searchwith-effective-unpaid-influencer-marketing-campaigns-80785239> consulted on 11 May 2023
- Thwaites, D., Lowe, B., Monkhouse, L. L., & Barnes, B. R. (2012). The Impact of Negative Publicity on Celebrity Ad Endorsements. *Psychology & Marketing*, 29(9), 663–673. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.20552>
- Till, B. D., & Busler, M. (1998). Matching products with endorsers: Attractiveness versus expertise. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 15(6), 576–586. <https://doi.org/10.1108/07363769810241445>
- Tolson, A. (2010). A new authenticity? Communicative practices on YouTube. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 7(4), 277–289. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2010.511834>
- Tolvanen, K., Olkkonen, L., & Luoma-aho, V. (2013). The Legitimacy of the Media Industry – What do Advertisers Expect? *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 10(2), 17–37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/16522354.2013.11073562>
- Torres, P., Augusto, M., & Matos, M. (2019). Antecedents and outcomes of digital influencer endorsement: An exploratory study. *Psychology & Marketing*, 36(12), 1267–1276. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21274>

- Trivedi, J., & Sama, R. (2020). The Effect of Influencer Marketing on Consumers' Brand Admiration and Online Purchase Intentions: An Emerging Market Perspective. *Journal of Internet Commerce*, 19, 103–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332861.2019.1700741>
- Unnava, H. R., & Burnkrant, R. E. (1991). An Imagery-Processing View of the Role of Pictures in Print Advertisements. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 28(2), 226–231. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3172811>
- Uribe, R., Buzeta, C., & Velásquez, M. (2016). Sidedness, commercial intent and expertise in blog advertising. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(10), 4403–4410. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.102>
- Uzunoğlu, E., & Kip, S. M. (2014). Brand communication through digital influencers: Leveraging blogger engagement. *International Journal of Information Management*, 34(5), 592–602. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2014.04.007>
- Valesia, F., Proserpio, D., & Nunes, J. C. (2020). The Positive Effect of Not Following Others on Social Media. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 57(6), 1152–1168. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022243720915467>
- Van Dam, S., & van Reijmersdal, E. (2019). Insights in adolescents' advertising literacy, perceptions and responses regarding sponsored influencer videos and disclosures. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.5817/CP2019-2-2>
- van der Bend, D. L. M., Gijsman, N., Bucher, T., Shrewsbury, V. A., van Trijp, H., & van Kleef, E. (2023). Can I @handle it? The effects of sponsorship disclosure in TikTok influencer marketing videos with different product integration levels on adolescents' persuasion knowledge and brand outcomes. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 144, 107723. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2023.107723>
- van der Lans, R., Bruggen, G., Eliashberg, J., & Wierenga, B. (2010). A Viral Branching Model for Predicting the Spread of Electronic Word of Mouth. *Marketing Science*, 29, 348–365. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40608137>
- van Reijmersdal, E. A., Fransen, M. L., van Noort, G., Oprea, S. J., Vandeberg, L., Reusch, S., van Lieshout, F., & Boerman, S. C. (2016). Effects of Disclosing Sponsored Content in Blogs: How the Use of Resistance Strategies Mediates Effects on Persuasion. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 60(12), 1458–1474. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764216660141>
- Van Reijmersdal, E. A., Rozendaal, E., Hudders, L., Vanwesenbeeck, I., Cauberghe, V., & Van Berlo, Z. M. C. (2020). Effects of Disclosing Influencer Marketing in Videos: An Eye Tracking Study among Children in Early Adolescence. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 49(1), 94–106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2019.09.001>
- Vannini, P., & Franzese, A. (2008). The Authenticity of Self: Conceptualization, Personal Experience, and Practice. *Sociology Compass*, 2, 1621–1637. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9020.2008.00151.x>
- Varnali, K. (2014). SMS advertising: How message relevance is linked to the attitude toward the brand? *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 20(5), 339–351. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2012.699457>
- Visentin, D. C., Cleary, M., & Hunt, G. E. (2020). The earnestness of being important: Reporting non-significant statistical results. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 76(4), 917–919. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.14283>
- Vrontis, D., Makrides, A., Christofi, M., & Thrassou, A. (2021). Social media influencer marketing: A systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 45(4), 617–644. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12647>
- Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(2), 349–370. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383\(98\)00103-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00103-0)
- Wang, X., Xu, F., Luo, X. (Robert), & Peng, L. (2022). Effect of sponsorship disclosure on online consumer responses to positive reviews: The moderating role of emotional intensity and tie strength. *Decision Support Systems*, 156, 113741. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2022.113741>

- Wellman, M. L., Stoldt, R., Tully, M., & Ekdale, B. (2020). Ethics of Authenticity: Social Media Influencers and the Production of Sponsored Content. *Journal of Media Ethics*, 35(2), 68–82. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23736992.2020.1736078>
- Wilkie, W. L., & Farris, P. W. (1975). Comparison Advertising: Problems and Potential. *Journal of Marketing*, 39(4), 7–15. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1250590>
- Winter, S., & Krämer, N. C. (2012). Selecting Science Information in Web 2.0: How Source Cues, Message Sidedness, and Need for Cognition Influence Users' Exposure to Blog Posts. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 18(1), 80–96. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2012.01596.x>
- Wojdyski, B. W., & Evans, N. J. (2016). Going Native: Effects of Disclosure Position and Language on the Recognition and Evaluation of Online Native Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 45(2), 157–168. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2015.1115380>
- Yang, S.-U., & Lim, J. S. (2009). The Effects of Blog-Mediated Public Relations (BMPR) on Relational Trust. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(3), 341–359. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10627260802640773>
- Ye, G., Hudders, L., De Jans, S., & De Veirman, M. (2021). The Value of Influencer Marketing for Business: A Bibliometric Analysis and Managerial Implications. *Journal of Advertising*, 50(2), 160–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2020.1857888>
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1987). The Emotional Aspect of Product Involvement. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14(1), 32–35.
- Zhang, H., Liang, X., & Moon, H. (2020). Fashion ceWebrity involvement in new product development: Scale development and an empirical study. *Journal of Business Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.01.052>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A : Message Sidedness Existing Literature

1. Moderators and Mediators of Message Sidedness Effectiveness: A Comprehensive Review of Previous Findings

MODERATORS (Mo) /MEDIATORS (Me)	OUTCOMES	REFERENCES
Information Characteristics		
<i>Amount of negative versus positive information (Mo)</i>	To maximize the effectiveness of a two-sided message, the number of negative arguments should be lower than the number of positive arguments. Moderate amounts of negative information in a two-sided message are associated with credibility gains and yield optimal results.	Crowley & Hoyer (1994); Eisend (2006); Golden & Alpert (1987)
<i>Relation between positive and negative claims (Mo)</i>	In two-sided message advertisements, the logical relation between negative and positive product attributes facilitates favorable inferences about the positive attributes, particularly when recipients have sufficient processing time.	Bohner et al. (2003)
<i>Message structure (Mo)</i>	Two-sided appeals are generally less effective in enhancing seller credibility and message acceptance compared to one-sided appeals. However, positioning unfavorable product arguments at the end of the appeal instead of the beginning partially mitigates this effect.	Hunt & Smith (1987)
<i>Correlation between attributes (Mo)</i>	A two-sided advertisement is more effective than one-sided ads only when featuring negatively correlated attributes. The unfavorable positioning of the brand on the negatively correlated secondary	Pechmann (1992)

attribute, along with the perception of advertiser honesty, contributed to improved judgments of the brand on the primary attribute and overall brand evaluations.

Presence of refutation (Mo)

Two-sided messages become less effective in terms of attitudes and intentions when they evoke higher levels of ambivalence. However, refutational messages effectively counteract the negative impact of high ambivalence on attitudes and intentions.

Cornelis et al. (2020)

Psychological Factors

Regulatory focus (Mo)

The impact of two-sided ads on product evaluations is influenced by regulatory focus, and this effect is mediated by the positivity of thoughts generated in response to the ad.

Florack et al. (2009)

Discounted attributes importance (Mo)

The positive effect of a two-sided message on an advertiser's trustworthiness remains significant regardless of the level of importance placed on the discounting attribute. Moreover, trustworthiness can be enhanced through a two-sided message without compromising purchase intentions by discounting a low-importance attribute within the message. However, a two-sided message only reduces the consumer's probability of purchase when an important attribute is disclaimed, based on the consumer's beliefs about the product's attributes.

Pizzutti et al. (2016)

Perceived value (Me)

Perceived value plays a significant role in vloggers' persuasion with two-sided messages. These messages enhance vloggers' credibility and provide more detailed information about products, leading to a positive perception of product value. As a result, the direct persuasion effect of two-sided messages is greater.

Sheng et al. (2022)

Consumer's skepticism level (Mo)

Hernandez et al. (2023)

	Two-sided messages are more effective in increasing purchase intentions, through enhanced credibility, particularly among consumers who are more skeptical of advertising. Less skeptical consumers trust both messages equally, and their purchase intentions are not affected by the type of message. Moreover, highly skeptical consumers trust two-sided appeals as much as their less skeptical counterparts.	
<i>Product involvement (Mo)</i>	In high involvement conditions, two-sided advertising with a moderate degree of negativity positively influences brand attitudes and intentions. However, this effect is limited and diminishes when the proportion of negative information exceeds a certain level. On the other hand, low-involved recipients are primarily influenced by the amount of information and are less affected by the negativity of information in two-sided messages. In this case, providing more information increases attitudes and intentions regardless of the degree of negativity.	Eisend (2013); Qi et al. (2010)
<i>Self-confidence (Mo)</i>	High (low) levels of self-confidence lead to increased (reduced) purchase intentions when exposed to a two-sided message, compared to exposure to a one-sided message.	Huertas & Hanna (2020)
<i>Need for cognition (NFC) (Mo)</i>	Two-sided ads generate more favorable perceptions of source credibility, attitudes toward the ads and brand, and purchase intentions among consumers with high NFC compared to those with low NFC. However, one-sided ads do not show this effect.	Kao (2011); Qi, Liang, Zhongpeng, et al. (2010)
<i>Tolerance for contradiction (Mo)</i>	Two-sided ads are more effective among consumers with a higher tolerance for contradiction, such as Easterners, compared to consumers with a lower tolerance for contradiction, such as Westerners.	Ertz et al. (2021)
<i>Humorous warmth (Mo)</i>		Campos, 2018; Eisend (2022)

The combined use of two-sidedness and humorous warmth has the greatest impact on message attitude, source credibility, and persuasion. However, for high-involvement consumers, humor can also have a negative distraction effect, reducing the effectiveness of two-sided advertising. Nonetheless, when there is a high fit between the product and the humor, the persuasiveness of two-sided advertising increases for high-involvement consumers.

Contextual Factors

<i>Cultural background (Mo)</i>	Two-sided advertisements are found to be more effective for individualistic cultures such as North America, while the opposite trend is observed for collectivist cultures like China or Japan.	Toffoli (1997); Yao et al. (2011)
<i>Time (valence and balance) (Me)</i>	A two-sided message initially has a negative effect on message attitudes due to the mediating variables of valence and balance. However, over time, these negative effects are neutralized as negative information is reevaluated and the valence of the message improves. This suggests that a two-sided message in advertising is not necessarily inferior to a one-sided message, despite its unfavorable short-term effects.	Küster & Eisend (2016)
<i>Time pressure (Mo)</i>	Moderate time pressure results in more positive ad attitudes compared to low and high time pressure. It also leads to more favorable brand attitudes and purchase intentions compared to high time pressure, but not compared to low time pressure.	Kao (2011)

2. Message Sidedness Effectiveness in OIM: A Comprehensive Review of Previous Findings

OBJECTIVES	RESULTS	REFERENCES
Examining the impact of message sidedness in promotional posts on Instagram on consumer responses, with a focus on the moderating role of need for cognitive closure.	Message sidedness impacts source trustworthiness, with two-sided messages receiving higher trust ratings. However, this increased trust did not translate into higher purchase intentions. On the other hand, one-sided messages resulted in higher purchase intentions despite lower trust in the source.	Braatz (2017)
Examining the effectiveness of two-sided messages on consumers' purchase intentions.	Vloggers can enhance consumers' purchase intention by using two-sided messages when promoting products. Additionally, perceived value acts as an intermediary variable as it enhances consumers' perception of product value and directly influences their purchase intentions.	Sheng et al. (2022)
Investigating the determinants of influencer marketing effectiveness, focusing on factors related to the influencer as the sender, the influencer's followers as the receivers, and the content of the influencer's posts as the message.	Post positivity moderates the effectiveness of influencer marketing, exhibiting an inverted U-shaped pattern.	Leung et al. (2022b)
Analyzing the influence of message sidedness on influencer marketing effectiveness.	Instagram product reviews with two-sided messages result in higher levels of influencer authenticity, credibility, ad attitudes, and eWOM intentions compared to one-sided messages. However, there is no significant effect on brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The perceived authenticity and credibility of influencers with two-sided messages mediate the effects on ad attitude, brand attitudes, purchase intention, and eWOM intention.	Lee & Johnson (2022)

Investigating the moderating effect of message sidedness on disclosed sponsorships.

Message sidedness moderates the negative relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand attitude, with one-sided messages having a stronger negative impact compared to two-sided messages. Furthermore, when a two-sided message is used, no significant difference is found between disclosed and non-disclosed influencer posts. Additionally, the credibility ratings of two-sided messages do not increase when influencer posts are disclosed compared to one-sided messages.

De Veirman & Hudders (2020)

The credibility and brand perception of the consumers suffer adverse effects due to sponsorship disclosure when the influencer presents a one-sided message. However, when the message is two-sided, the disclosure has no such negative impact.

APPENDIX B : Survey

Additional comments about the online survey :

- Conception of the Instagram post

The stimuli for the Instagram post featured a picture of a woman by a pool in Bali, sourced from the internet. Her name was a fictional creation, but it included the word "travels," and a little verified logo was added next to it to give the impression of a famous travel influencer. To make it seem real, the post was generated using the website Zeoob.com, a post-generation tool. Regarding the caption text, it was created to meet the criteria of an effective two-sided message, based on previous literature as explained in the Methodology section.

- Data collection

The collection of primary data was completed on July 6, 2023. After verifying the reliability of the responses (e.g., partial responses, incorrect answers to the attention check question, etc.), the database consisted of 186 valid responses, as mentioned in the thesis.

Survey :

Forewords

Welcome!

Before taking part in this study on **online influencers**, please read the consent form below and indicate if you understand the statements and freely consent to participate in the study.

The survey is being conducted by a master thesis student from Louvain School of Management (Belgium). There is no deception and the study involves no more than minimal risk to participants (i.e., the level of risk encountered in daily life).

Participation in the study takes **less than 10 minutes** and is strictly anonymous. All responses are treated as confidential, and in no case will responses from individual participants be identified. Rather, all data will be pooled and published in aggregate form only. Participation is voluntary. Your data will be treated and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

If you have further questions about this study or your rights, or if you wish to lodge a concern, please contact **margaux.schallier@student.uclouvain.be**

Thank you for your collaboration!

If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and freely consent to participate in the study, answer **'yes'** below.

Yes

No

Forewords#2 core study

Instructions:

In the following, you will see an Instagram post about a 3-star hotel in Bali made by a travel influencer. **Please read the caption very carefully** and take some time to **imagine yourself in this situation, assuming that this is an influencer you already follow**. Before going further and answering the questions, think about what you would do, how you would feel, what you would think.

scenario 1 (2S + SD)

Please look at the following post and the below caption closely.



travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. However, to fully experience the tranquility of this oasis, it's important to note that the hotel is situated a short distance from the bustling city center, requiring a brief taxi ride to reach the main tourist attractions. Nevertheless, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. While on-site dining options may not be as extensive as in more upscale establishments, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, if you're looking for ways to stay active, gym facilities are available, although quite limited. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ✈️ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🏠 ✨

Thank you to the hotel for providing a complimentary stay in exchange for my honest opinions. Don't forget to visit their website for more details and book your next Bali getaway 🔍
#sponsored

[View all 426 comment](#)

Did you read the caption below the post ? If not, **please do so attentively** before proceeding to this question.

If your answer is "No," unfortunately, we won't be able to include your data in our analysis.

- Yes
 No

scenario 2 (2S + non-SD)

Please look at the following post and the below caption closely.



travels_of_noah ✓
Bali



193,312 likes

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. However, to fully experience the tranquility of this oasis, it's important to note that the hotel is situated a short distance from the bustling city center, requiring a brief taxi ride to reach the main tourist attractions. Nevertheless, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. While on-site dining options may not be as extensive as in more upscale establishments, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, if you're looking for ways to stay active, gym facilities are available, although quite limited. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ➔ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🌅 ✨

[View all 426 comment](#)

Did you read the caption below the post ? If not, **please do so attentively** before proceeding to this question.


If your answer is "No," unfortunately, we won't be able to include your data in our analysis.

- Yes
- No

scenario 3 (1S + SD)

Please look at the following post and the below caption closely.



travels_of_noah 
Bali



193,312 likes

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. Additionally, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. Plus, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, gym facilities are available if you're looking for ways to stay active. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ✈️ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🌅 ✨

Thank you to the hotel for providing a complimentary stay in exchange for my honest opinions. Don't forget to visit their website for more details and book your next Bali getaway 🔍
#sponsored

[View all 426 comment](#)

Did you read the caption below the post ? If not, **please do so attentively** before proceeding to this question.

If your answer is "No," unfortunately, we won't be able to include your data in our analysis.


Yes

No

scenario 4 (1S + non-SD)

Please look at the following **post** and the below **caption** closely.



travels_of_noah 
Bali



193,312 likes

travels_of_noah Hey, friends! ✨ I recently had the most incredible stay at this stunning 3-star hotel, nestled in the breathtaking beauty of Bali 🌴 And I'm just so thrilled to share my unforgettable stay with all of you.

Nestled in Bali's breathtaking beauty, the hotel enjoys an ideal location near pristine white sandy beaches, turquoise waters, and stunning sunsets. Additionally, the hotel's warm and welcoming staff provided me with an exceptional guest experience, surpassing my expectations with their authentic Balinese hospitality. Plus, nearby restaurants offer delightful local culinary experiences. Also, gym facilities are available if you're looking for ways to stay active. Lastly, the hotel offers incredible value for money, allowing for a budget-friendly stay 🌸 ✈️ 🌴

Overall, it really was an incredible opportunity to immerse myself in the unique charm of this beautiful island so don't miss out on this gorgeous hotel—I highly recommend it! 🌴 🌅 ✨

[View all 426 comment](#)

Did you read the caption below the post ? If not, **please do so attentively** before proceeding to this question.

If your answer is "No," unfortunately, we won't be able to include your data in our analysis.

- Yes
- No

Questions about the post

Please answer the following questions picturing yourself in the situation displayed before.

Forewords #2 + product involvement

We are almost there. Some final questions.

To me, choosing an accommodation while on holidays is... (= Product Involvement scale)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| an unimportant decision | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a very important decision |
| a decision which requires very little thought | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a decision which requires a lot of thoughts |
| little to lose if I choose the wrong brand | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a lot to lose if I choose the wrong brand |
| a decision which is not mainly logical or objective | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a decision which is mainly logical or objective |
| a decision which is not based mainly on functional facts | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | a decision which is based mainly on functional facts |

Are you currently or have you in the past been using Instagram? (= Instagram Familiarity scale)

- Yes
- No

Personal questions

Tell us a bit more about yourself..

Please indicate your age

What do you identify as?

- Woman
- Man
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

What is the highest level of education you (will soon) have completed or the highest degree you (will soon) have received ?

- Less than high school degree
- High School diploma or equivalent
- Intermediate-Higher vocational education
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Ph.D. or higher
- Prefer not to say

If you have any specific feedback on the survey, thanks for telling me!

Powered by Qualtrics

APPENDIX C : Statistical Analyses

1. Reliability Analysis

Dimension	Number.of.items	Alpha
PI	5	0.85
BA	4	0.88
eWOM	3	0.83
SMI authenticity	3	0.92
MS	2	0.75
Product Involvement	5	0.74

2. Manipulation Checks

2.1.Message Sidedness

	MS	M	SD	F_test
1	1S	5.79	1.00	F(1,184) = 62.4148
2	2S	4.24	1.59	p-value < 0.0001

Table 2. Manipulation Check of MS

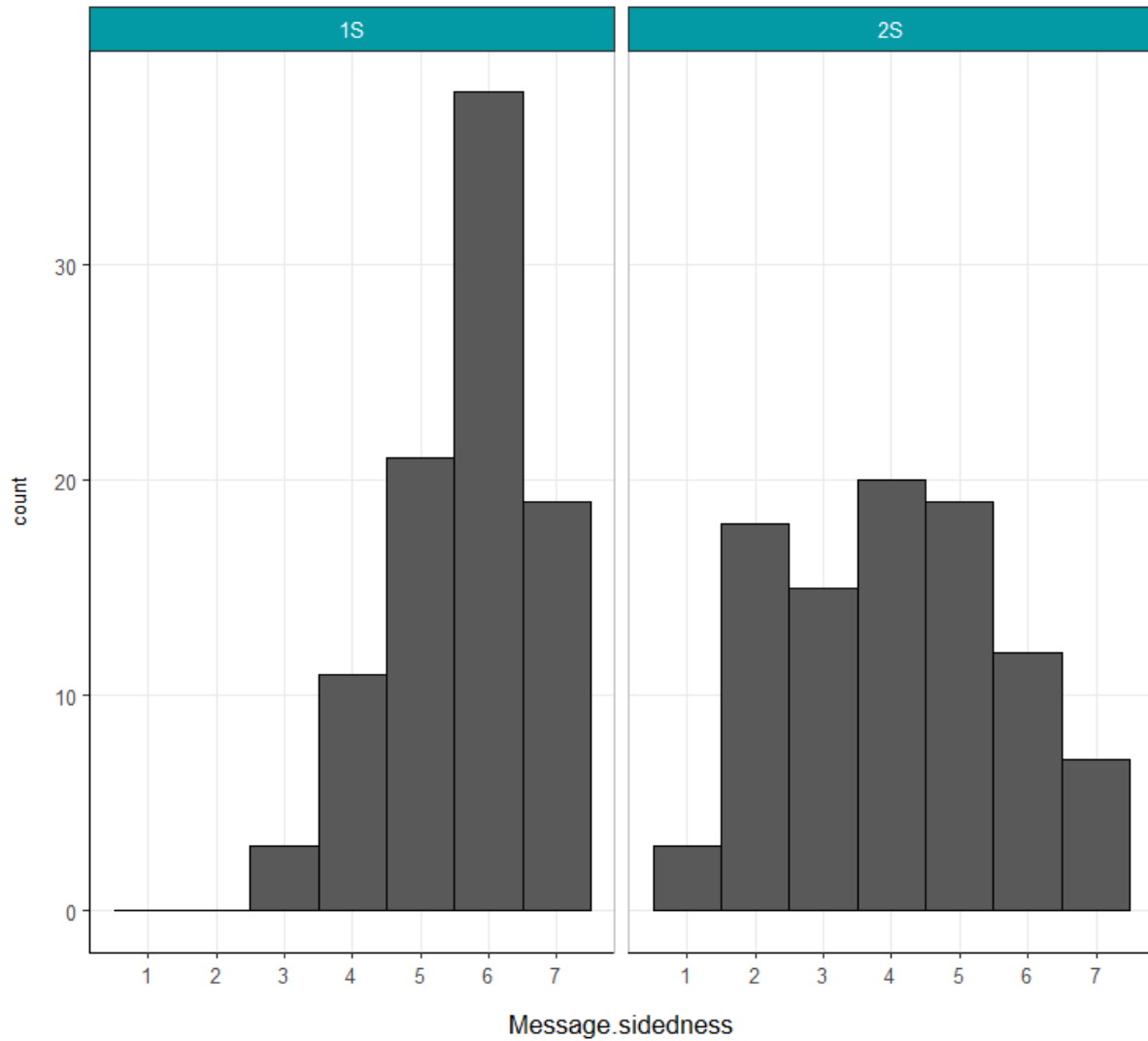


Figure 4. *Distribution of Participants' MS Perceptions in both 1S and 2S Conditions*

2.2.Sponsorship Disclosure

	Absence	Presence	Total	X-squared
No	55 (59.78%)	38 (40.43%)	93	X-squared(1) = 6.2158
Yes	37 (40.22%)	56 (59.57%)	93	p-value = 0.0127

Table 3. *Manipulation Check of SD*

3. Selection Bias Check

3.1. Gender

	1S_absence	1S_presence	2S_absence	2S_presence	Total	X-squared
M	16 (34.78%)	13 (28.26%)	21 (45.65%)	15 (31.25%)	65	X-squared(3) = 3.5125
W	30 (65.22%)	33 (71.74%)	25 (54.35%)	33 (68.75%)	121	p-value = 0.3191

Table 4. Examination of Potential Gender Bias

3.2. Level of Education

	1S_absence	1S_presence	2S_absence	2S_presence	Total	X-squared
<i>Bachelor</i>	10 (21.74%)	9 (19.57%)	13 (28.26%)	9 (18.75%)	41	X-squared(18) = 11.5347
<i>High school</i>	2 (4.35%)	1 (2.17%)	2 (4.35%)	3 (6.25%)	8	p-value = 0.8703
<i>Intermediate</i>	3 (6.52%)	1 (2.17%)	2 (4.35%)	1 (2.08%)	7	-
<i>Less than high school</i>	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (2.08%)	1	-
<i>Master</i>	29 (63.04%)	30 (65.22%)	28 (60.87%)	30 (62.50%)	117	-
<i>PhD</i>	2 (4.35%)	3 (6.52%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (4.17%)	7	-
<i>Prefer not to say</i>	0 (0.00%)	2 (4.35%)	1 (2.17%)	2 (4.17%)	5	-

3.3. Age

	Condition	M	SD	F_test
1	<i>1S_presence</i>	26.98	5.82	$F(3,182) = 0.8186$
2	<i>2S_absence</i>	25.43	4.99	$p\text{-value} = 0.4851$
3	<i>1S_absence</i>	26.57	6.23	-
4	<i>2S_presence</i>	25.65	5.02	-

4. Confounding Factors Analysis

Rep	Pred	Df_num	Df_denom	F_value	P_Val
PI	Product.Involvement	1	184	11.60	0.0008
PI	Insta.familiarity	1	184	3.37	0.0681
PI	Gender	1	184	0.90	0.3427
PI	Age	1	184	0.08	0.7788
BA	Product.Involvement	1	184	4.46	0.0360
BA	Insta.familiarity	1	184	0.83	0.3631
BA	Gender	1	184	1.69	0.1949
BA	Age	1	184	0.31	0.5793
eWOM	Product.Involvement	1	184	5.65	0.0185
eWOM	Insta.familiarity	1	184	0.39	0.5331
eWOM	Gender	1	184	2.77	0.0975
eWOM	Age	1	184	0.78	0.3786

5. Hypotheses Testing

5.1. Homogeneity of Variances Analysis

y	Pred	df1	df2	statistic	p	Hyp
PI	MS	1	184	0.00	0.9979	H1
BA	MS	1	184	1.23	0.2679	H1
eWOM	MS	1	184	0.29	0.5892	H1
SML.authenticity	MS	1	184	0.50	0.4793	H2
PI	SD	1	184	1.26	0.2628	H3
PI	MS*SD	3	182	0.34	0.7974	H3
BA	SD	1	184	0.07	0.7884	H3
BA	MS*SD	3	182	2.07	0.1052	H3
eWOM	SD	1	184	3.23	0.0739	H3
eWOM	MS*SD	3	182	1.69	0.1713	H3

Table 6. Homogeneity of Variances Analysis

5.2. Hypothesis 1 and 3

Variable	MS	Moyenne	StdDev
BA	1S	5.18	1.07
BA	2S	4.75	1.21
eWOM	1S	2.92	1.52
eWOM	2S	2.99	1.49
PI	1S	4.21	1.22
PI	2S	4.06	1.22

Table 9. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV in Each Condition of MS

Rep	Pred	Mod	Effect	Estimate	SE	Df	t_value	P_Val
PI	MS	SD	MS2S	0.00	0.25	182	0.00	0.5000
BA	MS	SD	MS2S	-0.47	0.24	182	-1.98	0.9752
eWOM	MS	SD	MS2S	0.56	0.31	182	1.82	0.0355
PI	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.29	0.35	182	-0.81	0.7903
BA	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	0.09	0.33	182	0.28	0.3890
eWOM	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.96	0.43	182	-2.23	0.9865

Table 8 and 12. Two-way ANOVA results for Hypothesis 1 and 3

Variable	MS	SD	Moyenne	StdDev
BA	1S	absence	5.39	0.91
BA	1S	presence	4.96	1.17
BA	2S	absence	4.92	1.33
BA	2S	presence	4.59	1.08
eWOM	1S	absence	2.93	1.58
eWOM	1S	presence	2.91	1.48
eWOM	2S	absence	3.49	1.60
eWOM	2S	presence	2.51	1.21
PI	1S	absence	4.35	1.16
PI	1S	presence	4.07	1.28
PI	2S	absence	4.35	1.17
PI	2S	presence	3.79	1.21

Table 13. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV for Each Condition of MS x SD

5.2.1. Mean and Standard Deviation for each DV for Each Condition of SD

Variable	SD	Moyenne	StdDev
Attitude.brand	absence	5.16	1.16
Attitude.brand	presence	4.77	1.14
eWOM.intentions	absence	3.21	1.61
eWOM.intentions	presence	2.71	1.36
PI	absence	4.35	1.16
PI	presence	3.93	1.25

5.3. Hypothesis 2

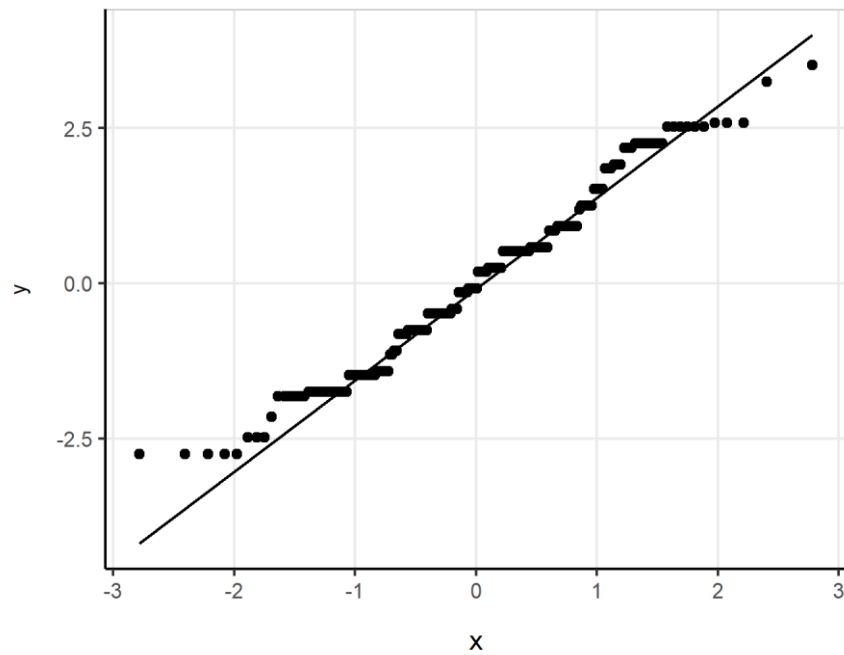
		Estimate	SE	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	p-value
PI	ACME	0.13	0.10	-0.03	0.30	0.0941
	ADE	-0.28	0.15	-0.53	-0.04	0.9702
	Total Effect	-0.15	0.18	-0.44	0.15	0.8053
BA	ACME	0.10	0.07	-0.03	0.22	0.0941
	ADE	-0.52	0.15	-0.78	-0.27	0.9991
	Total Effect	-0.42	0.17	-0.71	-0.15	0.9941
eWOM	ACME	0.16	0.12	-0.04	0.36	0.0941
	ADE	-0.10	0.18	-0.40	0.20	0.7093
	Total Effect	0.07	0.22	-0.30	0.43	0.3909

Table 10. Mediation Analysis Results in the Relationship between MS and PI/BA/eWOM

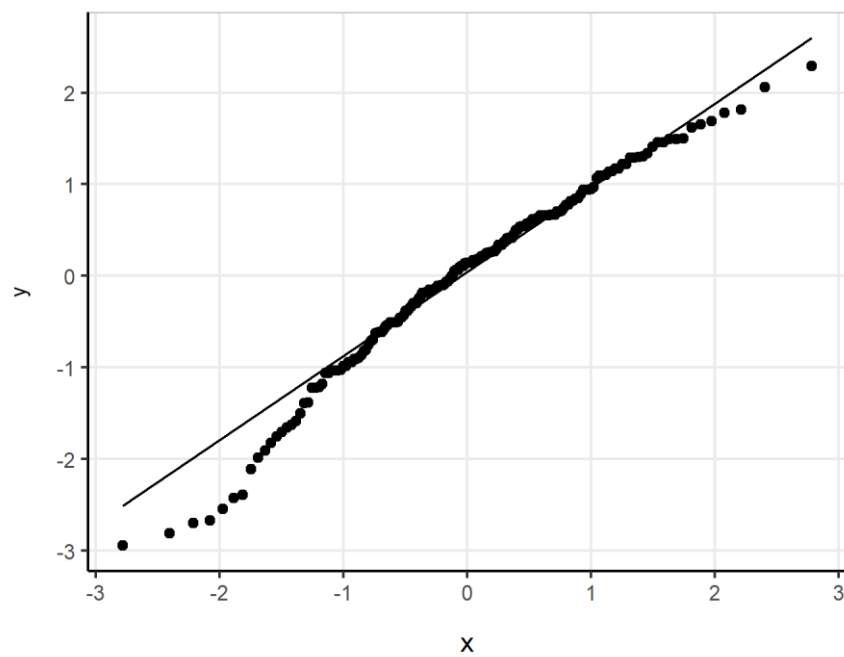
Variable	MS	Moyenne	StdDev
SMI.authenticity	1S	3.48	1.36
SMI.authenticity	2S	3.75	1.44

Table 11. Means and Standard Deviation for SMI's Authenticity in Each Condition of MS

5.3.1. Normality QQplot of Residuals for the Relationship Between MS and SMI Authenticity



5.3.2. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and PI



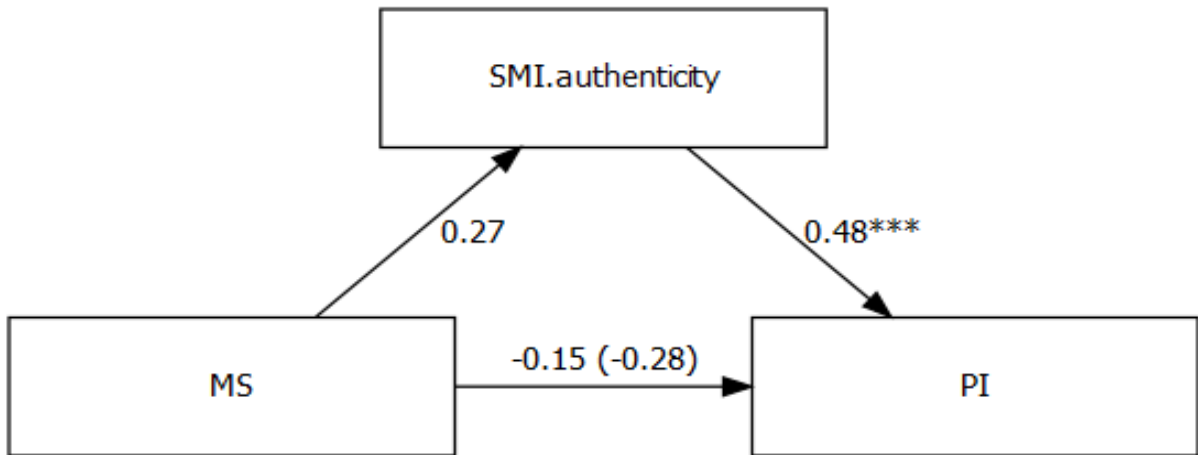
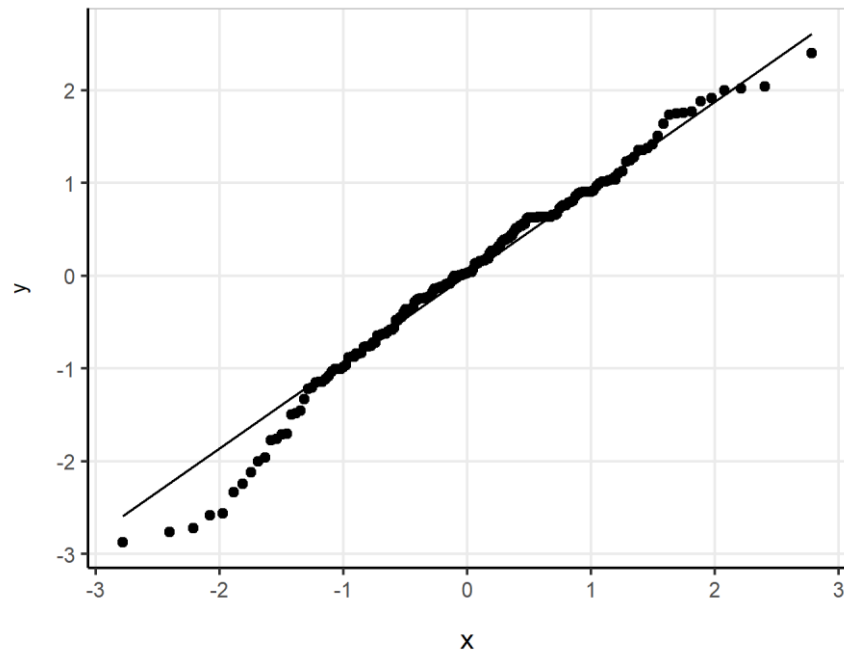
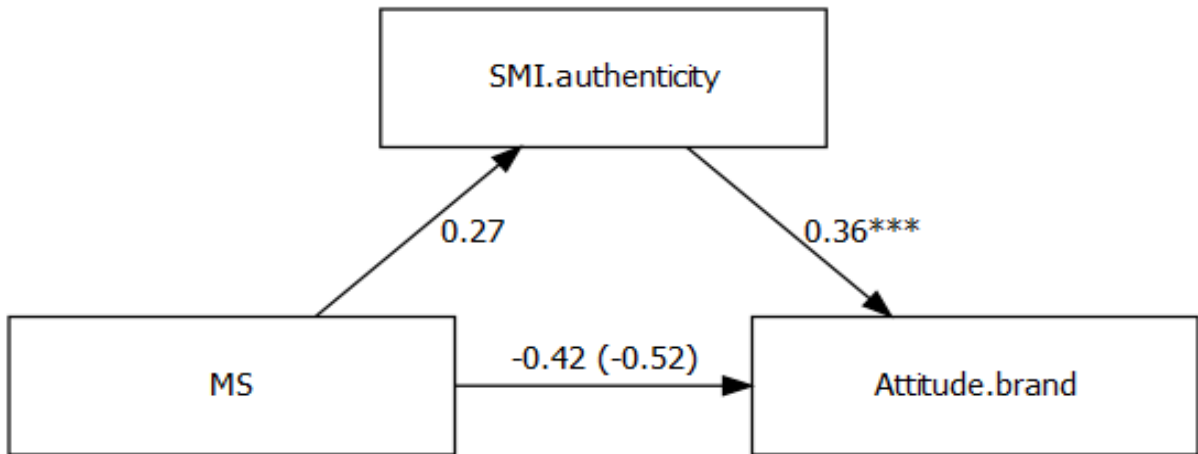


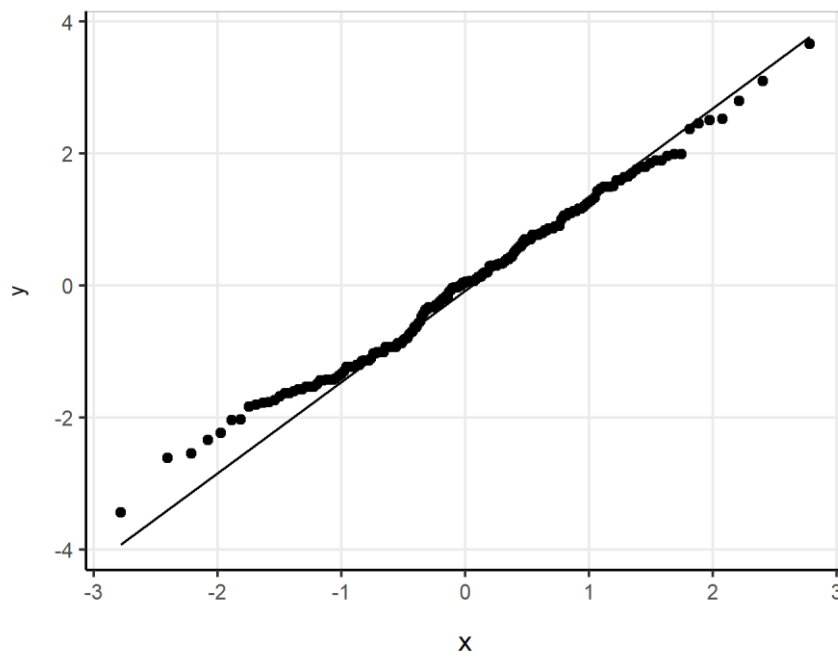
Figure 5. Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and PI

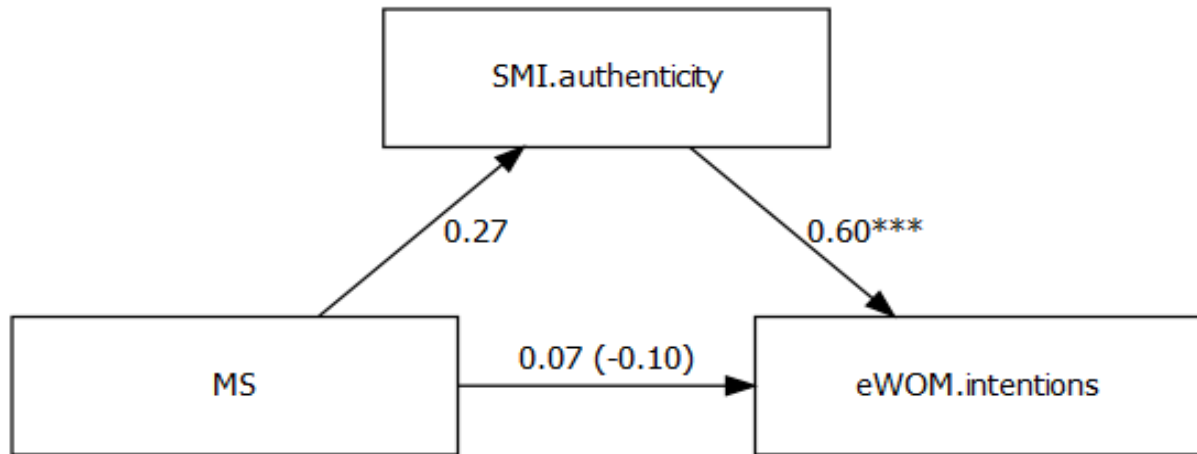
5.3.3. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and BA





5.3.4. Normality QQplot of Residuals and Mediation Model for the Relationship Between MS, SMI Authenticity and eWOM





6. Confounding Factor Analysis

6.1. Hypothesis 1 and 3

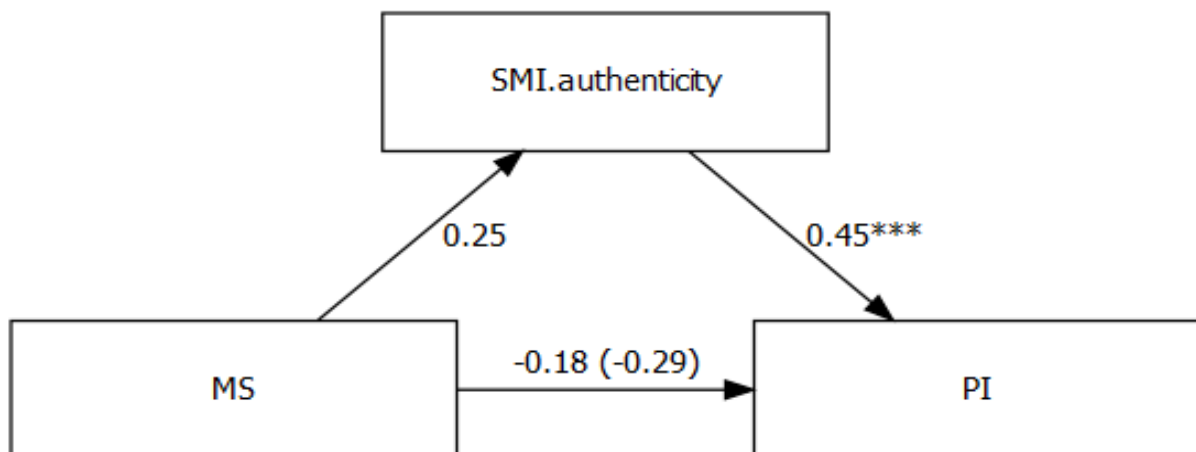
Rep	Pred	Mod	Effect	Estimate	SE	Df	t_value	P_Val
PI	MS	SD	MS2S	-0.06	0.25	181	-0.26	0.6030
	MS	SD	SDpresence	-0.29	0.24	181	-1.20	0.8851
	MS	SD	Product.Involvement	0.30	0.09	181	3.35	0.0005
	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.21	0.35	181	-0.61	0.7294
BA	MS	SD	MS2S	-0.51	0.23	181	-2.17	0.9842
	MS	SD	SDpresence	-0.44	0.23	181	-1.88	0.9691
	MS	SD	Product.Involvement	0.19	0.08	181	2.22	0.0137
	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	0.14	0.33	181	0.43	0.3340
eWOM	MS	SD	MS2S	0.51	0.31	181	1.66	0.0494
	MS	SD	SDpresence	-0.04	0.30	181	-0.12	0.5461
	MS	SD	Product.Involvement	0.24	0.11	181	2.18	0.0153
	MS	SD	MS2S:SDpresence	-0.90	0.43	181	-2.11	0.9817

6.2. Hypothesis 2

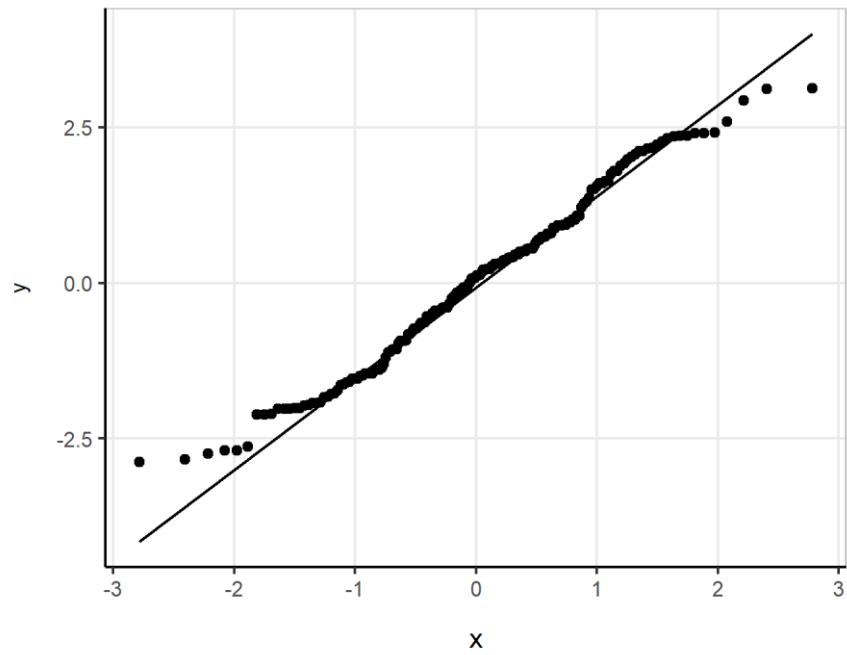
6.2.1. Impact on PI

	Estimate	SE	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	p-value
ACME	0.11	0.09	-0.04	0.27	0.1104
ADE	-0.29	0.15	-0.53	-0.05	0.9762
Total Effect	-0.18	0.17	-0.46	0.11	0.8476

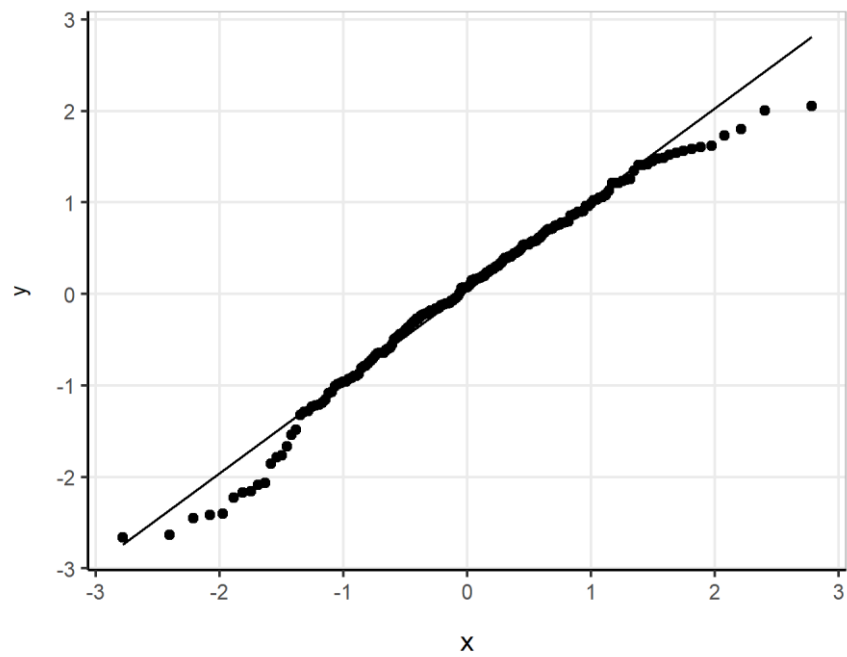
6.2.1.1. Mediation Model and QQplot



SMI.authenticity ~ MS + Product.Involvement



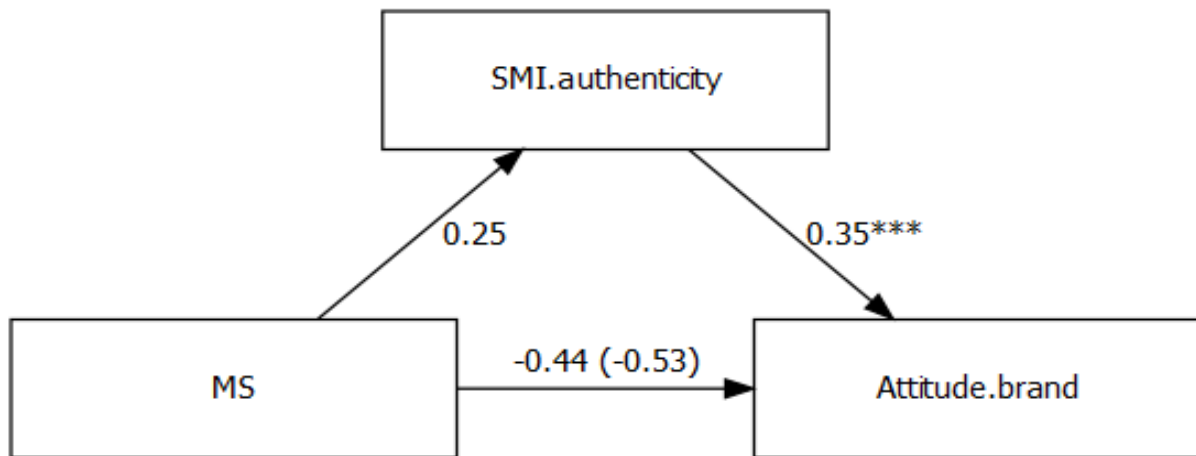
PI ~ MS + SMI.authenticity + Product.Involvement

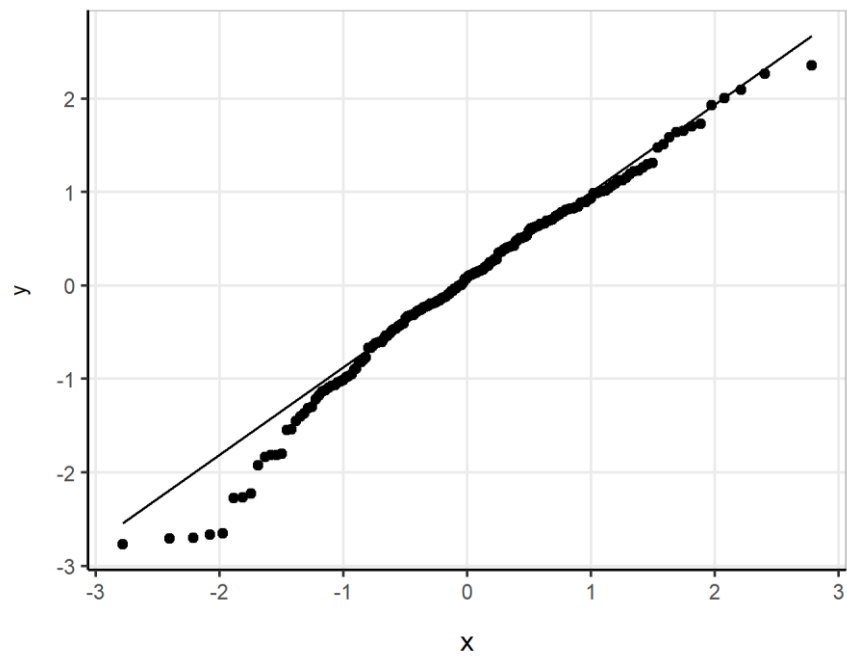


6.2.2. Impact on BA

	Estimate	SE	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	p-value
ACME	0.09	0.07	-0.03	0.20	0.1104
ADE	-0.53	0.15	-0.78	-0.28	0.9995
Total Effect	-0.44	0.17	-0.72	-0.17	0.9962

6.2.2.1. Mediation Model and QQplot

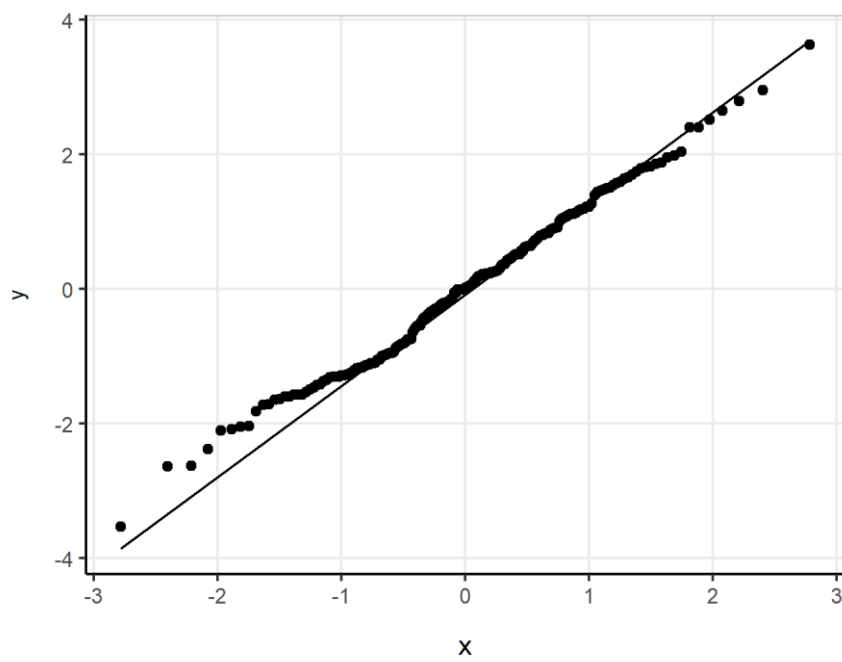
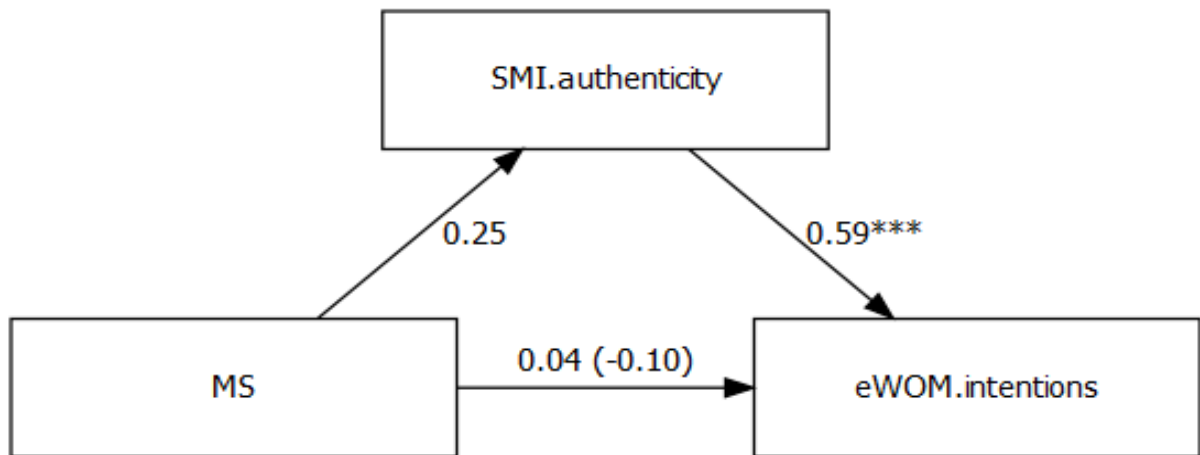




6.2.3. Impact on eWOM

	Estimate	SE	90% CI Lower	90% CI Upper	p-value
ACME	0.15	0.12	-0.05	0.33	0.1104
ADE	-0.10	0.18	-0.41	0.20	0.7175
Total Effect	0.04	0.22	-0.32	0.40	0.4299

6.2.3.1. Mediation Model and QQplot



UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN
Louvain School of Management

Place des Doyens, 1 bte L2.01.01, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve
Boulevard Emile Devreux 6, 6000 Charleroi, Belgique
Chaussée de Binche 151, 7000 Mons, Belgique

www.uclouvain.be/lsm