“The role of gender in influencer marketing”

A study on the effects of advertising disclosures and source gender in influencer marketing on Instagram

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Abstract

Influencer marketing is a type of native advertising where companies work together with social media influencers to promote their brands or products. Advertising disclosures are used to label sponsored content by stating the commercial intention. The current study aims to answer to what extent the location and phrasing of these disclosures impact advertisement recognition, brand attitude, and purchase intention. Moreover, this study provides a rare insight into the effects of source gender on source credibility in influencer marketing. The setting of the research is the promotion of a gaming peripheral by a social media gaming influencer on Instagram.

Among others, this study hypothesises that explicitly phrased disclosures located above the media on Instagram will result in higher advertisement recognition than unclear disclosures presented elsewhere. In turn, hypotheses state advertising recognition results in more negative brand attitudes and lower purchase intentions. As for source gender, this study hypothesises that male gaming influencers are seen as more credible compared to female influencers. Moreover, it is hypothesised that source credibility moderates the effect between advertising recognition and brand attitude and purchase intention. An experimental between-subject design tested these theories with a 2 (male or female) x 2 (top disclosure position and bottom disclosure position) x 2 (explicit disclosure language and implicit disclosure language) research design. The sample size of the online experiment included 567 participants, of which 48.2% was male. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight experimental research conditions, where they were asked to view stimulus materials and answer questions accordingly.

Results showed that explicitly phrased disclosures impacted the effectiveness of the advertisements as they triggered advertising recognition. However, disclosure location did not significantly affect the level of advertising recognition. In turn, advertising recognition was found to lower purchase intentions, but no effect on brand attitudes was found. Moreover, the gender of the source was not found to have a significant impact on source credibility. It seems brands and influencers are in a battle between the interests of users and their own. While users are likely to prefer the most ethical methods, brands and influencers might have more interest in increasing sales and brand awareness.

Keywords: *Influencer marketing, Advertising disclosures, Advertising recognition, Brand attitude, and Purchase Intention.*

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1. Introduction

In recent years, social networking sites (SNS) have completely integrated into everyday life. An example of a SNS is Instagram. Instagram is a photo based SNS that allows users to upload media with corresponding captions and hashtags, also known as posts. Over 1 billion people use Instagram every month, of which more than 500 million use the app every day (Hootsuite, 2019). With 71% of its users being under the age of 35 years old, the platform is highly popular among young users. A marketing method frequently used on social media is native advertising. This method hides the promotional intention, thereby minimizing consumer opinions and brand un-followers (Cambell & Marks, 2015). Striving to influence and persuade consumers without initiating resistance, many companies have actively integrated native advertising into their marketing strategies (Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun, 2017).

Influencer marketing is a rather new form of native advertising where companies work together with online opinion leaders, so-called influencers, to promote their products and impact buying decisions (Petty & Andrews, 2008). Influencers are third-party endorsers that are highly active on SNS and often have a large online following with whom they have a strong relationship. They are regularly viewed as equals, a reliable source of information, or even occasionally referred to as real friends (Labrecque, 2014; Lueg & Finney, 2007). A study conducted by Woods (2016) found that Instagram was the first SNS that came to mind when the practice of influencer marketing was mentioned.

Within this digital era, consumers rely heavily on recommendations of peers or online opinion leaders, being that people are less suspicious of opinions from independent sources (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014; Petty & Andrews, 2008). Since individuals feel that information from opinion leaders is very trustworthy, influencers may impact their followers' behaviour with their opinions (Lee & Koo, 2012). As influencers may have thousands or millions of followers, one branded post can reach a broad target audience, making them very attractive for brands. Thru sponsored content posted by influencers, brands try to increase awareness and stimulate positive attitudes. In turn, influencers receive free products or direct monetary compensation for their efforts (Boerman & Van Reijmersdal, 2016).

Nevertheless, some critics are not too optimistic about covert marketing as it minimalizes negative consumer opinions and brand un-followers by concealing the persuasive intent of the

content (Campbell & Marks, 2015). Critics feel that viewers have to be warned and propose laws forcing influencers to reveal the real persuasive goal of their content (FTC, 2013). Consequently, various influencers started disclosing their paid relationships with brands by using advertising disclosures. Previous research confirms that advertising disclosures might increase advertisement recognition (Boerman et al., 2012; Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun, 2017). In turn, advertisement recognition might activate cognitive resistance strategies so that persuasion knowledge may be used (Friestad & Wright, 1994). This persuasion knowledge could negatively influence brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Boerman & van Reijmersdal, 2016).

Influencer marketing is used as a marketing strategy in a large number of industries worldwide. This research sheds light on influencers active in the field of gaming. Gaming influencers often share game-related content and promote videogames or gaming peripherals on their SNS. Video gaming and gaming peripherals are huge worldwide industries in which large companies like Sony, Microsoft, and Razer operate. Consumers of these gaming products are often gamers, which are people who play video games (Shaw, 2011). There are more than 1,7 billion active gamers worldwide (Lu, 2016).

Over the last years, many gaming companies started collaborating with influencers to endorse products. This study aims to examine influencer marketing within the gaming peripherals market. Gaming influencers have not been thoroughly researched, even though some earn millions of dollars a year (Crook, 2019). Gamers are not limited or defined by their gender, race, or sexuality (Shaw, 2011). Yet, preceding studies did not examine the effects of gender. Moreover, the majority of gaming-related studies had male target audiences and many male participants. This research focusses on addressing that research gap by researching the impact of gender on consumer opinions and using an even amount of male and female respondents.

Many gaming influencers are present on Instagram, Twitch and YouTube, where they share game-play videos and product reviews. Currently, the most popular gaming influencer in the world is Tyler Blevins, better known as Ninja (Waarlo, 2019). He is an American professional gamer and streamer and has over 12 million followers on Twitch and more than 13,5 million on Instagram. Ninja is best known for playing the video game Fortnite and is sponsored by Red Bull and earns millions of dollars a year by playing video games. Similar to Ninja, there are

thousands of gaming influencers active on SNS, ready to promote branded content. Soccer teams like Ajax even have their own e-sports team that competes on the video game FIFA. Examples of Dutch gaming influencers are Ronald Vledder with 360,000 followers on Instagram, Colin Wijnholds 150,000 followers, Yarasky 187,000 followers, Koen Weijland 121,000 followers, and Jason Hagebeuk with 85,000 followers. Most of these gaming influencers have a full-time job playing video games. This study will focus on gaming influencers who are active on Instagram.

Gender, advertising disclosures, and advertising recognition and their effects on consumer responses are researched in this study. Moreover, the moderating effect of source credibility on brand attitude and purchase intention is researched. This study examines both the location and the formulation of advertising disclosures. Prior research data identified both independent variables to affect advertising recognition (Boerman et al., 2012; Evans, Phua, Lim & Jun, 2017). In turn, advertising recognition has proven to negatively influence consumer responses, such as brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Boerman & Van Reijmersdal, 2016; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2016). Moreover, data showed that source credibility could moderate the effect of advertising recognition on consumer responses (Hwang & Jeong, 2016). However, this has not been researched extensively in the case of influencer marketing on Instagram. Additionally, prior studies show little empirical research into the effects of gender within influencer marketing. Responding to the research gap, the impact of source gender on source credibility is researched.

Consequently, the main research question this study aims to answer is:

To what extent do source gender, disclosure position, and disclosure language impact advertisement recognition, brand attitude, and purchase intention, moderated by source credibility, in the context of influencer marketing on Instagram within the gaming peripheral industry?

2. Theoretical framework

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study. To understand advertising disclosures in influencer marketing, earlier research was studied. The theoretical framework starts with the identification of influencer marketing and the introduction of the gaming industry and gaming peripherals market. The theoretical framework continues by explaining the different types of advertising disclosures currently present on Instagram. Lastly, different consumer responses are identified and explained, followed by a clarification of gender influences.

2.1. Influencer marketing

In influencer marketing companies work together with influencers to promote their products and impact buying decisions (Petty & Andrews, 2008). The partnership between organisations and influencers may have different forms. Results of these partnerships can be sponsored content, product reviews, giveaways, and brand ambassadors (Considerable Influence, 2017). Sponsored content mainly involves the online advertising of brands, using product placements, or brand promotions. Product reviews are evaluations of products shared by influencers. Giveaways often involve influencers awarding one of their followers with a free product or service. Brand ambassadors work together with brands on a long-term basis and promote them frequently. This study focusses on product placements on Instagram. Van Reijmersdal, Neijens, and Smit (2009) characterise product placements as the integration of brands or branded posts into editorial content in exchange for reimbursements from a sponsor. Compensation often includes free products or direct monetary compensation (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014). As a result, several influencers have a full-time job in promoting branded content on their social media accounts.

2.1.1. Video gaming industry and gaming peripherals market

This study examines influencer marketing within the gaming peripherals market. The popularity of the gaming peripheral influencer market has been significantly influenced by professional competitive gaming. Over the last few years, there has been a significant increase in the popularity of professional competitive gaming, so-called Electronic Sports (e-sports) (Lu, 2016). With the rising popularity of e-sports, competitive gaming, and gaming live-streams, the number of e-sports fans has increased from 89 million in 2014, to 145 million in 2017 (Lu, 2016). Due to the increase in popularity of e-sports, the gaming peripherals market

has grown as well. This market generated a revenue of $ 2.18 billion in 2016, and it is expected to reach $ 3.56 billion in 2021 (Statista, 2019). Online live-streaming services like Twitch.tv are making vast amounts of money thanks to the booming of e-sports, and count over 45 million unique viewers each month (Lu, 2016). With this growing popularity, e-sports players have become rather famous and frequently have a massive online following. Many players can be seen as influencers because they work together with gaming companies to promote their products. Consequently, the face of the gaming industry and the gaming peripherals market has changed over the years, transforming it into a global sports landscape.

Gaming influencers often promote video games or gaming peripherals, such as keyboards, headsets, or controllers, on their SNS. Research distinguishes two types of products: search goods and experience goods (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014). Information about a search good is easy to obtain and quickly compared (Hsieh, Chiu & Chiang, 2005; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). Examples of search goods are gaming peripherals. For experience goods, the experience of others is an essential source of information, since these products are not tangible. However, product evaluations are more subjective and personal (Hsieh, Chiu & Chiang, 2005; Mudambi & Schuff, 2010). An example of an experience goods are video games. Influencer opinions about experience goods are highly personal and might not be based on factual product features or attributes (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014).

2.2. Advertisement disclosures

Numerous influencers started disclosing their paid collaborations with disclosures (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). These advertisement disclosures are labels or cues on sponsored content, highlighting the paid collaboration between an influencer and an organisation. Disclosures aim to warn people about advertisements so that cognitive resistance strategies can be activated (Boerman & van Reijmersdal, 2016; Friestad & Wright, 1994). According to the US FTC (2013), disclosing native advertising provides consumers with the required information to make informed decisions. Prior results show that the presence of disclosures can positively impact advertisement recognition and persuasion knowledge (Boerman, Willemsen & Van Der Aa, 2017; Evans et al., 2017; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2016; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). These preceding studies have focused on several characteristics of advertisement disclosures such as location, length, timing, and phrasing (Evens et al., 2017). Nonetheless, these studies were not conducted in the context of influencer marketing on Instagram.

Therefore, this research will focus on the position and language of advertisement disclosures in influencer marketing on Instagram.

2.2.1. Disclosure position

Merely putting a warning on sponsored content is not always sufficient to activate persuasion knowledge. For disclosures to stimulate advertisement recognition and be effective, people have to see and understand them (Boerman, van Reijmersdal & Neijens, 2012; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). The US Influencer Marketing Committee (2018) has drawn up several guidelines to assist organisations and influencers with disclosures. The guidelines explain how, when, and what to disclose on SNS. The committee explains that disclosures require to be close to the add, and not displayed in the comments. Moreover, hashtags containing disclosures should be located first and not buried within an extensive range of hashtags, as they may not affect advertisement recognition.

For disclosures to be effective, people need to be able to clearly see them. Earlier studies on user scanning patterns indicated where people look when using a desktop or mobile device. However, many of these studies are relatively outdated and their results might not be applicable anymore. The model of visual hierarchy by Faraday (2000), illustrates that users scan a webpage for points of interest, after which they processed the information more deeply. However, more recent research found that the scanning patterns for SNS may fluctuate between a computer and a mobile device (Kim & Shin, 2014). Research by Nielsen (2006) proposes that data near the top left corner of a webpage had the highest potential to be observed by users. However, many people nowadays use their mobile devices to access the internet or SNS.

Data on disclosure location and timing are contradicting. Wojdynski and Evans (2015) researched disclosures on webpages. They identified three areas: before an advertisement (top), in the middle of an ad (middle), or below an ad (bottom). Results showed disclosures located in the centre or at the bottom increased recognition. Boerman, van Reijmersdal, and Neijens (2013) researched disclosures in TV programs. They implied that displaying disclosures before any advertisements increase advertising recognition. Another study by Cameron (1994) investigated source cues in editorial content. It advocates that disclosures afterwards are unlikely to change encoding processes and will not be sufficient. As a result, data supports both presenting declarations before and after an advertisement on different platforms.

To the researcher's knowledge, no scientific studies have been conducted to date on the effects of advertisement disclosure location on Instagram. On Instagram, it is possible to display disclosures in two different areas, namely before or after the picture/movie. Disclosures before the sponsored content are located straight underneath an account name, on the top left corner of the app. Another option is to put the disclosure somewhere in the caption, which is found below the media. None of the earlier studies have focussed on disclosure positions on SNS. Therefore, the research by Nielsen (2006) is used for the formulation of the hypothesis. Applying these results, disclosures located before a picture or movie on Instagram should result in many views by users. This led to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Instagram advertisement disclosures located before the sponsored content lead to higher advertising recognition than disclosures positioned after.

2.2.2. Disclosure language

For advertising disclosures to be adequate, they have to be clear and understandable in informing on the commercial nature (Wojdynski and Evans, 2016). Therefore, the words used in disclosures may impact its effectiveness. As stated by Wojdynski and Evans (2016), users need to understand the disclosure message, before recognising something as an advertisement. Hence, it is imperative that the promotional nature is communicated in a way which people can easily understand (Evans et al., 2017). Earlier studies tested several disclosure language and formulation options. Kim, Pasadeos, and Barban (2001) studied the effect of the label 'advertisement' in print advertorials. Results showed that this specific word significantly increases recognition compared to no label at all, although no other words were researched. Different results showed that the terms 'advertising' and 'sponsored' both lead to higher advertisement recognition in news stories (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). Research by Boerman, Willemsen, and Van der Aa (2017) found that adding the disclosure 'sponsored' to a celebrity post on Facebook increased advertising recognition compared to no disclosure. Moreover, research by Evans et al. (2017) concluded that adding the hashtag #sponsored to Instagram posts increased advertising recognition.

Influencers are free to select the language and wording in their disclosures, making that there are many different sorts of disclosures present on Instagram. Most commonly used on Instagram are textual disclosures, either in words, full sentences, or hashtags. Since Instagram offers no regulations or limitations for the use of hashtags, users started using their imagination

when creating hashtags. The researcher found that explicit and understandable disclosures which are frequently used are *advertisement*, *advertising*, *sponsored*, *paid content, paid partnership*, or *ad*. Widely acknowledged and explicit hashtags are #ad, #sponsored, or #advertisement (Influencer Marketing Committee, 2018). Implicit disclosures are often unclear and require a skilled Instagram user to understand their meaning. Therefore, these disclosures may not result in advertisement recognition (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). Examples of this unclear language found by the researcher on Instagram are *SP*, *brand ambassador, collaboration, collab, partner,* or *spon.* Previous research found using explicit words within disclosures resulted in higher advertisement recognition, compared to no disclosure, unclear jargon, or challenging abbreviations (Boerman, Willemsen & Van der Aa 2017; Evans et al., 2017; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016).

Another option is to disclose advertisements using a full sentence. When using complete sentences, the disclosure should clearly state the paid nature of the content, to result in advertising recognition (Evans et al., 2017). Simply thanking a brand for a particular product is not enough, since it does not explicitly mention it was received for free (Influencer Marketing Committee, 2018). Other Instagram users might also thank a brand for a product, even though they have not received it for free. To help influencers with their disclosures, Instagram introduced a feature where a pre-made disclosure is available for branded content. This sentence contains explicit language and states 'Paid partnership with', followed by the brand name. The disclosure is located directly underneath an account name or below the number of post likes and is only available for a limited group of influencers (Instagram, 2019). When using the pre-made disclosure, influencers only have to add a brand name to their post. In summary, using explicit wording in both full sentences as hashtags should result in higher advertisement recognition compared to implicit language. This resulted in the subsequent hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The use of explicit language within Instagram advertisement disclosures leads to higher advertisement recognition than implicit language.

2.3. Consumer responses

The presence of advertising disclosures can affect several consumer responses such as advertising recognition, brand attitudes and purchase intentions. Disclosures increase advertising recognition, stimulate defensive coping mechanisms and activate persuasion

knowledge (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Petty and Cacioppo (1977) concluded that consumers are likely to resist persuasion attempts, but only when these are recognised. As a result, previous research has frequently observed negative impacts of disclosures on consumer responses. This study examines the effects of influencer advertising recognition on brand attitude and purchase intention. Additionally, the moderating effect of source credibility and the impact of source gender is researched.

2.3.1. Advertising recognition

Sponsored content on Instagram often contains product opinions and recommendations to influence consumers. Many of these persuasion attempts have limited impact since people do not always want to be persuaded (Fransen, Smit & Verlegh, 2015). People aim to reduce behavioural change and preserve their current attitudes. As a result, they counter and resist the persuasive intent by adopting resistance strategies. Examples of these resistance strategies are avoidance, contesting, biased processing, and empowerment (Fransen, Smit & Verlegh, 2015). However, when failing to identify Instagram content as advertisements, these cognitive resistance strategies will not be activated (Friestad & Wright, 1994). As a result, several groups, including the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC), consider it crucial to inform consumers by disclosing paid promotions on SNS and thereby increasing advertisement recognition (Loude, 2016). In various countries, such as the United States of America and Germany, governments demand to make these paid collaborations known to the public.

Friestad and Wright (1994) advocate that exposure to various persuasive attempts over time helps people develop an understanding of compelling messages. Their persuasion knowledge model (PKM) presents a conceptual clarification of how people can respond to these messages. This study defines persuasion knowledge as information that "enables them (consumers) to recognize, analyse, interpret, evaluate, and remember persuasion attempts and to select and execute coping tactics believed to be effective and appropriate" (Friestad & Wright 1994, p. 3). The PKM proposes that people can activate this knowledge, when coming across persuasive attempts, and can decide for themselves to be persuaded or resist the persuasion. When persuasion knowledge is activated, responses to certain content might be different, compared to when it is not enabled. Thus, persuasion knowledge can lead to different types of cognitive and affective resistance (Boerman & van Reijmersdal, 2016).

2.3.2. Brand attitude

Companies work with influencers to create awareness and positively shape brand attitudes as influencers can shape opinions through their social media channels (Labrecque, 2014). The evaluations and views people have about a brand, or how the brand is generally perceived, are considered brand attitudes (Spears & Singh, 2004). Recognising advertisements could induce negative brand attitudes (Wojdynski & Evans, 2016) since this activates persuasion knowledge, which might result in both cognitive and affective resistance strategies and negative brand perceptions (Van Reijmersdal et al., 2016). Prior research found a negative correlation between top-of-mind brand awareness and disclosures (Cambell et al.,2013). Another study found that sponsorship disclosures on Instagram enhanced ad recognition, which negatively affected brand attitudes (De Veirman & Hudders, 2019). Therefore, it is expected that advertising disclosures in influencer marketing on Instagram negatively influence brand attitudes. The subsequent hypothesis was made:

Hypothesis 3a: The recognition of advertisements negatively influences brand attitudes.

2.3.3. Purchase intention

The ultimate purpose of influencer marketing is to increase sales and create brand awareness. Sharing personal experiences and genuine product or brand reviews on Instagram may result in positive brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014). Purchase intention explains the likelihood and willingness of people to buy a particular product in the near future (Spears & Singh, 2004). The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) clarifies that an individual's beliefs impact the intention to execute a specific action. TPB proposes that the aim to perform particular actions effects actual behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The TPB could be used to explain the connection between purchase intention and the real acquisition of a product. However, the activation of persuasion knowledge through advertisement disclosures could negatively impact attitudinal responses, such as behavioural intentions (Boerman & van Reijmersdal, 2016). It may result in lower purchase intentions (van Reijmersdal et al., 2016). As a result, advertisement recognition is expected to lower purchase intentions. This resulted in the subsequent hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3b: The recognition of advertisements negatively influences purchase intentions.

2.3.4. Source credibility

Sponsored content on Instagram could affect the trustworthiness of social media influencers. A long-used description of source credibility is a consumer's perception of the bias, believability, truth, or facts of the information source (Hass, 1981). The three components of source credibility are perceived trustworthiness, perceived expertise, and perceived attractiveness (Ohanian, 1990). When consumers evaluate the components positively, they perceive an influencer as credible (Hass, 1981). The presence of advertising disclosures may indicate that the influencer is biased, and therefore people lower their perceived credibility (Hwang & Jeong, 2016). Prior research has found that disclosing sponsored content on blogs resulted in more negative source credibility as opposed to no disclosure (Lu, Chang & Chang, 2014). Boerman et al. (2012) explain that the activation of persuasion knowledge can cause the reduction of perceived credibility.

Source credibility can function as a moderator for consumer responses because people are more likely to accept messages if they perceive the source as credible (Chu & Kamal, 2008). If consumers feel the credibility of a message does not meet their expectations, they may resist the persuasive attempt (Lee & Koo, 2016). Research on advertising disclosures on Instagram discovered that informing consumers about the true nature of sponsored content leads to ad scepticism. In turn, ad scepticism leads to more negative influencer credibility (De Veirman & Hudders, 2019). Therefore, the following hypotheses were made:

Hypothesis 4a: Advertising recognition will lead to more negative brand attitudes when the influencer is seen as less credible.

Hypothesis 4b: Advertising recognition will lead to more negative purchase intentions when the influencer is seen as less credible.

2.4. Influence of gender

Gender influences in marketing is a popular research topic. Prior studies focused on the impact of gender in information processing, peripheral cues, visual design, or web advertising. The majority of these studies concentrated on the gender of the consumer. However, there is limited empirical research on the effect of the characteristics of the informational source. Todd and Melancon (2017) found that a source can influence the persuasiveness and effectiveness of a message. But the influence of the gender of the source was not specifically researched. Winter and Krämer (2014) studied the effects of personal characteristics of blog authors.

Results showed that gender is an essential variable for perceived credibility, as well as information selection. Participants, no matter their gender, preferred blogs by female authors.

Todd and Melancon (2017) conducted one of the few studies into the effects of source gender on SNS. They researched the impact of gender of the source on perceived attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness of the influencer. Their research was done in the context live-streaming on SNS and Twitch. Results revealed that using a female source increased perception of attractiveness, but only for a male audience. Moreover, source gender did not significantly influence perceived trustworthiness, but females received slightly higher perceptions of trustworthy.

The lack of empirical research into the effects of source gender in the field of influencer marketing presents an exciting research gap. Especially in the area of gaming, where research by Shaw (2011) on gamer identity showed there is a significant impact of gender, researching the effect of source gender can offer an interesting perspective. Based on earlier results, and due to the strong influence of males within this particular industry, it is probable male gaming influencers will be viewed as more credible compared to females. This resulted in the subsequent hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Male gaming influencers are perceived as more credible compared to female gaming influencers.

3. Research design and methods

3.1. Design

This research explored the relationship between advertisement disclosures and advertising recognition and its effects on consumer opinions in influencer marketing on Instagram. Moreover, it was researched how source gender influences source credibility and how source credibility impacts the relationship between advertising recognition and consumer opinions. Therefore, this study used a 2 (male or female) x 2 (top disclosure position and bottom disclosure position) x 2 (explicit disclosure language and implicit disclosure language) experimental between subject research design.

An online experiment was used to achieve the aim of the research. It included four different dependent variables, *advertisement recognition*, *brand attitude, purchase intention,* and *source credibility*. The study manipulated three independent variables, the *source gender*, *disclosure location*, and *disclosure language*. Moreover, it was measured how *source credibility* moderated the effect of *advertising recognition* on *brand attitudes* and *purchase intention*. Figure 1 shows the research model.

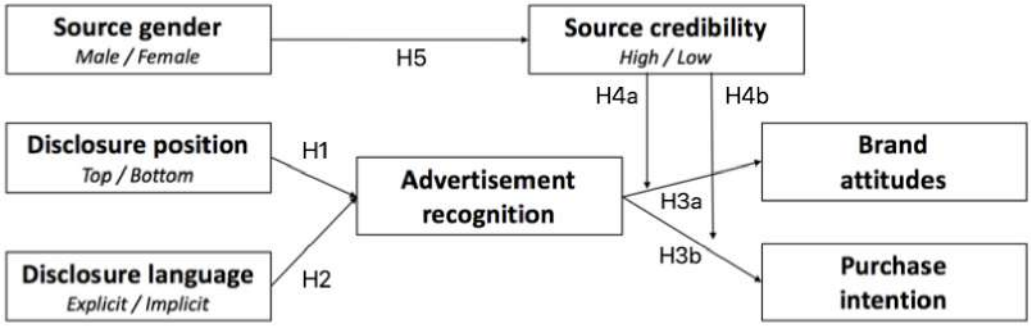

Figure 1 – Proposed conceptual research model

The research consisted of eight difference research conditions. These are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Research conditions

Condition	Disclosure location	Disclosure language	Influencer gender
1	Top location	Explicit language	Male
2	Top location	Implicit language	Male
3	Bottom location	Explicit language	Male
4	Bottom location	Implicit language	Male
5	Top location	Explicit language	Female
6	Top location	Implicit language	Female
7	Bottom location	Explicit language	Female
8	Bottom location	Implicit language	Female

3.2. Pre-study

To arrive at the stimulus materials for the main research, a pre-study was done. The main study used hypothetical influencers and stimulus materials. To control how the attitudes towards the hypothetical influencer might impact the hypothesised relationships, a pre-study was conducted. Within the same pre-study, the relevant verbal stimuli were selected. The aim was finding a fake male and female influencer that generated the most neutral attitudes and select the appropriate visual and verbal stimuli.

Within the pre-study, eight different fake influencers were included, four females and four males. All of the fake influencers were close relatives to the researcher and were in no way famous. The researcher made eight identical photos of the 'influencers'. In these pictures the influencers were standing in front of a white wall, wearing a grey t-shirt and had a gaming headset on their heads. This situation was inspired by real influencer pictures present on Instagram. The setting of the eight pictures were alike, merely the person in the picture was different. The aim of the pre-study was to select the pictures which would be used in the main research, the male and female influencer which generated the most neutral attitudes.

Subsequently, different verbal stimuli were tested within the pre-study. The researcher wrote a description, better known as an Instagram caption, based on more than 100 real game related Instagram captions. Therefore, the fake caption was based on real existing captions. Within the caption, a gaming headset of a hypothetical gaming brand was being promoted. A hypothetical brand was used, to prevent bias because of brand recognition. The brand was

called ‘Vana Gaming’. This name was inspired on the second surname of the researcher. From the caption, a total of six different versions with advertising disclosures were written, three with explicit disclosures and three with implicit ones. An overview of the entire pre-study with all the tested materials can be found in Appendix B.

A convenience sample of Instagram users (N = 10) participated in the pre-study. This sample included both males (N = 6) and females (N = 4) of which almost all (N = 9) owned a gaming console. The first part of the pre-study included questions about the pictures. Participants were asked to view a picture and answer questions afterwards. The questions measured source credibility and included statements about source expertise, source attractiveness and source trustworthiness. The male and female influencers with the most average source credibility score (female $M = 4.20$ male $M = 3.97$) were selected for the main research. The second part of the pre-study focussed on the captions with the advertising disclosures. Participants were asked to read the captions and answers statements about advertising recognition. The researcher chose to select the implicit disclosure with the lowest average advertising recognition score ($M = 4.70$). In contrast, the explicit disclosure with the highest average score ($M = 6.43$) was selected. This choice was made since these disclosures would be able to clearly test the hypotheses. The entire results of the pre-study can be found in Appendix A.

3.3. Stimulus materials

With the results of the pre-study, eight different sets of stimulus materials were made. The materials consisted of one Instagram post for each research condition (table 1). To make the stimulus materials, the researcher used an Instagram faker tool and Adobe Photoshop. The posts included an influencer name, a picture, the number of likes and comments and a caption with an advertising disclosure. The stimulus materials for the different conditions were almost identical, except for the pictures and the advertising disclosure. Therefore, only two photographs were used throughout the entire research. The captions were manipulated by displaying either the explicit disclosure ‘Paid partnership with Vana Gaming’ or implicit disclosure ‘#sp’. This resulted in eight different sets of stimulus materials. Figure 2 shows the stimulus material for the research condition with a bottom explicit advertising disclosure and a top explicit disclosure. All of the eight stimulus materials can be found in Appendix C.

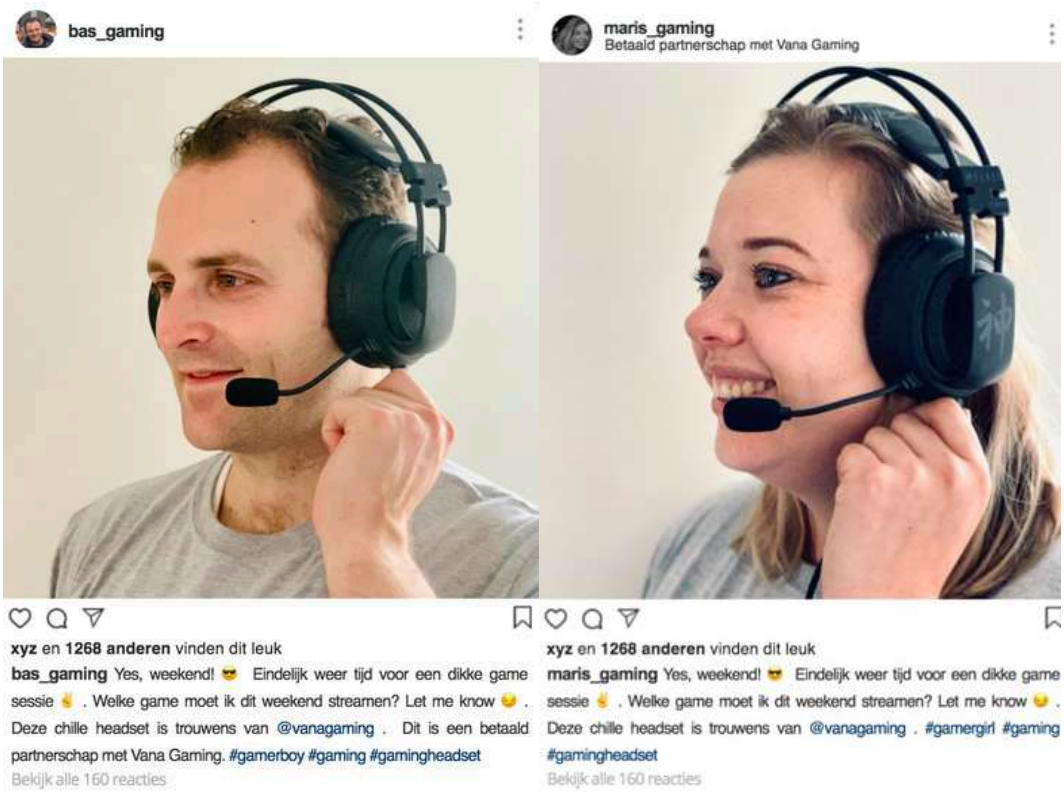

Figure 2 – Two examples of the stimulus materials used in the main study

3.4. Research procedure

Before starting the online experiment, participants were provided with a short introduction to the research, plus a link to the secure online survey. The test was made using Qualtrics, where participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight research conditions displayed in table 1.

Starting the experiment, respondents were asked several socio-demographic questions about age and gender. The survey continued by asking how frequently respondents use Instagram and for how long they have been using it. Moreover, some questions were asked about their interests in gaming and how often they play games.

Next, participants were asked to view the stimulus material and answer questions accordingly. The questionnaire started with two control variables. These control questions aimed to measure if respondents were familiar with either the brand or the influencer, as this could impact their answers. After the control questions, the measurement items were presented. These included statements about brand attitude, purchase intention, and source credibility.

Advertising recognition was measured after these consumer responses, so that recognition was the result of the stimulus material, not of the previous questions.

The questionnaire ended with another set of two control variables. These questions concerned disclosure recall and product interest.

3.5. Measurements

*Brand attitud*e was measured by asking participants how they perceived the advertised brand Vana Gaming. A 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) was used to measure a total of six items (Gordon & Bruner, 2009). This scale was proven to be reliable with an alpha of .93.

Table 2 – Research items brand attitude

Item category	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Brand attitude	I think Vana is good.	4.14	0.95
	I think Vana is pleasant.	4.28	0.93
	I think Vana is favourable.	4.18	0.93
	I think Vana is positive.	4.35	1.03
	I think Vana is likeable.	4.28	1.04
	I think Vana is of high quality.	4.24	1.04

Purchase intention measures the likelihood someone will buy a product. This was measured by the means of four different items using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) (Spears & Singh, 2004). The scale was proven to be reliable with an alpha of .96.

Table 3 – Research items purchase intention

Item category	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Purchase intention	I will buy Vana.	2.44	1.40
	I have the intention to buy a product of Vana.	2.32	1.41
	I am interested in buying a product of Vana.	2.58	1.58
	It is likely that I will buy a product of Vana in the future.	2.57	1.53

Source credibility was measured by asking participants how they feel about the social media influencer. The items were based on a research by Ohanian (1990), who divided source credibility into three different sections: *source attractiveness, source trustworthiness*, and *source expertise*. A 7-point semantic differential scale with a total of 15 items was used to assess this variable. The respondents were asked 'I believe the social media influencer is …'. These scales are reliable with alpha scores of .84, .92, and .92.

Table 4 – Research items source credibility

Item category	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Source credibility	Attractive/Unattractive	3.57	1.65
Attractiveness	Classy/Not classy	3.65	1.49
	Beautiful/Ugly	3.94	1.35
	Elegant/Plain	3.80	1.22
	Sexy/Not sexy	3.29	1.47
Trustworthiness	Dependable/Undependable	4.42	1.31
	Honest/Dishonest	4.34	1.28
	Reliable/Unreliable	4.16	1.45
	Sincere/Insincere	4.14	1.41
	Trustworthy/untrustworthy	4.22	1.30
Expertise	Expert/Not an expert	3.87	1.38
	Experienced/Inexperienced	4.12	1.30
	Knowledgeable/Unknowledgeable	4.14	1.13
	Qualified/Unqualified	4.10	1.19
	Skilled/Unskilled	4.03	1.12

Advertisement recognition was measured using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). To assess this variable, three items were used (Boerman et al., 2012; van Reijmersdal, Neijens & Smit, 2010; van Reijmersdal et al., 2016). This scale proved to be reliable with an alpha of .87.

Table 5 – Research items advertising recognition

Item category	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation
Advertisement recognition	The Instagram post is advertising	5.25	1.59
	The Instagram post is commercial.	5.43	1.44
	The Instagram post contains advertising.	5.50	1.48

3.6. Participants

For the online experiment, a total of 783 participants were recruited through several methods. One method was convenience sampling, since the experiment was shared on different social media pages and websites of several game-related businesses and platforms the researcher has contacts with. Moreover, customers and employees of these businesses were asked to participate. Furthermore, the experiment was shared on different gaming Facebook groups and pages. To increase the number of responses, the researcher awarded a gaming shirt to two randomly selected participants.

From the initial 783 participants, 567 completed the online experiment. Of these 567 responses, 48.2% was male (N = 273). The mean age was 28.25 years, with an age range of 16 to 65 years old. The majority of the respondents used an Instagram account (75.7%), 12.5% had an account but did not use it, and 11.8% had no Instagram account. As for gaming, 24.0% of the respondents played for more than 14 hours a week, 29.5% between eight to 14 hours a week, 33% between one to seven hours a week and 7.4% played less than one hour a week. The remaining 6.2% of the respondents claimed to never play at all. Table 2 shows the number of participants per condition, plus the distribution of gender, percentage of Instagram users, gamers and the mean age.

Table 6 – Number of participants per condition

Condition	**N**	**% male**	**M =age**	**% Instagram users**	**% gamer**
1	73	42.5%	27.53	89.0%	90.4%
2	70	41.2%	27.64	84.3%	92.9%
3	74	56.8%	29.03	90.5%	90.5%
4	71	45.1%	27.18	90.1%	93.0%
5	76	42.1%	28.17	84.2%	96.1%
6	66	54.5%	27.64	92.4%	89.4%
7	70	61.4%	32.07	85.6%	91.4%
8	67	41.8%	26.60	89.6%	92.5%
Total	567	48.1%	28.25	88.2%	92.1%

Randomisations test were used to detect any differences between the experimental groups for the different research conditions. This was done to check whether the respondents were successfully randomised. Chi-Square independence tests confirmed the equal distributions of gender, Instagram usage and gamer identification within the research conditions (see Appendix A). A one-way ANOVA identified that age was not equally distributed between the research conditions (F (7,559) = 2.59, p = .012). The mean age for condition seven is significantly higher compared to the other conditions. However, this did not affect the outcomes of the study as data from respondents in this condition were not noteworthy compared to the other conditions.

Immediately after viewing the stimulus materials, respondents were asked two control questions. These questions were asked to check if the responders were biased by their previous knowledge about the brand or the influencer. 93.7% of the respondents claimed not to recognise the brand Vana Gaming, some claimed to know the brand (N = 30), and a handful mentioned that they had no idea (N = 6). As for recognising the gaming influencer (N = 567, M = *2*.02, SD = 0.42), 92.2% did not (N = 523) recognise the person in the photo. Only 4.4% recognised the influencer (N = 25) and the remaining 3.4% had no idea if they knew the person or not (N = 19). Chi-Square independence tests confirmed the equal distributions of respondents with brand and influencer recognition (see Appendix A). Therefore, they were not excluded from the analyses.

After answering the different research items, two more control questions were asked. First a question about disclosure memory was asked (N = 567, *M* = 2.03, *SD* = 0.72). The majority of respondents (N = 272) could not remember any disclosure. 24.2% could remember that they had seen an advertising disclosure (N = 137), and 27.9% did not know if they had seen a disclosure or not (N = 158). A Chi-Square independence test showed respondents were not equally distributed between the different research conditions. This was expected, since the implicit advertising disclosures resulted in significantly lower levels of disclosure memory compared to the explicit one. When comparing the explicit and implicit research conditions, respondents were equally distributed (see appendix A).

To check for product interest, respondents were asked if they were in the possession of a (gaming) headset (N = 567, *M* = 1.35, *SD* = 0.49). The majority of the respondents owned a headset (N = 369), about 34.6% did not (N = 196). Chi-Square independence test confirmed the equal distributions of respondents.

4. Results

This chapter presents the results of the statistical analyses of the main experiment. First, the hypotheses will be tested. Second the results of several additional analyses will be presented.

4.1. Hypotheses testing

4.1.1. Disclosures and advertising recognition

Hypothesis 1 predicted that advertising disclosures located at the top position would result in higher advertising recognition compared to disclosures at the bottom position. Hypothesis 2 anticipated that explicit advertising disclosures would result in higher advertising recognition compared to implicit advertising disclosures.

A two-way ANOVA was conducted on the influence of disclosure position and disclosure language on advertising recognition. Disclosure position included two levels, top and bottom position, as well as disclosure language, which included implicit and explicit. The model had a significant effect $F(3, 563) = 6.24$, $p < .001$. The main effect for disclosure position yielded an F ratio of $F(1, 563) = 2.29$ $p = .131$, indication that there was no significant difference between the disclosure top position ($N = 285$, $M = 5.32$, $SD = 1.36$) and disclosure bottom position ($N = 282$, $M = 5.47$, $SD = 1.32$). The main effect for disclosure language generated an F ratio of $F(1, 563) = 12.75$, $p < .001$, indicating a significant difference between the explicit disclosure language ($N = 293$, $M = 5.59$, $SD = 1.30$) and the implicit disclosure language ($N = 274$, $M = 5.19$, $SD = 1.36$). The interaction effect was significant $F(1, 563) = 3.95$, $p = .047$. This explained the interaction between disclosure language, disclosure position and advertising recognition. A plot of the interaction effect can be found in figure 3.

These results demonstrate that disclosure position did not influence the respondent's ability to identify the Instagram post as advertising. Moreover, understandable advertising disclosures helped respondents identifying the Instagram post as advertising. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected and hypothesis 2 was accepted.

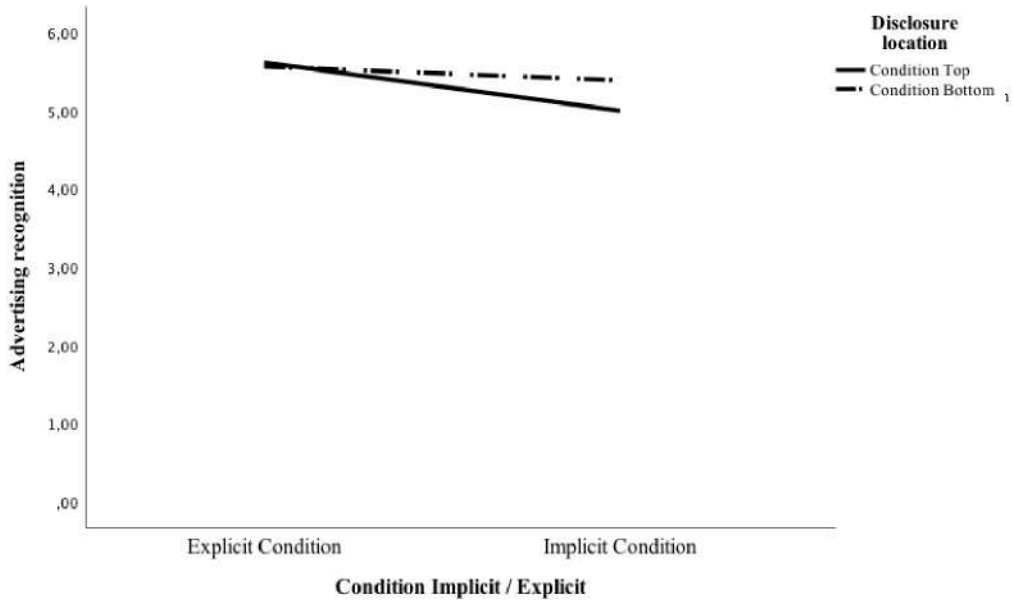

Figure 3 – Interaction effect disclosure language and disclosure position

4.1.2. Advertising recognition and consumer responses

Hypothesis 3a predicted that the recognition of advertisements negatively influences brand attitudes. Hypothesis 3b anticipated that advertising recognition would negatively influence purchase intentions.

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict brand attitude based on advertisement recognition. It was found that advertising recognition did not reliably predict brand attitudes F (1,565) = 0.02, p = .895, R^2 < .01. These results showed that recognising an Instagram post as advertisement did not significantly influence participant's brand attitudes. Therefore, hypothesis 3a is rejected.

Another simple linear regression was calculated to predict purchase intention based on advertising recognition. It was found that advertising recognition did reliably predict purchase intentions F (1,565) = 38.41, p < .001, R^2 = .06. The standardized regression coefficient was (β -.26). These results showed that advertising recognition had a weakly negative effect on purchase intention. So, if advertising recognition increases, purchase intention slightly decreases. Therefore, hypothesis 3b is accepted.

4.1.3. Impact of source credibility on consumer responses

Hypothesis 4a predicted that advertising recognition would lead to lower brand attitudes when the influencer was seen as less credible. Hypothesis 4b anticipated that advertising recognition would lead to lower purchase intentions when the influencer was seen as less credible. To test these interaction effects the sample was split in two groups. These groups were created based on the median of source credibility and resulted in a group with low scores for source credibility and one with high scores.

Two multiple linear regressions were conducted to predict brand attitude based on advertising recognition, for both low and the high source credibility. It was found that advertising recognition and low source credibility did not reliably predict brand attitude F (2, 314) = 2.01, p = .136, R^2 = .01. For high source credibility, it was found that advertising recognition and high source credibility reliably predicted brand attitude F (2, 247) = 22.19, p < .001, R^2 = .15. The standardized regression coefficient was (β .39) for source credibility. So, results did not significantly show that brand attitude increased when source credibility increased as well. Therefore, hypothesis 4a is rejected.

Two other multiple linear regressions were conducted to predict purchase intention based on advertising recognition, for both low and high source credibility. It was found that advertising recognition and low source credibility did reliably predict purchase intention F (2, 314) = 11.50, p < .001), R^2 = .06. The standardized regression coefficients were (β .12) for source credibility and (β -.23) for purchase intention. For high source credibility, it was found that advertising recognition and high source credibility reliably predicted purchase intention F (2, 247) = 19.87, p < .001), R^2 = .13. The standardized regression coefficients were (β .28) for source credibility and (β -.24) for advertising recognition. So, results showed that purchase intention increases with higher source credibility and decreases when advertising recognition increases. Therefore, hypothesis 4b is accepted.

4.1.4. Source gender and source credibility

Hypothesis 5 estimated that male gaming influencers would be perceived as more credible compared to female gaming influencers.

A two sample t-test was used to compare the levels of source credibility for male and female gaming influencers. Results showed a significant difference for the male influencer (N

= 288, *M* = 3.88, *SD* = 0.72) and the female influencer (N = 279, *M* = 4.09, *SD* = 1.07) conditions (t (565) = -2.68, *p* = .004) for the perception of source credibility. These research outcomes showed that female gaming influencers are perceived more credible compared to male gaming influencers. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is rejected.

Three different two sample t-tests were used to compare the levels of source credibility for male and female gaming influencers. For source attractiveness, results showed a significant difference between male influencers (N = 288, *M* = 3.38, *SD* = 0.92) and female influencers (N = 279, *M* = 3.94, *SD* = 1.26) conditions (t (565) = -6.10, *p* < .001). Data showed that female influencers were perceived more attractive compared to male influencers. Researching source trustworthiness, result showed no significant difference for male influencers (N = 288, *M* = 4.19, *SD* = 1.01) and female influencers (N = 279, *M* = 4.33, *SD* = 1.32) conditions (t (565) = -1.37, *p* = .085). Therefore, source gender did not impact respondent's perceptions of trustworthiness. As for source expertise, results showed no significant difference for the male influencer (N = 288, *M* = 4.09, *SD* = 0.92) and the female influencer (N = 279, *M* = 4.01, *SD* = 1.19) conditions (t (565) = -0.93, *p* = .176). So, source gender had no influence on respondent's perceptions of expertise.

4.1.5. Additional testing

Additional to the hypotheses testing, several other tests were conducted to gain useful insights. The results of these test are presented within this chapter.

A three-way ANOVA was conducted for the effect of three independent variables (disclosure language, disclosure position and source gender) on the levels of advertising recognition. The analysis showed the model had a significant main effect F (7,559) = 3.82, *p* < .001. No significant effect of disclosure position on advertising recognition was found F (1,559) = 2.35, *p* = .126. No significant effect of source gender on advertising recognition was found F (1,559) = 1.29, *p* = .256. A significant effect of disclosure language on advertising recognition was found F (1,563) = 12.78, *p* < .001.

Moreover, analysis showed a significant interaction effect between disclosure language, disclosure position and source gender on advertising recognition F (1,559) = 5.26, *p* = .022. The advertising recognition at the implicit condition for males was comparable for top position (N = 70, *M* = 5.19, *SD* = 1.43) and the bottom position (N = 71, *M* = 5.41, *SD* = 1.40). However,

for females there was a significant difference for top position (N = 66, *M* = 4.79, *SD* = 1.43) and the bottom position (N = 67, *M* = 5.36, *SD* = 1.06) in terms of advertising recognition.

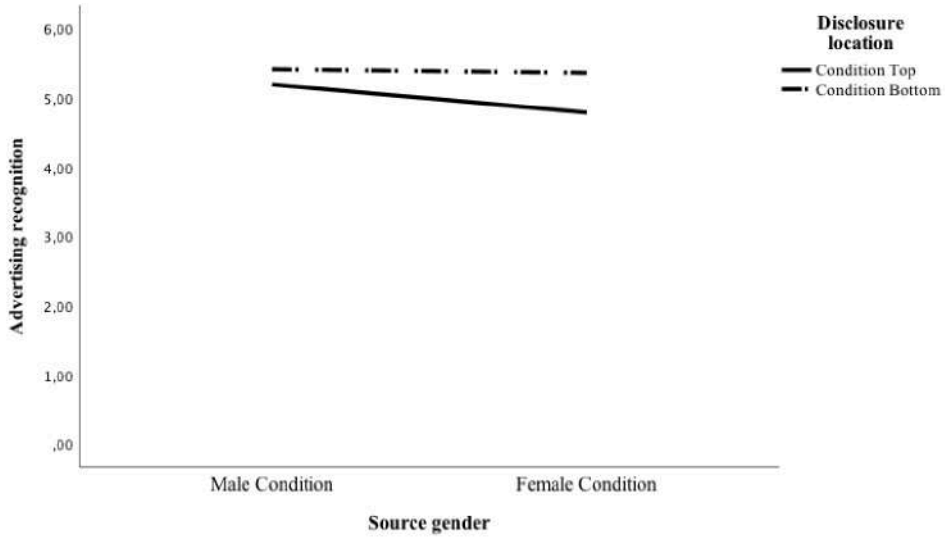

Figure 4 – Interaction effect for the implicit research condition

For the explicit condition males had lower advertising recognition for the top position (N = 73, *M* = 5.46, *SD* = 1.32) as for the bottom position (N = 74, *M* = 5.73, *SD* = 1.78). Whereas woman had higher advertising recognition for the top position (N = 76, *M* = 5.76, *SD* = 1.08) as for the bottom position (N = 70, *M* = 5.38, *SD* = 1.59).

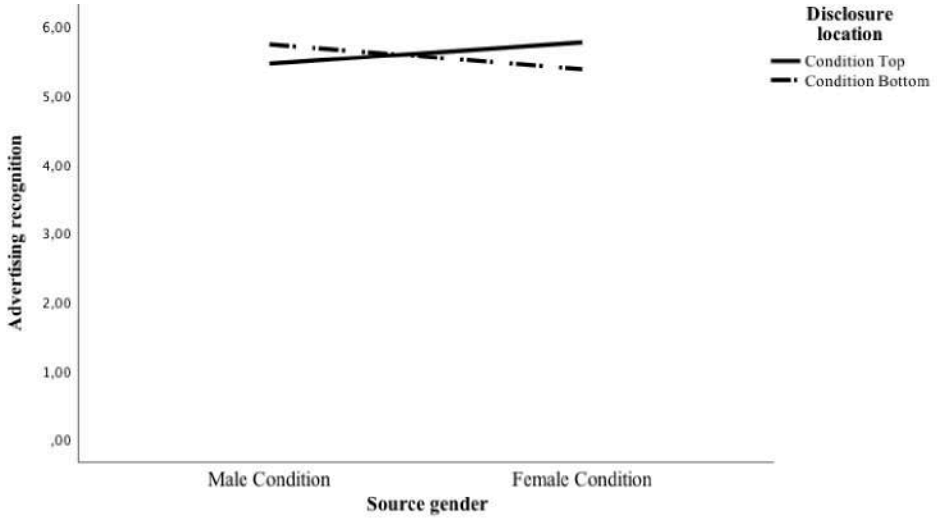

Figure 5 – Interaction effect for the explicit research condition

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict purchase intention based on brand attitude. It was found that brand attitude did reliably predict purchase intentions F (1,565) = 68.16, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .11$. The standardized regression coefficients was (β .33). These results showed that a more positive brand attitude resulted in higher levels of purchase intentions. Meaning that if a respondent was positive about the brand, they were more likely to buy products from it.

It was tested whether disclosure language had an effect on purchase intention. A two sample t-test was conducted to compare the levels of purchase intention for the explicit and implicit disclosure languages. The outcome presented a significant difference for the explicit disclosure language (N = 293, $M = 5.59$, $SD = 1.30$) and the implicit disclosure language (N = 274, $M = 5.19$, $SD = 1.36$) conditions (t (565) = -1.69, $p = .046$). These data showed that explicit language resulted in lower purchase intention ($M = 2.38$) compared to implicit language ($M = 2.58$). So, when respondents were able to understand the advertising disclosure, they were less willing to buy the promoted product.

Product interest was measured by asking participants if they owned a gaming headset. Owners of a gaming headset were registered as having high levels of product interest. A two sample t-test compared the influence of product interest on purchase intention. The outcome presented a significant difference in purchase intention for high levels of product interest (N = 369, $M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.34$ and low levels of product interest (N = 196, $M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.45$) (t (563) = 2.24, $p = .013$). These results indicated that high levels of product interest resulted in higher purchase intentions.

Disclosure memory was measured at the end of the survey by asking participants if they remembered any disclosure. An analysis was conducted to see if disclosure language had any influence on disclosure memory. To compare the levels of disclosure memory for the explicit and implicit language conditions, a Chi square test for independence was conducted. Results showed that there was an association between disclosure memory and disclosure language ($X^2(2) = 59.14$, $p < .001$). Explicit language had a more positive influence on disclosure memory compared to implicit language. So, when respondents were presented with a clear and understandable advertising disclosure, they were more likely to remember the disclosure, compared to an unclear label.

5. Discussion

This chapter presents a general discussion of the research results. Afterward, the practical and academic research implications are presented, followed by future research suggestions and limitations of this research.

5.1. General discussion

Native advertising is a marketing method frequently used on SNS where consumers are unaware of the commercial intention of a message. Encouraged by the rising popularity of native advertising and limited research into gaming peripherals, this research sought to investigate the practice of influencer marketing on SNS Instagram within the gaming peripherals market. Advertising disclosures are used in native advertising to reveal the paid relationship between an organisation and influencer to the public. Prior research data showed that the presence of advertising disclosures might increase advertising recognition (Van Reijmersdal et al., 2016; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). However, since studies on the characteristics of these disclosures are limited in the context of Instagram, this research aimed to shed light on this particular research gap. This study intended to examine influencer marketing within the gaming peripherals market. Source gender, advertising disclosures, and advertising recognition and their effects on consumer responses were researched. Moreover, the moderating effect of source credibility on brand attitude and purchase intention was researched.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that advertising disclosures located at the top position would result in higher advertising recognition compared to disclosures at the bottom position. Data rejected this hypothesis. Therefore, this study was unable to prove any significant effect between disclosure position and advertising recognition. Since there was limited earlier research on the effect of disclosures on mobile applications, prior studies on disclosures in different types of media, such as webpages, editorial content, and newspapers, were used to draw up the hypothesis. One of these studies was conducted by Nielsen (2006), who concluded that data near the top left corner of a webpage has the highest potential to be seen. Other research conclusions on scanning patterns (Kim & Shin, 2014; Nielsen, 2006), points of interests (Faraday, 2000), and advertising disclosure locations (Boerman et al., 2012; Campbel, Moht & Verlegh, 2013; Cameron, 1994) were used as well. However, none of these studies were conducted using a mobile application. Since this research was done using the mobile app of

Instagram, these earlier findings might not have been relevant. Moreover, most of the earlier studies are relatively old and outdated as the average daily time Europeans spent using the internet on mobile phones has increased from 10.7 minutes in 2011 to 103.5 minutes in 2018 (Statista, 2019). This increase in time spend on mobile internet might have changed user scanning patters and points of interests over the last few years. Therefore, research data from the years 2012 and 2013 might not be relevant anymore today. This could explain the rejection of hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 anticipated that explicit advertising disclosures would result in higher advertising recognition compared to implicit advertising disclosures. Data showed that disclosure language had a significant effect on advertising recognition. As hypothesised, using explicit language in advertising disclosures resulted in higher advertising recognition compared to implicit language. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was accepted. It appeared that understandable language improved respondent's capability to identify the Instagram post as advertising. This because the specific disclosure 'In paid partnership with' resulted in significantly higher levels of advertising recognition than the unclear abbreviation 'SP'. These results support previous research by Evans, Jun, and Phua (2017). Their research outcomes showed that recognising and understanding disclosures was crucial for identifying advertisements. Arguably, it may be that other formulations of explicit or implicit declarations lead to different results, as this study only tested one formulation.

Additional analysis found that disclosure language did not only influence advertising recognition, but also impacted the respondent's disclosure memory. At the end of the survey participants were asked if they remembered any disclosure. Data showed that the use of explicit language resulted in higher levels of disclosure memory, compared to implicit language. When respondents were presented with a clear and understandable advertising disclosure, they were more likely to remember the disclosure, compared to an unclear label. So, explicit disclosures resulted in higher advertising recognition and higher disclosure memory.

Based on prior research, hypothesis 3a predicted that the recognition of advertisements negatively influences brand attitudes (Evans, Phua, & Jun, 2017; Friestad & Wright,1994; Van Reijmersdal et al., 2016; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). However, current data did not demonstrate any significant effect between advertising recognition and brand attitude. Therefore, hypothesis 3a was rejected. The majority of respondents did not recall any

advertising disclosure (48.0%) or did not know it anymore (27.9%), indicating they might not have noticed the disclosures in the stimulus materials. Research by Wojdynski & Evans (2016) concluded that disclosures were only effective when users viewed them. Therefore, the disclosures presented in the stimulus materials might have been ineffective. Resulting in respondents not activating their persuasion knowledge or initiating their resistance strategies (Friestad & Wright, 1994). As a result, their brand attitudes were not influenced by advertising recognition, explaining the missing relationship.

Another possible explanation for the lacking effect between advertising recognition and brand attitudes could be the brand mention within the stimulus materials. For the purpose of this research, the gaming brand 'Vana Gaming' was made up. A fake brand was chosen so that prior knowledge of the brand would not influence respondents. Vana Gaming was briefly introduced to all respondents as it was mentioned within all of the stimulus materials. However, if respondents did not pay enough attention to the stimulus materials, they might have overlooked this brand mention. As a result, the disclosure label did not influence their brand attitudes. In short, this study could not confirm advertising disclosures to affect brand attitudes.

Hypothesis 3b anticipated that advertising recognition would negatively influence purchase intentions. Data showed that recognising the commercial purpose lowered the likelihood to buy the promoted product. Therefore, hypothesis 3b was accepted. This outcome supported prior research by Lu, Chang, and Chang (2014), who concluded that influencer experiences shared on Instagram might impact purchase decisions. Moreover, previous analysis by Boerman and Van Reijmersdal (2016) was supported, as they concluded that the activation of persuasion knowledge could negatively impact behavioural intentions.

Additional analysis found a significant difference in purchase intentions for headset owners and people who did not own a headset. This could be explained by their levels of interest. Product interest was measured by asking participants if they owned a gaming headset. Owners of a gaming headset were registered as having high levels of product interest. Respondents who did not own a gaming headset had lower purchase intentions compared to respondents who did. Therefore, the level of product interest also influenced the intention to purchase a gaming headset.

Earlier research showed that a paid relationship between an organisation and influencer could damage the credibility of the influencer (Hwang & Jeong, 2016; Lee & Koo, 2012). Moreover, source credibility may have a moderating effect on brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Chu & Kamal, 2008; Lee & Koo, 2012). Therefore, hypothesis 4a predicted that advertising recognition would lead to lower brand attitudes when the influencer was seen as less credible. However, data could not confirm this assumption, as no significant moderating effect of source credibility was found. Therefore, hypothesis 4a was rejected. Additionally, hypothesis 4b anticipated that advertising recognition would lead to lower purchase intentions when the influencer was seen as less credible. As data showed that lower perceptions of credibility lead to lower purchase intentions, hypothesis 4b was accepted.

The rejection of the hypothesis 4a could be explained by the fact that the online experiment used information from an unknown source. The brand review showed in the stimulus materials contained personal information from an, to the respondent, unknown person. Acting on messages from unidentified sources has a high-risk perception, since their credibility is unknown (Lee & Koo, 2012). As a result, respondents might not have acted on the presented message, as they viewed the risks were too high. Therefore, their brand attitudes were not impacted by the opinion of the influencer.

In line with the previous explanation, an alternative possibility could be the lack of source familiarity and the missing relationship between the influencer and the respondent. Erdogan (1999) concluded that the familiarity of the source might impact message effectiveness. Moreover, Labrecque (2014) and Lueg and Finney (2007) found that influencers are often viewed as equals, a reliable source of information, or even occasionally referred to as real friends. However, during this experiment respondents were unfamiliar with the influencer. As a result, the effectiveness of the Instagram post might have decreased, since the information source was unfamiliar and not identified as reliable. Consequently, brand attitudes were not influenced. In conclusion, this research could not confirm source credibility to have a moderating effect on brand attitude.

Many prior researchers describe gaming as a masculine activity (Shaw, 2011). Therefore, hypothesis 5 predicted that respondents would perceive male influencers as more credible compared to female influencers when promoting a gaming peripheral product. A significant effect between source gender and source credibility was found. However, female

influencers were seen as more credible compared to male influencers. Therefore, hypothesis 5 was rejected. The picture used in stimulus materials could have impacted this outcome. Respondents may not have identified the influencers as gamers, since the setting was not game related. The image showed a male or female standing in front of a white wall, wearing a headset. This might not have informed respondents about them being gamers. Thus, the male influencer did not generate higher credibility perceptions.

5.2. Theoretical and practical implications

This research has several implications for researchers, brands, companies, and social media influencers. Especially with the increasing popularity of influencer marketing and the limited research on the growing gaming peripherals market, it is crucial to implicate research findings on these topics.

Results of this study supported previous research by Evans, Jun and Phua, (2017) on the relationship between disclosure language and advertising recognition, as the usage of explicit language increased advertising recognition. In turn, increased advertising recognition lead to lower purchase intentions, which supported prior research by Boerman and van Reijmersdal (2016). To date, disclosing sponsored content on Instagram is not forced by law within the Netherlands. Nevertheless, disclosing the paid relationship between organisations and influencers is considered a decent thing to do. Though results showed that using explicit disclosure language may be most effective in increasing advertising recognition and activating persuasion knowledge, results also showed that advertising recognition might lower purchase intentions. Therefore, explicit disclosures could reduce purchases. So, companies are faced with the challenge of acting ethical, while at the same time ensuring positive returns on their investment in influencer marketing. The results of this study imply that organisations and influencers should consider the negative effect of advertising awareness when disclosing paid relationships on Instagram. However, they should strive to make their messages clear and understandable. This because, even if it is not forced by law, using explicit language in disclosures is considered ethical since it properly informs viewers about the content.

The lack of significant effect between disclosure location and advertising recognition presented a practical implication. Social media companies could make both positions easily accessible for advertisement disclosures. Instagram offers pre-made labels for sponsored content. Currently, Instagram offers solely one single possibility for a pre-made disclosure.

Their standard label is a full sentence highlighting the paid relationship located above the media. However, during the summer of 2019, Instagram briefly introduced an additional option for disclosures. This new option made it possible to display the same disclosure underneath the media, above the number of likes and comments. This option had not been used regularly and has not been seen lately. This suggests Instagram might have been A/B testing this feature. However, by making the two locations available for influencers, they are able to choose together with the brand which location would be the best option.

Hypothesis 1 predicted that advertising disclosures located at the top position would result in higher advertising recognition compared to disclosures at the bottom position. This hypothesis was mostly based on prior research on eye tracking and user scanning patterns conducted on webpages. This because there was limited research available on eye-tracking and scanning patterns for social media or mobile applications. However, as the results showed, this might not be entirely applicable to the mobile app of Instagram. The theoretical implication presented here is that more research into scanning patterns on mobile applications and social media is needed as research showed that scanning patterns are different between webpages and mobile applications.

This study hypothesised that male gaming influencers would be seen as more credible compared to females. However, this hypothesis was rejected because data showed that female gaming influencers are perceived more credible instead of males. This outcome might motivate companies to work more with female gaming influences instead of males. However, this research only tested two social media influencers, one male and one female. Consequently, results might not be generally applicable to all gaming influencers. Before companies decide to work with female gaming influencers more instead of males, additional research will have to be conducted.

5.3. Limitations and future research

This research had several limitations which could decrease its significance or stability of the research results.

Stimulus materials – The researcher created fake Instagram posts with Photoshop and a digital tool and tried to make the materials as accurate as possible. To make the captions, over 100 game related Instagram posts were viewed. Moreover, many influencer pictures were

observed to help create the setting of the image. This made the stimulus materials as representative as possible. However, because the pictures and captions were not created by a fulltime social media influencer, it is possible this impacted results. Respondents might not have found the stimulus materials realistic. Therefore, future researchers could work together with a social media influencer to create the pictures and captions. This way, respondents might react differently to the presented material as they may feel that they are more realistic.

Influencer recognition - To prevent bias, fake influencers were used for the creation of the stimulus materials. The online experiment did not provide an introduction to the influencer, leaving respondents without any information. This was done so it could be clearly tested whether the gender of the influencer had any impact on perceptions of credibility. It is possible that because respondents were not familiar with the influencer, perceptions of credibility were lower. Another line of reasoning could be that because respondents only saw one picture, they did not have enough information to judge whether the influencer was trustworthy or a credible source of information. Both of these aspects could have influenced responses. A small introduction to both the brand and the influencer might help prevent this in future research. Future research could test whether providing respondent with more information might change the outcomes. Research outcomes could then be used by social media agencies or brands to increase the effectiveness of their influencer marketing strategies.

Setting – During the online experiment, respondents saw one single Instagram post. This decision was made as the researcher chose quality over quantity and it was believed that the hypotheses could still be tested effectively. By only presenting one Instagram post, it might have created an unrealistic situation for the respondent. They were unable to view the Instagram account of the influencer or scroll through multiple updates on the Instagram timeline. Therefore, the setting of the experiment was not very realistic. Since respondent were only presented with one post, and told in advance to observe it closely, this might have triggered them to pay closer attention to the posts, something that might not have happened in a real environment. Future research might display more of an actual Instagram timeline to create a more realistic setup. Yet, creating more Instagram posts takes a large amount of time, producing the risk of losing quality by increasing the quantity.

Disclosure language – This research tested two different language options for research disclosures, explicit and implicit. For both the explicit as the implicit three different

formulations were pre-tested. The aim of the pre-study was to find out which of the labels generated the highest and the lowest advertising recognition so the hypothesis could be clearly tested. Since the focus was on quality over quantity, only two of these options were selected for the main research, namely 'sp' and 'paid partnership with'. Even though results showed that the explicit disclosure 'paid partnership with' resulted in higher levels of advertising recognition compared to the implicit label 'sp', other explicit or implicit disclosures may lead to different results. Influencers use many different words or phrases for disclosing advertisements. Future research could focus even more on these various forms, as it could provide useful insights to know whether a specific, explicit formulation results in higher advertising recognition.

Sample – The sample of this research may limit generalisability because of age limits. The youngest participants in this research were 16 years old. The age limit was set at 16 years old, since working with younger respondents requires parental consent. However, many children under the age of 16 are active on SNS, such as Instagram. Results may not apply to this young age group because children might be persuaded or influenced differently compared to adults. Moreover, children aged under 16 years old grew up within this digital age. Therefore, they might have more knowledge about SNS compared to adults, which may impact their responses. Future research could study the effect of disclosures on children under the age of 16 years as they might respond very differently to the stimulus materials. Since they are future consumer, knowing how they respond to advertising disclosures will provide useful insights.

5.4. Conclusion

This study was bound by several limitations and raises questions for future research. One of these limitations was the limited amount of disclosures researched. Within this study, only two different disclosure formulations were tested; #SP and 'In paid partnership with'. It was concluded that explicit language is more effective in increasing advertising recognition compared to implicit language. These findings provide a reason to investigate the different disclosure formulations further. Besides testing more language options, future studies should change the setting of the experiment and work with real influencers to create stimulus materials. This study made use of one single Instagram post, where it could be useful to display an actual Instagram timeline to create a more realistic setup. Moreover, the materials were made by the researcher, whereas real influencers might create more realistic research materials. Due to this experimental setup, the generalisability of this research might be limited. Nevertheless, this

research has provided useful insights into influencer marketing in the gaming peripherals market.

This study focused on influencer marketing on Instagram. Empirical research into this relatively new marketing method is limited and more scientific research is required, especially in the growing field of gaming peripherals, as many brands are increasing their marketing budgets for influencer marketing and it is becoming a million-dollar business. With the rising popularity of E-sports, the market of gaming peripherals has grown exceptionally over the last few years, and so have the number of gaming influencers. The results of this study provide a useful perspective on this research gap and raise questions for future research.

Many argue influencer marketing is highly effective as it hides the real commercial intent of the message. Because this is considered unethical by several governments and other agencies, numerous influencers started disclosing their paid relationships with brands. In their disclosures, influencers can use two types of disclosure languages; explicit or implicit. However, results showed that explicit disclosures might impact the effectiveness of the advertisements as it triggers advertising recognition, which lowered purchase intentions. Therefore, it seems brands and influencers are in a battle between acting ethical and increasing profits. While influencers might be likely to choose the most ethical methods, since they feel they have an obligation to their followers, brands might have more interest in increasing revenue.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Additional tables

Table 6 - Chi-square test for independence of gender across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18,463[a]	14	,187
Likelihood Ratio	18,054	14	,204
Linear-by-Linear Association	,204	1	,651
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 7 - Chi-square test for independence of Instagram accounts across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11,523[a]	14	,645
Likelihood Ratio	11,625	14	,636
Linear-by-Linear Association	,540	1	,462
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 8 - Chi-square test for independence of gamers across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3,004[a]	7	,885
Likelihood Ratio	3,271	7	,859
Linear-by-Linear Association	,101	1	,750
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 9 – ANOVA for age of the respondents across the study conditions

ANOVA

Age (in years)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1419,311	7	202,759	2,591	,012
Within Groups	43741,613	559	78,250		
Total	45160,924	566			

Table 10 - Chi-square test for independence of influencer recognition across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11,659[a]	14	,634
Likelihood Ratio	16,146	14	,305
Linear-by-Linear Association	,010	1	,920
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 11 - Chi-square test for independence of brand recognition across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11,759[a]	14	,626
Likelihood Ratio	12,867	14	,537
Linear-by-Linear Association	1,916	1	,166
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 12 – Overview of disclosure memory across the study conditions

Crosstabulation

		Advertising_label			
		Ja	Nee	Weet ik niet	Total
Condition	1 Top Explicit Male	25	28	20	73
	2 Bottom Explicit Male	30	25	19	74
	3 Bottom Implicit Male	6	49	16	71
	4 Top Implicit Male	7	41	22	70
	5 Top Explicit Female	24	27	25	76
	6 Top Implicit Female	8	42	16	66
	7 Bottom Explicit Female	29	25	16	70
	8 Bottom Implicit Female	8	35	24	67
Total		137	272	158	567

Table 13– Chi-square test for independence of disclosure memory across the study conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68,132[a]	14	,000
Likelihood Ratio	70,284	14	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2,327	1	,127
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 14– Chi-square test for independence of product interest across the conditions

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9,739[a]	14	,781
Likelihood Ratio	9,321	14	,810
Linear-by-Linear Association	,009	1	,924
N of Valid Cases	567		

Table 15– Results pre-study influencer mean credibility scores

Report

Gender		Influ-encer 1	Influ-encer 2	Influ-encer 3	Influ-encer 4	Influ-encer 5	Influ-encer 6	Influ-encer 7	Influ-encer 8
1 Man	Mean	4.32	4.80	4.21	4.67	4.76	3.98	4.42	3.87
	Std. Dev.	.39	.60	.47	.93	.63	.90	.53	.78
2 Vrouw	Mean	3.75	4.56	4.18	4,18	4.71	3.96	4.18	4,40
	Std. Dev.	1.15	.91	.66	.59	.72	.32	.92	1.44
Total	Mean	4.09	4.70	4.20	4.47	4.74	3.97	4.33	4,08
	Std. Dev.	.78	.70	.52	.81	.62	.69	.68	1.05

Table 16– Results pre-study caption mean scores

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
mean_sp	10	2.00	7.00	4.70	1.50
mean_partner	10	2.00	7.00	5.23	1.55
mean_brandambassador	10	2.00	7.00	5.13	1.58
mean_advertentie	10	1.33	7.00	5.13	2.06
mean_ad	10	2.00	7.00	5.43	1.59
mean_partnerschap	10	4.00	7.00	6.43	.95

Appendix B: Pre-study

Beste respondent,

Graag nodig ik je uit om deel te nemen aan deze pre-studie. Deze pre-studie wordt afgenomen in het kader van mijn Master's thesis voor de opleiding Communication Studies aan de Universiteit Twente. De enquête zal ongeveer 10-15 minuten duren en deelname is geheel vrijwillig.

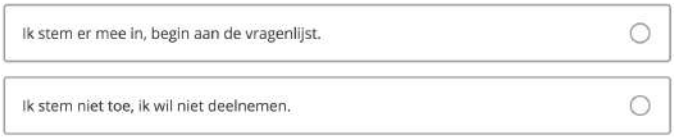
Voor de hoofdstudie zijn verschillende materialen ontworpen, om deze materialen te valideren wordt deze pre-studie afgenomen. Op de volgende pagina's krijg je 8 verschillende foto's te zien waar een Instagram gebruiker wordt voorgesteld. Besteed je volledige aandacht aan de foto's, er worden hier namelijk vragen over gesteld. Vervolgens krijg je 6 verschillende Instagram beschrijvingen te zien. Ook hier volgen een aantal vragen over.

Het onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd onder supervisie van Universiteit Twente. Hierdoor heb jij de garantie dat alle ingevoerde gegevens volledig anoniem zijn en niet aan derden worden verstrekt.

In het geval van vragen of opmerkingen voor, tijdens of na deze studie, voel je vrij om contact met mij op te nemen via het volgende e-mailadres t.e.denkers@student.utwente.nl

Alvast bedankt voor jouw medewerking.

Met vriendelijke groet,
Tara Denkers
Master Student Communication Studies



Introductie

Een aantal algemene vragen.

Geslacht

- Man
- Vrouw
- Weiger antwoord te geven

Leeftijd (in jaren)

Heb je een Instagram account?

- Ja, ik heb een Instagram account en maak hier gebruik van.
- Ja, ik heb een Instagram account maar gebruik deze nooit.
- Nee, ik heb geen Instagram account.

Welk van deze apparaten heb je in bezit?

- [ ] Mobiel/Tablet
- [ ] Playstation console
- [ ] Xbox console
- [ ] Nintendo console
- [ ] Gaming PC
- [ ] Ander gaming apparaat

Hoe veel uur besteed je aan het spelen van games?

- Meer dan 14 uur per week
- Tussen de 7 tot 14 uur per week
- Tussen de 1 tot 7 uur per week
- Minder dan 1 uur per week
- Ik speel helemaal geen games

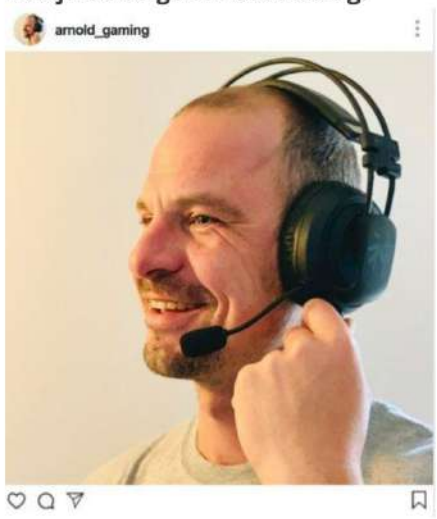
→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Instagram gebruikers

In het volgende gedeelte worden er 8 verschillende Instagram gebruikers getoond. Na iedere foto volgen er een aantal vragen over deze gebruiker.

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

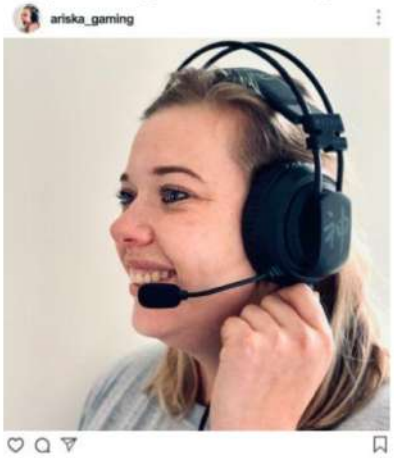
"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

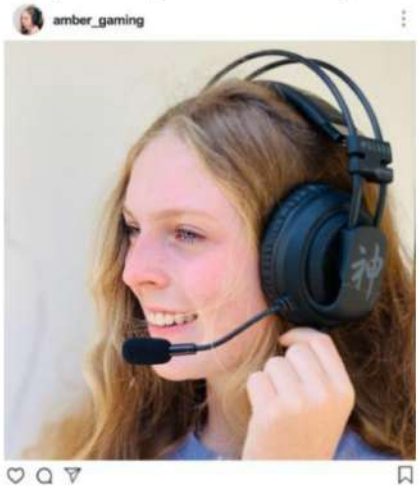
"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.

Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.

Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

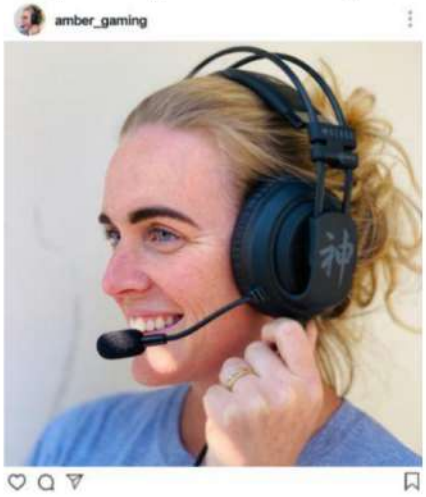
"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

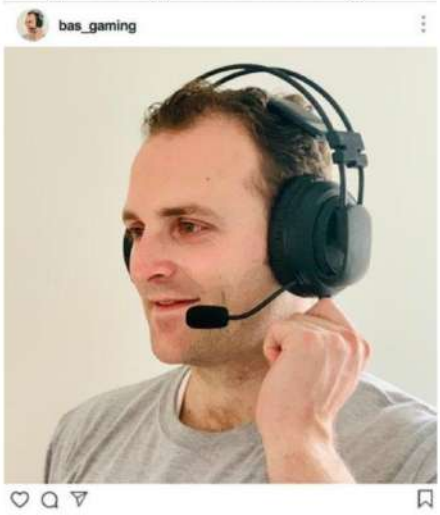
"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

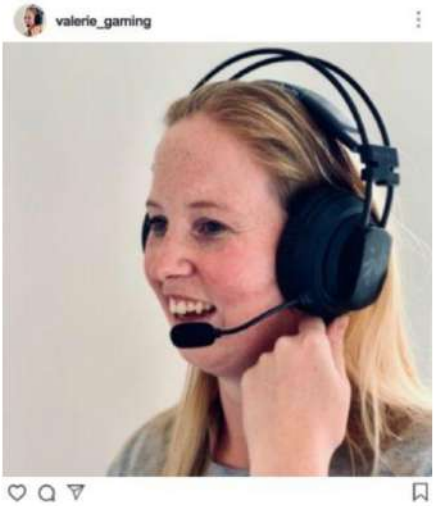
"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende afbeelding.



Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

"Ik vind deze Instagram gebruiker ..."

	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy
Niet aannemelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aannemelijk
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Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Waren de Instagram gebruikers Influencers? (mensen die geld verdienen met een Instagram account)

- Ja
- Nee
- Geen idee

Waarom denk je van wel/niet?

Wat vind je in het algemeen van de foto's?

Welk merk headset was te zien op de foto's?

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Instagram posts

In het volgende gedeelte worden er verschillende Instagram teksten getoond. Na iedere foto volgen er een aantal vragen over deze tekst.

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post.

Beantwoord de volgende vragen:

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Lichtelijk mee oneens	Neutraal	Lichtelijk mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk nogmaals de 6 verschillende Instagram post.

Post 1

Post 2

Post 3

Post 4

Post 5

Post 6

Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

"Welke post(s) verwacht jij tegen te komen op Instagram?"

- [ ] Post 1
- [ ] Post 2
- [ ] Post 3
- [ ] Post 4
- [ ] Post 5
- [ ] Post 6
- [ ] Geen een post

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram posts.

Post 1

Post 2

Beantwoord de volgende vraag:

"Welke Instagram posts denk jij dat er echt online is gezet door een gaming influencer?

- Post 1
- Post 2
- Geen van beide

Waarom denk je dat?

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

Bedankt voor uw tijd om aan deze enquête deel te nemen.
Uw antwoord is geregistreerd.

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Appendix C: Main study


Introductie
De vragenlijst begint met een aantal algemene vragen.
Geslacht
Man
Vrouw
Weiger antwoord te geven
Leeftijd (in jaren)
→
0%
Afronding van de enquête
100%

Heb je een Instagram account?

- Ja, ik heb een Instagram account en maak hier gebruik van.
- Ja, ik heb een Instagram account maar gebruik deze nooit.
- Nee, ik heb geen Instagram account.

Hoe lang maak je al gebruik van Instagram?

- Minder dan 3 maanden
- 3-6 maanden
- 7-12 maanden
- 13-24 maanden
- Meer dan 24 maanden
- Ik maak geen gebruik van Instagram

Welk van deze apparaten heb je in bezit? (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- [ ] Mobiel/Tablet
- [ ] Playstation console
- [ ] Xbox console
- [ ] Nintendo console
- [ ] (Gaming) PC
- [ ] Ander gaming apparaat

Hoeveel uur besteed je gemiddeld aan het spelen van games? Denk hierbij aan een gemiddelde week van het afgelopen half jaar.

- Meer dan 14 uur per week
- Tussen de 8 tot 14 uur per week
- Tussen de 1 tot 7 uur per week
- Minder dan 1 uur per week
- Ik speel helemaal geen games

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Instagram post

In het volgende gedeelte wordt een Instagram post getoond. Na de foto volgt er een aantal vragen over deze post.

Stel je voor dat je deze post tegenkomt terwijl je door de Instagram tijdlijn scrolt. Kijk tenminste 10 seconden naar de post en beantwoord vervolgens de vragen.

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

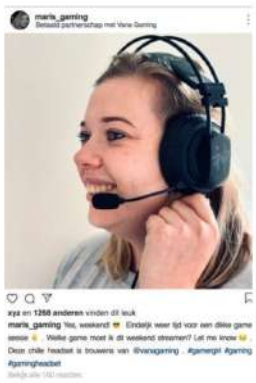
0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:



Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Bekijk de volgende Instagram post:

Herken je de influencer van de Instagram post?

- Ja
- Nee
- Weet ik niet

Had je voor vandaag al eens gehoord van het merk Vana Gaming?

- Ja
- Nee
- Weet ik niet

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

De volgende stellingen gaan over het merk Vana Gaming. Bij deze stellingen gaat het om je mening over dit merk. Reageer op de stellingen en geef je antwoorden op een schaal van 'helemaal mee oneens' tot 'helemaal mee eens'.

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Enigszins mee oneens	Niet mee eens of oneens	Enigszins mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een goed merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een prettig merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een gunstig merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een positief merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een leuk merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk dat Vana Gaming een kwalitatief goed merk is	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

De volgende stellingen gaan over jouw intentie om een gaming headset van Vana Gaming te kopen. Reageer op de stellingen.

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Enigszins mee oneens	Niet mee eens of oneens	Enigszins mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
Ik ga een headset van Vana Gaming kopen	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik ben van plan om een headset van Vana Gaming te kopen	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik heb interesse om een headset van Vana Gaming te kopen	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik ga waarschijnlijk in de toekomst een headset van Vana Gaming kopen	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

De volgende stellingen gaan over de influencer afgebeeld op de Instagram post die je net hebt gezien. Bij deze stellingen gaat het om je mening over deze persoon. Reageer op de volgende stellingen en geef je antwoorden op een schaal van '-3' tot '+3'.

Ik vind de persoon afgebeeld op de foto ...

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	
Niet aantrekkelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Aantrekkelijk
Niet stijlvol	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Stijlvol
Lelijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Mooi
Lomp	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Elegant
Niet sexy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sexy

Ik vind de persoon afgebeeld op de foto ...

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	
Niet vertrouwd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Vertrouwd
Oneerlijk	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Eerlijk
Niet geloofwaardig	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Geloofwaardig
Niet oprecht	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Oprecht
Niet betrouwbaar	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Betrouwbaar

Ik vind de persoon afgebeeld op de foto ...

	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	
Geen expert	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Expert
Niet ervaren	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Ervaren
Niet goed geïnformeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Goed geïnformeerd
Niet gekwalificeerd	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Gekwalificeerd
Niet getraind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Getraind

De volgende stellingen gaan wederom over de Instagram post die je net hebt gezien. Reageer op de stellingen en geef je antwoorden op een schaal van 'helemaal mee oneens' tot 'helemaal mee eens'.

	Helemaal mee oneens	Mee oneens	Enigszins mee oneens	Niet mee eens of oneens	Enigszins mee eens	Mee eens	Helemaal mee eens
De Instagram post is een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post is commercieel	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
De Instagram post bevat een advertentie	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Conclusie

De vragenlijst sluit af met een aantal algemene vragen.

Werd er in de Instagram post aangegeven dat het een advertentie was?

- Ja
- Nee
- Weet ik niet

Ben je in het bezit van een headset?

- Ja
- Nee
- Ik weet het niet

Wat voor profielen volg je op Instagram? (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk)

- [ ] Vrienden/familie
- [ ] Bekende personen/Artiesten
- [ ] Bloggers
- [ ] YouTubers
- [ ] Bedrijven/Merken
- [ ] Twitch streamers
- [ ] Ik volg geen mensen op Instagram

Is je hoofdtaal Nederlands?

- ○ Ja
- ○ Nee
- ○ Weet ik niet

Heb je vragen en/of opmerkingen over dit onderzoek? Dan kun je deze hieronder aangeven.

→

0% Afronding van de enquête 100%

Bedankt voor jouw deelname aan dit onderzoek!

Als beloning worden er **twee gaming t-shirts ter waarde van € 20** per stuk eerlijk verloot. Als je kans wilt maken op een t-shirt, klik dan op de onderstaande link en laat vervolgens jouw e-mail adres achter. Het is niet toegestaan om meerdere keren deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek.

https://utwentebs.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8pOsrpE9ndh6Q6h

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