Social influencers:
examining source credibility and homophily on Instagram

Author
Esmeé Kuster
Student number: S1751883
e.n.kuster@student.utwente.nl
Master Specialization: Marketing Communication
Communication studies
Faculty of Behavioral Sciences
University of Twente

Supervisors
Prof. Dr. A.T.H. Pruyn
Dr. M. Galetzka

April 25, 2017
Enschede, The Netherlands

Abstract

Recently, influencer marketing has become a topic of interest for many marketers. Influencer marketing can be defined as: “a form of marketing that identifies and targets individuals with influence over potential buyers” (Wong, 2014). An important question for brands that aim to implement influencer marketing is how to identify and select influencers. This study focuses on the effect micro and macro influencers, number of followees and number of likes can have on perceived quality, perceived price and brand trust. Although many marketers these days use influencers, there is little academic research on this topic. A 3 x (micro vs. macro: micro / middle / macro) x 2 (number of followees: low / high) x 2 (number of likes: low / high) research design was proposed, where micro vs. macro, followees and likes were the independent variables and perceived quality, perceived price and brand trust the dependent variables. A quantitative online survey was used to measure the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables and the mediating effect of source credibility and influencer homophily. In total, 300 individuals participated in this study. The results of this study provide some practical guidelines for marketers who are interested in working with influencers. It indicates that source credibility and influencer homophily are important for improving brand trust and perceived quality. Moreover, it shows that macro influencers are perceived as more credible than micro influencers. When specifically looking at Instagram users, this study shows that the number of followees has an effect on the perceived product price. When an influencer with a low number of followees is promoting a product, participants are willing to pay more for the product compared to when the product is endorsed by an influencer with a high number of followees.

Keywords: influencer marketing, source credibility, homophily, E-WOM, Instagram marketing

Inhoud

1. Introduction

For marketers, the internet has evolved into a powerful advertising medium. Consumers are increasingly using social media for recommendations from friends, family, experts and the collective community. Recently, marketers seem particularly interested in influencer marketing. Influencer marketing is promoting products and services through specific individuals (influencers) who have influence over potential buyers (Wong, 2014). Influencers are a group of 'everyday' consumers who have built large networks of followers online and are considered trusted opinion leaders in one or several niche groups (Wong, 2014). Years ago, marketers mainly focused on celebrity endorsements to influence potential buyers. However, today's rising stars are not from Hollywood, but come from platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. Targeting and collaborating with these people can help influence consumers.

The most important question for brands that aim to implement influencer marketing is how to identify and select influencers. Research shows that identifying the right influencers is the biggest challenge for marketers when developing an influencer strategy (Roy, 2015). The easiest thing for marketers to do, is to first look at the number of individuals an influencer can reach. They might think that bigger is better, so it is only natural to be drawn towards extremely popular celebrities who have millions of followers. However, a broad reach does not always indicate that the influencer has a huge influence on its viewers. Influence is also determined by credibility, trustworthiness, expertise and the relationship between influencer and followers (Kapitan & Silvera, 2015; Wong, 2014). As a matter of fact, research shows that when an influencer's total number of followers increases, the amount of engagement with followers decreases. Instagrammers with 1000 followers have on average a higher like and comment rate compared to users with more than 1 million followers (Markerly, 2016). This raises the question whether marketers should target an expensive macro influencer, or collaborate with several smaller micro influencers.

Because reaching a broad audience still seems to be an important criterion for selecting influencers, this study makes a distinction between three type of influencers: micro, meso and macro. Macro influencers are very popular public figures with over hundreds of thousands or even millions of followers, whereas micro influencers have around 1.000-10.000 followers on their account (Markerly, 2016; Wong, 2014). The biggest advantage of macro influencers is their large and broad range of followers. However, micro influencers are usually seen as more intimate and close with their followers and earn trust because they don't seem to have the same financial motives as macro influencers (Tashakova, 2016). For this reason, micro influencers might be better at persuading their followers. An example of an Instagram influencer marketing strategy of a brand that used micro and macro influencers is Hawaii's #LetHawaiiHappen campaign. Because of Instagram's content based approach, it is the perfect place for brands with

photogenic products. In this case, the Hawaiian Islands might be one of the best Instagrammable 'products' there is. The Hawaii Tourism Department launched their campaign on January 2015 with the help of Instagrammers such as adventure photographer Jordan Hershel (+500K followers), former Miss Hawaii Emma Wo (16,9K followers), blogger Lindsey Higa (20,1K followers), and surfer Tara Binek (43,8K followers). They started spreading the word about the campaign and inspired their followers to visit Hawaii, using the #LetHawaiiHappen hashtag. The campaign generated almost 100K posts and with other paid advertising efforts reached 54% of all U.S. travelers (Mediakix, 2016). Another example is Swedish watch company Daniel Wellington. The brand refuses to pay for traditional advertising and focuses on working with hundreds of influencers online (such as model Helen Owen with +1.2 million followers and online fashion entrepreneur Kenza Zouiten with +1.5 million followers). The hashtag #DanielWellington has close to a million posts and remains to be very popular. The company claims that this strategy is the main reason they went from being set up with $15,000 back in 2011, to being the market leader for watches in the mid-range market in 2016 (Pulvirent, 2015). In conclusion, both brands saw a measurable ROI through third-party endorsements which shows that influencer marketing can be very profitable.

Another goal marketers might have is increasing the number of likes. Likes can indicate popularity and prove that the post contains interesting content. By liking a post, individuals state their opinion publicly. Phua & Ahn (2016) found that there is a relationship between the number of 'likes' on a Facebook page and brand attitude, brand involvement and purchase intention. Individuals that view a post on Facebook with a high number of likes are more likely to have positive brand attitudes, involvement and purchase intention, than when the number of likes is low. Marketers might therefore choose for an influencer that receives many likes. However, compared to other online social networks, liking on Instagram has not been studied much. Additionally, besides the reach of an influencer and the number of likes, this study will focus on followees. Followees represent the individuals an influencer follows. Research shows that the more followees an individual has, the more insincere the individual will be evaluated (Tong, Van Der Heide, Langwell & Walther, 2008). On the contrary, a user with a high number of followees is able to read more opinions and experiences because he or she is exposed to a larger amount of information and might therefore provide better content. It is therefore interesting to see if the number of followees an influencer has can have an effect on consumers.

In conclusion, this study focuses on the following three independent variables: micro vs. meso vs. macro influencers, followees and likes. These variables will be manipulated in order to measure their effect on brand trust, perceived product quality and perceived product price, which are the dependent variables. Consequently, the main research question of this study is:

RQ1: To what extent do different types of influencers (i.e. micro, meso and macro influencers), number of followees and number of likes influence brand trust and perceived quality/price of the advertised product?

Furthermore, understanding how brands can create relationships with consumers through social media influencers is important for marketers. Drawing on the communications literature, two mediators have been identified: source credibility and influencer homophily. Source credibility is "a term commonly used to imply a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message" (Ohanian, 1990). Influencer homophily can be defined as: "the degree to which people who interact are similar in beliefs, education, social status, and the like" (Aral, Muchnik, & Sundararajan, 2009). Similar individuals tend to have higher levels of interpersonal attraction, trust and understanding than a group of individuals that are dissimilar (Ruef, Aldrihc & Carter, 2004). Therefore, another research question is:

RQ2: To what extent do source credibility and influencer homophily mediate the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables?

2. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, relevant literature related to the different constructs will be discussed. Furthermore, this theoretical framework contains hypotheses about the relationships between the variables. The conceptual model, presented in the final paragraph, provides an illustration of these relationships.

2.1. Influencers

Social media influencers are seen as third party endorsers who try to shape their followers opinions and behavior through tweets, blog posts and pictures. Many of today's influencers have attracted engaged followers by focusing on a specific niche or content category, such as fashion, beauty, interior design, food, sports and travel. As a result, they have created their own network of individuals that are all interested in the same topic.

Because of their recent popularity it is important to understand how social media influencers can influence consumers. The effect of influencers has been explained by associative network models. These models explain the concept that memory consists of mental representations, each piece of knowledge is a 'node'. Nodes can be connected to other nodes, creating an associative relationship. Celebrities, influencers and brands are represented by nodes in memory. Whenever an influencer is seen endorsing a certain brand, the human brain can connect these two separate nodes, creating a relationship between brand and influencer (Collins & Loftus, 1975). Additionally, repeated exposure to these two stimuli results in the activation of the nodes and their relationship, building a stronger associative link (Biswas, Biswas, & Das, 2006; Kapitan & Silvera, 2015). Thus, characteristics about an influencer might rub off on the endorsed brand and vice versa. This means that positive experiences about an influencer can rub off, but negative experiences can too. It is therefore of great importance to choose influencers wisely.

2.2. Micro vs. macro influencers

The easiest thing for marketers to do, is to first look at the amount of individuals an influencer can reach. They might think that a broad reach is better, so it is only natural to be drawn towards extremely popular celebrities who have millions of followers. However, a broad reach does not always indicate that the influencer has a huge impact on its viewers. Maybe, it is better to focus on influencer with less followers but more engagement.

According to Romero, Galuba, Asur, & Huberman (2011) the number of followers an influencer has suggests popularity. Followers illustrate audience size and having a large number of followers stimulates a wide spread of information (Yoganarasimhan, 2012). Furthermore, research shows that a high number of followers, followees, and tweets one has on Twitter leads

to a higher opinion leadership status (Feng, 2016). This could indicate that a macro influencer has a higher opinion leadership status compared to a micro influencer. On the contrary, Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto & Gummadi (2010) found that a macro influencer is not related to actual influence. They claim that having an active audience, one that retweets and mentions the user, is more influential.

The effect of micro and macro influencers on social media on perceived price, perceived quality and brand trust has not been studied yet. Nevertheless, perceived advertising costs of an influencer can play a role. Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived quality as: "the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority". She emphasizes that perceived quality is different from actual quality because consumers use indirect measures to evaluate a brand. Assuming that collaborating with a macro influencer requires a higher budget than collaborating with a micro influencer, perceived advertising budget might influence perceived quality and perceived price. Kirmani & Wright (1989) showed that perceived advertising costs can be linked to distinctive quality. A high advertising budget indicates managerial confidence and high quality. Specifically, results from their six experiments reveal that perceived advertising costs can elicit advertising expense inferences that influence quality predictions. This means perceived advertising expense acts as a cue to quality. This could indicate that using a macro influencer will make the brand appear to be of higher quality compared to a micro influencer. Besides, one could argue that a high advertising budget can indicate a higher product price because of the higher costs.

The effect of influencers on brand trust has not been studied yet either. Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) define brand trust as "the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function". An individual can attribute a trust image to a brand based on his or her experience. This means that brand trust can be influenced by any direct (usage, trials) and indirect (advertising, word of mouth, reputation) contact with the brand (Grewal, Monroe, & Krishnan, 1998; Keller, 1993). Doney & Cannon (1997) found five distinct processes by which brand trust can develop. One of those five processes is a transference process and can be linked to influencer marketing. Transference is the extension of trust in a brand, based on a third party's definition of its trustworthiness. A transference process is triggered when faith in an individual is high (Doney, Cannon, & Mullen, 1998). In conclusion, brands can use influencers to increase visibility and trust without looking like they are actually trying to increase brand trust. It is therefore expected that influencers can impact consumers' brand trust. According to Sztompka (1999), trustworthiness increases in conditions of 'closeness, intimacy and familiarity' and is less likely to occur in situations where there is more distance. Overall, people trust their peers, but they can be skeptical towards ads. Since micro influencers are more similar to the average consumer than macro influencers, it is possible that

a brand endorsed by a micro influencer results in higher brand trust compared to an endorsement by a macro influencer. While a micro influencer may not have the reach a marketer is looking for, they do have an audience that trusts their opinion. Consequently, the following hypotheses read:

H1a: A product endorsement of a micro influencer results in higher brand trust compared to an endorsement of a macro influencer

H1b: A product endorsement of a macro influencer results in a higher perceived quality compared to an endorsement of a micro influencer.

H1c: A product endorsement of a macro influencer results in a higher perceived product price compared to an endorsement of a micro influencer.

2.3. Impact of number of followees.

Besides followers, the number of followees may impact someone's feelings about the influencer as well. Followees represent the individuals an influencer follows. The term originates from literature on Twitter usage and has since been used to describe the number of social media users an individual follows (Huberman, Romero, & Wu, 2008). A user with a high number of followees is able to read more opinions and experiences because he or she is exposed to a larger amount of information. This suggests that the more individuals one follows, the more appealing his or her content is because of the variety of opinions and information consumed (Suh, Hong, Pirolli, & Chi, 2010). The user has the ability to "look outside one's narrow daily existence" (Williams, 2006). However, whether an influencer with 10.000 followees is able to read all the information that is posted is questionable. Tong, Van Der Heide, Langwell, & Walther (2008) mentioned the concept "following out of desperation", which means that some users follow others in the hopes of gaining more followers themselves. These users spend their time 'friending' others beyond a plausible extent which makes their behavior appear to be superficial and insincere. Hence, 'friending' a profuse amount of others may lead to negative evaluation about the profile owner (Donath & Boyd, 2004). Furthermore, a high number of followees can also indicate so called "bot" accounts (Cresci, Di Pietro, Petrocchi, Spognardi, & Tesconi, 2015). These fake accounts usually have a huge number of followees and only a small number of actual followers. In conclusion, an influencer with a high number of followees can be perceived as insincere and questionable. It is expected that when an influencer is evaluated negatively, this negative evaluation will rub off on the brands the influencer is promoting.
which can have a negative effect on brand trust, perceived quality and price. Consequently, the following hypotheses read:

H2a: An influencer with a high number of followees results in lower brand trust of the advertised product compared to an influencer with a limited number of followees.

H2b: An influencer with a high number of followees results in lower perceived quality of the advertised product compared to an influencer with a limited number of followees.

H2c: An influencer with a high number of followees results in lower perceived price of the advertised product compared to an influencer with a limited number of followees.

2.4. Impact of likes

'Liking' content on social media has become a popular and important function. It was first introduced on Facebook as a fast and simple way to tell friends that you like the information they share (Gerlitz & Helmond, 2013). Liking helps users express their appreciation for the content and indicates that the user is interested in the object posted. Liking on Instagram does not require an existing friendship. In fact, any person can show interest in others by liking their photo's. Besides, on social networks such as Facebook and Instagram, a 'liked' post will be shared with friends. This makes 'liking' a valuable and useful way of sharing and endorsing information in social networks (Jin, Wang, Luo, Yu, & Han, 2011). Phua & Ahn (2016) found that there is a relationship between the number of 'likes' on a Facebook page and brand attitude, brand involvement and purchase intention. Individuals that view a post on Facebook with a high number of likes are more likely to have positive brand attitudes, involvement and purchase intention, than when the number of likes is low.

Compared to other online social networks, liking on Instagram has not been studied much. One study shows that teenagers receive more likes and comments than adults (Jang, Han, Shih & Lee, 2015) . Another study showed that Instagram photos that include a face receive more likes than photos that do not show a face, whereas the number of faces, their age and gender does not have an effect on the number of likes (Bakhshi, Shamma, & Gilbert, 2014). Overall, these results do not give any clues to whether the number of likes can have an influence on the dependent variables. However, other theories might be able to indicate some possible effects. According to the bandwagon effect, a psychological phenomenon where individuals adoption increases primarily because others are doing so (Marsh, Blackburn & Calderbank, 1985), it can be assumed that viewers judge a post which seems to be liked by many others more favorably. This might have an effect on perceived quality and perceived price based on expected market forces. An endorsement with a high number of likes indicates that the product is popular. Market forces push prices up when demand rises, and drive them down when demand decreases. However, a high number of likes does not mean that all those 'likers' are fully engaged

with the brand. Based on the previous mentioned research about liking in social media, the following hypotheses have been defined:

H3a: An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher brand trust of the advertised product compared to a post with a low number of likes.

H3b: An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher perceived quality of the advertised product compared to a post with a low number of likes.

H3c: An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher perceived price of the advertised product compared to a post with a low number of likes.

2.5. Impact of source credibility

Knowing whether the influencer you want to work with is perceived as credible by consumers is important information for marketers. Drawing on the communications literature, this paragraph will focus on the credibility of the influencer. This research proposes that source credibility is an essential factor and may serve as a mediator between the independent and the dependent variables.

H4a: Type of influencer (micro vs. macro) is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on source credibility.

H4b: The number of followees is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on source credibility.

An influencers' credibility has an effect on the persuasiveness of the message. Numerous studies have focused on endorser characteristics, such as attractiveness (Kahle & Homer, 1985), expertise and trustworthiness (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Ohanian, 1990). According to Ohanian (1991) source credibility is most essential when selecting an influencer. Ohanian (1990) describes source credibility as: "a term commonly used to imply a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message". There are three variables that measure source credibility: attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness. Attractiveness refers to characteristics that affects an influencers´ physical appearance and the perceived familiarity, likability, and similarity of the source to the receiver. Physically attractive influencers are perceived as more likable, popular and social and therefore have greater influence than unattractive endorsers. Besides attractiveness, the source's perceived expertise has a positive effect on attitude change as well. Expertise refers to the extent to which the

influencer holds credible knowledge. It is more important that the consumers believe an endorser has expertise than whether the endorser is an expert. Trustworthiness in communication is the degree of confidence in and acceptance of the influencer and the message. An influencer that is perceived to be trustworthy can achieve opinion change. It is expected that a high source credibility will have a positive effect on the dependent variables.

It is expected that micro influencers have a higher source credibility than macro influencers. Micro influencers are expected to have higher credibility because they have more expertise and are perceived as more trustworthy. Micro influencers earn trust because they don't seem to have the same financial motives as macro influencers. They post sponsored content less often and may feel more authentic and trustworthy (Tashakova, 2016). In terms of expertise, micro influencers are generally seen as individuals that have higher insider knowledge in their focus area (Bachouche, 2016; Wong, 2014) because the content they produce is genuine and specific for their niche interest. This in turn suits the interests of their followers. Furthermore, according to Sztompka (1999) trustworthiness and credibility increase in conditions of 'closeness, intimacy and familiarity' and is less likely to occur in situations where there is more distance.

Moreover, it is expected that the number of followees have an effect on source credibility as well. Since having many followees seems to have an overall negative effect, it is anticipated that it will have a negative effect on source credibility as well. An influencer with 10.000 followees might follow these people 'out of desperation' and is trying to gain more followers for their own account. This can negatively affect the credibility of the influencer.

H5a: Micro influencers have higher source credibility compared to macro influencers.

H5b: An influencer with a low number of followees has a higher source credibility compared to an influencer with a high number of followees.

2.6. Impact of influencer homophily

Understanding how brands can create relationship with consumers through social media influencers is important. Drawing on the communications literature, this paragraph will focus on the 'friendship' between influencer and consumer. This research proposes that homophily is an essential factor in this relationship and may serve as a mediator between the independent and the dependent variables.

H6a: Type of influencer (micro vs. macro) is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on influencer homophily.

H6b: The number of likes is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on influencer homophily.

Eyal & Rubin (2003) define homophily as: "the degree to which people who interact are similar in beliefs, education, social status, and the like". Similar individuals tend to have higher levels of interpersonal attraction, trust and understanding than a group of individuals that is dissimilar (Ruef, Aldrihc & Carter, 2004). In other words, similarity breeds connection. This means that homophily can account for a great deal of a contagious process (Aral et al., 2009). Several researchers have identified homophily as an antecedent of parasocial interactions (PSI) (Frederick, Hoon Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Lee & Watkins, 2016; McCroskey, McCroskey, & Richmond, 2006). PSI explains the relationship between media users and media personalities (Frederick et al., 2012). It can be seen as a friendship in which the media user is looking for advice from the media personality as if they are friends (Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985). The concept of para-social interaction initially offered an explanation of the development of consumers relationships with mass media, however, the concept has now been extended to online environments as well (Ballantine & Martin, 2005). Lee & Watkins (2016) examined how influencers on YouTube could impact viewers' perceptions of luxury brands using video blogs (vlogs). They specifically studied two antecedents of PSI: homophily and attractiveness. Their results show that brand perceptions and purchase intention of luxury brands were higher for participants that watched a vlog compared to the control group, who did not watch the vlog. More specifically, watching a vlogger who was viewed as similar to the participant or had traits the participant found desirable was more likely to lead to PSI. Therefore it is expected that influencer homophily has a positive effect on the dependent variables.

It is expected that micro influencers will have more similarities with the average consumers than macro influencers. Overall, micro influencers are usually seen as more intimate and close with their followers. Their lives might be similar with other people their age, whereas

the life of a popular macro influencer might seem more glamorous and extreme compared to a 'normal' life. It is expected that micro influencers resonate with the audience that follows them. Furthermore, it is likely that ´regular´ consumers do not receive enormous numbers of likes on their Instagram page, and are therefore more similar to influencers with a low number of likes. Accordingly, the following hypothesis have been defined:

H7a: Micro influencers have higher perceived influencer homophily compared to macro influencers.

H7b: An Instagram post with a low number of likes has higher perceived influencer homophily compared to a post with a high number of likes.

2.7. Interaction effects

Literature does not provide evidence regarding the relation between the independent variables. However, it is expected that interaction effects will occur. First, an interaction effect between followees and type of influencer on source credibility is expected. It could be argued that a micro influencer with a high number of followees will have lower source credibility compared to a macro influencer with a high number of followees, because the difference between the two numbers is smaller in the first scenario. Participants might notice that the numbers lie closely together and think that others follow the influencer just because the influencer follows them as well, not because of his or her interesting content. A small followers-to-followees ratio might imply an individual who employs all kinds of stunts to boost their numbers. It is likely that people with more followees than followers try to retain existing followees. Whereas a macro influencer with a high number of followees might seem more credible since the difference between the numbers is bigger. People simply follow this person because of the interesting content. Second, an interaction effect between type of influencer and number of likes on influencer homophily is expected. It could be argued that a micro influencer with a low number of likes is more comparable to the average consumer than a micro influencer with a high number of likes, since it does not seem normal to receive enormous amounts of likes and followers on an Instagram page. On the other hand, one could argue that people would want be like a macro influencer with a high number of likes. People might fantasize about being popular on social media and therefore would want to feel similar to this type of person. Which might cause a higher score on homophily.

Based on the previous mentioned findings, the following research model underlying this study has been developed (see Figure 1). It consists of three independent variables (micro vs. macro, followees and likes) and three dependent variables (brand trust, perceived qualiy and perceived price). The mediators source credibility and influencer homophily have been added to the model

because it is expected that these variables mediate the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The arrows represent the expected relationships between the variables.

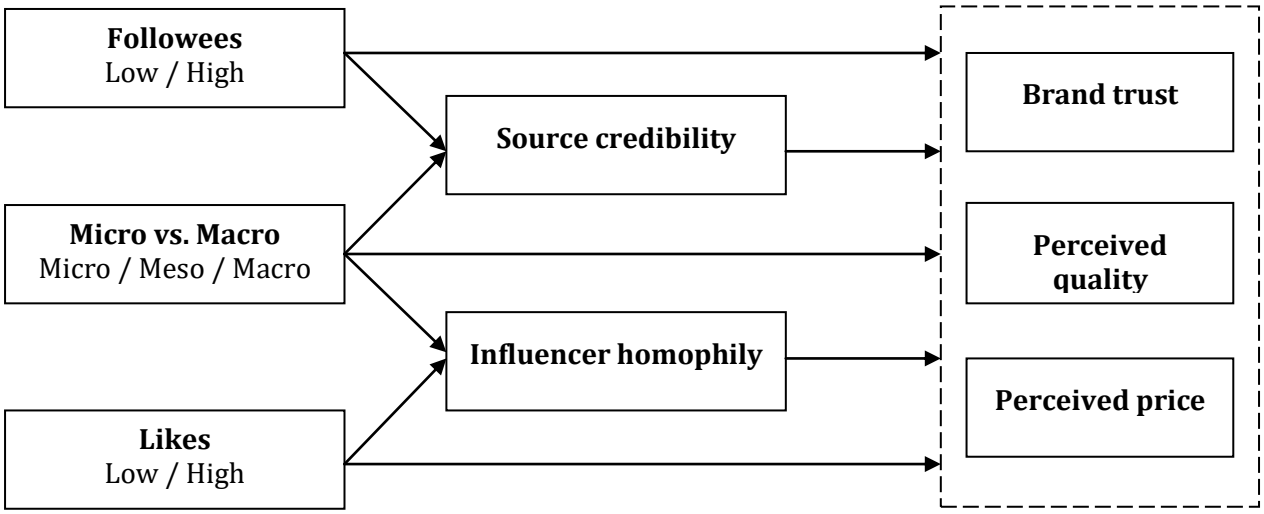


Figure 1; Research model

3. Method

This chapter discusses the research methodology employed to test the research hypotheses. First, the results of the pre-test will be discussed and the manipulations for the main study will be explained. Second, the experimental design is presented. Third, the research sample and procedure is presented. The final section discusses the measurements of this study.

3.1. Pre-test

This section discusses the pre-test that was conducted before the main study. In order to determine the exact manipulations and the product that would be visible in the endorsement, existing Instagram profiles have been analyzed and a pre-test questionnaire was deployed. On Instagram, influencers promote a wide range of products. Many of today's "Instagrammers" have attracted engaged followers by focusing on a specific niche or content category, such as fashion, beauty, interior design, food, sports and travel. With food being part of everyday life for all of us, male and female, this pre-test focused on the niche food. Based on the results of the pre-test, the final stimuli were designed. The pre-test was conducted with Qualtrics Survey Software and data of 20 respondents were collected.

3.1.1. Analysis of existing Instagram profiles

In order to decide how to manipulate the independent variables, one hundred existing Instagram profiles that focus on food were randomly selected and analyzed. These profiles were categorized by number of followers: micro, middle and macro. Besides analyzing the independent variables, the number of posts the Instagrammer posted was also taken into account. Because this number has a prominent place on an Instagram profile and was not manipulated, it was important to know what the average number of posts is. Because likes can vary across different posts, the number of likes was measured by using the average of the last eight Instagram photo's the user posted. Table 1 shows the results of the analysis. The standard deviations are high, this means that the values in the data set are widely spread around the mean.

Table 1; Descriptive statistics "food instagrammers".

		N	*Median*	*Mean*	*SD*
Micro	*Followers*	39	4.050	4.407	2.924
	Followees		562	677	631
	*Likes**		109	137	93
	Posts		767	1.032	1.025
Meso	*Followers*	36	21.050	23.572	10.330
	Followees		458	990	1.564
	*Likes**		387	424	205
	Posts		1.453	1.645	1.158
Macro	*Followers*	28	127.000	220.658	223.211
	Followees		481	588	463
	*Likes**		3.241	4.995	4904
	Posts		1.150	969	969
Total	*Followers*	100	17.150	65.035	
	Followees		502	781	
	*Likes**		329	1.454	
	Posts		1.002	1.323	

Note: * = Average number of likes of the last eight posts

It was expected that the number of likes would increase with the number followers. As an example, it was not expected that a micro influencer with 1.000 followers had 3.000 likes on a post, while 3.000 likes might be not surprising for a macro influencer. Therefore, the number of likes was analyzed in percentages of the number of followers as well. In this sample the average like rate is 3%, where micro influencers have the highest like rate and middle influencers the lowest. Table 2 shows the number of likes as percentages of the number of followers.

Table 2; Number of likes as percentages of the number of followers.

	Percentage	*SD*
Micro	3.81%	2.40
Middle	1.89%	0.73
Macro	2,33%	2.33
Total	3.04%	2.38

3.1.2. Pre-test questionnaire

A pre-test questionnaire was developed in order to test the influencer, manipulations and the appropriate product for the endorsement . First, two fictitious influencers were created, a food blogger and a professional cook. Using a fictitious influencer will prevent participants from recognition and will minimize prior perceptions (Till & Busler, 1998). Besides the influencer

being fictional, the gender of the influencer was predetermined because it might have an effect on the responses of the participants. Studies by Aral & Walker (2012), Armstrong & McAdams (2009), and Weibel, Wissmath, & Groner (2008) show that male sources are considered more influential and credible than female sources. Therefore, male influencers were used. Second, the manipulations were chosen and six products were selected for the pre-test: three food products and three kitchen appliances.

The online survey tool Qualtrics was used to create the questionnaire and to collect data. Family, friends, and colleagues of the author of this study, were provided with an URL that led them to the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: questions concerning the manipulations and questions concerning the products. After the introduction page, participants were randomly assigned to either the food blogger or the professional cook. First, participants were exposed to four different images. These images showed the Instagram page of the influencer where he was either micro or macro, had a low or high number of followees and likes. After each image, participants were asked whether they thought the influencer had a high or low number of followers, followees and likes. Furthermore, they were asked whether this number was higher or lower than the average Instagram user. Both questions utilized a 5 point scale. Second, participants were exposed to six products: Corona beer, Bertolli olive oil, Ben & Jerry's ice cream, KichtenAid food processer, Philips blender and Joseph&Joseph chopping board set. Participants were asked whether they knew the brand, whether the product fitted the influencer and whether they were willing to buy the product. Finally, participants were asked for their demographic data, such as gender and age.

3.1.3. Results questionnaire

In total, 20 participants finished the questionnaire, of which nine participants were male and eleven were female. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 55 years, with an average age of M = 28.51 (SD = 13.84). The overall manipulation of the stimuli for the independent variable micro vs. macro was successful in the pre-test. Respondents indicated that the macro influencer had more followers (M = 4.40, SD = .55) compared to a micro influencer (M = 3.22, SD = .85). This difference proves to be significant; t (38) = -5.182, p = <.001.

The overall manipulation of the stimuli for the independent variable followees was successful as well. Respondents exposed to an influencer with many followees indicated that the influencer had more followees (M = 3.85, SD = .52) compared to a influencer with a low number of followees (M = 1.6, SD = .44). This difference proves to be significant; t (38) = -14.744, p = <.001. The overall manipulation of the stimuli for the independent variable likes was successful in the pre-test as well. Respondents exposed to an influencer with high likes indicated that the influencer had more likes (M = 3.03, SD = .62) compared to a influencer with a low number of

likes (M = 2.10, SD = .43). Again, this difference proves to be significant; t (38) = -5.193, p = <.001. In the pre-test questionnaire the familiarity and the appropriateness of six brands and products were tested in order to select which brand and product would be used for the main study. Participants indicated familiarity with the brands and products and expressed whether the product suited the influencer. All participants were familiar with the brands Ben & Jerrys, Corona, Bertolli and Philips. Participants indicated that the Bertolli olive oil was best suited for the foodblogger (M = 4.44, SD = .81), followed by the KitchenAid food processor (M = 4.32, SD = .56). For the chef cook, participants indicated that the Kitchen Aid food processor was best suited (M = 4.09, SD = .54), followed by the Bertolli olive oil (M = 4.00, SD = .63).

3.1.4. Stimuli main research

The questionnaire tested two types of influencers: micro (2.120 followers) and macro (210.200 followers). The results showed that the manipulations were successful. However, the number of followers of the micro influencer was still considered average or high. The analysis of existing Instagrammer shows that the median of the micro influencers is 4.050 followers and macro influencers 127.000. In conclusion, the number of followers in the macro condition seems appropriate. The number of followers in the micro condition should be lower than 2.120, since it was still considered as high by several respondents. Therefore, the main study consists out of a macro influencer with 210.200 followers, a middle influencer with 42.200 followers and a micro influencer with 1620 followers.

The questionnaire tested two numbers of followees: low (59 followees) and high (1936 followees). The results showed that the manipulations were successful. The analysis shows that the median of followees is 502. Therefore, the number of followees used in the pre-test questionnaire is considered appropriate for the main study.

The questionnaire tested two numbers of likes: low (2% of the number of followers) and high (8% of the number of followers). The results show that the manipulations were successful, even though 2% is not much lower than the average number of likes that resulted from the Instagram analysis. In other words, there is a gap between the analysis and the questionnaire. Additionally, a high number of likes was considered low in combination with a micro influencer. This means, respondents expect micro influencers to have a higher like rate. In order to make sure the manipulations will be perceived correctly, the difference between the numbers will be larger. Using 1% for the low conditions and 10% for the high conditions.

Additionally, eight respondents were interviewed in order to gain extra information about the profiles they viewed. The respondents all considered the fictional profiles to be real and credible. They did not recognize the people in the photo's. The majority of the respondents commented that they thought a foodblogger was better suited for Instagram endorsement than a

professional cook. A foodblogger was considered more 'trendy' and 'better suited for Instagram'. Therefore, the main research will contain the profile of a foodblogger.

The products and brands that scored highest for the foodblogger were the Bertolli olive oil and the KitchenAid food processor. Since all participants were familiar with the brand Bertolli but not with KichtenAid, Bertolli was selected as appropriate for the main research. All stimulus materials can be found in appendix A.

3.2. Experimental design

The main goal of this study was to find out if influencers have an effect on brand trust, perceived price and perceived quality. This study has a 2 x (number of followees: low / high) 3 x (micro vs. macro: micro / middle / macro) x 2 (number of likes: low / high) design, where micro vs. macro, followees and likes are independent variables and perceived quality, perceived price and brand trust are the dependent variables. Resulting from this design are 12 conditions, visualized in the table below.

Table 3; 2 x 3 x 2 experimental research design.

	Low number of likes			**High number of likes**		
	Micro influencer	**Middle influencer**	**Macro influencer**	**Micro influencer**	**Middle influencer**	**Macro influencer**
Low number of followees	N = 23	N = 24	N = 22	N = 27	N = 25	N = 26
High number of followees	N = 21	N = 28	N = 23	N = 26	N = 27	N = 28

3.3. Procedure

The main questionnaire was constructed using Qualtrix Software. Participants received a web link with which they could participate in the study. The questionnaire started by welcoming the participants, explaining the instructions and ensuring confidentiality for the participants' answers. After that, three questions concerning the participants' Instagram usage and their involvement in cooking and foodbloggers followed. After answering these questions, the participants were randomly assigned to one of the 12 conditions. Here they were asked to (1) take a close look at an influencer's Instagram account which showed the number of followers and followees and (2) take a close look at a specific post in which the influencer is endorsing the product including the likes on this post. After viewing these images, participants were presented with questions concerning brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price. After answering these questions, participants were again exposed to the two images and asked to carefully study them. This was followed by three manipulation check questions measuring whether or not the

three manipulations were correctly perceived. Subsequently, the participants were presented with questions concerning source credibility and influencer homophily. The survey ended with three demographical questions. The entire questionnaire can be found in appendix B.

3.4. Participants

After a two-week survey period, a total of 389 responses were received. However, 89 respondents failed to complete the questionnaire and were excluded from the analysis. This leads to a total of 300 respondents. Respondents' age ranged from 18 to 65 years, with a mean of 25.5 (SD= 8.7). A one-way analysis of variance was executed in order to see the differences in age between the twelve conditions. The test was statistically non-significant, $F(11) = 1.527$, $p > .05$. This means that there was no significant difference in the age distributions between the conditions. A small majority of the respondents were female (male: 44.7%, female 55.3%). A Pearson's chi-square test was performed to determine whether there was a difference in gender distribution between the twelve conditions. The chi-square test was statistically non-significant, $X^2(11) = 10.371$, $p > .05$. This means that there was no significant difference in gender distribution between the conditions. Furthermore, the majority of the participants were highly educated (81.3%). A reason for this could be the used method of sampling. Participants were collected by convenience sampling, in which respondents are selected due to their convenient accessibility to the researcher (e.g. family, friends, fellow students). Because the author herself studies at a university, it is not unexpected that many participants were highly educated students as well. A one-way analysis of variance was executed in order to see the differences in education distributions between all conditions. The test was statistically non-significant, $F(11) = 1.542$, $p > .05$. This means that there was no significant difference in education level between the conditions. See table 4 for an extended overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4; Demographics participants.

Measure	*Item*	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Age	18-24	223	74.3
	25-34	49	16.3
	35-44	6	2.0
	45-54	15	5.0
	55-65	7	2.3
Gender	Male	134	44.7
	Female	166	55.3
Education	High school	31	10.3
	MBO	25	8.3
	HBO	109	36.3
	WO	135	45.0

Besides demographic characteristics of the respondents, the survey also contained questions about their Instagram usage. A large proportion of the participants (63,3%) uses Instagram. Most of these Instagram users use the app several times a day (46.8%) or daily (32.6%). Furthermore, 37.9% of the participants that use Instagram have been a member for over 36 months. A Pearson's chi-square test was performed to determine whether there was a difference in the distribution of being a member of Instagram or not between the twelve conditions. The chi-square test was statistically non-significant, X^2 (11) = 8.576, p > .05. This means that there was no significant difference in Instagram users between the conditions. See table 5 for an extended overview of the Instagram usage of the participants.

Table 5; Instagram usage.

Measure	*Item*	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
General Instagram use	Yes	190	63,3
	No	110	36,7
Start Instagram use	Shorter than 3 months	1	0.5
	3 – 6 months	8	4.2
	7 – 12 months	15	7.9
	13 – 18 months	25	13.2
	19 – 24 months	28	14.7
	25 - 30 months	28	14.7
	31 – 36 months	13	6.8
	Longer than 36 months	72	37.9
Regular Instagram use	Several times a day	88	46.8
	Daily	61	32.6
	Several times a week	17	9.8
	Weekly	24	7.4
	Monthly	2	1.1
	Less than monthly	5	2.6

3.5. Measurements

The following constructs were measured in this study: brand trust, perceived quality, perceived price, source credibility and influencer homophily. Most of the items in the questionnaire were adopted from previous studies were reviewed to fit in this study. Furthermore, all constructs were measured on a 7-point scale. Additionally, a factor analysis was conducted in order to find the underlying structures of the construct influencer homophily. The results of the factor analysis were included in the reliability analysis, which discusses the reliability of all constructs.

Brand trust (6 items)

For this study, a combination of the brand trust scales developed by Lau & Lee (1999) and McKnight, Choudhury & Kacmar (2002) is used. An example of a question measuring brand trust

is: 'I consider Bertolli to be sincere'. The items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha of the 6 items was very good (α = .85).

Perceived quality (4 items)

In order to measure the perceived quality of the product, a scale developed by Dodds et al. (1991) was used. This scale consists of 4 items. The value of coefficient alpha for this scale is .86. An example of a question is: 'this product would seem to be durable', on which participants can answer on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Perceived price

Based on van Rompay & Pruyn (2011), price expectations were measured by asking participants to indicate what they think the average price (in euro cents) will be if the product was presented at Dutch supermarkets.

Source credibility (15 items)

To measure the role of source credibility, a scale developed by Ohanian (1990) was used. Source credibility was measured in three dimensions as proposed by Ohanian (1990): expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness. This scale was created to measure the effect of celebrity endorsers and assess the impact of each component. It has proven to be reliable with a coefficient higher than 0.8 for all three subsets. The scale consists of 15 semantic differentials items to measure perceived expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness and has five items for each construct. An example of a question measuring expertise could be: "please rate the Instagram user on the following dimensions: knowledgeable – unknowledgeable". Participants responded on a seven-point semantic differential scale. Cronbach's alpha of the 15 items was high (α = .92). The value of coefficient alpha was also calculated for the three sub dimensions. Attractiveness (α = .87), trustworthiness (α = .91) and expertise (α = .91) all scored very good.

Influencer homophily (17 items)

The scales consist of several questions measuring similarity and connectedness with the influencer. The scale was based on existing scales of Bruhn, Schoenmüller, Schäfer, & Heinrich (2012), Craig & Gustafson (1998), Lee & Robbins (1995) and Peetz (2012). Example of questions are: "I can identify with the influencer" and "I feel distant from the influencer". Participants answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Overall, the Cronbach's alpha of the 17 items was good (α = .88).

In order to find the underlying structures of the variable influencer homophily, a factor analysis was conducted. Before conducting the actual factor analysis, two tests were conducted to in order to verify that a factor analysis is appropriate for this study: the Kaiser-Meyers-Olkin

(KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Barlett's test of sphericity . The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is .86. This indicates a good adequacy to use the data in a factor analysis. Furthermore, the Barlett's test of sphericity showed a significance level of <.001. This is an excellent score for conducting a factor analysis.

Based on a principal component analysis with varimax rotation, three components can be distinguished from the influencer homophily scale. These components had eigenvalues above the Kaiser's criterion of 1 and explained for 55,01% of the variance. Table 6 shows the rotated component matrix which presents the factor loadings for each variable onto each factor. Items with factor loadings below .40 were intentionally removed from the table in order to present an output that is better readable. In this analysis, each item has a relatively strong loading on one factor (target loading: > .4) and relatively small loadings on other factors (cross-loadings: < .3). The questions that load highly on component 1 all relate to how similar the influencer and the participant are. Therefore, this component is labeled similarity. The questions that load highly on component 2 relate to the authenticity of the influencer, therefore, this components is labeled authenticity. And finally, all questions that load highly on component 3 relate to the integrity of the influencer. Consequently, component three is labeled as integrity. In conclusion, the factor analysis showed that the scale could be divided in three components: similarity (α = .86), authenticity (α = .78), and integrity (α = .77).

Table 6; Rotated Component Matrix of Principal Component Matrix.

Items	*Components*		
	1	*2*	*3*
The influencer and I are similar	.873		
I have a lot in common with the influencer	.839		
I can identify with the influencer	.811		
The influencer and I share similar viewpoints	.712		
I feel distant from the influencer	.665		
The influencer feels close to me	.616		
I feel disconnected from the influencer	.485		
The influencer stands out compared to other influencers		.734	
The influencer is unique		.696	
The influencer stays true to himself		.669	
The influencer can be trusted		.627	
The influencer is different from all other influencers		.570	
The influencer would not lie to me		.506	
The influencer is hypocrite		.401	
The influencer gets paid to promote this product			.852
The influencer is commercial			.835
The influencer acts out of self interest			.667

Manipulation checks

Manipulation checks were executed in order to confirm if the stimuli were perceived by the participants as expected, consistent with the results derived from the pre-test. To check the number of followers, followees and likes, participants were asked whether they think the influencer has a very small (=1) versus very large (=7) number of followers, followees and likes.

3.5.1. Reliability

The survey contained different constructs in accordance with the research question and hypotheses. Cronbach's α scores were calculated to determine the reliability of the constructs of the total sample (N= 300). All constructs have alpha scores above .77, this indicates an acceptable level of reliability. Table 7 shows the reliability scores of the constructs included in this research.

Table 7; Cronbach's alpha of the research constructs.

Construct	*No. of items*	*Cronbach's a*
Brand trust	6	0.85
Perceived quality	4	0.86
Source credibility	15	0.92
-Attractiveness	5	0.87
-Trustworthiness	5	0.91
-Expertise	5	0.91
Influencer homophily	17	0.88
-Similarity	7	0.86
-Authenticity	7	0.78
-Integrity	3	0.77

4. Results

In this chapter the results of the experiment are presented. First, the manipulation checks which were used to confirm stimulus validity are discussed. Second, the mean scores of all constructs will be discussed. After that, statistical analyses regarding the main and interaction effects for supporting the hypotheses are discussed. Furthermore, the role of source credibility and influencer homophily is explained. In addition, differences in the results of Instagram users and non-users will be discussed. This chapter ends with an overview of all accepted and rejected hypotheses.

4.1. Manipulation check

A manipulation check was conducted in order to ensure that the independent variables micro vs macro, followees and likes were effectively manipulated. The participants had to indicate whether they thought the influencer had a very small or large number of followers, followees and likes. This was measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (small) to 7 (large). To investigate the effectiveness of the manipulations in the main study, a between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) and two independent sample t-tests were performed.

The manipulation of the independent variable micro vs. macro was correctly perceived. The ANOVA revealed a significant effect for the perception of micro, meso and macro influencers $F(2) = 41.372$, $p = <.01$. As expected, participants indicated that the micro influencer ($M = 4.64$, $SD = 1.57$) had less followers than a meso ($M = 5.81$, $SD = 0.94$) or macro ($M = 6.03$, $SD = 0.82$) influencer. When specifically looking at the difference between meso and macro, an independent sample t-test showed that the difference in means is marginally significant, $t(298) = 1.807$, $p = .07$.

The manipulation of number of followees was checked with an independent sample t-test. The influencers with a low number of followees ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.44$) were perceived as having less followees than an influencer with a high number of followees ($M = 4.70$, $SD = 1.50$). This difference proves to be significant, $t(298) = 12.08$, $p = <.01$. Furthermore, the manipulations of the number of likes were tested with an independent sample t-test as well. A post with a low number of likes ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 1.76$) was perceived as having less likes than a post with a high number of likes ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.44$). This difference also proves to be significant, $t(298) = 4.191$, $p = <.01$. Based on the results of the manipulation check tests, it can be concluded that the manipulation checks in the main study were successful.

4.2. Mean comparison of the constructs

Presented in table 8, are the mean and standard deviation values for the research constructs across the twelve conditions ($N = 300$). Table 8 shows that the highest score for brand trust ($M =$

4.78, SD = 0.68) was given for a micro influencer with a high number of followees and a low number of likes. In the same condition the highest mean score for perceived quality was found (M = 5.04, SD = 0.81). However, a macro influencer with a low number of followees and a low number of likes had the highest mean score for perceived price (M = 5.96, SD = 1.32). Later, it will be determined whether the differences in mean scores are statistically significant or not.

Table 8; Mean comparison and standard deviation for research constructs.

		Low likes						**High likes**					
		Micro		**Middle**		**Macro**		**Micro**		**Middle**		**Macro**	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Low followees	*Brand trust*	4.59	0.68	4.46	0.75	4.48	1.07	4.34	0.85	4.49	0.95	4.52	0.68
	Perceived quality	5.03	0.82	4.64	0.77	4.99	1.15	4.65	1.13	4.95	0.97	4.86	0.92
	Perceived price	5.37	1.47	5.53	1.10	5.96	1.32	5.60	1.29	5.78	1.09	5.72	1.21
High followees	*Brand trust*	4.78	0.68	4.43	0.67	4.19	1.00	4.48	1.14	4.67	0.83	4.38	0.50
	Perceived quality	5.04	0.81	4.92	0.55	4.86	0.96	4.82	1.04	4.97	1.07	4.93	0.70
	Perceived price	5.08	0.86	5.73	1.26	5.49	0.90	5.70	1.17	5.17	1.11	5.80	1.13

4.3. Correlations

The Pearson correlation coefficient measures the strength and the direction of a linear relationship between two variables. In this paragraph, the correlation coefficients of five constructs will be discussed. When the correlation coefficient is close to one, there is a strong relationship between the two variables. This means that changes in one variable are strongly correlated with changes in the other variable. When the coefficient is close to zero, there is a weak relationship between the two variables. This means there is no linear correlation or a weak linear correlation.

The correlation analysis shows several significant positive relationships. Brand trust and perceived quality are positively correlated (Pearson's $r = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). This means that as brand trust increases in value, perceived quality also increases in value. The same applies for influencer homophily and source credibility (Pearson's $r = 0.64$, $p < 0.001$). Both of these values indicate a strong positive relationship. Moreover, a moderate positive relation exists between brand trust and source credibility (Pearson's $r = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$) and brand trust and influencer homophily (Pearson's $r = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, a weak relationship exists between perceived quality and source credibility (Pearson's $r = 0.20$, $p < 0.001$) and perceived quality and influencer homophily (Pearson's $r = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$). However, there is no significant correlation

between perceived price and all other constructs. This means that perceived price does not increase or decrease when another variable does. In conclusion, the findings suggest that the constructs brand trust, perceived quality, source credibility and influencer homophily are significantly positively related to each other.

Table 9; Pearson correlation coefficients of all constructs.

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Brand trust	1.00				
2. Perceived Quality	.64*	1.00			
3. Perceived price	.02	.01	1.00		
4. Source credibility	.40*	.20*	.-.08	1.00	
5. Influencer homophily	.45*	.35*	-.02	.64*	1.00

Notes: * = correlations are significant at p < .01.

4.4. Main effects and interaction effects: brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price

The main effects of the independent variables were measured using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The analysis was performed with micro vs. macro influencers (micro, meso and macro), followees (low, high) and likes (low, high) as the factors. Brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price were included as the dependent variables. Unfortunately, the test showed that there are no significant main effects for micro vs. macro influencers ($F(6,572) = 1.159$, $p = .327$). Therefore, hypotheses H1a, H1b and H1c are rejected. Moreover, the multivariate test showed that there is no significant main effect for the independent variable followees ($F(3,286) = .733$, $p = .533$). Therefore, hypothesis h2a, h2b and h2c are rejected. The test showed no significant main effect for likes ($F(3,286) = .367$, $p = .777$). Therefore hypotheses H3a, H3b and H3c are rejected. Furthermore, no significant interaction effects emerged. Table 10 shows the multivariate tests. The between-subject effects table per independent variable can be found in appendix C.

Table 10; Multivariate tests (Wilks'Lamda).

Construct	*F*	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Micro vs. macro	1.159	6	.327	.012
Followees	.733	3	.533	.008
Likes	.367	3	.777	.004
Micro vs. macro * Followees	.660	6	.682	.007
Micro vs. macro * Likes	1.432	6	.200	.015
Followees * Likes	.95	3	.963	.001
Micro vs. macro * Followees * Likes	1.269	6	.270	.013

4.5. Effects of source credibility and influencer homophily

Besides looking for main and interaction effects on the dependent variables, this study also focuses on source credibility and influencer homophily as mediators between the independent and the dependent variables. Baron and Kenny (1986) discussed four steps in establishing mediation: first, the independent variable must be correlated with the outcome. This steps establishes that there is an effect that may be mediated. Second, the independent variable must be correlated with the mediator. Third, the mediator must affect the dependent variable. Fourth, the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable should be zero when controlling for the mediator. If all four steps are met, the variable completely mediates the relationship. If step 4 is not met, partial mediation is indicated. The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed that there are no significant main effects. This means that step one cannot be met for all variables. In other words, there is no effect that may be mediated. However, because no significant main effects and interaction effects emerged from the multivariate analysis, this paragraph will take a closer look at the constructs source credibility and influencer homophily. It is hypothesized that the independent variables will have an effect on these constructs. Therefore, a multivariate test was performed with micro vs. macro influencers (micro, middle and macro), followees (low, high) and likes (low, high) as the factors. Source credibility and influencer homophily were included as the dependent variables. Furthermore a between subject analysis was performed to take a closer look at the results. Table 11 shows the multivariate analysis of source credibility and influencer homophily. Table 12 shows the main findings of the between-subject analysis. In appendix D you can find the complete tables.

Table 11; Multivariate analysis source credibility and influencer homophily.

Construct	*F*	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Micro vs. macro	1.874	4	.113	.013
Followees	.455	2	.635	.003
Likes	.897	2	.409	.006
Micro vs. macro * Followees	2.542	4	.039*	.017
Micro vs. macro * Likes	2.618	4	.034*	.018
Followees * Likes	2.116	2	.122	.015
Micro vs. macro * Followees * Likes	.200	4	.938	.001

Notes: * = significant at p < .05.

Table 12; Main findings of the between-subject analysis of source credibility and influencer homophily

		F	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Main effects					
Micro vs macro	Source credibility	2.867	2	.058***	.019
	- attractiveness	2.137	2	.120	.000
	- trustworthiness	.275	2	.759	.002
	- expertise	4.723	2	.010*	.031
Interaction effects					
Micro vs macro * followees	Source credibility	4.350	2	.014**	.029
	- attractiveness	4.506	2	.012**	.030
	- trustworthiness	2.933	2	.079	.018
	- expertise	2.318	2	.114	.015
Micro vs macro * likes	Source credibility	3.926	2	.021**	.027
	- attractiveness	1.563	2	.232	.010
	- trustworthiness	6.190	2	.005*	.036
	- expertise	1.573	2	.209	.011
	Homophily	4.303	2	.014**	.029
	- similarity	2.974	2	.049**	.021
	- authenticity	3.053	2	.013**	.030
	- integrity	1.756	2	.163	.013
Followees * likes	Homophily	4.055	1	.045**	.014
	- similarity	4.278	1	.037**	.015
	- authenticity	.500	1	.394	.003
	- integrity	1.051	1	.296	.004

Notes: * = significant at p < .01. ** = significant at p < .05. *** = significant at p <0.06.

4.5.1. Main effect: Micro vs. macro

The test on the between-subjects effects of the MANOVA shows that there is a marginally significant main effect for micro vs. macro on source credibility (F (2,288) = 2.867, p = 0.58). The descriptive results of the MANOVA showed that that the group which was confronted with a micro influencer (N = 97) gave the influencer a source credibility score of M = 4.20 (SD = .88). Participants that were confronted with a macro influencer gave the influencer a source credibility score of M = 4.47 (SD = .92). It should be noted that they rated the macro influencer as more credible. In this study, source credibility was measured by the use of three constructs: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. It is therefore interesting to see which construct has a leading role in the results. All three constructs were separately examined by use of an univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA results show that all three constructs received higher scores in the macro influencer conditions. However, the differences in mean scores are highest for the construct expertise. When examining the significance of the differences, it can be concluded that the means of expertise (F (2,297) = 4.723, p = 0.010) are significantly different from each other. However, the same conclusion cannot be drawn for the constructs attractiveness (F (2,297) = 2137, p = .120) and trustworthiness (F (2,297) = .275, p = .759). This indicates that using a macro influencer is more effective for influencer consumers' perception of expertise than for attractiveness or trustworthiness. The results of the between-subject effects test of the MANOVA, show that interaction effects were found for micro vs. macro and followees on source credibility (F (2,288) = 4.350, p = .014), micro vs. macro and likes on source credibility (F (2,288) = 3.926, p = .027), and influencer homophily (F (2,288) = 4.303, p = .014) and followees and likes on influencer homophily (F (1,288) = 4.55, p = .045).

4.5.2. Interaction effect: micro vs. macro and followees

The results of the between-subject effects test of the multivariate analysis of variance shows that an interaction effect was found for micro vs. macro and followees on source credibility (F (2,288) = 4.350, p = .014). The results of the descriptive statistics show that a macro influencer with a low number of followees is rated as most credible (M = 4.64, SD = .88), followed by a middle influencer with a high number of followees (M = 4.49, SD = .76). The lowest score for credibility is for a micro influencer with a low number of followees (M = 4.03, SD = .90), followed by a macro influencer with a high number of followees (M = 4.31, SD = .93). In order to take a more detailed look at the results, a univariate ANOVA test was conducted. First, the Levene's test shows that the assumption of homogeneity of the variances can be rejected (F (5,294) = .787, p = .560). The interaction effect between micro vs. macro and followees on source credibility is visualized in Figure 2. Second, the univariate test on the interaction proves to be significant (F (2,294) = 3.991, p = .019). When taking a closer look at the three dimensions

of source credibility, the construct attractiveness appeared to have a leading role in the significance. Therefore, a univariate analysis of variance was conducted. The descriptive statistics of this analysis show that a macro influencer with a low number of followees was rated as most attractive (M = 4.98, SD = 1.12) and a micro influencer with a low number of followees as least attractive (M = 4.34, SD = 1.01). The ANOVA indicated that these differences were significant (F (2,294) = 4.154, p = .017). Simple effects analysis were used to further examine the interaction between micro vs. macro and followees. These analyses indicated that micro vs. macro has a statistically significant effect on source credibility when the number of followees is low (F(2,294) = 6.240, P = .002). However there is no significant effect of micro vs. macro on source credibility when the number of followees is high (F2,294) = .635, p = .531). Furthermore, the number of followees has as statistically significant effect on source credibility when the influencer can be defined as a macro influencer (F(1,294) = 3.997, p = .047).

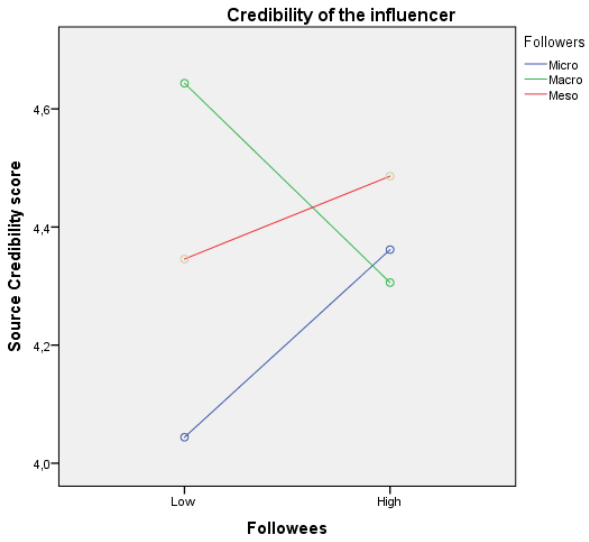


Figure 2; Interaction effect micro vs. macro and followees.

4.5.3. Interaction effect: micro vs. macro and likes

The results of the between-subject effects test of the MANOVA show that an interaction effect was found for micro vs. macro and likes on source credibility (F (2,288) = 3.926, p = .027) and influencer homophily (F (2,288) = 4.303, p = .014). First, source credibility is discussed. The descriptive statistics show that a macro influencer with a high number of likes is rated as most credible (M = 4.67, SD = .85), followed by a meso influencer with a low number of likes (M = 4.46, SD = .74). The lowest score for source credibility is for a micro influencer with a high number of likes (M = 4.11, SD = .94) followed by a macro influencer with a low number of likes (M = 4.24, SD = .95). In order to take a more detailed look at the results, a univariate ANOVA test was conducted. First, the Levene's test shows that the assumption of homogeneity of the variances can be rejected (F (5,294) = .574, p = .720).). The interaction effect between micro vs.

macro and likes on source credibility is visualized in Figure 3. Second, the ANOVA indicated that the differences were significant (F (2.294) = 3.764, p = .024). When taking a closer look at the three dimensions of source credibility, the construct trustworthiness appeared to have a leading role in this significance. Therefore, a univariate analysis of variance was conducted which focused on trustworthiness. Again, the descriptive statistics show that a macro influencer with a high number of likes received the highest score (M = 4.44, SD = 1.01) while a macro influencer with a low number of likes received the lowest score on trustworthiness (M = 3.80, SD = 1.33). The ANOVA indicated that results on trustworthiness were significant (F (2.294) = 5.240, p = .006). Simple effects analysis were used to further examine the interaction between micro vs. macro and likes. These analyses indicated that micro vs. macro has a statistically significant effect on source credibility when the number of likes is high (F(2,294) = 4.123, P = .003). However there is no significant effect of micro vs. macro on source credibility when the number of likes is low (F2,294) = .649, p = .404). Furthermore, likes has as statistically significant effect on source credibility when the influencer can be defined as a macro influencer (F(1,294) = 4.536, p = .012).

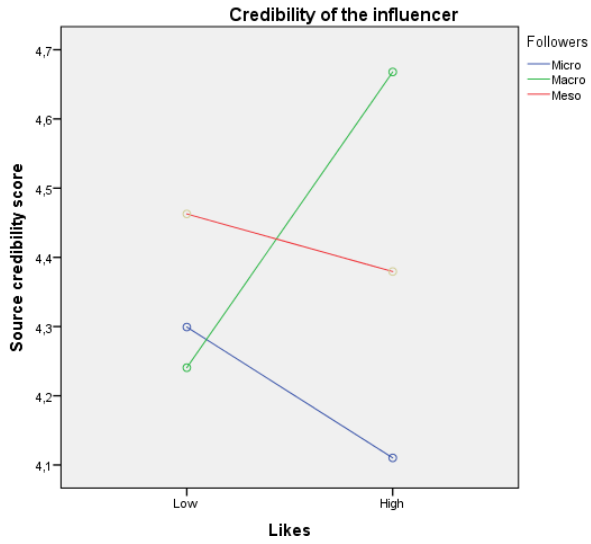


Figure 3; Interaction effect micro vs. macro and likes on source credibility.

An interaction effect on influencer homophily was found as well. The descriptive statistics show that a macro influencer with a high number of likes has the highest score on homophily (M = 3.45, SD = .65) followed by a meso influencer with a low number of likes (M = 3.34, SD = .79). A macro influencer with a low number of likes received the lowest score on homophily (M = 2.99, SD = .80) followed by a micro influencer with a high number of likes (M = 3.18, SD = .85). Again, a univariate ANOVA test was conducted to take a closer look at the results. The Levene's test shows that the assumption of homogeneity of the variances can be rejected (F (5,294) = 2.024, p = .075). The interaction effect between micro vs. macro and likes on influencer homophily is

visualized in Figure 4. The ANOVA indicated that the effects of micro vs. macro and likes on influencer homophily are significant (F (2,294) = 4.262, p = .015). Again, we take a closer look at the three dimensions of homophily: similarity, authenticity and integrity. It appears that similarity and authenticity play a leading role. Therefore, a univariate analysis of variance was conducted which focused on these two dimension. The effect on similarity proves to be marginally significant (F (2,294) = 3.013, p = .051) whereas the effect on authenticity proves to be significant (F (2,294) = 4.369, p = .013). Simple effects analysis were used to further examine the interaction between micro vs. macro and likes. These analyses indicated that micro vs. macro has a marginal significant effect on influencer homophily when the number of likes is high (F(2,294) = 2.897, P = .057). However there is no significant effect of micro vs. macro on influencer homophily when the number of likes is low (F2,294) = 1.909, p = .150). Furthermore, likes has as statistically significant effect on influencer homophily when the influencer can be defined as a macro influencer (F(1,294) = 4.536, p = .012).

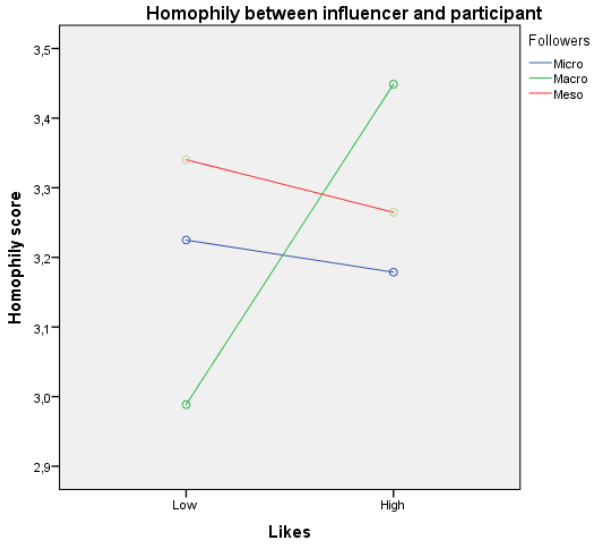


Figure 4; Interaction effect micro vs. macro and likes on influencer homophily.

4.5.4. Interaction effect: followees and likes

The results of the between-subject effects test of the MANOVA shows that an interaction effect was found for followees and likes on influencer homophily (F (1,288) = 4.55, p = .045). The descriptive statistics show that the combination of a high number of followees and a low number of likes received the lowest score on homophily (M = 3.15, SD = .76) followed by a low number of followees and a high number of likes (M = 3.17, SD = .70). In order to take a more detailed look at the results, a univariate ANOVA test was conducted. First, the Levene's test shows that the assumption of homogeneity of the variances can be rejected (F (3,296) = .655, p = .580). The interaction effect between followees and likes on influencer homophily is visualized in Figure 5.

Second, the ANOVA shows that the differences are marginally significant (F (1,269) = 3.849, p = .051). Again, we take a closer look at the three dimensions of homophily. It appears that similarity plays a leading role in the significance. The effect on similarity proves to be significant (F (2,296) = 4.147, p = .043). Simple effects analysis were used to further examine the interaction between followees and likes. These analyses indicated that followees has a significant effect on influencer homophily when the number of likes is high (F(1,296) = 4.504, P = .035). However there is no significant effect of followees on influencer homophily when the number of likes is low (F1,296) = .478, p = .490). Furthermore, likes has as statistically significant effect on influencer homophily when the number of followees is high (F(1,296) = 5.265, p = .022). There is no significant effect when number of followees is low (F(1,296) = .248, p = .619).

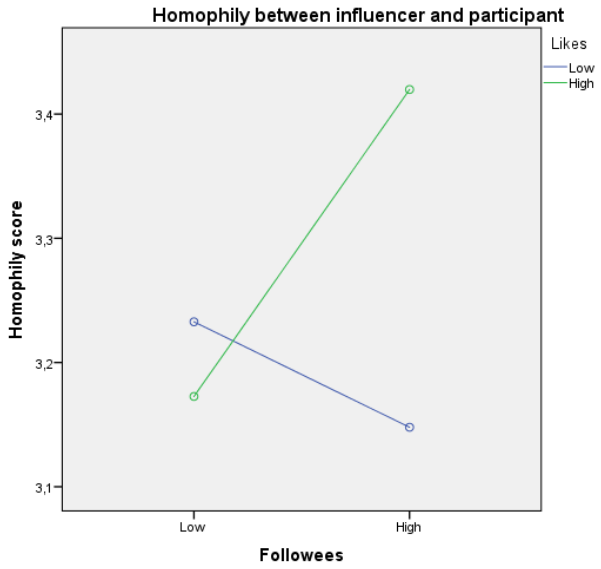


Figure 5; Interaction effect followees and likes on influencer homophily.

4.6. Differences between Instagram users and non-users

Since no main and interaction effects were found of the independent variables on the dependent variables, some extra tests were conducted. Because participants of the questionnaire were users and non-users of Instagram, the responses of Instagram users were analyzed to see if there were any differences. This paragraph will only discuss the results that differ from the results of the total sample. Table 13 shows the mean comparison between users (N = 190) and non-users (N = 110). Participants that do use Instagram score significantly higher on brand trust (t(298)= 3.174, p < .05) and perceived quality (t(298)= 3.187, p = < .05). This means Instagram users have higher brand trust (M = 4.59, SD = .85) towards Bertolli compared to non-users (M = 4.28, SD = .76), furthermore, Instagram users think the quality of the Bertolli olive oil is better (M = 5.01, SD = .90) compared to non-users (M = 4.67, SD = .90). Besides looking at the

differences on the dependent variables, the table shows the differences on the constructs influencer homophily and source credibility as well. Again, the differences between users and non-users prove to be significant for source credibility (t(298)= 4.564, p = <.001) and influencer homophily (t(298)= 3.408, p = .001).

Table 13; Mean comparison Instagram users and non-users.

	Instagram users		*Non-users*	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Brand trust	4.59	.85	4.28	.76
Perceived quality	5.01	.90	4.67	.90
Perceived price	5.61	1.10	5.53	1.31
Source credibility	4.53	.79	4.08	.90
Influencer homophily	3.36	.72	3.06	.74

4.6.1. Instagram users: main effects

The test on the between-subject effect of the MANOVA (see appendix E) indicates that there is a significant main effect for the number of followees on perceived price (F(1,178)=5.487, p = .020). The descriptive results showed that the group which was confronted with an influencer with a low number of followees (N=88) were willing to pay M = €5,80 for a bottle of Bertolli olive oil (SD = 1.13). When observing the group that was confronted with an influencer with a high number of followees (N = 102), it can be noticed that they were inclined to pay less for the same product (M = 5.45, SD – 1.04). This effect cannot be found when analyzing the responses of non-users or the total sample. Furthermore the test shows that there is a marginally significant main effect for micro vs. macro on perceived price as well (F(2,178)= 2.899, p = .058). The descriptive results showed that the group which was confronted with a macro influencer were willing to the most for a bottle of Bertolli olive oil (M = 5.83, SD = 1.05). Participants that were confronted with a meso influencer were prepared pay the lowest amount of money for the same product (M = 5.44, SD = .93). This effect cannot be found when analyzing the responses of non-users or the total sample.

4.6.2. Instagram users: source credibility and influencer homophily

Besides looking for main and interaction effects on the dependent variables, this section also analyses the effects on source credibility and influencer homophily. The results of the between-subject effects test of the MANOVA (see appendix F) shows that a main effect was found for micro vs. macro on source credibility (F(2,178) = 4.370, p = .014). This effect was found as well when analyzing the total sample. Again, all three constructs of source credibility were separately examined by use of an univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). This analysis shows that the construct expertise has a leading role (F(2,178) = 6.779, P = .001) whereas in the total sample, the construct trustworthiness had a leading role. Participants indicated that a macro influencer

(N = 61) had more expertise (M = 4.72, SD = .88) than a micro influencer (N = 64, M = 4.18, SD= 1.14). This indicates that using a macro influencer is more effective for influencing consumers' perception of expertise than for attractiveness or trustworthiness.

4.7. Results hypotheses

	Hypotheses	*Results*
H1a	A product endorsement of a micro influencer results in higher brand trust compared to an endorsement of a macro influencer	Rejected
H1b	A product endorsement of a macro influencer results in a higher perceived quality compared to an endorsement of a micro influencer	Rejected
H1c	A product endorsement of a macro influencer results in a higher perceived product price compared to an endorsement of a micro influencer	Rejected
H2a	An influencer with high followees results in lower brand trust compared to an influencer with low followees	Rejected
H2b	An influencer with high followees results in lower perceived quality compared to an influencer with low followees	Rejected
H2c	An influencer with high followees results in lower perceived price compared to an influencer with low followees	Rejected
H3a	An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher brand trust compared to a post with a low number of likes	Rejected
H3b	An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher perceived quality compared to a post with a low number of likes	Rejected
H3c	An Instagram post with a high number of likes will result in higher perceived price compared to a post with a low number of likes	Rejected
H4a	Type of influencer (micro vs. macro) is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on source credibility.	Rejected
H4b	The number of followees is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on source credibility.	Rejected
H5a	Micro influencers have higher source credibility compared to macro influencers.	Accepted
H5b	An influencer with low followees has a higher source credibility compared to an influencer with high followees	Rejected

H6a	Type of influencer (micro vs. macro) is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on influencer homophily.	Rejected
H6b	The number of likes is expected to affect the dependent variables through its effect on influencer homophily.	Rejected
H7a	Micro influencers have higher perceived influencer homophily compared to macro influencers	Rejected
H7b	An Instagram post with lows likes has higher perceived influencer homophily compared to a post with high likes	Rejected

5. Discussion

The goal of this study was to explore the effects of social media influencers. In this chapter, the results of the study are discussed in relation to existing literature. In the following paragraphs, the theoretical implications and limitations from this research are discussed. Furthermore, suggestions for future research are provided.

5.1. Main findings

This paragraph discusses the main findings of the study. Using Instagram as research context, the goal was to investigate how influencers impact brand trust, perceived price and perceived quality and the role of source credibility and influencer homophily. The most important finding is that there were no significant effects on brand level, but only on influencer level. This means that the independent variables had an effect on the perception of the influencer and not on the perception of the brand. In conclusion, the results of this study do provide some practical guidelines for marketers who are interested in working with influencers. It proves that source credibility and influencer homophily are important for improving brand trust and perceived quality. Moreover, it shows that macro influencers are perceived as more credible than micro influencers. In the following sections, the results of this study will be discussed.

5.1.1. Brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price

It was expected that the number of followers an influencer has (micro, meso or macro) would have an effect on brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price. Several researchers have already studied the effects of followers. Bakhshi et al. (2014) found that the number of followers (micro vs. macro) was the main driver of engagement on Instagram photos. According to Feng (2016) the number of followers, number of followees, and the number of tweets one has on Twitter contributes to an individual's opinion leadership status. Unfortunately, this study showed no effects of the number of followers on brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price. Therefore, hypotheses 1a, 1b and 1c were rejected.

Besides focusing on micro vs. macro influencers, this study also aimed attention at the number of followees. A user with many followees is exposed to a large amount of information and is therefore able to read more opinions and experiences of others. However, some users follow others in the hopes of gaining more followers themselves. They follow others out of desperation, which makes their behavior appear to be superficial and insincere. 'Friending' a profuse amount of others may lead to negative evaluations about the profile owner. In this study, no significant main or interaction effects of the number of followees on the dependent variables were found. Therefore, hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c were rejected.

Furthermore, this study focused on likes as well. Liking helps users express their appreciation for the content and indicates that the user is interested in the object posted. Studies

show that individuals who view a post on Facebook with a high number of likes are more likely to have positive brand attitudes, involvement and purchase intention, than when the number of likes is low (Phua & Ahn, 2016). However, no significant effects of likes on the dependent variables were found in this study. Therefore, hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c were rejected.

An explanation for the missing significant effects on brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price could be the simulated research conditions. In the survey, participants were exposed to a screenshot of an influencers' Instagram profile and a product post. This means that participants were not able to scroll through the profile, read comments, browse the used hashtags, or search online for further information or details. This means a real situation was not represented, therefore, participants were not able to further explore the influencer or brand. Another explanation could be that fact that a fictional influencer was used. An important aspect of influencers is the bond they create with their followers. Influencer marketing is seen as an opportunity for brands because it uses the power of word-of-mouth through individuals that consumers already follow and admire. This connection gives influencers a unique authority (Jargalsaikhan, Korotina, & Pantelic, 2016). However, by using a fictional influencer, there was no prior bond between influencer and participant. This could have made it difficult for participants to judge the brand because they do not know the person that is endorsing the product, therefore, they might rely on their existing opinion on the brand. For future research, it is interesting to study 'real' influencers. It might be necessary to replicate the study in a experimental condition employing real stimuli to further confirm the external validity of the results. Besides, this study only illustrates a one-time exposure to the influencer. Future research can take a longitudinal approach to studying the impact of influencers and see if a bond is formed between influencer and viewer after repeated exposure and what the effects are of this relationship between consumer and influencer.

5.1.2. Source credibility

According to Ohanian (1991) source credibility is essential when selecting an influencer. Ohanian (1990) describes source credibility as: "a term commonly used to imply a communicator's positive characteristics that affect the receiver's acceptance of a message". Influencers are important sources of information, which makes their credibility valuable for a marketer. This study examined the relationship between source credibility and the dependent variables brand trust, perceived price and perceived quality. The results show that there is a positive correlation between source credibility and brand trust and source credibility and perceived quality. In other words, when source credibility increases, brand trust and perceived quality increase as well.

Furthermore, the results of this study show that macro influencers are perceived as more credible than micro influencers. Macro influencers score highest on all three aspects of source

credibility, especially on expertise. This means that macro influencers have higher perceived expertise compared to micro influencers. However, macro influencers are not seen as much more trustworthy than micro influencers. Mosteller, Donthu, Eroglu, Adaji, & Lauw (2014) explained how a source can score high on expertise, but low on trustworthiness. They claim that consumer's perception of trustworthiness will decrease when the expert's motive to share is questionable. In this case, consumers might suspect the macro influencers' intention to share since they can be seen as commercial sources. The construct integrity of the influencer homophily scale focused on this aspect of the influencer. This construct had no significant effect on the variable micro vs. macro, however, it should be noted that a micro influencer scored higher on integrity than a macro influencer. In conclusion, macro influencers have higher perceived expertise than micro influencers but do not score as high on trustworthiness, which might be caused by their motive to share.

Besides the effect of macro influencers on source credibility, the results show two interaction effects. First, an interaction effect was found for micro vs. macro and followees on source credibility. More specifically, micro vs. macro has an effect on source credibility when the number of followees is low. This means that the micro and macro influencers score equivalent on source credibility when the number of followees is high, but the scores are significantly different when the number of followees is low. Then, the macro influencer is perceived as more credible. In conclusion, the influencer with most positive followers-to-followees ratio was found most credible. It is likely that influencers with a positive ratio are perceived as more credible because their follower base does not solely consist of individuals that followed the influencer back after he or she started following them. If an influencer is interesting, people will follow him or her regardless.

Second, an interaction effect was found for micro vs. macro and likes on source credibility. More specifically, micro vs. macro has a significant effect on source credibility when the number of likes is high. This means that the micro and macro influencer score equivalent on source credibility when the number of likes is low, but the scores are significantly different when the. In conclusion, a high number of likes has a positive effect on the macro influencer, but not on the micro influencer. A reason could be that a high number of likes is expected for a macro influencer, but not for a micro influencer. Participants might have wondered how a micro influencer was able to get that many likes, whereas a high number of likes for a macro influencer might seem more natural since this person has many followers.

5.1.3. Influencer homophily

Furthermore, this study examined the relationship between influencer homophily and the dependent variables brand trust, perceived quality and perceived price. The results show that there is a positive correlation between influencer homophily and brand trust and influencer

homophily and perceived quality. This means that influencers that are perceived as similar to the viewer score higher on brand trust and perceived quality than influencers who viewers think is not similar to them.

It was hypothesized that an Instagram post with a low number of likes would have higher perceived influencer homophily compared to a post with a high number of likes. Instead, participants indicated that an influencer with a high number of likes was more comparable to them than an influencer with a low number of likes. This seems strange, since it was expected that ´regular´ consumers do not receive enormous amounts of likes on their Instagram page, and are therefore more similar to influencers with a low number of likes. An explanation could be that consumers may want to receive many likes themselves and therefore give an influencer with a high number of likes a higher score. They might fantasize about being popular on social media and therefore would want to feel similar to the macro influencer.

Additionally, the results show two interaction effects for influencer homophily. First, an interaction effect was found for micro vs. macro and likes on homophily. More specifically, the number of likes has a significant effect on influencer homophily when the influencer can be defined as a macro influencer. This means that homophily between consumers and a macro influencer is susceptible for the number of likes. A macro influencer with a low number of likes received the lowest score on homophily whereas a macro influencer with a high number of likes had the highest score on homophily. The number of likes did not have an effect on the homophily of a micro influencer. An explanation could be that a micro influencer already feels more similar to a consumer compared to a macro influencer. The macro influencer could be more susceptible for the number of likes because he or she feels less familiar to the consumer, therefore, consumers might search for other cues in order to rate the influencer on homophily.

Second, an interaction effect was found for the number of followees and likes on influencer homophily. The number of followees have an effect on influencer homophily when the number of likes is high. This means that an influencer with a low number of followees and one with high followees score equivalent on homophily when the number of likes is low, but the scores are significantly different when the number of likes is high. Then, an influencer with a high number of followees scores much higher on homophily.

5.1.4. Differences between Instagram users and non-users

Because participants of the questionnaire were users and non-users of Instagram, differences between the two groups were analyzed. The results show that Instagram users gave higher scores for brand trust, perceived quality, source credibility and influencer homophily. This means that, overall, users are more positive about an Instagram endorsement than non-users. Non-users might have a negative opinion about Instagram as a medium, since they do not use it, and can therefore be more negative about an influencers on Instagram.

When looking at the results of Instagram users, this study shows that the number of followees has an effect on the perceived product price. When an influencer with a low number of followees is promoting a product, participants are willing to pay more for the product compared to when the product is endorsed by an influencer with a high number of followees. An influencer with a low number of followees might be perceived as more exclusive since that person does not follow many others. This person pays attention to only a select group of people and does not follow others 'out of desperation' which makes him or her appear as more sincere. This feeling of 'exclusivity' might be the reason why participants are willing to pay more for the product.

Furthermore, participants are willing to pay more for a product when it is endorsed by a macro influencer compared to when it is endorsed by a micro influencer. A macro influencer can act as a cue for the advertising budget of the brand. A high advertising budget can indicate a higher product price because of the higher costs, which might explain the reason why participants would pay more for a product that is endorsed by a macro influencer.

5.2. Limitations

This research is offering some important insights on social media influencers, however, it also has some limitations. First of all, the results presented are limited to influencers on Instagram as a social media platform only. For future research it would be interesting to study the effects of influencers on other social media platforms as well. Second, the sampling frame confines to mainly technical university students. This may limit the generalizability of the results. For future research, the study could be replicated with a broader sampling frame and within several social media environments in order to increase the generalizability. Third, the results of this study are limited to the product category 'food'. Although a wide range of products is used for endorsement on Instagram, one product category might be better suited than the other. An examination of other product categories is interesting for future research. Furthermore, the survey was translated from English to Dutch. Although the accuracy of the translation was checked by two individuals that fluently speak English and Dutch, the translation might have caused some unintended translational errors.

Moreover, this study did not present a realistic Instagram situation where people are able to further investigate the influencer and brand. Participants were confronted with a static screenshot which might not have given them enough information. Besides, because a fictional influencer was used there was no existing bond between participant and influencer, which might have made it difficult for participants to judge the brand the influencer is endorsing. In order to measure the real effects of an influencer, future research could focus on real the followers of the Instagrammer, since they are the target group of the advertisement.

5.3. Practical implications

When selecting an influencer to work with, marketers should look at the credibility of the influencer. High credibility is positively related to brand trust and perceived quality. Marketers seeking to incorporate influencers into their marketing strategy should consider whether consumers think the influencer is credible since researchers provide evidence that credible sources are more persuasive than sources of low credibility (Dholakia & Sternthal, 1977; Erdogan, 1999; Ohanian, 1990). This study provides evidence that macro influencers are perceived as more credible than micro influencers. This might encourage marketers to collaborate with macro influencers. However, whether marketers want to work with a certain influencer might depend on the goals they have. Do you want to raise awareness within the general public or a specific targeted audience? Do you want to partner with an influencer that turned famous or a niche expert? Do you want to increase comments or views? These questions are crucial in determining the value influencers can offer a brand. Lately, it seems like a trend to get involved with micro influencers rather than with macro influencers. A problem can be the large social gap between famous influencers and regular people. But just because the use of micro influencers is on the rise, does not mean it is suited for every brand. Larger bands like Airbnb and L'oreal have found great successes with macro influencer marketing. It might therefore be better to look at what suits the brand better and the goals you have for a marketing campaign rather than only focusing on the reach of an influencer.

This study also shows a positive relationship between influencer homophily and the dependent variables brand trust and perceived quality. This means changes in brand trust and perceived quality can be made with an influencer that feels similar to the viewer. The more familiar an influencer feels to the consumer, the stronger the effects of the endorsement are. This means that collaborating with an influencer that is well known within the target group might cause viewers to experience high homophily and therefore have an effect on brand trust and perceived quality. However, future research into how homophily can impact consumers´ opinion on influencers is necessary.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

Future studies should continue to be conducted since literature on online influencer marketing on social media is scarce. Various suggestions for future research came up throughout the duration of this study. First, it is interesting to manipulate other important aspects of an influencers' account, such as comments, biography, hashtags, number of posts and tags, and measure their effects. It would be interesting to see if viewers are affected by negative comments, different types of biographies or the number of tags an influencer has. Moreover, the

sentiment of an endorsement is worth studying as well. If an influencer is negative about a certain product, will the viewers adapt their opinion of the brand?

Second, is it desirable to examine other constructs of interest. Future research could examine the potential impact of homophily on other constructs, such as intention to follow the influencers advice, intention to share the advice and brand attitudes. Furthermore, future research could focus on various categories of risks which consumers might experience whilst checking out social media influencers and their endorsements.

Third, the impact of sponsorship disclosure is definitely worth studying since the growing use of influencer marketing has raised some public policy concerns. Legislators in the U.S. and Europe try to increase consumers' awareness by forcing influencers to add an advertising characteristic to their content, for example in the form of a label 'advertisement' or 'sponsored' (Federal Trade Commission, 2015; Stichting Reclame Code, 2014). It is interesting to see whether these labels have an effect on, for example, brand trust or source credibility, because the inclusion of a sponsorship disclosure can help viewers understand the persuasive motive of the content and activate cognitive defenses (D'Astous & Chartier, 2000; Nebenzhal & Jaffe, 1998).

6. Literature

Aral, S., Muchnik, L., & Sundararajan, A. (2009). Distinguishing influence-based contagion from homophily-driven diffusion in dynamic networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, *106*(51), 21544–9. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.0908800106

Aral, S., & Walker, D. (2012). Identifying Influential and Susceptible Members of Social Networks. *Science*, *337*(6092), 337–41. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1215842

Armstrong, C. L., & McAdams, M. J. (2009). Blogs of Information: How Gender Cues and Individual Motivations Influence Perceptions of Credibility. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *14*(3), 435–456. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2009.01448.x

Bachouche, R. (2016). Micro-Influencers: effectieve optie voor je influencer marketing | Adformatie. Retrieved September 15, 2016, from http://www.adformatie.nl/blog/micro-influencers-effectieve-optie-voor-je-influencer-marketing

Bakhshi, S., Shamma, D. A., & Gilbert, E. (2014). Faces engage us: photos with faces attract more likes and comments on Instagram. In *Proceedings of the 32nd annual ACM conference on Human factors in computing systems - CHI '14* (pp. 965–974). New York, New York, USA: ACM Press. https://doi.org/10.1145/2556288.2557403

Ballantine, P. W., & Martin, B. A. S. (2005). Forming Parasocial Relationships in Online Communities Forming Parasocial Relationships in Online Communities. *Advances in Consumer Research*, *32*(32), 197–201. Retrieved from http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/9073/volumes/v32/NA-32

Biswas, D., Biswas, A., & Das, N. (2006). The differential effects of celebrity and expert endorsements on consumer risk perceptions. *Journal of Advertising*, *35*(2), 17–31.

Bruhn, M., Schoenmüller, V., Schäfer, D., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand Authenticity: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Its Conceptualization and Measurement Brand Authenticity: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Its Conceptualization and Measurement. *Advances in Consumer Research*, *40*(40), 567–576. Retrieved from http://www.acrwebsite.org/volumes/1013106/volumes/v40/NA-40

Cha, M., Haddadi, H., Benevenuto, F., & Gummadi, K. P. (2010). Measuring User Influence in Twitter: The Million Follower Fallacy. In *Fourth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*. Washington D.C., USA.

Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. (2001). The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty. *The Journal of Marketing*. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.fairfield.edu/business-facultypubs/8

Collins, A. M., & Loftus, E. F. (1975). A Spreading-Activation Theory of Semantic Processing. *Psychological Review*, *82*(6), 407–428. https://doi.org/10.1037//0033-295X.82.6.407

Craig, S. B., & Gustafson, S. B. (1998). Perceived leader integrity scale: An instrument for assessing employee perceptions of leader integrity. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *9*(2), 127–145. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(98)90001-7

Cresci, S., Di Pietro, R., Petrocchi, M., Spognardi, A., & Tesconi, M. (2015). Fame for sale: efficient detection of fake Twitter followers. *Decision Support Systems*, *80*, 56–71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dss.2015.09.003

D'Astous, A., & Chartier, F. (2000). A Study of Factors Affecting Consumer Evaluations and Memory of Product Placements in Movies. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, *22*(2), 31–40. https://doi.org/10.1080/10641734.2000.10505106

Dholakia, R. R., & Sternthal, B. (1977). Highly Credible Sources: Persuasive Facilitators or Persuasive Liabilities? *Source Journal of Consumer Research*, *3*(4), 223–232. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/2489608

Dodds, W. B., Monroe, K. B., & Grewal, D. (1991). Effects of Price, Brand, and Store Information on Buyers' Product Evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *28*(3), 307. https://doi.org/10.2307/3172866

Donath, J., & Boyd, D. (2004). Public displays of connection. *BT Technology Journal*, *22*(4), 71–82. https://doi.org/10.1023/B:BTTJ.0000047585.06264.cc

Doney, P. M., & Cannon, J. P. (1997). An Examination of the Nature of Trust in Buyer-Seller Relationships. *Journal of Marketing*, *61*(2), 35–51. https://doi.org/10.2307/1251829

Doney, P. M., Cannon, J. P., & Mullen, M. R. (1998). Understanding the Influence of National Culture on the Development of Trust. *The Academy of Management Review*, *23*(3), 601–620. https://doi.org/10.2307/259297

Erdogan, B. Z. (1999). Celebrity Endorsement: A Literature Review. *Journal of Marketing Management*, *15*(4), 291–314. https://doi.org/10.1362/026725799784870379

Eyal, K., & Rubin, A. M. (2003). Viewer Aggression and Homophily, Identification, and Parasocial Relationships With Television Characters. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *47*(1), 77–98. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem4701_5

Federal Trade Commission. (2015). The FTC's Endorsement Guides: What People Are Asking | Federal Trade Commission. Retrieved October 17, 2016, from https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/ftcs-endorsement-guides-what-people-are-asking#social

Feng, Y. (2016). Are you connected? Evaluating information cascades in online discussion about the #RaceTogether campaign. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *54*, 43–53. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.07.052

Frederick, E. L., Hoon 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*(4), 481–502. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1123/ijsc.5.4.481

Gerlitz, C., & Helmond, A. (2013). The like economy: Social buttons and the data-intensive web. *New Media & Society*, *15*(8), 1348–65. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444812472322

Grewal, D., Monroe, K. B., & Krishnan, R. (1998). The effects of price-comparison advertising on buyers' perceptions of acquisi. *Journal of Marketing*, *62*(2), 46–59. https://doi.org/10.2307/1252160

Huberman, B. A., Romero, D. M., & Wu, F. (2008). Social Networks that Matter: Twitter Under the Microscope. *First Monday*, *14*(1). https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1313405

Jang, J. Y., Han, K., Shih, P. C., & Lee, D. (2015). Generation Like. In *Proceedings of the 33rd Annual ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems - CHI '15* (pp. 4039–4042). New York, New York, USA: ACM Press. https://doi.org/10.1145/2702123.2702555

Jargalsaikhan, T., Korotina, A., & Pantelic, D. (2016). *Attitudes towards Instagram micro-celebrities and their influence on consumers' purchasing decisions*. Jönköping University. Retrieved from http://www.diva-portal.se/smash/get/diva2:950526/FULLTEXT01.pdf

Jin, X., Wang, C., Luo, J., Yu, X., & Han, J. (2011). LikeMiner. In *Proceedings of the 17th ACM SIGKDD international conference on Knowledge discovery and data mining - KDD '11* (p. 753). New York, New York, USA: ACM Press. https://doi.org/10.1145/2020408.2020528

Kahle, L. R., & Homer, P. M. (1985). Physical Attractiveness of the Celebrity Endorser: A Social Adaptation Perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *11*(4), 954–961. https://doi.org/10.1086/209029

Kapitan, S., & Silvera, D. H. (2015). From digital media influencers to celebrity endorsers: attributions drive endorser effectiveness. *Marketing Letters*, *27*, 553–567. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11002-015-9363-0

Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Brand Equity. *Journal of Marketing*, *57*(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.2307/1252054

Kirmani, A., & Wright, P. (1989). Money Talks: Perceived Advertising Expense and Expected Product Quality. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *16*(3), 344–353. https://doi.org/10.1086/209220

Lau, G. T., & Lee, S. H. (1999). Consumers' Trust in a Brand and the Link to Brand Loyalty. *Journal of Market Focused Management*, *4*(4), 341–370. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1009886520142

Lee, J. E., & Watkins, B. (2016). YouTube vloggers' influence on consumer luxury brand perceptions and intentions. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(12), 5753–5760. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.171

Lee, R. M., & Robbins, S. B. (1995). Measuring belongingness: The Social Connectedness and the

Social Assurance scales. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *42*(2), 232–241. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.42.2.232

Markerly. (2016). Instagram Marketing: Does Influencer Size Matter? – Markerly Blog. Retrieved September 10, 2016, from http://markerly.com/blog/instagram-marketing-does-influencer-size-matter/

Marsh, C., Blackburn, D., & Calderbank, C. F. (1985). Back on the Bandw Polls on Public Op The possibility of predictions affecting outcomes in the provided the meat for some elegant theoretical articles by. *British Journal of Political Science*, *15*(15), 51–74. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/193747

McCroskey, L., McCroskey, J., & Richmond, V. (2006). Analysis and Improvement of the Measurement of Interpersonal Attraction and Homophily. *Communication Quarterly*, *54*(1), 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370500270322

McKnight, D. H., Choudhury, V., & Kacmar, C. (2002). Developing and Validating Trust Measures for e-Commerce: An Integrative Typology. *Information Systems Research*, *13*(3), 334–359. https://doi.org/10.1287/isre.13.3.334.81

Mediakix. (2016). Instagram Marketing Case Study: Hawaii's Tourism Campaign. Retrieved September 14, 2016, from http://mediakix.com/2016/05/instagram-marketing-case-study-hawaii-tourism-campaign/#gs.K7unDsk

Mosteller, J., Donthu, N., Eroglu, S., Adaji, I., & Lauw, H. (2014). The fluent online shopping experience. *Journal of Business Research*, *67*(11), 2486–2493. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2014.03.009

Nebenzhal, I. D., & Jaffe, E. D. (1998). Ethical Dimensioins of Advertising Executions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *17*(7), 805–815. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1005850812845

Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and Validation of a Scale to Measure Celebrity Endorsers' Perceived Expertise, Trustworthiness, and Attractiveness. *Journal of Advertising*, *19*(3), 39–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1990.10673191

Peetz, T. B. (2012). *Celebrity Athlete Endorser Effectiveness: Construction and Validation of a Scale*. University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Retrieved from http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations

Phua, J., & Ahn, S. J. (2016). Explicating the "like" on Facebook brand pages: The effect of intensity of Facebook use, number of overall "likes", and number of friends' "likes" on consumers' brand outcomes. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, *22*(5), 544–559. https://doi.org/10.1080/13527266.2014.941000

Pulvirent, S. (2015). How Daniel Wellington Made a $200 Million Business Out of Cheap Watches - Bloomberg. Retrieved September 15, 2016, from http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-07-14/how-daniel-wellington-made-a-

200-million-business-out-of-cheap-watches

Romero, D. M., Galuba, W., Asur, S., & Huberman, B. A. (2011). Influence and passivity in social media. In *Proceedings of the 20th international conference companion on World wide web - WWW '11* (pp. 113–114). New York, New York, USA: ACM Press. https://doi.org/10.1145/1963192.1963250

Rompay, van, T. J. L., & Pruyn, A. T. H. (2011). When Visual Product Features Speak the Same Language: Effects of Shape-Typeface Congruence on Brand Perception and Price Expectations*. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, *28*(4), 599–610. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5885.2011.00828.x

Roy, A. (2015). *State of influencer engagement 2015*. Retrieved from https://www.launchmetrics.com/resources/whitepapers/the-state-of-influencer-engagement-2015

Rubin, A. M., Perse, E. M., & Powell, R. A. (1985). Loneliness, Parasocial interaction, and Local Television News Viewing. *Human Communication Research*, *12*(2), 155–180. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1985.tb00071.x

Ruef, M., Aldrihc, H. E., & Carter, N. M. (2004). The Structure of Founding Teams: Homophily, Strong Ties, and Isolation among U.S. Entrepreneurs. *American Sociological Review*, *69*(2), 297–297. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900208

Stichting Reclame Code. (2014). Stichting reclame code: Reclamecode Social Media (RSM). Retrieved October 17, 2016, from https://www.reclamecode.nl/nrc/pagina.asp?paginaID=289 &zoekTerm=blogs&markeerzoekterm=blogs&exact=False&deel=2#Eerste

Suh, B., Hong, L., Pirolli, P., & Chi, E. H. (2010). Want to be Retweeted? Large Scale Analytics on Factors Impacting Retweet in Twitter Network. In *2010 IEEE Second International Conference on Social Computing* (pp. 177–184). IEEE. https://doi.org/10.1109/SocialCom.2010.33

Sztompka, P. (1999). *Trust: a sociological theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tashakova, O. (2016). Why micro-influencers matter most - Khaleej Times. Retrieved September 15, 2016, from http://www.khaleejtimes.com/business/local/why-micro-influencers-matter-most

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

Tong, S. T., Van Der Heide, B., Langwell, L., & Walther, J. B. (2008). Too Much of a Good Thing? The Relationship Between Number of Friends and Interpersonal Impressions on Facebook. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *13*(3), 531–549.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2008.00409.x

Weibel, D., Wissmath, B., & Groner, R. (2008). Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media How Gender and Age Affect Newscasters' Credibility—An Investigation in Switzerland How Gender and Age Affect Newscasters' Credibility— An Investigation in Switzerland. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, *523*(3), 466–484. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838150802205801

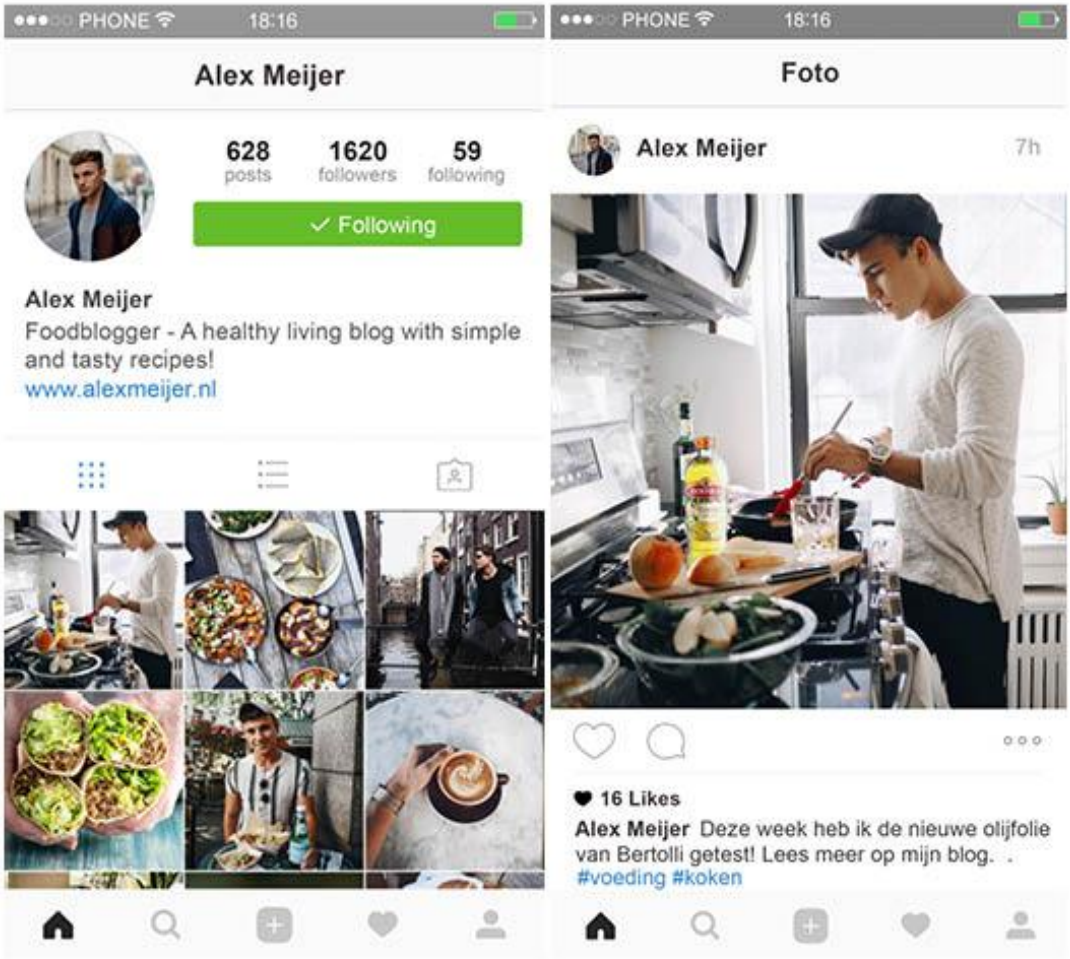
Williams, D. (2006). On and Off the 'Net: Scales for Social Capital in an Online Era. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *11*(2), 593–628. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.00029.x

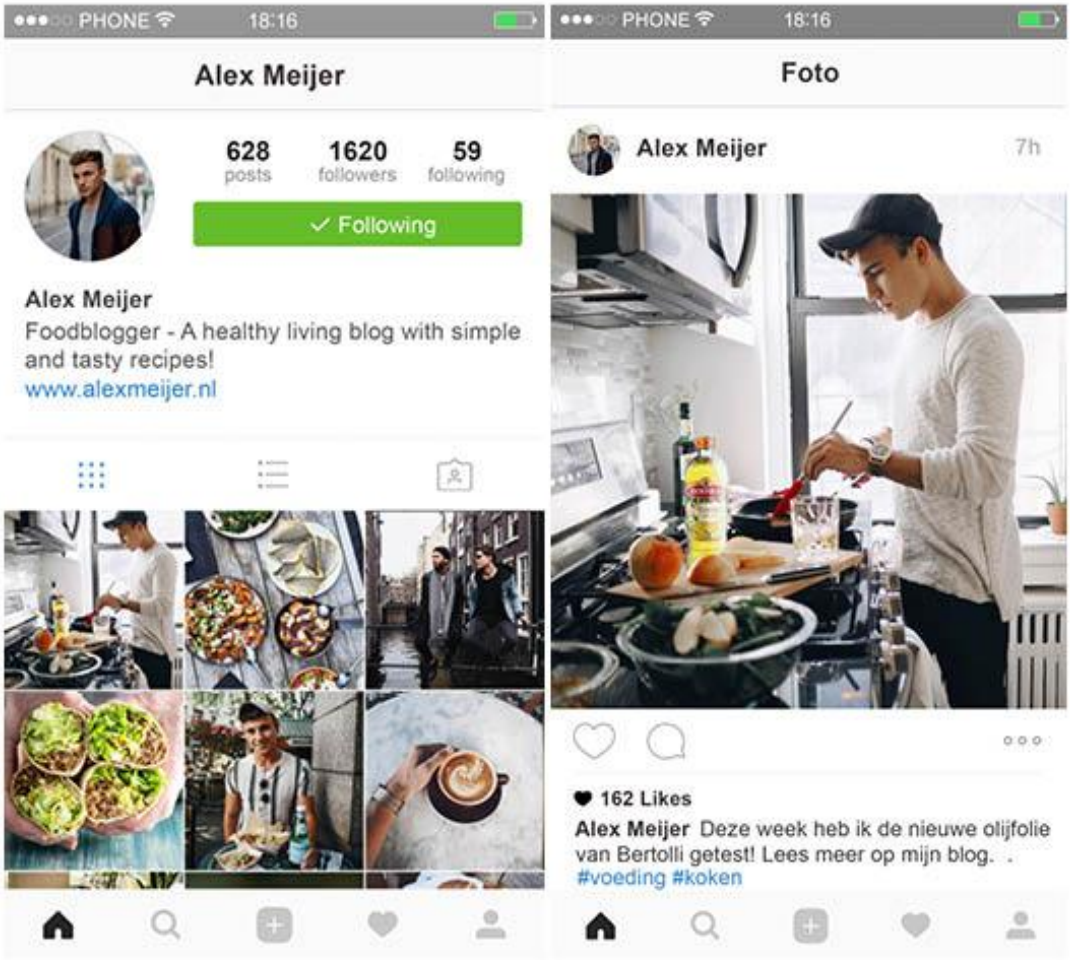
Wong, K. (2014). The Explosive Growth Of Influencer Marketing And What It Means For You. Retrieved October 11, 2016, from http://www.forbes.com/sites/kylewong/2014/09/10/the-explosive-growth-of-influencer-marketing-and-what-it-means-for-you/#379ee315595f

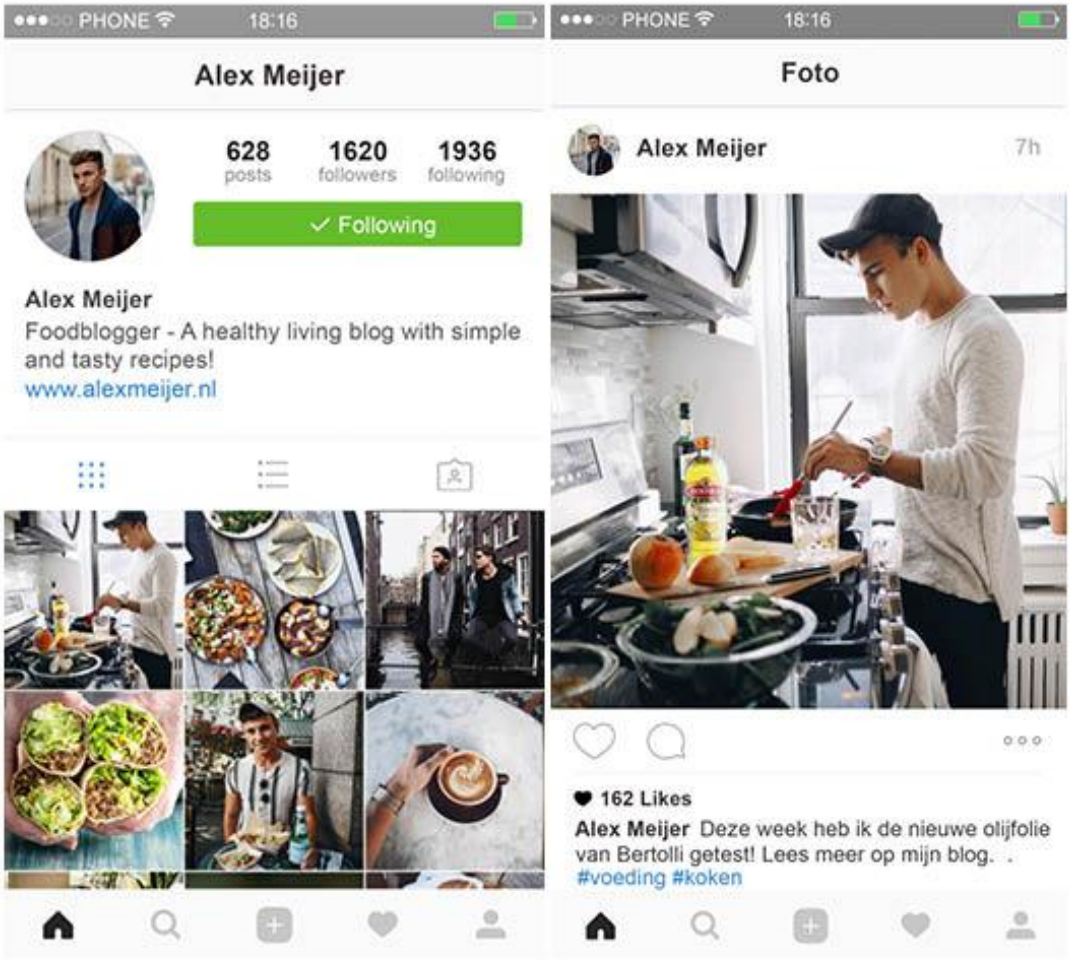
Yoganarasimhan, H. (2012). Impact of social network structure on content propagation: A study using YouTube data. *Quantitative Marketing and Economics*, *10*(1), 111–150. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11129-011-9105-4

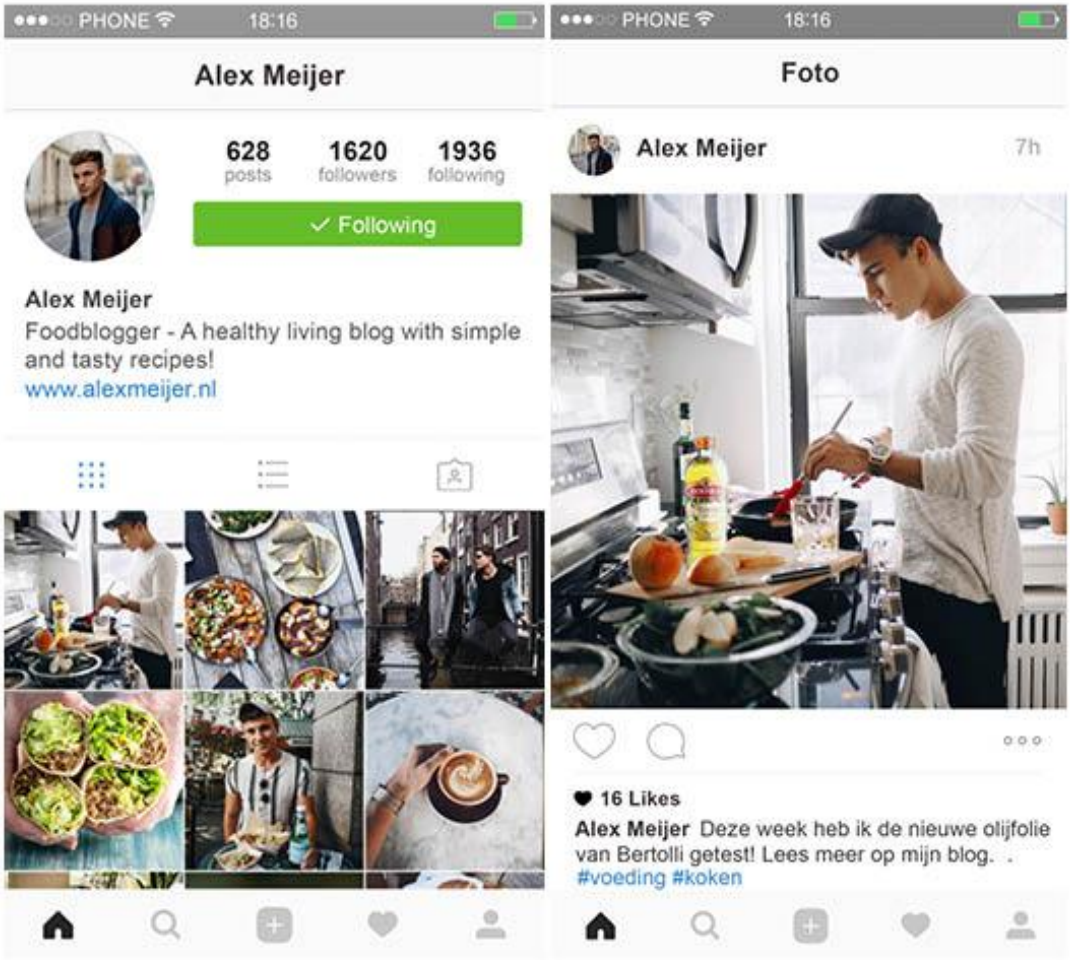
Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, *52*(3), 2–22. https://doi.org/10.2307/1251446

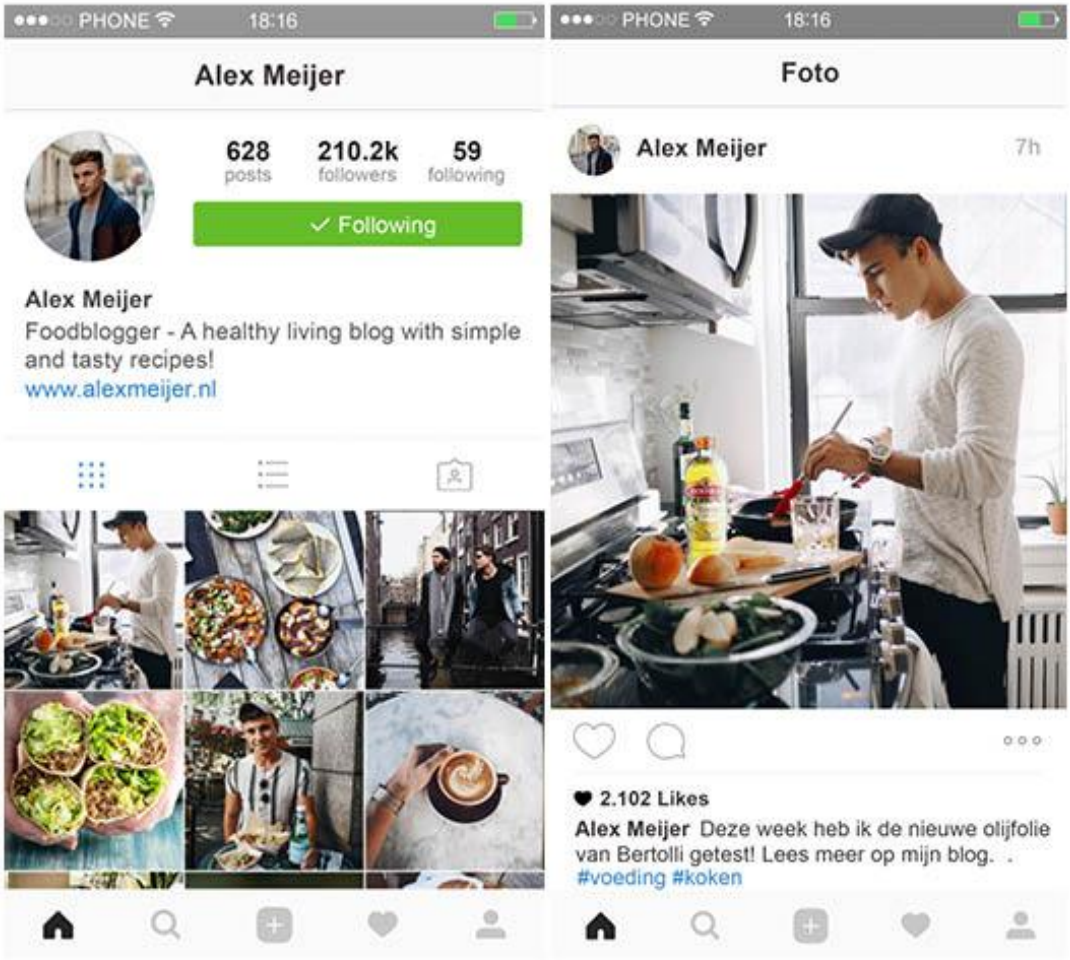
Appendix A: Stimulus material

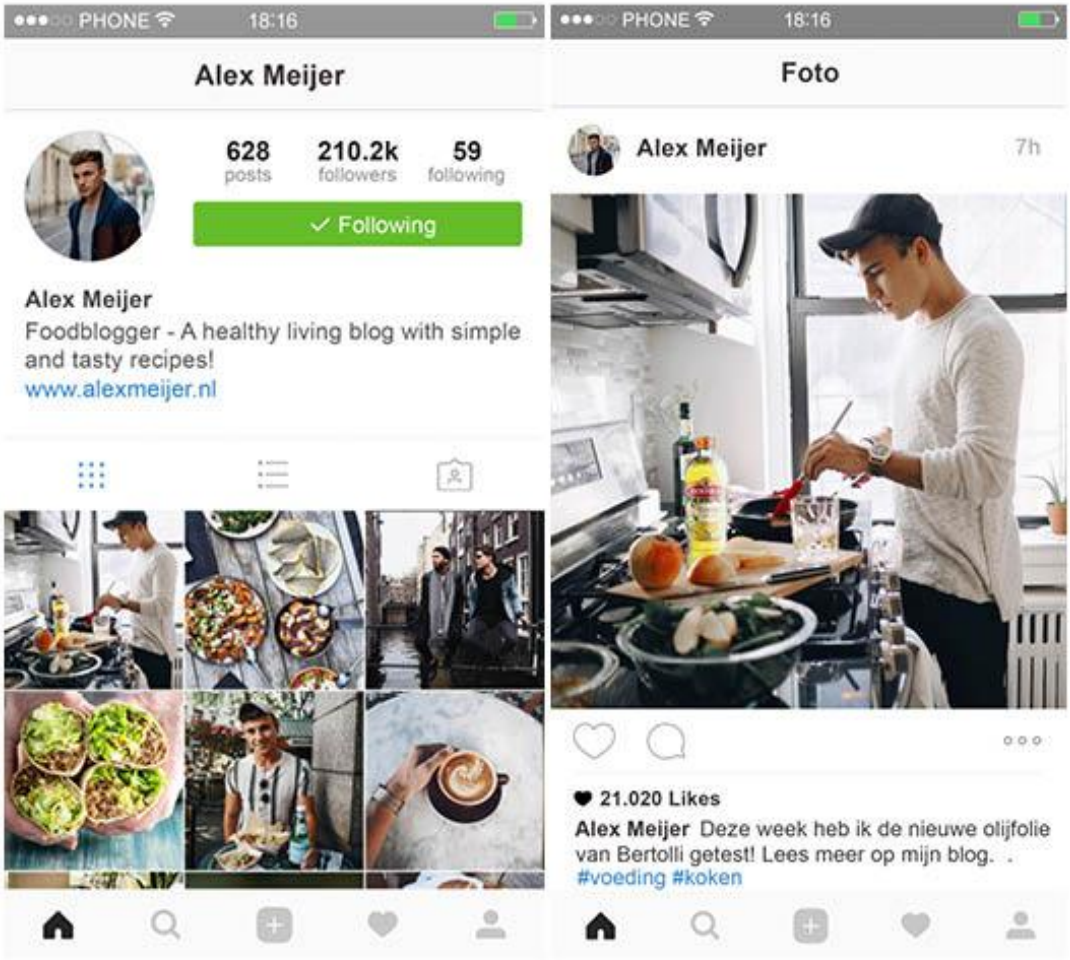


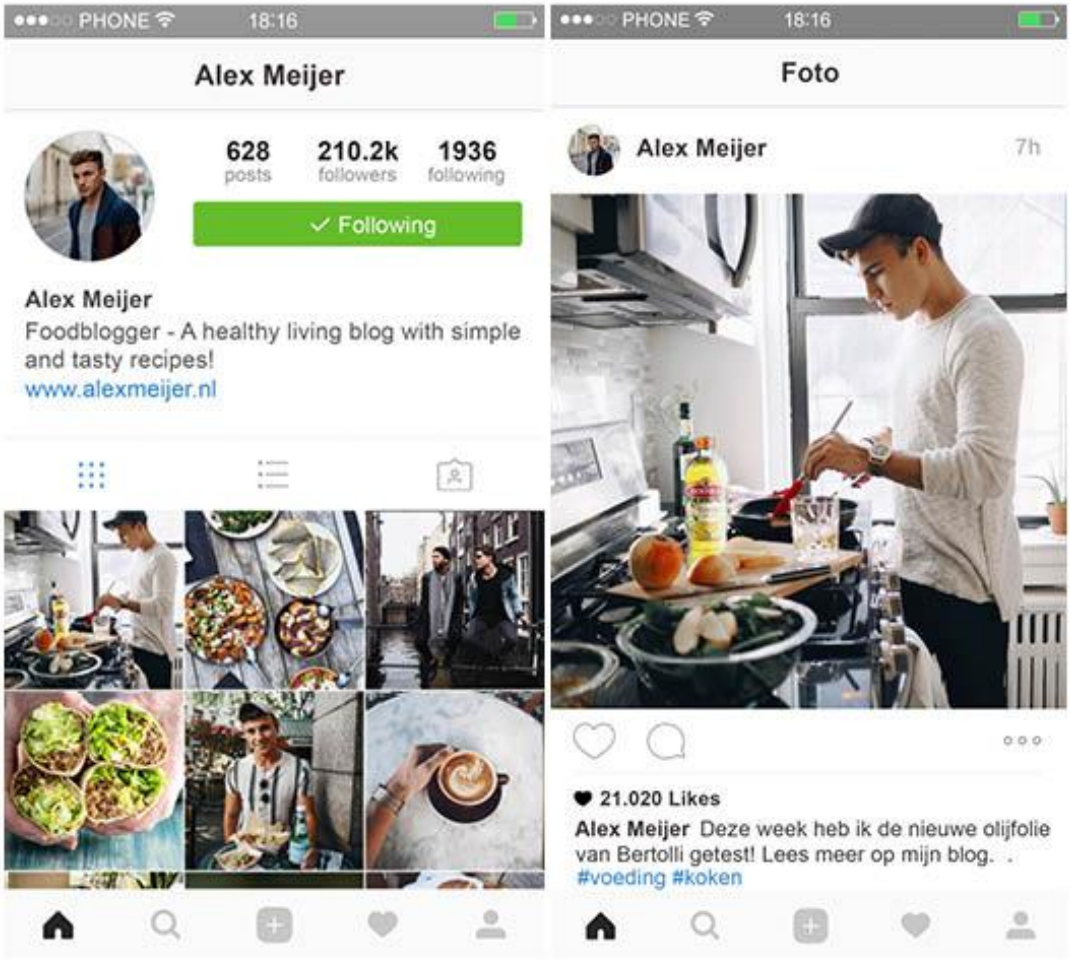

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
1620 followers
59 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
162 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

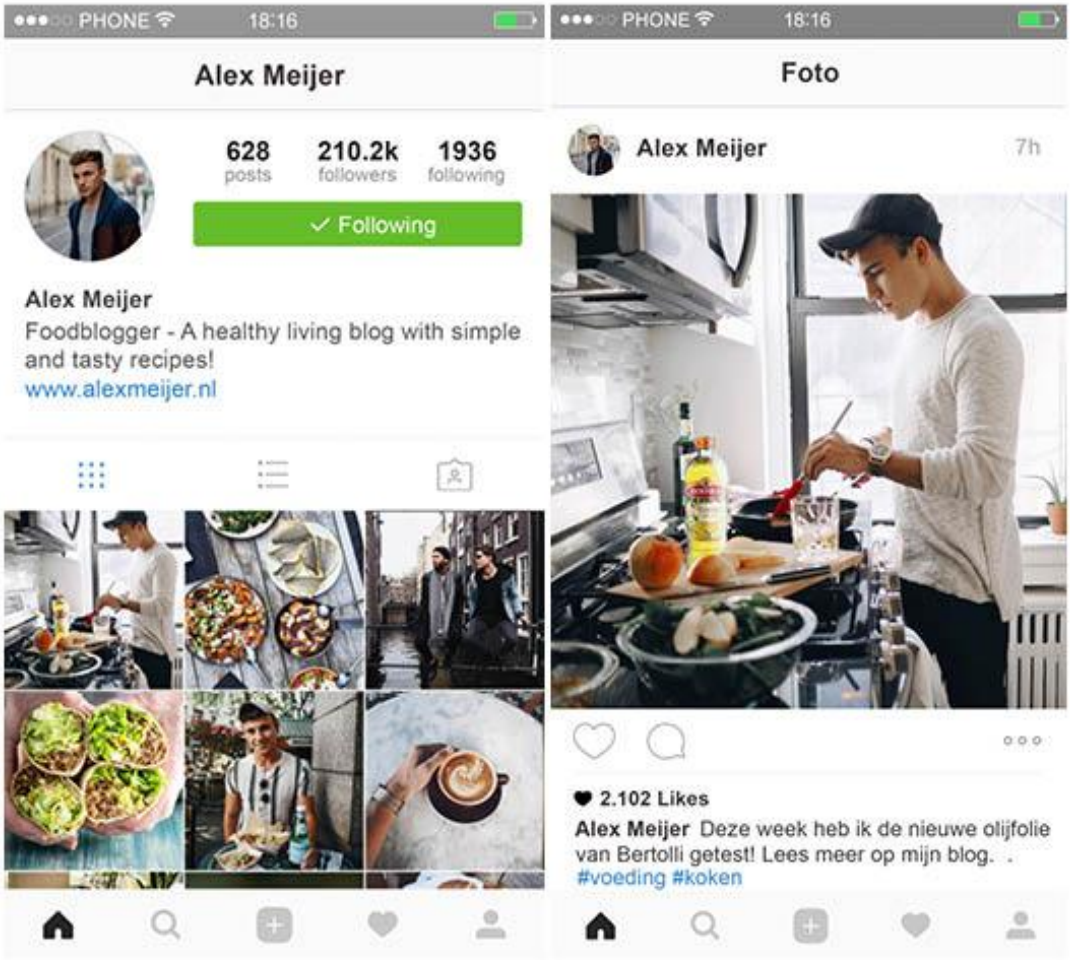

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
1620 followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
162 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

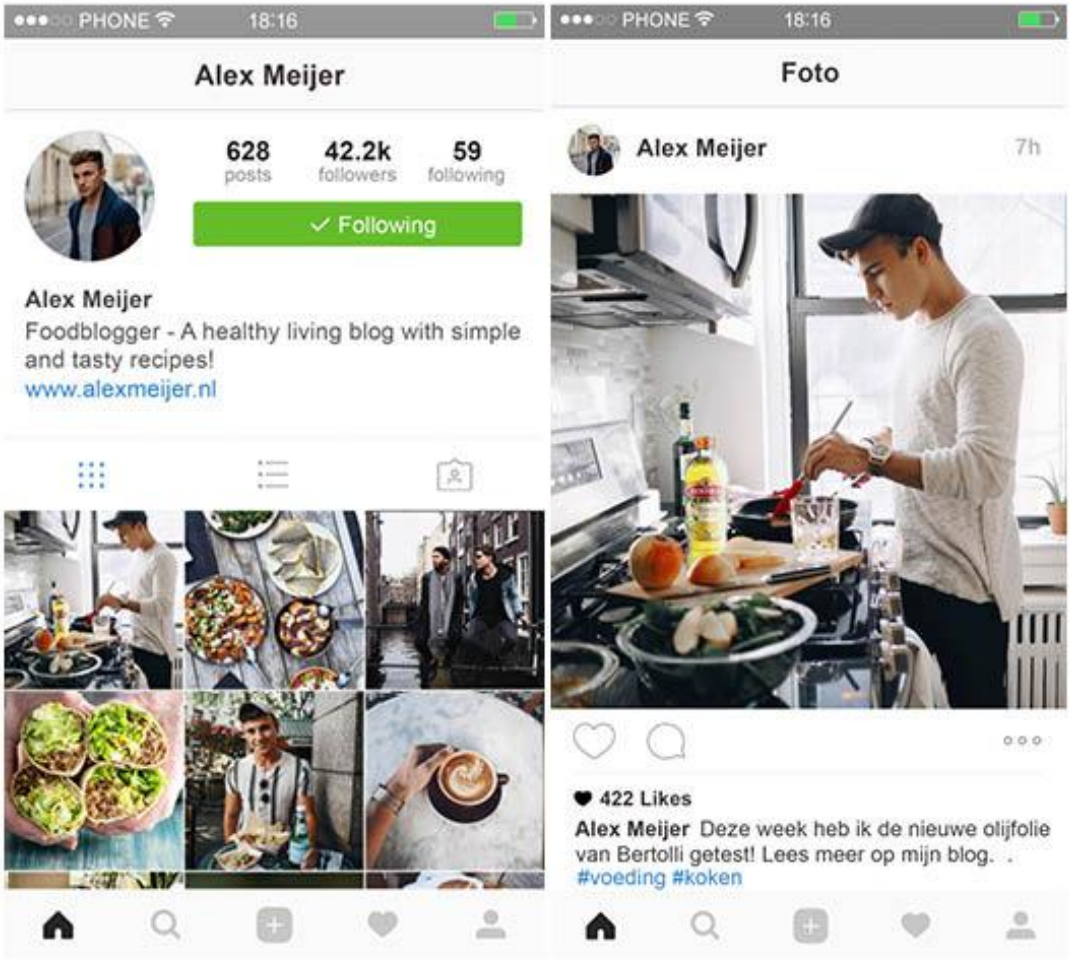

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
1620 followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
16 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

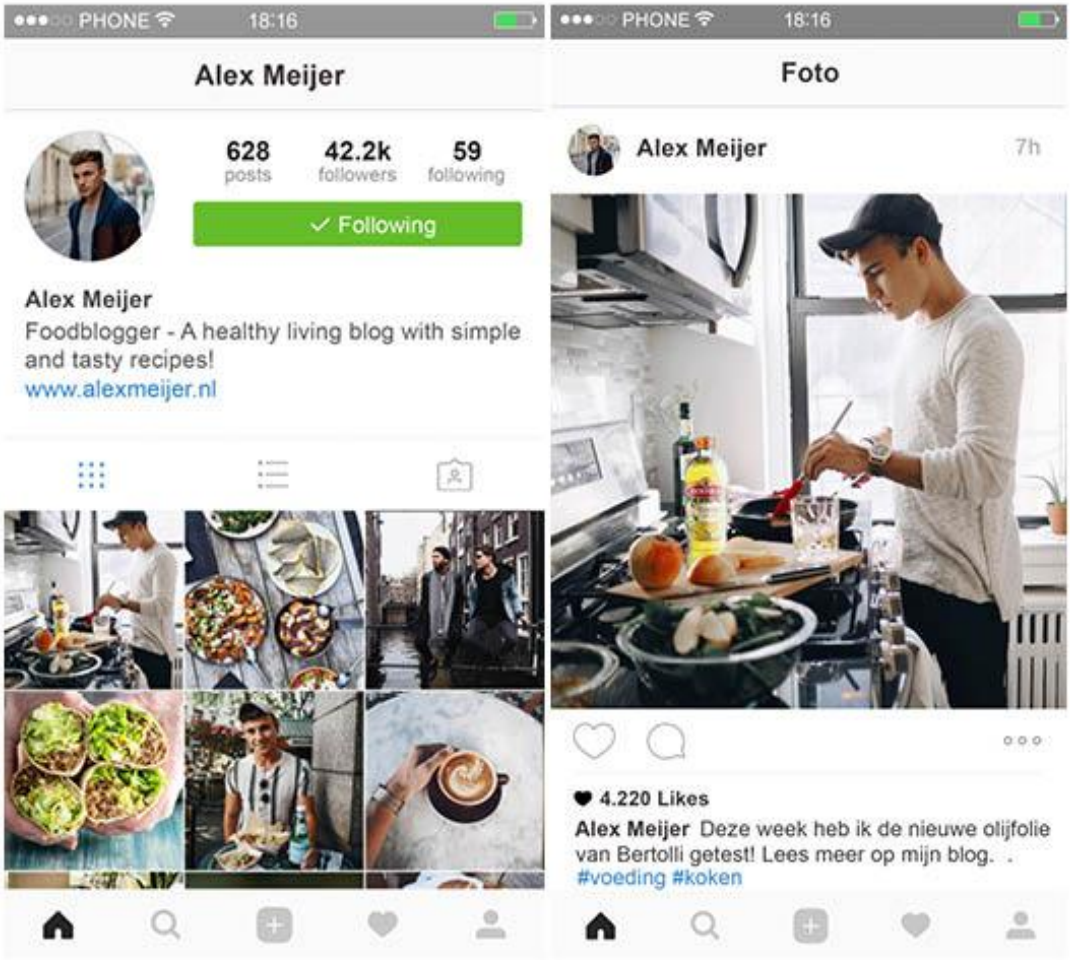

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
210.2k followers
59 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
2.102 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

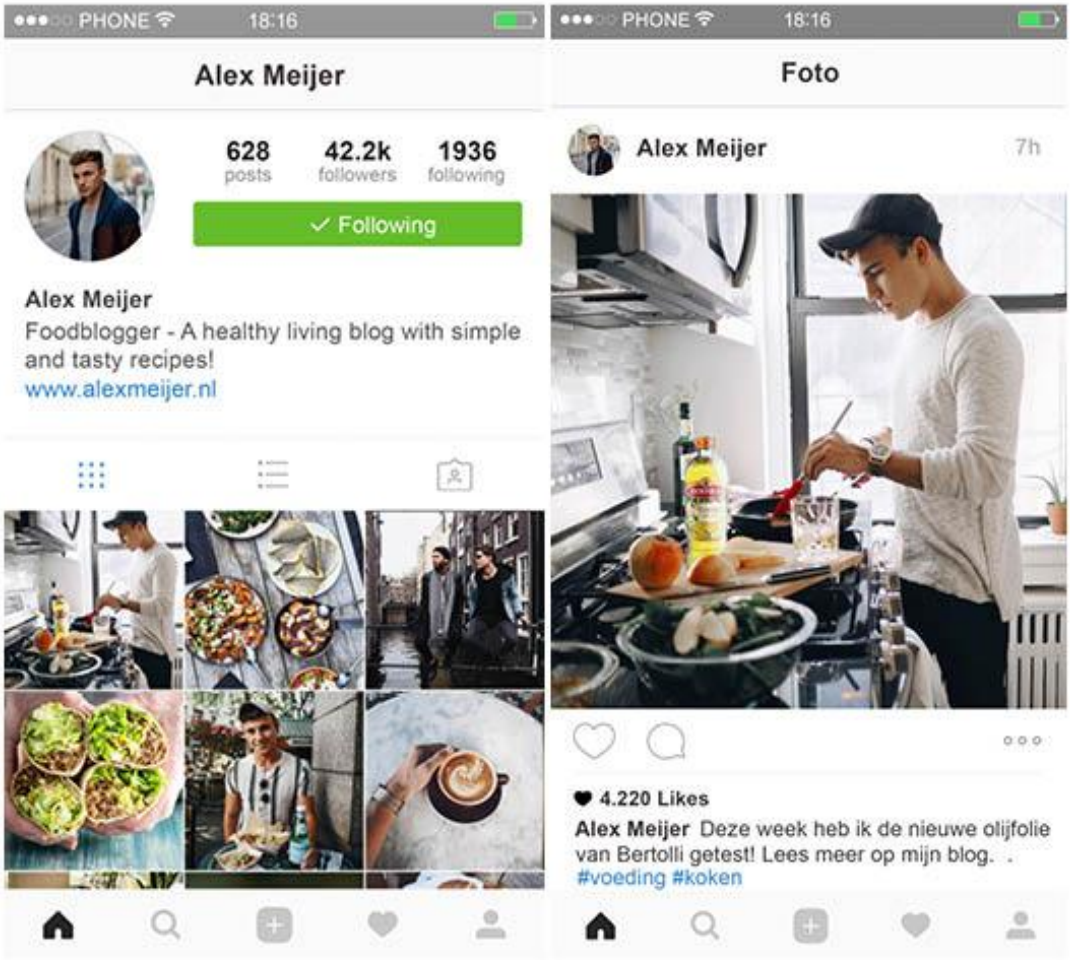

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
210.2k followers
59 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
21.020 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

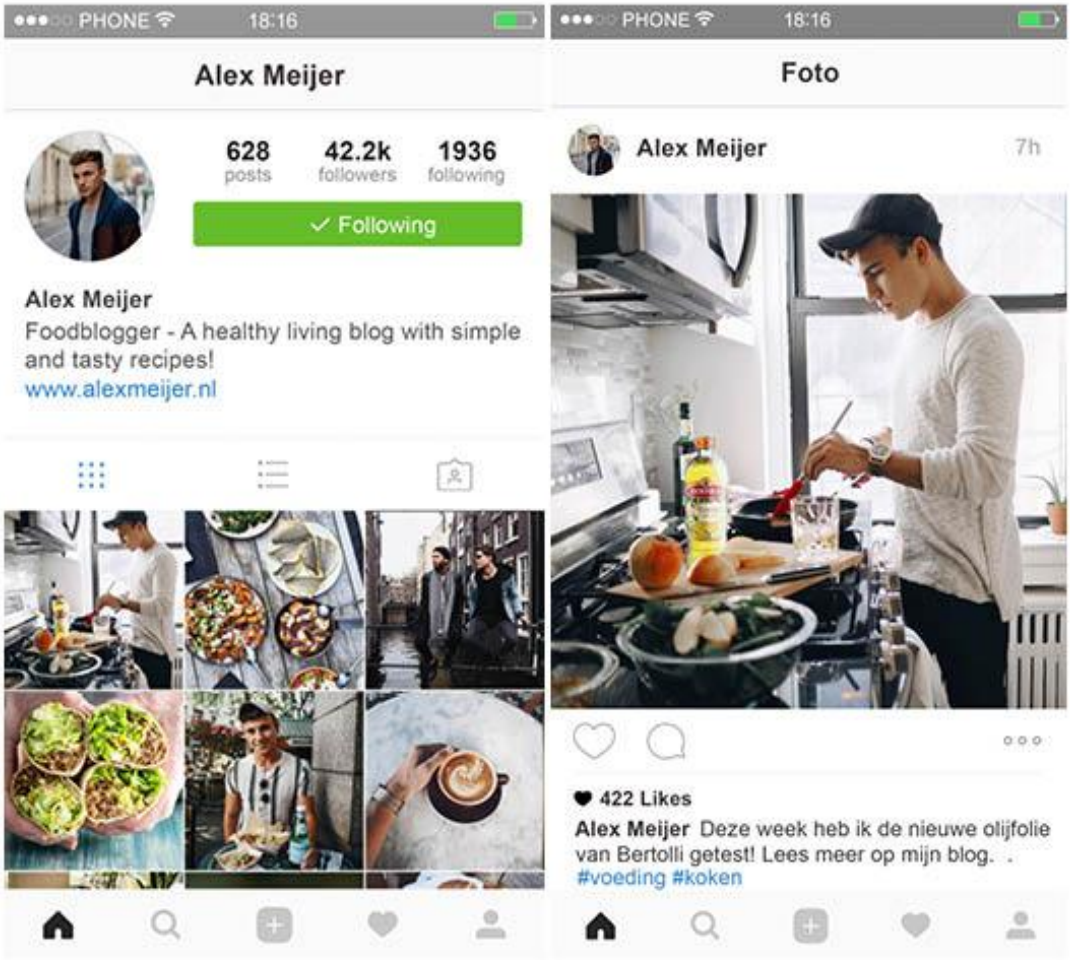

PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
210.2k followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
21.020 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken


PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
210.2k followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
2.102 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken


PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
42.2k followers
59 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
422 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken


PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
42.2k followers
59 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
4.220 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken


PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
42.2k followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
4.220 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken


PHONE 18:16
Alex Meijer
628 posts
42.2k followers
1936 following
✓ Following
Alex Meijer
Foodblogger - A healthy living blog with simple and tasty recipes!
www.alexmeijer.nl
PHONE 18:16
Foto
Alex Meijer 7h
422 Likes
Alex Meijer Deze week heb ik de nieuwe olijfolie van Bertolli getest! Lees meer op mijn blog. .
#voeding #koken

Appendix B: Questionnaire

Welkom.

In het kader van de masteropleiding Marketing Communicatie aan de Universiteit Twente doe ik onderzoek naar het gebruik van Instagram in Nederland. U zou mij een plezier doen als u de tijd neemt om mij te helpen met dit onderzoek. Het invullen van deze vragenlijst zal ongeveer 5 tot 10 minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen. De gegevens van het onderzoek worden vertrouwelijk behandeld en anoniem opgeslagen en verwerkt. U behoudt het recht om op elk moment zonder opgaaf van reden uw deelname aan het onderzoek te beëindigen.

Heeft u vragen naar aanleiding van deze vragenlijst, dan kunt u contact opnemen met Esmeé Kuster (e.n.kuster@student.utwente.nl)

Bedankt voor uw deelname!

Deze enquête begint met enkele vragen over uw Instagram gebruik en uw interesse in koken en foodbloggers. Probeer deze zo nauwkeurig mogelijk te beantwoorden.

1. Gebruikt u Instagram?

- ❍ Ja
- ❍ Nee

2. Hoe vaak maakt u gebruik van Instagram?

- ❍ Meerdere keren per dag
- ❍ Dagelijks
- ❍ Meerdere keren per week
- ❍ Wekelijks
- ❍ Maandelijks
- ❍ Minder dan maandelijks

3. Sinds wanneer maakt u gebruik van Instagram?

- ❍ Korter dan 3 maanden
- ❍ 3 - 6 maanden
- ❍ 7 - 12 maanden
- ❍ 13 - 18 maanden
- ❍ 19 - 24 maanden
- ❍ 25 - 30 maanden
- ❍ 31 - 36 maanden
- ❍ Langer dan 36 maanden

4. Wat is uw mening over koken in het algemeen?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Onbelangrijk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Belangrijk
Oninteressant	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Interessant
Saai	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Opwindend

5. Wat is uw mening over foodbloggers in het algemeen?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Onbelangrijk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Belangrijk
Oninteressant	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Interessant
Saai	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Opwindend

** Scenario **

6. In de afbeeldingen zag u dat Alex Meijer tijdens het koken olijfolie van het merk Bertolli gebruikt. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Ik vind Bertolli een oprecht merk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ik vind Bertolli een authentiek merk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ik vind Bertolli een deskundig merk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Het merk Bertolli houdt zich aan haar beloftes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Het merk Bertolli is betrouwbaar	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Het merk Bertolli handelt uit belang van haar klanten	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Het merk Bertolli misleidt haar klanten	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

7. In de afbeeldingen zag u dat Alex Meijer tijdens het koken olijfolie van het merk Bertolli gebruikt. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Mee oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Dit is een betrouwbaar product	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Dit is een professioneel product	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Dit is een kwaliteitsproduct	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Dit product heeft een constante kwaliteit	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Dit is een duurzaam product	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

8. Een fles olijfolie van 500ml kost in een supermarkt gemiddeld €4,76. Wat denkt u dat u moet betalen voor dit product (een fles Bertolli olijfolie) als u het in een supermarkt koopt?

_____

9. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Deze persoon heeft veel volgers	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon volgt veel anderen	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
De post van deze persoon heeft veel likes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

10. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan wat uw mening is over foodblogger Alex Meijer:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Onaantrekkelijk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Aantrekkelijk
Smakeloos	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Stijlvol
Lelijk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Mooi
Eenvoudig	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Elegant
Niet sexy	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Sexy

11. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan wat uw mening is over foodblogger Alex Meijer:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Onverantwoord	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Verantwoordelijk
Oneerlijk	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Eerlijk
Nep	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Authentiek
Onoprecht	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Oprecht
Onbetrouwbaar	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Betrouwbaar

12. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan wat uw mening is over foodblogger Alex Meijer:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Geen expert	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Expert
Onervaren	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Ervaren
Ondeskundig	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Deskundig
Onbekwaam	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Bekwaam
Amateuristisch	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	Professioneel

13. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Ik kan mij identificeren met deze persoon	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon is vergelijkbaar met mijzelf	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ik heb veel gemeen met deze persoon	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon en ik delen soortgelijke standpunten	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon en ik zitten in dezelfde levensfase	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

14. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Ik voel mij niet verbonden met deze persoon	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Ik voel mij ver verwijderd van deze persoon	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon staat dicht bij mij	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

15. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Niet mee eens, niet mee oneens*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Deze persoon blijft dicht bij zichzelf	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon valt op tussen andere foodbloggers	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon is uniek	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon komt oprecht over	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

16. Geef naar aanleiding van de informatie in de afbeeldingen aan in hoeverre u het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Zeer mee oneens	*Oneens*	*Enigzins mee oneens*	*Neutraal*	*Enigzins mee eens*	*Mee eens*	*Zeer mee eens*
Deze persoon zou niet tegen mij liegen	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon is te vertrouwen	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon is hypocriet	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon handelt uit eigen belang	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon is commercieel	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Deze persoon wordt betaald om dit product te promoten	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

17. Wat is uw geslacht?

❍ Man
❍ Vrouw

18. Wat is uw leeftijd?

19. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?

❍ VMBO
❍ HAVO
❍ VWO
❍ MBO
❍ HBO
❍ WO

Appendix C: Between-subject effects main constructs

Table 14: between-subject effects main constructs.

		F	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Main effects					
Micro vs. macro	Brand trust	.741	2	.478	.005
	Perceived quality	.044	2	.957	.000
	Perceived price	1.366	2	.257	.009
Followees	Brand trust	.003	1	.956	.000
	Perceived quality	.501	1	.479	.002
	Perceived price	1.181	1	.278	.004
Likes	Brand trust	.000	1	.982	.000
	Perceived quality	.204	1	.652	.001
	Perceived price	.600	1	.439	.002
Interaction effects					
Micro vs macro * followees	Brand trust	1.441	2	.238	.010
	Perceived quality	.208	2	.812	.001
	Perceived price	.092	2	.912	.001
Micro vs macro * likes	Brand trust	1.739	2	.178	.012
	Perceived quality	1.725	2	.180	.012
	Perceived price	1.876	2	.155	.013
Followees * likes	Brand trust	.308	1	.579	.001
	Perceived quality	.043	1	.836	.000
	Perceived price	.010	1	.921	.000
Micro vs macro * followees * likes	Brand trust	.191	2	.826	.001
	Perceived quality	.507	2	.603	.004
	Perceived price	2.231	2	.109	.015

Appendix D: Results source credibility and influencer homophily

Table 15; Multivariate analysis source credibility and influencer homophily.

Construct	*F*	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Micro vs. macro	1.874	4	.113	.013
Followees	.455	2	.635	.003
Likes	.897	2	.409	.006
Micro vs. macro * Followees	2.542	4	.039*	.017
Micro vs. macro * Likes	2.618	4	.034*	.018
Followees * Likes	2.116	2	.122	.015
Micro vs. macro * Followees * Likes	.200	4	.938	.001

Notes: * = significant at p < .05.

Table 16; Between-subject effects source credibility and influencer homophily.

		F	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Main effects					
Micro vs macro	Source credibility	2.867	2	.058***	.019
	- attractiveness	2.137	2	.120	.000
	- trustworthiness	.275	2	.759	.002
	- expertise	4.723	2	.010*	.031
	Homophily	.493	2	.611	.003
	- similarity	.124	2	.883	.001
	- authenticity	1.148	2	.196	.011
	- integrity	.818	2	.425	.006
Followees	Source credibility	.210	1	.647	.001
	- attractiveness	.201	1	.645	.001
	- trustworthiness	.128	1	.721	.000
	- expertise	.094	1	.761	.000
	Homophily	1.135	1	.288	.004
	- similarity	3.801	1	.052***	.013
	- authenticity	1.777	1	.184	.006
	- integrity	.617	1	.433	.002
Likes	Source credibility	.259	1	.611	.001
	- attractiveness	.029	1	.864	.000
	- trustworthiness	.656	1	.419	.002
	- expertise	.373	1	.561	.001
	Homophily	1.662	1	.198	.006
	- similarity	2.205	1	.139	.007
	- authenticity	.437	1	.509	.001

	- integrity	.013	1	.910	.000
Interaction effects					
Micro vs macro * followees	Source credibility	4.350	2	.014**	.029
	- attractiveness	4.506	2	.012**	.030
	- trustworthiness	2.933	2	.079	.018
	- expertise	2.318	2	.114	.015
	Homophily	.437	2	.647	.006
	- similarity	.453	2	.636	.003
	- authenticity	.892	2	.411	.006
	- integrity	.292	2	.747	.002
Micro vs macro * likes	Source credibility	3.926	2	.021**	.027
	- attractiveness	1.563	2	.232	.010
	- trustworthiness	6.190	2	.005*	.036
	- expertise	1.573	2	.209	.011
	Homophily	4.303	2	.014**	.029
	- similarity	2.974	2	.049**	.021
	- authenticity	3.053	2	.013**	.030
	- integrity	1.756	2	.163	.013
Followees * likes	Source credibility	2.564	1	.110	.009
	- attractiveness	.424	1	.515	.001
	- trustworthiness	1.781	1	.183	.006
	- expertise	3.478	1	.063	.012
	Homophily	4.055	1	.045**	.014
	- similarity	4.278	1	.037**	.015
	- authenticity	.500	1	.394	.003
	- integrity	1.051	1	.296	.004
Micro vs macro * followees * likes	Source credibility	.170	2	.844	.001
	- attractiveness	1.277	2	.280	.009
	- trustworthiness	.386	2	.714	.002
	- expertise	.237	2	.800	.002
	Homophily	.077	2	.926	.001
	- similarity	.092	2	.912	.001
	- authenticity	.572	2	.565	.004
	- integrity	.431	2	.650	.003

Notes: * = significant at p < .01. ** = significant at p < .05. ** = significant at p <0.06.

Appendix E: Results Instagram users

Table 17; Multivariate test Instagram users.

Construct	*F*	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Micro vs. macro	1.448	6	.195	.024
Followees	1.854	3	.139	.031
Likes	1.446	3	.231	.024
Micro vs. macro * Followees	1.035	6	.402	.017
Micro vs. macro * Likes	.932	6	.472	.016
Followees * Likes	1.166	3	.324	.019
Micro vs. macro * Followees * Likes	1.076	6	.379	.018

Table 18; Between-subject effects Instagram users.

		F	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Main effects					
Micro vs. macro	Brand trust	.942	2	.392	.010
	Perceived quality	.920	2	.400	.010
	Perceived price	2.899	2	.058**	.032
Followees	Brand trust	.421	1	.517	.002
	Perceived quality	.097	1	.756	.001
	Perceived price	5.487	1	.020*	.030
Likes	Brand trust	.453	1	.502	.003
	Perceived quality	1.760	1	.186	.010
	Perceived price	2.282	1	.133	.013
Interaction effects					
Micro vs macro * followees	Brand trust	1.817	2	.166	.020
	Perceived quality	.025	2	.975	.000
	Perceived price	.198	2	.821	.002
Micro vs macro * likes	Brand trust	1.139	2	.322	.013
	Perceived quality	2.287	2	.105	.025
	Perceived price	.114	2	.892	.001
Followees * likes	Brand trust	.052	1	.820	.000
	Perceived quality	.017	1	.896	.000
	Perceived price	3.212	1	.075	.018
Micro vs macro * followees * likes	Brand trust	.521	2	.595	.006
	Perceived quality	1.126	2	.327	.012
	Perceived price	.977	2	.378	.011

Notes: * significant at p < .05. ** = significant at p <0.06

Appendix F: Results source credibility and influencer homophily of Instagram users

Table 19; Multivariate analysis source credibility and influencer homophily.

Construct	*F*	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Micro vs. macro	2.689	4	.032*	.029
Followees	1.105	2	.333	.012
Likes	1.244	2	.291	.014
Micro vs. macro * Followees	1.568	4	.182	.017
Micro vs. macro * Likes	2.332	4	.056	.026
Followees * Likes	.838	2	.434	.009
Micro vs. macro * Followees * Likes	.504	4	.733	.006

Notes: * = significant at p < .05.

Table 20; Between-subject effects source credibility and influencer homophily of Instagram users.

		F	*df*	*p*	ηp 2
Main effects					
Micro vs macro	Source credibility	4.370	2	.014**	.047
	- attractiveness	4.605	2	.011	.049
	- trustworthiness	.613	2	.543	.008
	- expertise	6.779	2	.001*	.071
	Homophily	.714	2	.491	.008
	- similarity	.154	2	.858	.002
	- authenticity	2.294	2	.104	.025
	- integrity	2.621	2	.076	.029
Followees	Source credibility	.834	1	.362	.005
	- attractiveness	.040	1	.842	.000
	- trustworthiness	.574	1	.450	.003
	- expertise	1.416	1	.236	.008
	Homophily	.148	1	.701	.001
	- similarity	1.957	1	.164	.011
	- authenticity	.017	1	.896	.000
	- integrity	.746	1	.389	.004
Likes	Source credibility	1.845	1	.176	.010
	- attractiveness	.166	1	.684	.001
	- trustworthiness	2.806	1	.096	.016
	- expertise	3.555	1	.060***	.020
	Homophily	2.154	1	.144	.012

	- similarity	1.578	1	.211	.009
	- authenticity	1.088	1	.298	.006
	- integrity	.070	1	.791	.000
Interaction effects					
Micro vs macro * followees	Source credibility	.670	2	.513	.007
	- attractiveness	2.596	2	.077	.028
	- trustworthiness	.097	2	.907	.001
	- expertise	.003	2	.997	.000
	Homophily	1.106	2	.333	.012
	- similarity	.190	2	.827	.002
	- authenticity	2.365	2	.097	.026
	- integrity	.682	2	.507	.008
Micro vs macro * likes	Source credibility	3.254	2	.041**	.035
	- attractiveness	1.834	2	.163	.020
	- trustworthiness	3.834	2	.023**	.041
	- expertise	1.941	2	.147	.021
	Homophily	4.234	2	.016**	.046
	- similarity	4.422	2	.013**	.047
	- authenticity	3.823	2	.024**	.041
	- integrity	.648	2	.524	.007
Followees * likes	Source credibility	1.681	1	.196	.009
	- attractiveness	1.577	1	.211	.009
	- trustworthiness	.326	1	.569	.002
	- expertise	1.600	1	.208	.009
	Homophily	.711	1	.400	.004
	- similarity	2.271	1	.134	.013
	- authenticity	.286	1	.594	.002
	- integrity	.009	1	.923	.000
Micro vs macro * followees * likes	Source credibility	.650	2	.523	.007
	- attractiveness	2.146	2	.120	.024
	- trustworthiness	.261	2	.773	.003
	- expertise	.168	2	.833	.002
	Homophily	.190	2	.827	.002
	- similarity	.187	2	.829	.002
	- authenticity	.151	2	.860	.002
	- integrity	.279	2	.757	.003

Notes: * = significant at p < .01. ** = significant at p < .05. ** = significant at p <0.06.