

Influencer marketing on Instagram

The perspective of young consumers towards beauty industry
using influencers as a marketing strategy

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<p>Abstract:</p> <p>In recent years, technology has developed rapidly, and digitalization has changed the marketing world. Social media has become the new leading marketing tool and companies use it through influencers to market their brand and products. Due to digitalization and increased marketing, consumers see advertisements constantly from different channels, which has led to that consumers are more critical towards advertising. The aim of this thesis was to study influencer marketing from the perspective of young consumers and to find out what consumers really think about influencer marketing. The qualitative research method was chosen because it provided a deep understanding of the respondent's perspective towards influencer marketing, and the interviews were conducted face-to-face with seven different respondents. Despite the popularity of influencer marketing, the results showed that majority of the respondents were skeptical whether they could trust the influencers recommendations concerning beauty products. Although the respondents trust in influencer marketing was questionable, it was still perceived as more effective and appealing marketing tool, as interviewees found it more relatable, more humane and easily accessible. This study showed that the key to successful influencer marketing is to build trust between the influencer and the consumer, which the consumer can build by being authentic.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä:</p> <p>Viime vuosina teknologia on kehittynyt nopeasti ja digitalisaatio on muuttanut markkinointimaailmaa. Sosiaalisesta mediasta on tullut uusi johtava työkalu markkinoinnissa ja yritykset käyttävät sitä vaikuttajien kautta markkinoidakseen heidän brändiään ja tuotteitaan. Digitalisaation ja kasvaneen markkinoinnin takia kuluttajat näkevät mainoksia erilaisista kanavista jatkuvasti, mikä on johtanut siihen, että kuluttajat ovat kriittisempiä kaupallisia mainoksia kohtaan. Tämän työn tavoitteena oli tutkia vaikuttajamarkkinointia nuorten kuluttajien näkökulmasta ja selvittää mitä mieltä kuluttajat oikeasti ovat vaikuttaja markkinoinnista. Kvalitatiivinen tutkimus menetelmä valittiin, sillä se mahdollisti syvän ymmärryksen osallistujien näkökulmasta vaikuttajamarkkinointia kohtaan ja haastattelut järjestettiin kasvotusten puolistrukturoituna seitsemän eri haastateltavan kanssa. Huolimatta vaikuttajamarkkinoinnin suosioista tulokset osoittivat, että suurin osa haastateltavista oli epäileväisiä sen suhteen, että voisivatko he luottaa vaikuttajien antamiin suosituksiin koskien kauneustuotteita. Lisäksi kaikki haastateltavat olivat sitä mieltä, että he luottavat vaikuttajien antamiin suosituksiin paremmin, kun vaikuttajat eivät saa siitä rahaa tai mitään muuta palkkiota. Vaikka haastateltavien luottamus vaikuttajamarkkinointia kohtaan oli kyseenalaista, se koettiin silti tehokkaampana ja miellyttävämpänä markkinointikeinona, sillä haastateltavien mielestä se oli samaistuttavampaa, inhimillisempää ja helposti saatavilla. Tämä tutkimus osoitti, että avain onnistuneeseen vaikuttajamarkkinointiin on rakentaa luottamusta vaikuttajan ja kuluttajan välillä, jonka kuluttaja voi rakentaa olemalla aito.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, a general introduction is given about the topic. Including background information, current problem statement and the research aim. Concluded with the research questions, focus and limitations and structure of the study.

1.1 Background

In recent years technology has advanced rapidly and digitalization has changed the marketing world. According to Walker-Smith nowadays we are exposed to as many as 5000 ads per day, when back in the days in 1970's it was only about 500 ads a day (Cbsnews.com, 2019). A lot has changed since that and social media has become the new leading tool in the marketing world. Social media includes websites and applications, such as Instagram and Facebook that enable users to share content and interact in social networking. However it is difficult for brands to stand out alone from the mass of advertising, which is why influencer marketing has become one of the most popular ways for companies to market their brand and products in social media. According to Morrison and Morrison (2019), already 75 % of marketers used influencer marketing, which is expected to grow to a \$5 – \$10 billion market by 2020 (Mediakix | Influencer Marketing Agency, 2019). Influencer marketing focuses on people who are popular on social media, people who has influence over potential customers and use it to promote the brand's products or services. Companies arrange different kind of marketing activities through these influencers in order to gain visibility for the brand and attract consumers (Aumcore.com, 2019).

A similar study has been made regarding influencer marketing; in 2017 Iman Veissi also researched the subject from a consumer perspective with a topic "*Influencer marketing on Instagram*" (Veissi, 2017). There is a lot of research about influencer marketing, which is why it is interesting to see what kind of results they have achieved with their studies.

1.1.1 Problem statement

As by now we know influencer marketing is extremely popular nowadays, but how consumers really feel about it and are they tired of the enormous amount of advertising? Because of the digitalization and increased amount of marketing, consumers see advertisements in different channels constantly, which has led to that consumers are more critical towards commercial messages. According to SurveyMonkey (2019), even 74 % of people are tired of social media advertisements. Despite this fact, companies use a lot of influencers in their marketing strategy, which arouses the interesting question of how consumers perceive and trust influencer marketing and how it affects on consumers behavior?

1.2 Aim of the research

The aim of the research is to study influencer marketing from a consumer's perspective and find out how consumers really feel about influencer marketing. The researcher investigates these issues in a priority order; how consumers trust influencer marketing, how it affects their buying behavior and what types of influencers they prefer. The purpose of this study is to find out if influencer marketing is as effective way to appeal to consumers as believed. Moreover, this study tries to determine if consumers make buying decisions based on influencer's recommendations.

1.3 Research questions

This study poses the following research questions in order of importance:

Question 1: How consumers perceive and trust influencer marketing on Instagram?

Question 2: How influencer marketing on Instagram affects the consumer behavior?

Question 3: What kinds of influencer's characteristics are appealing to consumers?

1.4 Focus and limitations

The focus of this study is in the consumer's perception towards influencer marketing. More specifically the demarcation has been made to young Finnish female consumers between ages 18-34, since this is the group that uses Instagram the most (Napoleon-cat.com, 2019). In addition, a demarcation has been made to the beauty industry, because the researcher has a previous degree from the field, years of working experience and personal interest towards the industry. The scope of this research is also limited to the influencer marketing on Instagram, since it is currently the most popular social media channel used for influencer marketing. According to eMarketer (2019), Instagram is a global platform leader for Influencer Marketing. It is important to emphasize that the research focuses on the consumer's perspective of the influencer marketing and is excluded from the business point of view. The demarcation has been made because it is extremely vital to understand the consumer perspective and behavior towards the influencer marketing. This study does not have the resources to study both aspects. However, businesses are able to benefit from the end results of the study as well.

1.5 Structure of the study

The study is divided into five different sections; introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, results and discussion. The theoretical framework provides general information and theoretical argumentation of the topic. The theories include consumer behavior, Kelman's source attributes and receiver processing modes, brands and influencers and influencer marketing from different aspects.

The Method section consists of qualitative research interviews, which are conducted to investigate how consumers perceive and trust influencer marketing on Instagram, to study what kind of affect influencer marketing has on consumers buying behavior and what kind of influencers the respondents prefer.

Finally the results and discussion part will present the outcome of the study, both the theoretical and the empirical perspectives are compared to each other to establish the analysis. Lastly, the conclusions of the research findings and thoughts about whether the study was successful or not.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter the relevant theories and models have been presented in order to answer to the research questions. These theories have been used to gain important background information about the subject.

2.1 Consumer behavior

Consumers make various buying decision in their daily life, therefore the buying decision is the marketer's main focus in consumer behavior. Marketers are interested to find out what consumers buy, where and how they buy it, as well as when and why they buy. However it is not easy to learn about consumer behavior and why they buy something, usually even consumers them selves don't know what influences their purchases. Many levels can affect the consumers buying behavior including cultural and social influences, motivations, beliefs and attitudes, which might lie deep in the consumers mind. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.134-135)

It is important to understand how consumers react to the numerous marketing efforts, which companies use. The first part of the consumer behavior model is the response to stimulus that comes from the environment. Marketing stimuli includes the four Ps: product, price, place and promotion, while the other stimulus consists of powerful aspects in the consumer's environments, which are economic, cultural, political and technological. These inputs enter to the consumers so called "black box" where they are shaped into buyer responses. The responses have two parts, where we first look at the consumer's characteristics, which include cultural, social, personal and psychological (see figure 1). These affect strongly how consumer perceives and reacts to the stimuli. Afterwards comes the second part, which is the actual buyer decision process and how it affects consumer behavior. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.134-135)

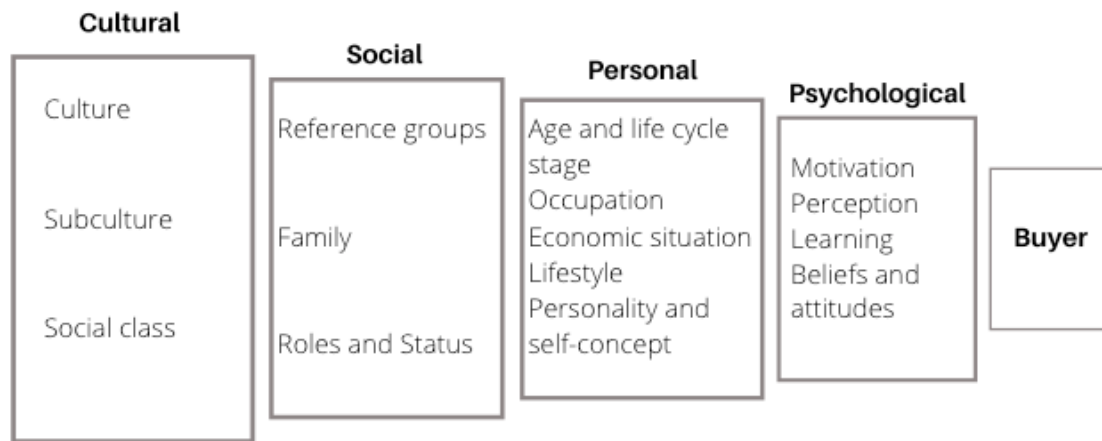


Figure 1. Characteristics influencing consumer behavior. Adapted from (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 p.135)

2.1.1 Consumer perception

According to Kotler and Armstrong (2011), perception is the process how individuals interpret information in order to select and organize it to form a meaningful picture of the world. It is the process that allow consumer to be conscious about company and its offerings, moreover how that impression affects to the individual’s buyer behavior (Buyitallblog, 2016). However individuals can make various perceptions of the same stimulus because of three perceptual processes: selective attention, selective distortion, and selective retention (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.148-149).

Selective attention refers to the tendency how people try to avoid most of the information they are exposed to. Since individuals face approximately 5000 advertisements every day, it is extremely hard for marketers to draw the consumer’s attention. Selective distortion implies how people interpret information in a way that it supports their already existing attitudes and beliefs. Selective retention in the other hand suggests that consumers are likely to remember upsides of the brand they like and ignore the same ones about competitive brands. Because of these three steps of perceptual process marketers must make an effort to get their information visible in consumers mind. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.148-149)

2.1.2 Buyer decision process

Marketing is an important tool that enables companies to reach their target market. In addition it affects to consumer-purchasing behavior, thereby it is extremely important to understand the whole process of consumer's buying decisions. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2011), the process consists of five different stages: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post purchase behavior (see figure 2). However depending on the consumer's situation, they can sometimes skip some of these stages or reverse back to them. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)



Figure 2. The buyer decision process. Adapted from (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 p.152)

Need recognition is the first stage of the buyer decision process, where the consumer recognizes a problem or need, and it increases high enough to become a drive. The need can be triggered in two ways, by internal or external stimuli. An internal stimulus refers to the normal needs like hunger or thirst, whereas the external stimuli can be triggered for instance from an advertisement. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)

The second stage is information search, where the consumer is stimulated to search for more information. Sometimes the consumer buys the product directly, if it is easily available and satisfies the need. Otherwise the consumer stores the need in the memory for heightened attention or starts actively searching information related to the need. Consumers can acquire information from many sources, which include personal, commercial, public and experiential sources. Nonetheless, the most effective sources are mostly from personal sources, like friends and family. Commercial sources tend to only inform the buyer, when personal sources give more legitimacy. The studies also show that consumers find user generated content three times more influential when making purchase decision compared to traditional marketing methods. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)

The third stage is alternative evaluation, in which the consumer uses the gathered information to evaluate all the different brands from the choice group. The evaluating methods depend on the individuals and their specific buying situation. In some cases they for instance use logical thinking, rely on friend's recommendations, read online reviews or buy on impulse. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)

After the evaluation stage the consumer has formed the purchase decision, which usually is to buy the preferred brand. However two elements can come between the purchase intention and the purchase decision, where the first element is the attitudes of others and the second one is unexpected situations. For example someone important can affect the consumer buying decision with their strong opinions and unexpected changes may occur in income or product prices. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)

The last stage is post purchase behavior, in which consumer is either satisfied or dissatisfied with the purchase. If the product does not meet the expectations, the consumer is most likely to be disappointed, however if it meets the expectations, the consumer is satisfied and in the best case scenario the product exceeds the expectations, which makes the consumer delighted. This is why it is crucial that the seller only promises what their brand can deliver, otherwise the consumer might take further actions to complain and spread negative word of mouth. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 pp.152-156)

2.2 Kelman's source attributes and receiver processing modes

According to the social psychologist Herbert Kelman, three general source attributes promote the source's effectiveness which are: credibility, attractiveness, and power. All the attributes have different means by which the source (e.g., endorser) affects to the consumer's attitudes and behavior (see figure 3). In addition to celebrity endorsements, products receive the support of ordinary person endorsers as well. (Shimp and Andrews, 2013 pp.290-293)

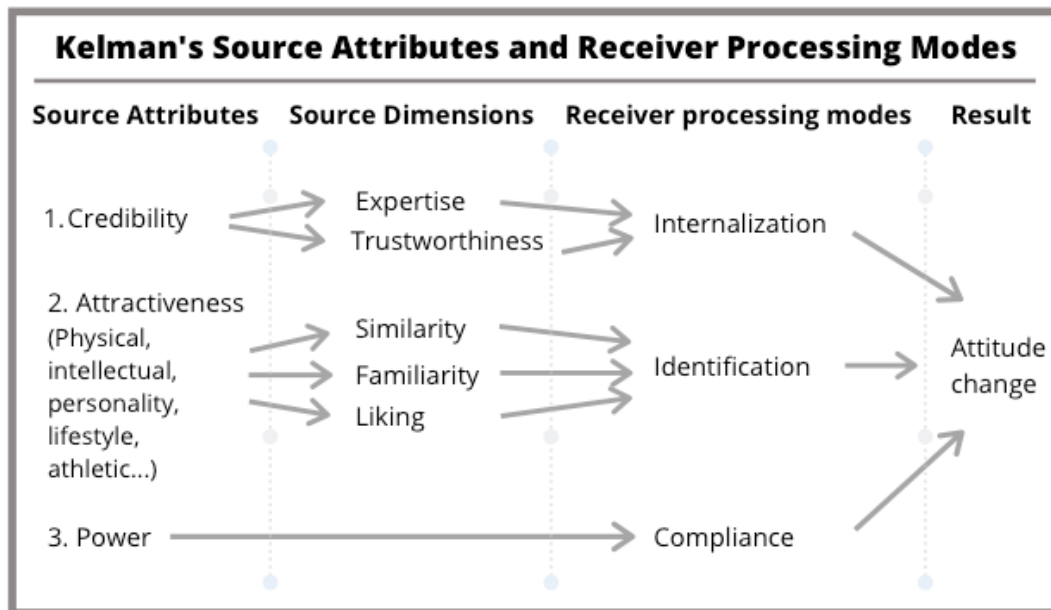


Figure 3. *Kelman's source attributes and receiver processing modes. Adapted from (Shimp and Andrews, 2013 p.292)*

The first source attribute is credibility, which is the process of internalization. Credibility refers to the alignment of trust or capability to believe someone. When the information source is perceived as credible, consumer's attitudes are changed through psychological process of internalization. It takes place when the receiver accepts the source's position about the issue as her or his own. There are two important aspects of source credibility that are known as expertise and trustworthiness. Expertise relates to the perceived experience, knowledge and skills that the source carries. If the source is perceived as an expert on his or her field, it is more likely that he or she is observed more credible. Trustworthiness applies to the perceived honesty, believability and integrity of a source, which level of trust depends on the audience's perception of the source's intent. If consumers believe that the source is just marketing for their own benefit, this source is less convincing than someone who has no benefits by marketing the brand. Although expertise and trustworthiness do not close each other out, frequently a particular source can be considered as highly reliable, but not particularly expert. (Shimp and Andrews, 2013 pp.290-293)

Attractiveness is the second source attribute, which is known as the process of identification. Source attractiveness consists of three dimensions: similarity, familiarity, and liking. This means that the source is seen as attractive, if the receivers share some simi-

larities with the source, or if they like the source regardless of whether they are similar in any way. Persuasion appears during the identification process, when the receivers find something in the source that they consider attractive, which can be for instance physical attractiveness, intellectual skills, lifestyle characteristics, personality properties, athletic capacity. When receivers perceive a source as attractive, they identify with the source and thereby are more likely to embrace the attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, interests or preferences of the source. However these beliefs and attitudes are not as lasting as the ones found under credibility. (Shimp and Andrews, 2013 pp.290-293)

Power is the third source attribute and it works through the psychological process of compliance. Compliance takes place when an individual is persuaded by an advertised source because they hope to receive a positive response or approval from the source. To be more specific, this process goes throughout compliance with the perceived awards and punishments observed from the source. While this is not as likely as mass media advertising, this kind of processes can take place through personal and direct advertising material or social media messages. These kind of perceptions are more likely to occur when there is a power imbalance. (Shimp and Andrews, 2013 pp.290-293)

2.3 Brands and influencers

Brands are the key element in the company's relationships with consumers; they are more than just names and symbols. They represent the perceptions and feelings the consumer has about the brand's products or services (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 p.243). Companies recruit popular people from social media, who are broadly known as influencers, to build brand awareness and promote their advertising campaigns. In this time of social media stars, the term "influencer" embraces a wide variety of social experts. Influencers in social media are regular people who have built a reputation and are known for example about their knowledge on a particular topic. Usually social influencers focuses on specific content areas like beauty, business, fitness, fashion or parenting, among others and this is how they fulfill their content to a specific market and can reach different kind of demographics easily. Influencers make regular posts about their topics on social media channels and have large amount of followers, who are enthusiastic and engaged. (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.)

Many of the general goals of influencer marketing campaigns are: creating brand awareness, get people to try their products, get followers on social media, and increase sales (TapInfluence, 2015). So why does influencer marketing work? It is effective, because the influencers have the benefit of trust. If you trust someone's opinion, you are more likely to try what he or she recommends. This is also why people ask opinions from their friends, browse a product reviews and continue buying products they have used before (Aumcore.com, 2019).

2.3.1 Building brand awareness in the beauty industry

At the beginning of influencer marketing, it was only thought as effective way to drive sales, creating a lot product focused campaigns, for example with a single Instagram post advertising a specific lipstick. However nowadays this is no longer the case, since building the brand awareness is now seen as the most significant reason for beauty brands to recruit digital influencers. The shift has simply happened because beauty brands now recognize that the road to purchase is way more complicated than it was before. There are unlimited things that can influence the buying behavior. Therefore brands have realized that influencer marketing has come to stay and is part of a wider strategy. Hence many brands start to offer influencer's long-term contracts rather than short term or one time deals, besides they are more focused to create projects with influencers, such as their own beauty products. (Gilliland and Gilliland, 2018)

Smaller, independent brands benefit from the digital marketing and because of the increased online purchases the big brands lose their dominant position. This indicates that the traditional buying journey for beauty products has evolved. Undoubtedly digital campaigns need to be at the core of marketing strategies for beauty brands, and with the rise of platforms, such as Instagram, it that makes it easy for brands to bring exposure to their products. (Upfluence, 2017)

2.4 Influencer marketing

Brown and Hayes (2018 p.50), define influencer, as a third-party who meaningfully shapes the customer's purchasing decision, but may never be responsible for it. However since then the marketing world and businesses has changed and the definition has de-

veloped during the years. Nowadays influencers are seen as someone who changes or affects the way other people behave for instance through social media (Dictionary.cambridge.org, n.d.).

Kotler and Armstrong (2011 pp.4-5) define marketing as managing profitable customer relationships, where the aim of marketing is to attract new customers by promising value and to retain and grow existing customers by providing satisfaction. The main difference of influencer marketing compared to the traditional marketing is that the results of the campaign are usually collaborations between brands and influencers (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.). Influencer marketing has become a type of marketing, which focuses on using influencers to drive the brand's message among their audience to the specific market (TapInfluence, 2015). It has evolved from the simple process of working with influencers to using them in their marketing strategy as marketing tools that promote companies (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.). Marketing strategy is a marketing logic for a company, which helps to create customer value and achieve profitable customer relationships (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011 p.48).

2.4.1 Types of influencers

There is no specific formula what makes an influencer, and why others have more influence over people than others. Though it can be their status or how well they are connected in social media or in business life. It can also be connected to their personality and their deep knowledge about a specific subject. (Brown and Hayes, 2008 p.50)

However there are different types of influencers and majority of them fit into these following categories. The first types are celebrities, the original influencers, who were more known as celebrity endorsers. They still have their part in marketing world, although their importance as influencers is fading. Celebrities are also known as macro influencers because of their high reach capability and large amount of followers. The second types are industry experts and thought leaders, such as journalists who can also be considered as influencers and hold significant position for brands. They gain respect because of their qualifications, position, or experience about their topic of expertise. The third types are bloggers, content creators and YouTubers; their key thing to success is having the respect of their readers and viewers. The last category is micro influencers,

which is rapidly becoming the most important influencer type. (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.)

A micro-influencer is an Internet personality who has followers in a smaller scale around a target niche, a topic that they have passion for. Thus their followers consist of people who share that same passion. Since micro-influencers have smaller follower numbers, they have the most authentic and active relationship with their audiences. They are usually more accessible, respond to comments and engage with their followers by getting to know the people who love them (TapInfluence, 2017). Micro influencer has not yet reached the amount of celebrity followers, but usually has a total reach between 5,000 and 100,000 followers (TapInfluence, 2018).

2.4.2 Influencer marketing on Instagram

Instagram is a free online platform, where people can share their photos and videos with their followers or with a selected group of friends. Users can also view, comment and like posts that are shared on Instagram. (Help.instagram.com, 2019)

In recent years, Instagram users have started to make their living from different kind of paid posts and brand ambassadorships. Instagram offers the perfect platform for collaborative marketing campaigns, where brands partner with influencers, who therefore promote their products in an authentic and informal way to act as advocates on Instagram. Nowadays Instagram has 800 million active users therefore it has become the main platform for influencer marketing. (Hopper Instagram Scheduler, 2019)

In 2016 Instagram introduced Instagram Stories, which is a new feature that enables the users to share their daily moments in the forms of videos or pictures. The photos and videos will disappear after 24 hours and they wont stay in the user feed unless they are saved in the highlights. (Instagram, 2016)

Instagram Stories is the fastest-growing content format that brands and companies can leverage on social media, it makes it easy to produce lightweight content that engages the viewers. Globally, over 500 million Instagram accounts already produce stories content every day. Stories have gained popularity as a form of content and more and more people are spending a lot of time following the people's stories. It can reach target audi-

ence with casual moods and videos as well as clearly produced brand messages. (Lmsomeco.fi, 2019)

Influencer marketing has had some criticism as well during recent years. Consumers have felt that they have been lead on; since they were unaware that someone they followed got paid of recommending the products. Thus, influencers want to show more transparency in their advertising and point out the sponsorship deals more clearly to their followers. Because of this Instagram created their own official paid partnership tag above the posts to inform users that the brand cooperates with the influencer. (Hopper Instagram Scheduler, 2019)

2.4.3 Consumer protection act and other regulations

According to the Consumer Protection Act, marketing must clearly indicate its commercial purpose and for whose behalf it is marketed. According to the rules, it applies to marketing in general regardless of the marketing style. Therefore, consumer must always be aware when they are being advertised to. The Consumer Protection Act therefore covers all the different forms of advertising, including Instagram advertising. (Fondia.com, 2018)

In April 2019, the Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority issued a new and more defined policy regarding influencer marketing, which includes instructions how to implement influencer marketing on the most common social media platforms. As a rule, the commercial nature of the content must be apparent from the start of the publication and in the same language as the publication. The authority recommends the use of the tag "advertisement", but the alternative and in practice much more popular term "commercial cooperation" is also acceptable. In addition to the identification, the influencer must identify the entity on whose behalf the advertising is being conducted and the marketing labels must be equally clear, regardless of the consumer's device or size. Free products and services obtained without a cooperation agreement should also be disclosed separately. For example, in the case of products, it is recommended to use the designation "product obtained for free". (MARK, 2019)

2.4.4 Influencer marketing in the beauty industry

Beauty and cosmetic industry is continuously evolving, diversifying and generating new trends. People have been using cosmetics for ages trying to enhance their appearance, however, today humans are even more concerned about their image, especially due to the presence of social media and the rise of selfies. In this new digital world, this means that the beauty industry is now stronger than ever before and the best way for brands to succeed in the beauty industry is to promote themselves in digital channels. (Upfluence, 2017)

According to Talouselämä magazine, the consumer sales in Finland for cosmetic products were 900 million euros in 2018. In average a Finnish people uses 167 € per year for cosmetic products, of which over 40 % is bought online. Price of the cosmetic products has come down, since the supply of products has grown exponentially and online sales have increased. Cosmetic advertising in print media has been declining for a long time and instead the money invested in print media advertising is now paid to influencers. They can influence for example whether L’Oreal’s new nail polish is going to be a hit or if the Nordic cosmetics is the next super trend. Major cosmetic importers attract the influencers to their new product launch parties and build fan events around them. (Meikkipussi uusiksi, 2019 pp.32-37)

Trend predictions for the beauty industry reveals that consumer’s expectations are changing and brands must respond to this to stay competitive. Consumers are becoming more interested in the ethical views of the brand and about them using more eco-friendly ingredients. The aggressive and intrusive traditional advertisements that promise to do everything are in the past, consumers want to see how products work on real people and to know what results to expect. This is where the influencers are the key to success. Social media generates a constant flow of information and enables change of opinions. The communication is possible with everyone in the social network, including celebrities, influencers, friends and even strangers. Even 82 % of women think that social media influences beauty trends. (Upfluence, 2017)

In addition to creating trends, influencer marketing has helped to break barriers. Make up and beauty brands have made a huge effort to encourage men to take care of them-

selves in this area of beauty care. Even premium brands like Tom Ford have launched male cosmetics lines, which shows that the trend is not going to slow down. Male beauty influencers have been the key drivers for this trend. (Programmatic Influencer Marketing | INFLURY, 2018)

2.4.5 Effectiveness of influencer marketing

As mentioned earlier, influencer marketing can be seen as effective marketing channel towards consumers, and it works well because influencers have an advantage in trust. If you trust someone's opinion you are more likely to try his or her recommendations (Aumcore.com, 2019). According to TapInfluence (2015), influencer's authentic content builds trust, whereas, insincere or irrelevant content quickly weaken the impact of the influencer, by reducing their follower's trust in them.

Influencers have the authority to reach their target audience in a way that it feels more genuine than traditional advertising. They have a strong and loyal relationship with their followers, as they share their daily life with them, therefore consumers feel like they know them personally and listen to their recommendations as if they were their friends. According to Nicola Cronin article, in 2018, 72 % of Instagram users said they have bought fashion, beauty or style related products after seeing something on Instagram. (Hopper Instagram Scheduler, 2019)

Influencer Marketing Hub partnered with NeoReach and Viral Nation to survey 800 industry professionals to discover the state of the influencer marketing industry in 2019. According to their report even average firms has achieved impressive results with influencer marketing. Average earned media value was \$5.20 per \$1 spent on influencer marketing, based on more than 2000 campaigns analyzed by NeoReach in 2018. According to the same report, the survey respondents were highly positive about the effectiveness of influencer marketing. Overall, 92 % believe influencer marketing is an effective form of marketing, when only 62 respondents (8 %) disbelieved in the effectiveness of it. (Anon, 2019)

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter gives an overview of the material and methods used to collect the information needed for this study. Furthermore it will also explain the reliability and validity of the study and how the data was analyzed and finally interpret.

3.1 Approach

A qualitative research method approach was chosen because it provides in depth understanding of the participant perceptions towards influencer marketing and it allows gathering non-numerical data, which therefore provided more deeper and specific information about consumers underlying opinions. The main concerns of qualitative researchers are seeing through the eyes of the participants, where face-to-face interaction is the deepest state of participating in the mind of another human being, which helped to seek beneath the surface appearances. (Bryman, 2012 pp.380-400)

3.2 Material

In order to meet the aim of the study, two different types of data were gathered from primary and secondary sources. The material used for this research was collected through secondary data, from already existing literature sources and by using digital articles. The researcher also used international digital sources in this study, because of the lack of literature sources concerning influencer marketing on Instagram. In addition, the primary data was obtained through qualitative research, which was conducted as face-to-face interviews.

The respondents were chosen according to purposive sampling method. It is a non-probability form of sampling, where the researcher doesn't seek to sample respondents on a random basis. Instead the goal of purposive sampling is to sample participants in a way that they are relevant to the research questions that are presented, which is why the respondents were selected on purposeful manner, taking into account that the participants were interested in about the topic and use Instagram frequently. (Bryman, 2012 pp.416-418).

More specifically a convenience sampling method was chosen, which is a type of non-probability sampling, where subjects were selected from population based on who were conveniently available to participate to the study, but still considering their interest towards the topic. (Research-Methodology, 2019).

The age restriction in the sample frame was made between ages 18-34, since it is the age frame that uses Instagram the most in Finland and therefore provides more solid analysis. In February 2019 the statistics showed that people between ages 25-34 were the largest user group in Instagram with 26 % of the population and the second largest were people with ages 18-24 with 23,9 % of the population. (Napoleoncat.com, 2019)

3.3 Data collection

In addition to information gathered from the online articles and books the researcher collected qualitative data by arranging semi-structured face-to-face interviews. A semi-structured interview model was chosen because it leaves room for open discussion and the researcher was able to make additional follow-up questions to the respondent's replies. In these semi-structured interviews the interviewer followed a script to a certain point and had a list of themes and questions to be covered, referred as an interview guide. (Bryman, 2012 pp.470-473)

The sample consisted of seven female respondents with ages between 18-34 and the interviews were held at the interviewer's house in Helsinki to avoid any disruption. An hour was reserved for interviews, however the duration per one interview was approximately 30-45 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Finnish, since it was the native language of the respondents and provided more accurate information. In the interview situation, the respondent and the interviewer were alone, and in the beginning of the interview, there was some small talk to create a relaxed atmosphere. Prior to the interview, it was emphasized to the respondents that the interviews are anonymous and their names won't be mentioned in the study. As the study was conducted anonymously, letters from A to G has named the respondents. In addition, before starting the interview, the respondents were asked to give permission to record the interviews, which everyone agreed to. The interviewer also gave a brief introduction about the topic for every re-

spondent, which aimed to ensure that everyone knew what the interview was about. (See Appendix 1.)

The interview questions were constructed on the basis of a theoretical framework. In addition, particular attention was paid to the ability to answer the research questions presented in the introduction when designing the interview questions. When designing the interview questions, it was kept in mind that the research question and the interview question are not the same thing. In addition, open-ended questions were preferred when asking interview questions, as they provide more detailed answers.

The interview guide of the semi-structured interviews was categorized into five themes to explore the subject from different perspectives. The themes were used, because it helped to form relevant questions in order to find answers to the research questions. These themed semi-structured interviews allowed both, the interviewer and the respondents, to have conversations within the themes, which generated more diverse content. The questions in the first theme aimed to examine consumer's overall perception and trust towards influencer marketing on Instagram and whether they think influencers as trustworthy. The second theme aimed to explain the influencer marketing affect on the consumer buying behavior, where respondents were hoped to reveal some deeper thoughts about their behavior concerning the affect on influencer marketing on Instagram. The third theme aimed to find out what kind of influencer's characteristics the respondents prefer.

The interviews proceeded according to the interview frame, yet some questions that were not included in the guide were asked as the interviewer picked up on things said by interviewees. However, all the questions included in the guide were asked and the same interview guide was used with all the participants. The interview guide can be found in the Appendix 2.

The collected data from the interviews was processed manually and the results were kept original. To avoid any errors, the researcher recorded the interviews with voice recorder. According to Bryman (2012 p.482) recording allows more in-depth study of what people say and permits repeated examinations of the respondent's answers. Also, because the interviewer is intended to be alert to what is being said, following up the interesting points made, and pay attention to any disagreement in the answers (Bryman,

2012 p.482). As soon as possible after the interviews, the interviewer transcribed all the recordings, because it helped to identify similarities and differences between the participant's responds. The transcription per one interview lasted from one and a half hours to three hours, depending on the duration of the interview. In transcribing, the main findings of each interview were highlighted. The transcript contains a total of 46 pages.

3.4 Data analysis

After transcribing, the interview material was analyzed without the aid of any technical device. The analysis of qualitative research material is about analyzing the material in a way that it can answer the research questions (see figure 4), because the data collected does not say anything in itself. The qualitative data analysis was conducted through grounded theory approach, which is the most widely used general strategy for analyzing qualitative data. First step was coding, which included reviewing transcripts and giving names for parts that seemed to be theoretical significant and relevant in the social worlds of the respondents. Open coding was used to produce concepts and to make sense of the gathered raw data. It is the process of breaking down, examining and conceptualizing the data. The second step was about constant comparison of indicators and concepts, which therefore generated categories. A category is a concept, which is elaborated to represent real world phenomena. The final step was to conclude the data, where comparing and discovering similarities between theoretical sampling, collected data and categories formed the research findings, which are strongly linked to the aim of this study. During this process the researcher's analytical and critical thinking played a significant role. (Bryman, 2012 pp.567-571)

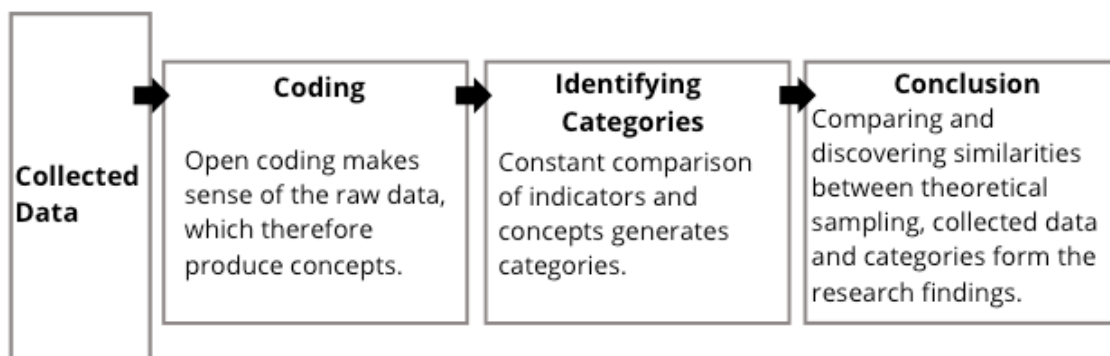


Figure 4. Data Analysis. Adapted from (Bryman, 2012, p.564-571)

3.5 Reliability and validity

The research was collected, analyzed and interpreted by paying attention to the reliability and validity, which were in central concerns in all measurement. This is why the subject was explored widely to build sufficient understanding and comprehensive theoretical framework. In addition, various sources have been used to support the study, which contributes the credibility of this research.

According to Bryman (2012 p.399) the social world must be interpreted from the perspective of the people being studied, rather than thinking that the subjects are unable to take their own ideas about the social world. Therefore, seeing by the eyes of the participants has guided this study, and it aimed to establish credibility by asking the interviewees for clarifications that the researcher had correctly interpreted the respondent's views.

It is often advised that the scope of qualitative research findings is limited. When participant observation is used or when qualitative interviews are conducted with a small number of respondents, it is impossible to know how the findings can be generalized to other context or to wider population, which is why generalizations to larger groups were avoided. (Bryman, 2012 p.406)

Reliability and validity helped to establish the truthfulness and credibility of the findings. In this context reliability means dependability, which suggest that the same results can be repeated in very similar conditions and validity suggests truthfulness by referring how well an idea fits with the actual reality (Lawrence Neuman, 2014 pp.211-218). Efforts have been made to improve reliability by supporting the researcher's own interpretations and observations with other studies, which implies that the material and interpretations are not the researcher's own imagination. This means that others can easily understand the interpretations and observations taken from the data, other than the researcher herself. In this study, raising direct quotes has sought to prove for the reader the validity of the findings. Highlighting quotes also provides the reader the opportunity to discover similar findings in the material, as the researcher has observed.

4 RESULTS

This chapter takes a look the answers the interviews provided. The researcher defines the results of the categories, to which the respondents responded.

4.1 Influencer marketing on Instagram

The interview started off with general level about influencer marketing. The interview sought to find out the consumers perception and trust towards influencer marketing on Instagram. The respondents were asked what comes to their mind about influencer marketing and five out of seven respondents connected that immediately to the product recommendations, Instagram posts and paid sponsorships. Also bloggers were mentioned few times, since that is where it all started. Nowadays they have accounts on Instagram, which is more popular platform, mentioned respondent B.

Next, respondents were asked what they think about influencer marketing in the beauty industry. All of the respondents thought it's a big deal right now in the beauty industry and has grown significantly; two of them also mentioned that there is too much of it. Respondent G explained, *"Nowadays, in my opinion, the beauty industry has come to the point where brands are publishing too many products, every month a new eye shadow palette, etc. It is a little confusing for the consumer when it comes from everywhere and feels like every month you should buy for example a new eye shadow palette, when the truth is that one eye shadow palette can last for years. It feels like there is an over-supply."*

Respondents were also asked if they notice what are influencer's own opinions and what are marketing content. There was no clear answer to this question. Four out of seven respondents said they don't necessarily notice the difference. Respondent A said, *"Yes that message is pretty much mixed up whether it is the influencers own opinion or the firms opinion they have said or suggested to say about the product in the ad. However, I would say that it is challenging to distinguish. Of course, the legislation makes it easier to notice, because the ad has to be mentioned, and so on."*

However three of the respondents also claimed that they can notice it well because influencers have to mark it when it's made in collaboration with some company. Re-

spondent G explained this, *“For example if some video has product placement and it says it is sponsored, then you will notice it well.”*

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether they trust the recommendations made by influencers regarding beauty products and if they think influencers make them genuinely. Again, no clear answer was received to this one. Five out of seven of respondents questioned the influencer’s recommendations. Respondent A explained it, *“I do not necessarily, I am very critical and always doubt whether they really recommend them from their heart and whether they are good products for real. Whether they recommend them because they get money of it or because they got the products for free.”*

Five out of seven respondents also mentioned they don’t trust only influencer’s opinions but they want to know other opinions as well. Respondent G said, *“I usually store their recommendation in my mind, but I also go and google the product to see what other normal consumers have thought about the product. I do not trust only one influencer, I rather trust the opinion of more people.”*

Two of the respondents said that they do trust in their opinions, but it doesn’t mean they will buy the product immediately. Respondent B stated, *“Yes I trust and at least I am ready to try, but of course not all products are suitable for everyone. Even though I trust, I might not go buy them right away. The difference is if I make the purchase decision based on its recommendations and if I bother to buy it.”*

Six out of seven respondents thought that it’s hard to say if they recommend the products genuinely. Also three of them thought that if the influencers use the product more often than once, they probably really like it. Respondent F explained it this way. *“A little hard to say because I believe some are sure to be genuine, but then again they get paid for recommending it. I wonder if they would recommend these products so strongly if they were not paid for it. There is a fine line. You can usually notice it if they use that product on more than one Instagram video, and if they use it many times, then I get the feeling that they really like the product.”*

All of the respondents stated that they trust the influencer’s recommendations more without the collaboration with brands, for example a product that they have bought

themselves. Respondent F said, *“I feel that then it is an honest recommendation if they have put money into it themselves, because they don't get any profit or money from it when they advertise it.”*

Respondents were also asked to tell what kind of influencer recommendations they trust the most. All of the respondents mentioned that they prefer something that has been shown before and after material, something where the influencers uses the product in a way that they can see the product results themselves. Respondent B explained it, *“To recommendations where there is something before and after the material. Something where there are practical examples and not just a package image. For example, in the case of makeup products, the fact that she has actually made the makeup with those products will give the products specificity.”* Like other respondents, respondent F explained in similar way that *“Videos where you see that they are actually using that product, and maybe just before and after pictures where you can see the difference. For example, if you put a picture just about makeup and there is no comparison picture, then there is nothing to compare the end result with. Just from a picture you don't even know what products are actually used for it.”*

Respondents were further asked to clarify what type of influencer marketing they prefer on Instagram. The key things mentioned between all the respondents were that they like if influencers provide authentic content and material about their personal life as well, because it makes it more humane. Also four of the respondents mentioned they don't like if there is too much marketing in influencers profiles. Respondent B explained her thoughts *“Authentic, that they give more than just such a beautiful picture every now and then. The kind, where they also share those bad moments with their everyday lives, not just those superficial pictures”* Respondent C also pointed out that *“Excessive perfection is not my type, because life is not perfect. Also, there should not be too many ads, certainly not so that every post is an ad. In addition, I prefer if they are authentic and share their personal life as well, it is far more interesting than just beautiful pictures”*

Respondent F also highlighted relatable marketing, where the main purpose is not the marketing. She mentioned *“Something that is easy to relate with. Kind of something, which is not so transparent marketing. Like you would use that product yourself in that*

video, and no clear praise speech. Then it feels like they are the similar people as I am.” Respondent G also pointed out that she prefers influencer marketing that feels natural and not forced upon you.

Four of the respondents also mentioned that nowadays they prefer Instagram Stories instead of pictures. Respondent D pointed out that Instagram Stories and video tutorials catch more attention and they are easy and fast to look at. Whereas respondent C mentioned she also likes Instagram Stories more, because she thinks influencers show more relaxed material there and share more videos than pictures.

4.2 Consumer buying behavior

Next the interviews shifted to consumer behavior. This part of the interview sought to find out how influencer marketing affects to the consumer buying behavior. The first interviewees were asked that, does influencer marketing on Instagram affect them somehow. Five out of seven respondents mentioned that it affects on them somehow and they feel that influencer marketing encourages, motivates and inspires them. Though three out of seven respondents also mentioned it must have some unnoticeable affect as well. Respondent C explained in her case *“influencer marketing encourages self-care, for example, a beautiful makeup somehow inspires you to put on some nice makeup. Gives you inspiration and desire to try certain eye shadows and different color schemes.”* *“It surely has an impact on some deeper level and also affects unnoticed”* she adds.

Respondent B also raised the issue how influencer marketing brings out some pressure about appearance. *“The first thing that comes to mind is that the striving for perfection on Instagram and the fact that everything is beautiful and superficial puts pressure on how I should be. The kind of feeling, that I should be dressed up and looking just the same.”* Two of the other respondents also mentioned that maybe it has caused some pressure in earlier years when they were younger but nowadays they are able to ignore it better, because they know how photos are edited etc.

Respondents F pointed out as well that, *“I buy much more products for try-out, products that I would not otherwise have considered to buy. When you see products being advertised, then you try out products that you wouldn't otherwise know about.”*

Second, respondents were asked to tell which one appeals to them more, traditional marketing or influencer marketing and to justify it. Six out of seven respondents thought that influencer marketing appeals to them more and sometimes even without noticing. The key words were that because it's more relatable, humane and easily accessible. Respondent F explained her thoughts, *"Influencer marketing appeals better, because it provides user experiences from real people. It is easier to identify with, compared to for example TV or magazine ads. Also, because you are more exposed to that marketing, because you instinctively browse Instagram more and it seems to reach better."*

However, one of the respondents disagreed with the others. Respondent E stated that, *"Traditional marketing, because I get more interested in products if they are well marketed for instance some really great advertisement."*

Respondents were asked if they have ever made or could make buying decisions based on recommendations from influencers in Instagram. Six out of seven respondents had made some buying decisions based on influencer marketing. However majority of them mentioned they make them rarely or have made only few of them. Four of the respondents also said that the recommendation might not lead to direct purchase decision, but it can arise later. Respondent B explained *"I may not purchase the product exactly at the time when I see the ad. However, later on if I see Instagram advertised product at the shop, I might buy it then because of the ad that I saw earlier on Instagram. Or if I have a need for a product right at that moment when I see the ad, then I might buy the product right away. The timing of the advertisement is important and what is the current need of the product on that very moment."* Later on she added, *"Maybe I could buy those products more often if it was easier, but then I'm too lazy to bother."* Respondent F agreed with B about the easiness, by mentioning that she thinks she would buy more as well if the products were more easily available in Finland, for example compared to the United States.

Three of the respondents also raised the fact about highlighted brand image. Without asking about it, they mentioned that influencer's recommendations have positive impact on the company's brand image. Respondent C said, *"For example, if I have previously thought that the brand makes a bit lower quality stuff, or it is not so "in". But then if they work with popular influencers, the value of the brand will increase in my eyes and I*

may find that they have some pretty good and popular products.” However, respondent B highlighted the fact that the influencer must fit the brand image, for example a fitness influencer is not the best choice for marketing sugar cereals. It takes away the credibility of the marketing, when we can notice that even the influencer does not for sure eat the cereals herself.

Next, respondents were asked to tell that, when they buy or want to buy a beauty product based on influencer’s recommendations, is it usually based on need or want. However, we did not get a clear answer for that one. Six out of seven respondents mentioned that usually it’s both, sometimes it’s want and sometimes it’s need depending on the case. Respondent F explained that, *”Want comes from seeing someone using a skin care product or makeup, then it comes down to feeling that I also want to look like that, and it usually creates that want.”* Respondent C also mentioned that it might start with the want, but then she strives to think if she really needs the product and if she already has similar ones, which usually affects to her purchase decision. Respondent F also agreed with her by mentioning, *”Of course there is more that desire, but then I justify to myself that if I already have the same kind in my selection and then see if I really need it.”* Anyhow, only one of the respondents mentioned that the purchase is solely based on need.

Respondents were asked how far they are willing to go in their buying behavior when buying a product based on influencer’s recommendations. For example, if they would order the product from abroad if needed. Six out of seven respondents told that they would be willing to order the product from abroad if needed. However, five of them mentioned that they would not be willing to spend too much money on it, if there is not the need. Respondent F explained, *”If, for example, some cream costs hundreds of euros, then I might not be ready to pay hundreds of euros based solely on the influencer’s recommendations. Then there must be, for example, some need for a particular product and recommendations heard elsewhere. The price is decisive.”* Respondent E was the only one who disagreed with others by mentioning that, it should be some real anti-age serum if she would order some product from abroad.

All of the respondents mentioned they usually think about their purchase decision on average one or two days, what depends on how big the purchase is. They also mentioned, if they need to buy more expensive products, they make more research about the

product and price. Also the bigger the purchase, the longer all the respondents spend time thinking about the purchase decision. On the other hand if they want some product they might buy it more quickly or even immediately. Respondent D explained her thoughts, *"If I'm in a situation where I run out of product or I need a product then I start researching where I would buy it and where I can get it at the best price. As for the want, if I'm in a store and I see some product that looks nice, the buying decision is much faster, and often I buy it right away. For buying needs, I spend more time re-searching before buying."* Respondent C pointed out in her case that discounts are significant factor in her buying behavior. With a good discount she usually buys the product right away and might even buy products in stock.

Respondents were asked if they would participate in marketing competitions or lottery, which influencers arrange on Instagram. Six out of seven respondents mentioned they have participated in them, and some of them only a few times. Respondent A said, *"I have participated and I can participate and live in the hope that some day I would get something for free."* However, respondent C had a bit different opinion about the marketing competitions, even though she had participated in them a few times. She said, *"I have attended a few. I feel like I never win and it often passes me by who even won? In these, the influencers just want to have a lot of comments in their picture, so that it lifts them up in Instagram feed. Usually the prizes aren't even that good and you often have to follow another account to participate, I don't bother anymore."* One of the respondents has never participated in the lottery, because she doesn't want to leave her information in there.

4.3 Influencer's characteristics

Finally, the interview discussed about influencers characteristics and why the respondents follow them. First the respondents were asked to tell what type of influencers they like or follow on Instagram and why. A few of the same opinions came up in each respondent's response. The key words that arise were *"authentic"*, *"relatable"* and *"humane"*. Respondent F explained her thoughts, *"Feels authentic and speaks as a person about these things, not just marketing. Perhaps, such influencers that I can identify with in some way. Also those who show their own personality on Instagram which makes it*

easier to identify.” Like other respondents, respondent C stated her thoughts with similar opinions, *“Authenticity is very important. I like that influencer gives more of her/himself than just the superficial side and brings out her/his personality as well, which makes it more humane and relatable. Appearance alone is not enough because Instagram is full of beautiful pictures, so the influencer must have something else to say and show her/his personal life as well, so that I bother to follow her/him.”* According to the respondent’s, the reason they follow these influencers are inspiration, motivation and tips that they get from them. In addition, respondent F mentioned that she follows the influencers for amusement, which is part of her day, more like a hobby, and she doesn’t follow them because of the marketing recommendations they offer.

Next respondents were asked what ways or by what qualities an influencer can built trust in them. Five out of seven respondents had similar answers; the main thing emphasized was being authentic, which built trust in influencers. For example respondent B explained that being authentic and your own self evokes trust and it is noticeable. However, few of the respondents answer differed from the others, respondent E pointed out that telling facts about the product builds trust in influencers and respondent A mentioned that recommending products without collaborations builds trust in influencers.

Respondents were asked if they think the Instagram influencers are experts in their fields and if they follow them because of their knowledge and skills. Five out of seven respondents said that they don’t follow them because of their expertise or think the influencers as experts. However four of the respondents also told they think they can have good recommendations from the influencers because they have tried so many promotional products. Respondent B explained her thoughts, *“I don't think they are professionals. Maybe I believe more that they know how to choose good products from the consumer's point of view because they are consumers themselves. Also in the sense that they have been able to test many products and based on that they can tell what is a good product. However, for example, I wouldn't believe they could tell me which hair product would fit my hair or what foundation for my skin type.”* Like other respondents, respondent A had similar thoughts, *“I don’t think they are experts in their field and I don’t follow them because of that. I follow them because I can hear opinions about some products, but that is never a professional point of view, it is just personal opin-*

ion.” Respondent F mentioned that in order to think about them as experts, the influencers should have some kind of education from the industry. Respondent C agreed with respondent F and also mentioned that education in beauty and cosmetics brings value, but is not necessary.

The interviews also sought to find out if the respondents relate or admire the Instagram influencers they follow, for example their values, lifestyle, appearance or something else. Four out of seven respondents said they only relate to them to some extent, though six out seven respondents said they don’t admire the influencers. However three of the respondents mentioned that it is especially hard to relate to their lifestyle, because their life is so different and they share only certain things about their life. Respondent B mentioned, *”I can't say I admire anyone for it, but maybe I can identify with someone, if they give and tell something deeper about themselves. However, often I get inspiration from them.”*

Like two other respondents, respondent F agreed with others, that it is hard to relate to their lifestyle. However, unlike other respondents, she raised the fact that she admires the influencers for their appearance and the freedom they have in their life, how they are able to travel and decide what kind of job they want to take. After a short silence, she also mentioned *”I might not relate so much, but I do admire them and maybe I also envy them to some extent.”*

Respondents were also asked if they feel familiar or friendly with the influencers. Six out of seven respondents mentioned that they somehow feel familiar with them, especially if the person shares things about her personal life. However, they don’t feel like the influencers are their friends. Respondent F explained her thoughts, *”Yes with people who I have been following for a long time and who tell a lot about their private life on Instagram and have for example boyfriends in the same video. Then sometimes it feels like I know the person who posts those pictures and videos.”* Respondent F also mentioned that she might feel familiarity with them, when she learns to know them more, their personality and their thoughts. Only one of the respondents mentioned that she doesn’t feel any familiarity with the influencers.

The interviews also tried to find out if the respondents follow Instagram influencers because of their attractiveness, for example physical attractiveness, intellectual skills, life-

style characteristics, personality, athletic talent or something else. All of the respondents mentioned that they do follow them due to some of these reasons. Personality seemed to be the most popular one and after that sportiness and lifestyle came up. Two of the respondents mentioned the physical attractiveness as well. Respondent C stated in her case, *“Yes it is often one of these and preferably all. At first, I might look at appearance, that he/she looks nice and then see if there's anything else there, some factor. However, personality is the most important of these, but if I find out that it doesn't please me, then I stop following.”*

Like other respondents, respondent D mentioned about the importance of the personality, *“Yes I do follow. Personality is at least a big part that she/he is a nice person and you bother to follow her/him, so of course it does. For example, if she/he is not a nice person and even how great she/he looks, if the personality doesn't please at all, then I don't follow her/him for long.”*

Respondent E also emphasized the personality, but also mentioned other factors, such as sports and lifestyle, which were popular ones in the respondents mind. *“Well maybe that personality, though, some may have that personality, some may have lifestyle or sports. Lifestyle is the most interesting of all; I take the most tips from that, which includes everything, food, makeup etc. the whole thing. Everyone has such a reason why I follow them and they fit into these categories.”*

Finally, the respondents were asked to tell which beauty influencers they follow on Instagram and what are the core beauty products that they market. Make up and skincare were the most popular ones. Some of the respondents also mentioned that sometimes it varies between beauty and fashion. The respondents mainly followed different people, however, a few names came up that were mentioned couple times among the respondents. Those influencers were Patricia Bright, Jeffrey Star, Michelle Phan, Cloe Morelle, Tati Westbrook, Aino Rossi. Few of the respondents also mentioned that they follow beauty brands, like Sephora and Huda Beauty. During this question, many of the respondents also revealed that they often just “spy” Instagram profiles out of curiosity, but don't start to follow them directly.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to analyze and discuss the results from the view of theoretical study and the empirical research, including the researcher's views. It discusses the results by emphasizing the following research questions.

5.1 Research question 1: How consumers perceive and trust influencer marketing on Instagram?

As already mentioned in the introduction, due to the digitalization and increased amount of marketing, social media has become the new leading tool in the marketing world. Hence, all of the respondents had noticed the significant grow of influencer marketing and two of them mentioned there is too much of it. However four out of seven respondents mentioned that they don't necessarily notice the difference between the marketing content and influencer's own opinions. This is why influencer marketing has had some criticism during recent years, consumers have felt that they have been lead on; since they were unaware that someone they followed got paid of recommending the products (Hopper Instagram Scheduler, 2019). Thus, it seemed that three of the respondents had heard about the legislation concerning the fact that collaborations with brands must be marked, which is the reason they are now able to differentiate more easily the marketing content on Instagram. Respondent G explained this, *"For example if some video has product placement and it says it is sponsored, then you will notice it well."* According to the Consumer Protection Act, marketing must clearly indicate its commercial purpose and for whose behalf it is marketed (Fondia.com, 2018). In April 2019, the Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority also issued a new and more defined policy regarding influencer marketing (MARK, 2019). It is possible to assume that the legislations concerning influencer marketing are seen as a good thing, which helps the consumers to identify the marketing content and reduce the feeling they are lead on.

According to Aumcore.com (2019), influencer marketing is effective because the influencers have the benefit of trust. If you trust someone's opinion, you are more likely to try what he or she recommends. Compared to the theoretical framework of the study, the interviews raised an interesting finding, which was the fact that five out of seven

respondents were doubtful whether they could trust the recommendations made by influencers regarding beauty products. Majority of the respondents questioned the influencer's recommendations. For example respondent A explained it this way, *"I do not necessarily, I am very critical and always doubt whether they really recommend them from their heart and whether they are good products for real. Whether they recommend them because they get money of it or because they got the products for free."*

Five out of seven respondents also mentioned they don't trust alone influencers opinions and want to know other opinions as well, like asking from a friend or checking the product reviews from Google. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2011), in some cases consumers do rely on friend's recommendations and read online reviews when they are in the alternative evaluation stage of buyer decision process, where the evaluating methods depend on the individuals and their specific buying situation.

Another thing that seemed to be questionable for six out of seven respondents was, whether influencers recommend the products genuinely. The reason for majority of them seemed to be the fact that there is money involved in the recommendations. Respondent F explained her thoughts, *"A little hard to say because I believe some are sure to be genuine, but then again they get paid for recommending it. I wonder if they would recommend these products so strongly if they were not paid for it. There is a fine line."* When looking at the theory, it is essential to emphasize Shimp and Andrews (2013) significant findings whereby trustworthiness is an important aspect of source credibility, which applies to the perceived honesty, believability and integrity of a source. The level of trust depends on the audience's perception of the source's intent. If consumers believe that the source is just marketing for their own benefit, the source is seen as less convincing than someone who has no benefits by marketing the brand. Thereby the interviews strengthened the theory of Shimp and Andrews (2013), it also turned out all the respondents considered influencer marketing more reliable when influencers don't receive any reward or money from it.

This study reinforces Upinfluence's (2017) idea that the aggressive and intrusive traditional advertisements that promise to do everything are in the past, consumers want to see how products work on real people and to know what results to expect. All of the respondents agreed that material where they can see influencers actually using the product

by showing the results generates the most trust in them, also a before and after material shown as pictures and videos are seen as trustworthy. Respondent F explained with an example why this kind of material is seen as more trustworthy, “...*For example, if you put a picture just from makeup and there is no comparison picture, then there is nothing to compare the end result. Just from a picture you don't even know what products are actually used for it.*”

According to TapInfluence (2015), influencer’s authentic content builds trust, whereas, insincere or irrelevant content quickly weaken the impact of the influencer by reducing their follower’s trust in them. This applies to the interview results as well; to be able to gain that trust of individuals the key thing for influencers is to be authentic. Authenticity came up on several questions during the interviews; it is the main quality that can arise trust in influencers and it is the marketing type that the respondents also prefer on Instagram. The several quotes of respondent B clearly referred to the fact that she prefers authentic influencer marketing. She explained that she prefers if influencers are authentic and in a way that they give more than just superficial pictures and share those bad moments with their everyday lives as well. Respondent C also pointed out that she prefers if the influencers are authentic and share their personal life as well, because it is far more interesting than just beautiful pictures.

By Hopper Instagram Scheduler (2019) Instagram offers the perfect platform for collaborative marketing campaigns, where brands partner with influencers and promote their products in an authentic and informal way. From the interview results we can assume that not all the influencers promote the products in authentic and informal way, since it was noticeable that some of the respondents had a bit negative attitude towards the Instagram superficial side. Based on the interviews we can draw the conclusion that, authenticity is what the consumers want from influencer marketing, which therefore builds trust in influencers.

5.2 Research question 2: How influencer marketing on Instagram affects the consumer behavior?

Five out of seven respondents mentioned that influencer marketing affects them somehow and they feel that influencer marketing encourages, motivates and inspires them. Three of the respondents also mentioned that influencer marketing must have some unnoticed affect on them. This supports the fact that according to Kotler and Armstrong (2011) usually even consumers themselves don't know what influences their purchases. There are many levels deep in the consumer's mind, which can affect the consumers buying behavior, including cultural and social influences, motivations, beliefs and attitudes. Based on the research it is possible to assume that when consumers browse the Instagram frequently, they are exposed to various marketing effects unnoticed.

Compared to the theoretical framework of the study, the interviews raised a somewhat new issue. Three of the respondents told that influencer marketing have brought out some pressure about appearance, for some during the younger age and for some it still does. It is possible to assume, that this is one of the reasons why the respondents prefer material from the real life of the influencer as well, and not just superficial and beautiful pictures.

An interesting finding was that six out of seven respondents thought influencer marketing appeals to them more compared to traditional marketing, even though majority of the respondents had some doubts whether they can trust influencers marketing recommendations. The respondents explained they feel influencer marketing is more relatable, humane and easily accessible. Veissi Iman (2017) received similar results in his study; according to his study Instagram Influencers are perceived more trust worthy than traditional advertisements, even though the respondents of his study might have suspected that the influencers may not promote the products authentically. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2011), the studies show that consumers find user generated content three times more influential when making purchase decision compared to traditional marketing methods. This reinforces the idea why respondents thought influencer marketing as more appealing and therefore it is possible to assume it is more effective way of marketing as well.

Recognizing the need or want is always the starting point in consumer's buying behavior process. Six out of seven respondents stated that when they buy or want to buy a beauty product based on influencer's recommendations, it's usually both, sometimes want and sometimes need depending on the case. Respondent F explained that her want arises from the feeling when she wants to look like the influencer, seeing someone using a skin care or makeup can arise that feeling. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2011), this kind of external stimuli, can be triggered for instance from advertisement, which is usually the case in influencer marketing. However influencer recommendations are not the only influencing factor on consumer behavior. The factors that strongly impact on the aspect how consumers perceive and react to the stimuli are cultural, personal, social and psychological characteristic, and these several characteristics influence on a subconscious level. (Kotler and Armstrong, 2011).

Six out of seven respondents had bought some product based on the influencer's recommendations. However, they mentioned they make them rarely or have made only a few of them. Even though the sample in the research was small, this indicates that influencer marketing has some kind of affect on the consumer buying behavior. This also refers to the Nicola Cronin article, in 2018, where 72 % of Instagram users said they have bought fashion, beauty or style related products after seeing something on Instagram (Hopper Instagram Scheduler, 2019).

After all four out of seven respondents said that the recommendation might not lead to direct purchase decision, but it can lead to a purchase decision later on. Respondent B explained that she might not buy the product at the time she saw the advertisement, but she might buy it later on because of the Instagram advertisement that she saw earlier. This applies to the Kotler and Armstrong (2011) theory about buyer decision process. In the second stage of the process the consumer is stimulated to search for more information. If the consumer doesn't buy the product directly it is typical that the need is stored in the memory for heightened attention or the consumer starts actively search information related to the need. Thus, we can presume that influencer marketing has some kind of influence to the buyer decision process as well.

Respondents F pointed out as well that she buys more products for try out because of influencer marketing, products that she would not otherwise consider to buy or even

know about. It may be noted that only one respondent mentioned this when asking how influencer marketing affects on her. However, we can consider this might be the case with some other respondents as well, since three of the respondents had noticed that influencer marketing has some unnoticeable affect on them. As mentioned before, according to Kotler and Armstrong (2011) usually even consumers them self's don't know what influences their purchases. In addition, one of the reasons for this could be what respondent F mentioned. She said that she doesn't follow the influencer because of product recommendations, but more as a hobby, as part of her day and for amusement. This indicates that consumers might not think following influencers as marketing, and thus are more exposed to marketing, without actually noticing it.

Another interesting discovery was made without asking about it, three out of seven respondents mentioned that influencer marketing shapes the brands image. The respondents mentioned that if the company works with a popular influencer it has positive affect on company's brand image. According to Gilliland and Gilliland (2018) building brand awareness is the most significant reason for beauty brands to recruit digital influencers. Based on interviews, we can assume that influencer marketing is a good way to boost the company's brand image, however, it is highly important to evaluate how the influencer fits to the brand image and that they have the same values. As respondent B mentioned, if the influencer does not fit to the brand image, it takes away the credibility of the influencer marketing.

Six out of seven the respondents were ready to order the influencer recommended product from abroad if needed. This indicates influencer marketing certainly has some kind of affect on the consumer, if they are willing to invest the effort on ordering the product from another country. However, five out of seven respondents mentioned they would not be willing to spend more money for it based solely on the influencer recommendations. Respondent C also pointed out that discounts are significant factor in her buying behavior, which indicates that the price is decisive factor in consumer's buyer decision process. The price also appeared later on in the interviews, when the respondents told how long they think about their purchase decision. Turned out that the bigger the purchase, the longer all the respondents spend time thinking about the purchase and searching for more information about the product and price. According to Kotler and Arm-

strong (2011) price is one of the elements that can come between the purchase intention and the purchase decision, it is seen as unexpected situations, which can occur for example in changes in income or product prices. Based on to the interview results we can assume that influencer marketing has some kind of affect on consumer behavior, and it is perceived as more appealing than traditional marketing.

5.3 Research question 3: What kinds of influencer characteristics are appealing to consumers?

As already stated above, authenticity is one of the influencer characteristics that build trust in influencer, but it is also one of the reasons why the respondents like to follow the influencer. Common answers between all the respondents were that they like to follow influencers who are authentic, relatable and humane. For example respondent C said that authenticity is very important and she likes when influencer gives more than just superficial side and shows her/his personality as well, because according to her it makes it more humane and relatable. The main reasons why the respondent's follow influencers in Instagram are inspiration, motivation and tips that they get from them. Four of the respondents also mentioned that nowadays they prefer Instagram Stories instead of pictures in the feed. Respondent C mentioned that she likes Instagram Stories more over pictures, because influencers show more relaxed material there and share more videos than pictures. It is possible to assume that one of the reasons why the respondents prefer Instagram Stories are because the personality and authenticity of the influencer are better exposed in form of Instagram Stories. Based on Lmsomeco.fi (2019) Instagram Stories makes it easy to produce lightweight content that engages the viewers.

According to the social psychologist Herbert Kelman there are three general source attributes: credibility, attractiveness and power, which promotes the sources effectiveness (Shimp and Andrews, 2013). All of them have different means by how the influencer affect to the consumer's attitudes and behavior. There are two important aspects of source credibility, which are known as expertise and trustworthiness. Expertise relates to the knowledge and skills the source carries and if the source is perceived as an expert on his or her field, it is more likely that he or she is observed as more credible. Howev-

er, five out of seven respondents said that they don't follow the influencers because of their expertise or think the influencers as experts. Respondent F mentioned that in order to think them as experts, the influencers should have some kind of education from the industry. Respondents C agreed with respondent F and also mentioned that education brings value, but is not necessary. Nevertheless four of the respondents think that they can have good recommendations from the influencers because they have tried so many promotional products. This indicates that even though majority of the respondents don't see influencers as experts, they still value their opinions on some level.

One important finding about influencer marketing, according to both the theoretical material and the empirical research was the effectiveness of attractiveness. Shimp and Andrews (2013) explain attractiveness as the process of identification, which consists of three dimensions: similarity, familiarity and liking. It means that the source is seen as attractive, if the consumer shares some similarities with the influencer or if they just like the source regardless whether they have any similarities. According to Kelman attractiveness can be for example intellectual skills, lifestyle characteristics, personality, athletic talent or physical attractiveness (Shimp and Andrews, 2013). All of the respondents mentioned that they do follow the influencers some of these reasons. Though personality seemed to be the most popular one and after that sportiness and lifestyle came up, also two of the respondents mentioned the physical attractiveness. Respondent D explained the importance of personality in a way that if the influencer is not a nice person, even though how great she/he would look, she would stop following the influencer if the personality doesn't please at all. Respondent E also emphasized the personality, but also mentioned other factors, such as sports and lifestyle. She mentioned that lifestyle is the most interesting of all, because it encompasses everything, including food, makeup etc. Shimp and Andrews (2013) explains that when the consumer perceives a source as attractive, they identify with the influencer and are more likely to adopt their attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, interest and preferences. This indicates that personality is the most important factor, how an influencer can influence the consumer.

According to Hopper Instagram Scheduler (2019) influencers have a strong and loyal relationship with their followers, as they share their daily life with them, therefore consumers feel like they know them personally and listen their recommendations as if they

were their friends. The interviews revealed that six out of seven respondents said they somehow feel familiar with them, if person shares things about her personal life. However, they don't feel like the influencers are their friends. For example respondent F explained, *"Yes with people whom I have been following for a long time and who tell a lot about their private life on Instagram and have for example boyfriends in the same video. Then sometimes it feels like I know the person who posts those pictures and videos."* Based on to the theoretical study and the empirical research it is possible to assume that the respondents would be able to identify better with the influencers, if they share something personal about their life and that is why the respondents wish influencers would share more material like that, which consequently would generate more trust between the consumers and the influencers.

The respondent's revealed which beauty influencers they follow on Instagram and mentioned that the core beauty products they market are make up and skincare, which sometimes may vary as well between beauty and fashion. The respondents mainly followed different influencers, however, a few names came up couple of times, which were Patricia Bright, Jeffrey Star, Michelle Phan, Cloe Morelle, Tati Westbrook, Aino Rossi. They all fit to the third type of influencers that include bloggers, content creators and YouTuber's, where their key thing to success is having the respect of their readers (Influencer Marketing Hub, n.d.). Five of these influencers were from abroad and had followers between 1,1 – 15,2 million. Aino Rossi was the only Finnish influencer who was mentioned couple of times between the respondents and she has 152 thousands followers. According to the Influencer Marketing Hub micro influencers are rapidly becoming the most important influencer type, however none of these influencers mentioned fit to the micro influencers category, because the amount of followers they have. This was an interesting finding, since according to TapInfluence (2017) micro influencers provide more authentic relationship with their audience, which is what the respondents actually hoped for from the influencers. Based on this research it is possible to assume that the importance of authenticity is still growing and micro influencers are becoming more popular in the future.

6 CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study was to answer the research questions and the researcher believes that the material collected from the theoretical study and the empirical research gained answers to the research questions. In addition, the study provides new information by looking at the subject from a consumer perspective.

Influencer marketing has grown rapidly due to digitalization and the rise of a social media, nowadays it is one of the most popular ways for companies to market their brand and products in social media. The primary objective of the study was to find out how consumers perceive and trust influencer marketing. Despite the popularity of influencer marketing, the majority of the respondents were doubtful whether they could trust the recommendations made by influencers regarding beauty products. Many of the respondents questioned the influencer's recommendations, because they were aware that influencers get money or other benefits by marketing the products on Instagram. Thereby, this study reinforces Shimp and Andrews (2013) observation that the level of trust depends on the audience's perception of the source's intent. All the respondents considered influencer marketing more reliable when influencers don't receive any reward or money from it. In addition the opinion of the influencer alone was not convincing enough, a majority of the participants wanted to know other opinions as well before purchasing the product.

The key for successful influencer marketing is to build trust between the influencer and consumer, which the influencer can build by being authentic. It is the main quality that builds trust in influencers, consequently it is also seen as a preferred characteristic of influencers. In addition, it also generates trust in influencer marketing when respondents see the influencers actually using the beauty products and when they are sharing before and after material. Another important thing was the fact that influencers should also share content about their personal lives, which would make the influencers more relatable. Displaying only the superficial side on Instagram triggers easily negative emotions and creates a pressure on appearance. However, the respondents thought that they still get some positive feelings out of influencer marketing because it encourages, motivates and inspires them.

Although the respondent's trust for influencer marketing was questionable, six out of seven respondents had still made some purchase decisions based on it, which indicates that influencer marketing has some kind of affect on consumer buying behavior. In addition, the results of this study indicate that influencer marketing is seen as more effective than traditional marketing, it appeals more to the consumers because it is more relatable, humane and easily accessible. This strengthens Kotler and Armstrong (2011) studies that consumers find user generated content three times more influential when making purchase decision compared to traditional marketing methods.

All of the respondents stated they follow influencers because of their attractiveness, which according to Kelman can for example be intellectual skills, lifestyle characteristics, personality, athletic talent or physical attractiveness (Shimp and Andrews, 2013). However, it turned out that the influencer's personality is the most important one when choosing whom to follow. Shimp and Andrews (2013) explains that when the consumer perceives a source as attractive, they identify with the influencer and are more likely to adopt their attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, interest and preferences. This indicates that personality is the most important factor, how an influencer can influence the consumer.

There are also issues in this study that naturally need to be taken into account when assessing the reliability of the study. This research focused on to the respondent's own experiences, and the respondents based their answers on their personal experiences. Therefore, it is important to evaluate whether all the respondents dared to tell their answers truthfully, as these questions can be critical and personal issues, which could influence how openly the respondents expressed their views. Thus, more respondents could have improved the reliability of the study. Though, the inclusion of additional interviewees would not necessarily have changed the conclusions of the study, as the interpretations made for this study are based on the views of several interviewees. However, overall the problem of qualitative studies is the small amount of respondents, which means generalizations to the larger groups should be avoided.

6.1 Suggestions for further research

A coherent way to explore this research in the future would be to proceed with the same topic and questionnaire, but with a larger sample. Even though this research provided in depth answers, the sample was rather small, which is why it doesn't prove the perception of the whole group between ages 18-34. A larger sample would generate more reliable results of the study. A broader study would also be interesting on how influencers should act on Instagram, to make consumers more easily trust them without mistrusting their motives. Furthermore a research about what influencers should do on Instagram and why, in addition to study how they should create the marketing content. It would be interesting and useful for the influencers and help them to build stronger trust towards consumers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Interview introduction

This interview is about consumer perception towards Influencer marketing on Instagram. The focus is in the beauty industry, which include make up, skin care and hair products. The interview is conducted anonymously and it is divided into three different topics, where we can speak freely about the topic. The topics are: Influencer Marketing on Instagram, consumer buying behavior and influencer's characteristics. However I will present different kinds of questions inside of these topics, where you can ask further specific questions if needed and freely mention things that I don't ask from you.

In case the term Influencer marketing is uncertain for you, I will give you brief introduction about. Influencer marketing focuses on people who are popular on social media, people who has influence over potential customers and use it to promote the brand's products or services. Companies arrange different kind of marketing activities through these influencers in order to gain visibility for the brand and attract consumers (Aumcore.com, 2019).

Appendix 2 – Interview guide

Theme 1 Influencer Marketing on Instagram

1. What comes to your mind about influencer marketing?
2. How do you feel about influencer marketing in the beauty industry?
3. Do you notice what are influencer's own opinions and what are marketing content?
4. Do you trust the recommendations made by Instagram influencers regarding beauty products and do you think they make them genuinely?
5. What do you think when influencers recommend products without the cooperation tag (E.g. self-purchased product) do you think it is still marketing or honest recommendation?
6. What kind of influencer recommendations you trust the most?
7. What type of influencer marketing do you prefer in Instagram?

Theme 2 Consumer buying behavior

1. Does influencer marketing on Instagram affect you somehow?
2. Which one appeals to you more, traditional marketing or influencer marketing and why?
3. Have you ever made or could you make buying decisions based on recommendations from influencers in Instagram? (How often or why not?)
4. When you buy or want to buy a beauty product based on influencer's recommendations, is it usually based on need or want?
5. If you want to buy a beauty product based on influencer's recommendations, how far are you willing to go in your buying behavior? (E.g. would you order the product from abroad if needed?)
6. How long do you think about the purchase decision and how?
7. Would you participate in marketing competitions or lottery that influencers arrange on Instagram?

Theme 3 Influencer's characteristics

1. What type of Instagram influencers do you like or follow on Instagram and why?
2. In what ways or by what qualities can an influencer arouse trust in you?
3. Do you think the Instagram influencers are experts in their fields and do you follow them because of their knowledge and skills?
4. Do you relate or admire the Instagram influencers you follow? (E.g. values, lifestyle, appearance or something else)
5. Do you feel familiar or friendly with them?
6. Do you follow Instagram influencers because of their attractiveness? (E.g. physical attractiveness, intellectual skills, lifestyle characteristics, personality, athletic talent or something else) If so, which one?
7. Which beauty influencers do you follow on Instagram and what are the core beauty products that they market?

Appendix 3 – Original quotes with translations

”Nykyään mun mielestä kauneus alalla ollaan tultu siihen, että brändit julkaisevat aivan liikaa tuotteita, joka kuukausi tulee uusi luomiväri paletti yms. Kuluttajalle hieman hämmentävää, kun sitä tulee joka puolelta ja tulee sellainen olo, että joka kuukausi pitäisi ostaa esimerkiksi uusi luomiväri paletti, kun totuus on se että yksi luomiväri paletti saattaa kestää vuosia. Tuntuu että on ylitarjontaa.”

“Nowadays, in my opinion, the beauty industry has come to the point where brands are publishing too many products, every month a new eye shadow palette, etc. It is a little confusing for the consumer when it comes from everywhere and feels like every month you should buy for example a new eye shadow palette, when the truth is that one eye shadow palette can last for years. It feels like there is an oversupply.” Respondent G

”Kyllä se sanoma aika paljon sekoittuu siinä, että onko se influencersien oma mielipide vai sitten firmojen mielipide, mitä he ovat käskeneet tai ehdottaneet sanomaan tuotteesta mainoksessa. Sanoisin kuitenkin, että on haastavaa erottaa. Toki lainsäädännöt helpottavat huomaamista, koska mainos pitää olla mainittu yms.”

“Yes that message is pretty much mixed up whether it is the influencers own opinion or the firms opinion they have said or suggested to say about the product in the ad. However, I would say that it is challenging to distinguish. Of course, the legislation makes it easier to notice, because the ad has to be mentioned, and so on.” Respondent B

”Esimerkiksi jos jollain videolla on tuote sijoittelua ja lukee, että se on sponsoroitu, silloin niistä huomaa hyvin.”

“For example if some video has product placement and it says it is sponsored, then you will notice it well.” Respondent G

”En välttämättä, mä suhtaudun tosi kriittisesti ja epäilen aina sitä, että suosittaleeko ne niitä oikeasti omalla sydämellä ja onko se oikeasti hyvä tuote. Suosittaleeko ne niitä siksi että ne saa rahaa siitä tai siksi että ne sai ne tuotteet ite ilmaiseksi.”

“I do not necessarily, I am very critical and always doubt whether they really recommend them from their heart and whether they are good products for real. Whether they

recommend them because they get money of it or because they got the products for free.” Respondent A

”Mä yleensä laitan korvan taakse heidän suosituksen, mutta menen myös lisäksi googlettamaan tuotteen katsoakseni mitä muut tavalliset kuluttajat ovat olleet mieltä tuotteesta. En luota ainoastaan yhteen vaikuttajaan vaan mieluummin luotan useamman ihmisen mielipiteeseen.”

“I usually store their recommendation in my mind, but I also go and google the product to see what other normal consumers have thought about the product. I do not trust only one influencer, I rather trust the opinion of more people.” Respondent D

”Kyllä mä luotan ja ainakin oon valmis kokeilemaan, mutta toki kaikki tuotteet ei sovi kaikille. Vaikka mä luotan niin en ehkä saman tien mee niitä ostamaan. Eriasia on sit teenkö ostopäätöksen sen suositusten perusteella ja vaivaudunko ostamaan sen.”

“Yes I trust and at least I am ready to try, but of course not all products are suitable for everyone. Even though I trust, I might not go buy them right away. The difference is if I make the purchase decision based on its recommendations and if I bother to buy it.” Respondent B

”Vähän vaikea sanoa, koska uskon että jotkut varmasti ovat aitoja, mutta sitten taas samalla niille taas maksetaan siitä suosittelusta. Mietin että suosittelisivatko ne niitä tuotteita niin vahvasti jos niille ei maksettaisi siitä. Siinä on hieman häilyvä raja. Siitä usein huomaa jos ne käyttää sitä tuotetta useammalla insta videolla, ja jos he käyttävät sitä monesti niin tulee sellainen fiilis että ne itsekin oikeasti pitävät siitä tuotteesta.”

“A little hard to say because I believe some are sure to be genuine, but then again they get paid for recommending it. I wonder if they would recommend these products so strongly if they were not paid for it. There is a fine line. You can usually notice it if they use that product on more than one Instagram video, and if they use it many times, then I get the feeling that they really like the product.” Respondent F

”Musta tuntuu että silloin se on rehellinen suositus jos ne on itse laittanut rahaa siihen, koska ne ei saa siitä mitään hyötää tai rahaa kun mainostavat sitä.”

“I feel that then it is an honest recommendation if they have put money into it themselves, because they don't get any profit or money from it when they advertise it.”

Respondent F

”Sellaisiin suosituksiin missä on jotain ennen ja jälkeen materiaalia. Jotain missä on käytännön esimerkkejä eikä vain paketista kuvaa. Esimerkiksi jos on kyse meikkituotteista, niin se että hän on oikeasti itse meikannut niillä tuotteilla, niin se antaa tuotteille konkretiaa.”

“To recommendations where there is something before and after the material. Something where there are practical examples and not just a package image. For example, in the case of makeup products, the fact that she has actually made the makeup with those products will give the products specificity.” Respondent B

”Videot missä näkee, että ne oikeasti käyttää sitä tuotetta, ehkä juuri sellaiset ennen ja jälkeen kuvat missä näkee myös sen eron. Jos esim. laittaa pelkästä meikistä kuvan, eikä ole mitään vertailu kuvaa niin ei nää mitään mihin lopputulosta verrata. Pelkästä kuvasta ei edes tiedä mitä tuotteita siihen on oikeasti käytetty.”

“Videos where you see that they are actually using that product, and maybe just before and after pictures where you can see the difference. For example, if you put a picture just about makeup and there is no comparison picture, then there is nothing to compare the end result with. Just from a picture you don't even know what products are actually used for it.” Respondent F

”Aidosta, että ne antaa itsestään muutakin kuin sellasen kauniin kuvan silloin tällöin. Jakaa omasta arjestaan myös niitä huonoja hetkiä, eikä vaan aina niitä pinnallisia kuvia.”

“Authentic, that they give more than just such a beautiful picture every now and then. The kind, where they also share those bad moments with their everyday lives, not just those superficial pictures” Respondent B

”Sellaisesta mihin on itse helppo samaistua. Tavallaan sellaista mikä ei ole niin läpinäkyvää markkinointia. Aivan kuin käyttäisi itse sitä tuotetta siinä videolla, eikä mitään selkeää ylistyspuhetta. Silloin tulee sellainen olo että noi on samanlaisia ihmisiä mitä mä oon.”

”Something that is easy to relate with. Kind of something, which is not so transparent marketing. Like you would use that product yourself in that video, and no clear praise speech. Then it feels like they are the similar people as I am.” Respondent F

”Liika täydellisyys ei ole mun makuun, koska elämä ei ole täydellistä. Mainoksia ei myöskään saa olla liikaa, ei missään nimessä niin että joka postaus on mainos. Lisäksi tykkään jos he ovat aitoja ja jakavat heidän omaa elämää myös, se on todella paljon kiinnostavampaa kuin vain kauniit kuvat.”

”Excessive perfection is not my type, because life is not perfect. Also, there should not be too many ads, certainly not so that every post is an ad. In addition, I prefer if they are authentic and share their personal life as well, it is far more interesting than just beautiful pictures” Respondent C

”Vaikuttaja markkinointi kannustaa sellaiseen itsestään huolta pitämiseen, esim kauniit meikit jollain inspiroi itseäkin laittamaan jonkun kivan meikin. Antaa inspiraatiota ja halua kokeilla tietynlaisia luomivärejä ja erilaista värimaailmaa.”

“Influencer marketing encourages self-care, for example, a beautiful makeup somehow inspires you to put on some nice makeup. Gives you inspiration and desire to try certain eye shadows and different color schemes.”

”Se vaikuttaa varmasti myös jossain syvemmillä tasolla ja vaikuttaa myös huomaamattani” *”It surely has an impact on some deeper level and also affects unnoticed.”*

Respondent C

”Ensimmäisenä tulee mieleen, että kyllä sellainen täydellisyyden tavoittelu Instagramissa ja sellainen että kaikki on kaunista ja pinnallista, tuo paineita siitä että millainen pitäisi olla. Fiilis että pitäisi olla kaikki viimeisen päälle ja ihan samanlainen.”

“The first thing that comes to mind is that the striving for perfection on Instagram and the fact that everything is beautiful and superficial puts pressure on how I should be.

The kind of feeling, that I should be dressed up and looking just the same.”

Respondent B

”Tulee ostettua paljon enemmän sellaisia tuotteita kokeiluun, tuotteita mitä ei tulisi muuten harkinneeksi ostaakseen. Kun näkee tuotteita mainostettavan, niin tulee kokeilua tuotteita mistä ei muuten saisi tietää mistään.”

“I buy much more products for try-out, products that I would not otherwise have considered to buy. When you see products being advertised, then you try out products that you wouldn't otherwise know about.” Respondent F

”Vaikuttaja markkinointi vetoaa paremmin, koska siinä saa käyttökokemuksia oikeilta ihmisiltä. Se on helpommin samaistuttavaa, versus esim. tv tai lehtimainokset. Myös sen takia, että altistuu sille markkinoinnille enemmän, koska Instagramia tulee selattua huomaamattaan enemmän ja tuntuu että se tavoittaa paremmin.”

“Influencer marketing appeals better, because it provides user experiences from real people. It is easier to identify with, compared to for example TV or magazine ads. Also, because you are more exposed to that marketing, because you instinctively browse the Instagram more and it seems to reach better.” Respondent F

”Perinteinen markkinointi, koska innostun enemmän tuotteista jos ne on hyvin markkinoitu esim. joku tosi hieno mainos.”

“Traditional marketing, because I get more interested in products if they are well marketed for instance some really great advertisement.” Respondent E

”En välttämättä juuri sillä hetkellä hanki sitä tuotetta kun nään mainoksen. Kuitenkin jos näen myöhemmin Instagramissa mainostetun tuotteen kaupassa, niin saatan ostaa sen silloin aikaisemmin näkemäni Instagram mainoksen takia. Tai jos minulla on tarve juuri sillä hetkellä johonkin tuotteeseen kun näen mainoksen, niin tällöin saattaisin ostaa sen heti samantien. Ajotus on tärkeä ja sillä on iso merkitys miten tarve kohtaa ajotuksen.”

“I may not purchase the product exactly at the time when I see the ad. However, later on if I see Instagram advertised product at the shop, I might buy it then because of the

ad that I saw earlier on Instagram. Or if I have a need for a product right at that moment when I see the ad, then I might buy the product right away. The timing of the advertisement is important and what is the current need of the product on that very moment.” Respondent B

”Ehkä voisin ostaa useammin niitä tuotteita jos se olisi helpompaa, mut sit oon niin laiska etten jaksa vaivautua.”

”Maybe I could buy those products more often if it was easier, but then I’m too lazy to bother.” Respondent B

”Jos olen esim. aiemmin ajatellut että tää brändi tekee vähän laadultaan huonompaa tavaraa tai ei ole niin in. Mutta sitten jos ne tekee yhteistyötä suosittujen influencersien kanssa niin mun silmissä brändin arvo nousee ja saatan huomata että niillähän on ihan hyviä ja suosittuja tuotteita.”

”For example, if I have previously thought that the brand makes a bit lower quality stuff, or it is not so “in”. But then if they work with popular influencers, the value of the brand will increase in my eyes and I may find that they have some pretty good and popular products.” Respondent C

”Halu syntyy siitä, jos näet että joku käyttää jotain ihonhoitotuotetta tai meikkejä, niin tulee sellainen fiilis että haluan myös näyttää tuolta ja siitä usein syntyy se halu.”

”Want comes from seeing someone using a skin care product or makeup, then it comes down to feeling that I also want to look like that, and it usually creates that want.”
Respondent F

”Tottakai on enemmän sitä halua, mutta sen jälkeen perustelen itselleni, että löytyykö omasta valikoimastani jo saman tyylisiä ja sitten katson tarvitsenko oikeasti sitä.”

”Of course there is more that desire, but then I justify to myself that if I already have the same kind in my selection and then see if I really need it.” Respondent G

”Jos esim joku rasva maksaa satoja euroja niin en ehkä ole kuitenkaan valmis maksamaan satoja euroja pelkästään influencersien suosituksen perusteella. Sitten täytyy olla

jo esim joku tarve tietylle tuotteelle ja muualtakin kuultuja suosituksia. Hinta on ratkaiseva.”

”If, for example, some cream costs hundreds of euros, then I might not be ready to pay hundreds of euros based solely on the influencer’s recommendations. Then there must be, for example, some need for a particular product and recommendations heard elsewhere. The price is decisive.” Respondent F

”Jos mulla tulee sellainen tilanne että mulla loppuu joku tuote tai mä tarviin jonkun tuotteen niin alan tutkimaan mistä mä ostaisin sen ja mistä saan sen edullisimmin hyvään hintaan. Halun mukaan taas jos olen jossain liikkeessä ja nään jonkun tuotteen mikä on kivan näköinen niin se on paljon nopeampi ostopäätös ja ostan sen usein heti. Tarpeeseen ostamiseen käytän enemmän aikaa tutkimiseen ennen ostoa.”

”If I’m in a situation where I run out of product or I need a product then I start researching where I would buy it and where I can get it at the best price. As for the want, if I’m in a store and I see some product that looks nice, the buying decision is much faster, and often I buy it right away. For buying needs, I spend more time researching before buying.” Respondent D

”Olen osallistunut ja voin osallistua ja elää siinä toivossa, että joskus saisi jotain ilmaiseksi.” *”I have participated and I can participate and live in the hope that some day I would get something for free.”* Respondent A

”Olen osallistunut muutamiin. Tuntuu etten ikinä voita ja usein menee ohi että kuka edes voitti. Näissä influencerit haluaa vaan kuvaan paljon kommentteja, jotta se nostaa häntä ylöspäin. Usein palkinnot eivät ole edes niin hyvä ja usein pitää vielä seurata toista tiliäkin siihen että voi osallistua, en viitsi enää.”

”I have attended a few. I feel like I never win and it often passes me by who even won? In these, the influencers just want to have a lot of comments in their picture, so that it lifts them up in Instagram feed. Usually the prizes aren't even that good and you often have to follow another account to participate, I don't bother anymore.” Respondent C

”Aitous ja puhuu henkilönä näistä jutuista eikä vaan markkinointina. Ehkä just sellaisista vaikuttajista kehen pystyn myös itse jollain tavoin samaistumaan. Myös sellaiset kenellä näkyy se oma persoona siellä Instagramissa, joka helpottaa sitä samaistumista.”

“Feels authentic and speaks as a person about these things, not just marketing. Perhaps, such influencers that I can identify with in some way. Also those who show their own personality on Instagram which makes it easier to identify.” Respondent F

”Aitous on erittäin tärkeä. Tykkään että se influenceri antaa itsestään enemmän kuin vain pinnallisen puolen ja tuo myös persoonaansa esiin, mikä tekee siitä ihmisläheisemmän ja samaistuttavamman. Pelkkä ulkonäkö ei riitä, koska instagram on täynnä kauniita kuvia, niin influencerilla pitää olla myös jotain muutakin sanottavaa ja tuoda myös muutakin elämää esille, että jaksan seurata häntä.”

“Authenticity is very important. I like that influencer gives more of herself/himself than just the superficial side and brings out her/his personality as well, which makes it more humane and relatable. Appearance alone is not enough because Instagram is full of beautiful pictures, so the influencer must have something else to say and show her/his personal life as well, so that I bother to follow her/him.” Respondent C

”En usko että he ovat alan ammattilaisia. Ehkä enemmän uskon että he osaavat valita hyviä tuotteita kuluttaja näkökulmasta koska ovat itsekin kuluttajia. Myös siinä mielessä, että he ovat päässeet testaamaan monia tuotteita ja osaavat sen perusteella kertoa mikä on hyvä tuote. En kuitenkaan esim uskoisi, että ne osaisivat kertoa mikä hiustuote sopisi mun hiuksille tai mikä meikkivoide mun ihotyypille.”

“I don't think they are professionals. Maybe I believe more that they know how to choose good products from the consumer's point of view because they are consumers themselves. Also in the sense that they have been able to test many products and based on that they can tell what is a good product. However, for example, I wouldn't believe they could tell me which hair product would fit my hair or what foundation for my skin type.” Respondent B

”Eivät ole mielestäni alansa asiantuntijoita enkä seuraa sen takia. Seuraan heitä koska heiltä voi kuulla mielipiteitä joistakin tuotteista, mutta se ei ole ammattimainen näkökulma ikinä, vaan se on vain henkilökohtainen mielipide.”

”I don’t think they are experts in their field and I don’t follow them because of that. I follow them because I can hear opinions about some products, but that is never a professional point of view, it is just personal opinion.” Respondent A

”En voi sanoa että ihailisin silleen ketään, mutta ehkä voi samaistua jos joku antaa ja kertoo itsestään jotain syvällisempää, joka osuisi omaan kohtaan. Usein saan kuitenkin inspiraatiota heidän kauttaan.”

”I can’t say I admire anyone for it, but maybe I can identify with someone, if they give and tell something deeper about themselves. However, often I get inspiration from them.” Respondent B

”En ehkä niinkään samaistu mutta ihailen kyllä ja ehkä jossain määrin myös kadehdin.”

”I might not relate so much, but I do admire them and maybe I also envy them to some extent.” Respondent F

”Kyllä sellaisten kanssa ketä on pitkään seurannut ja jotka kertoo Instagramissa paljon heidän yksityiselämästään ja heillä on esim. poikaystävät samalla videolla. Sitten joskus tulee sellainen olo ihan kuin tuntisin sen henkilön joka niitä kuvia ja videoita postailee.”

”Yes with people who I have been following for a long time and who tell a lot about their private life on Instagram and have for example boyfriends in the same video. Then sometimes it feels like I know the person who posts those pictures and videos.”

Respondent F

”Kyllä se on usein jokin näistä ja mieluusti kaikki. Ensin saattaa katsoa tietty ulkonäön perusteella että kivannäköinen tyyppi ja sitten katsoo löytyykö sieltä jotakin muutakin, joku tekijä.. Persoonaa on kuitenkin kaikista tärkein näistä, sitten jos huomaa että se ei miellytä niin lopetan seuraamisen.”

Yes it is often one of these and preferably all. At first, I might look at appearance, that he/she looks nice and then see if there's anything else there, some factor. However, per-

sonality is the most important of these, but if I find out that it doesn't please me, then I stop the following." Respondent C

"Joo kyllä mä seuraan. Persoonallisuus on ainakin iso osa, se että on kiva tyyppi ja sä jaksat seurata sitä niin totta kai se vaikuttaa. Esim. jos se ei olisi mukava henkilö ja vaikka hän näyttäisi kuinka upealta, jos sen persoona ei miellyttäisi yhtään, niin ei sellaista jaksaisi pitkään seurata."

"Yes I do follow. Personality is at least a big part that she/he is a nice person and you bother to follow her/him, so of course it does. For example, if she/he is not a nice person and even how great she/he looks, if the personality doesn't please at all, then I don't follow her/him for long." Respondent D

"No ehkä se persoona, joillan saattaa toki olla se persoona, joillain taas lifestyle tai urheilu. Lifestyle on kaikista kiinnostavin, siitä ottaa eniten kaikkia vinkkejä mihin kuuluu ihan kaikki, ruoka, meikit ym. koko homma. Kaikille on joku tälläinen syy miksi seuraan niitä ja menee näihin kategorioihin."

"Well maybe that personality, though, some may have that personality, some may have lifestyle or sports. Lifestyle is the most interesting of all, I take the most tips from that, which includes everything, food, makeup etz. the whole thing. Everyone has such a reason why I follow them and they fit into these categories." Respondent E