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Influencer Marketing

on Instagram for High-Street Fashion Brands, and the Purchase Intention

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As social media platforms, such as Instagram, continue to expand and evolve, fashion brands also have to change and adapt to reach its consumers. Influencer marketing is a relatively new marketing strategy that came up in the course of the growing popularity of social media. Macro- and micro-influencers function as influencers and promote brands/products on their social media channels. Especially on Instagram, many posts can be observed in which influencers endorse high-street fashion brands such as H&M. Since it is a relatively new marketing strategy, more research is needed to look at the effectiveness of this phenomenon. Hence, the following research question is formulated: *How can high-street fashion brands choose the right influencer on Instagram to improve the purchase intention of consumers?* Related sub-questions are formulated which also transition into hypotheses. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is chosen as the framework of the purchase intention.

The method of deductive research approach was chosen whereby the following four hypotheses (**H**) were formulated: **H1:** Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm than the Macro-Influencers. **H2:** The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention. **H3:** The credibility of influencers depends on the type of influencer: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy since they hold the expertise. **H4:** Influencer Marketing has an Impact on the Subjective norm which affects the purchase intention positively. The hypotheses were tested by conducting a survey and were supported/rejected based on current analysis. Thus, to be sure, this still needs to be statistically verified.

The results of the survey turn out to be more in favour of the micro-celebrity. **H1** and **H3** could be supported. That means that micro-influencers could have a more significant impact on the subjective norm. **H2** could be rejected since the participants seem to find only the construct 'relevance' important rather than reach and engagement. **H4** could be supported, which could mean that influencer marketing may have an impact on the subjective norm; which could also affect the purchase intention positively. Overall, micro-influencers score higher than macro-influencers.

To conclude, participants seem to prefer the micro-influencer over the macro-influencer. People seem to perceive the former's credibility higher which could mean that it affects their subjective norm more positively. They would rather take recommendations or purchase the endorsed clothes from the micro-influencer. Besides, micro-influencers are also less expensive and could be more loyal to a brand. Their relevance is also higher since they have built a niche-audience. Therefore, high-street fashion brands could rather choose micro-influencers to endorse their brand on Instagram.

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PREFACE

Writing this dissertation was not any less exciting than a rollercoaster ride. There were undoubtedly many ups and downs. However, like any rollercoaster, there are tracks which help the train be on track and leads the train to its final destination. These tracks are undoubtedly the people who have guided me and gave me moral support.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor J.F.M. de Koning. Without her, I would not be able to complete my research. She guided me through the whole research and made sure that I held on to the deadlines. The time she put into correcting and giving suggestions made sure that I was on the right track. I would also like to thank my first assessor, L.J.H. Harris, and my English lecturer, F.D.M. van den Enden, for assessing this dissertation.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends for giving me moral support during this rollercoaster ride. I am sure that I would be descending more than ascending without their support. They gave me the necessary distraction which I needed. My trust in God, and His guidance which I sought for during my pilgrimage to Mecca. I would also like to thank every participant of the survey who took their precious time to fill in. Without them, this dissertation would indeed be incomplete.

Once again, thank you!

1. INTRODUCTION

Ever since Fashion blogger Charlotte Groeneveld wore a Kitri Gabriella dress as part of a paid partnership with the label, the dress sold out shortly after (Conlon, 2018). The dress of the summer is not worn by a chart-topping singer or famous actor. The dress everyone wants to get their hands on is by the London-based label Kitri after the influential blogger shared it with her 344,000 Instagram followers. The £145 Gabriella dress – a green, belted shirt-style garment with a black and white flower print – has amassed an 800-strong waiting list of 800 people after Charlotte Groeneveld posted a picture on Instagram mid-February as a part of a paid partnership between her and the one-year-old brand. When the dress became available to purchase on Kitri's website a month later, almost 200 units sold out in 45 minutes. A new waiting list is currently open.

The hype and subsequent sales of the Gabriella dress suggest that social-media influencers remain a significant marketing strategy for fashion brands. However, is it true that fashion influencers can increase the purchase intention of consumers?

1.1 Background

The use of social media has changed the world of communication: information online reaches a broader audience, and everyone can contribute to the global dialogue. The popularity of social media increased by the growing use of smartphones and the constant connection among Generation Y population, aged between 20 to 30 years old. One of the social media platforms which more and more fashion brands use is Instagram. This mainly mobile photo sharing network had reached 500 million daily active users, up from 150 million in January 2017 (Aslam, 2018). The app is one of the most popular social networks worldwide.

As social media platforms such as Instagram continue to expand and evolve, fashion brands likewise have to change and adapt to continue to reach consumers. However, people do not trust traditional ads anymore. In fact, the 2016 Digital News Report from the Reuters Institute found that between 10 and 35 per cent of people had an ad-blocking software installed to keep those ads out of their lives. Companies are thus forced to use new marketing tools to strengthen their brand awareness.

In response to the decrease in the effectiveness of paid ads, influencer marketing has become more common. This concept is relatively new; however, it is a new spin on the oldest forms of advertising around, word-of-mouth (May, n.d.) A study conducted by Schlesinger Associates in 2015 found that 84 per cent of marketing professionals around the world plan to start an influencer marketing campaign

over the course of the next year. Of those that have already dipped their toes into influencer marketing, 81 per cent believe that their projects were successful.

Influencer marketing on Instagram is akin to word-of-mouth marketing, which can help brands to acquire loyal customers. It can be done by any individual who has a relatively large following on Instagram and can affect their followers' purchase decisions (Barker, 2016).

Influencers are often used by brands to promote their products. The influencer's posts on Instagram, for example, explain how a product/service works or discusses the quality and uniqueness of the product/service. In other words, the brands try to use the influencers to make consumers buy their product. Thus, they try to affect their purchase intentions. Moreover, purchase intention has been a popular research field as a part of attitude studies (Bagozzi, 1981) & (Ostrom, 1969) and are routinely used in various advertising domains such as tracking studies, brand evaluations and brand extensions (Spears & Singh, 2004). Since Return on Investment (ROI) is difficult to measure for influencer marketing, this research is focused on the purchase intention of influencer marketing of high-street fashion brands on Instagram. High street fashion literally means the clothes that one could buy on an average high street. These include high street brands that mass produce clothes catering to a broader target audience, are often affordable and are not very occasion specific. These clothes are ready-to-wear and change season to season.

1.2 Research Problem

Many fashion brands claim to have shown that influencer marketing has worked for them since they saw an increase in sales. However, they have not proven whether it has improved the purchase intention of their consumers. Purchase intention or referring to willingness to buy is widely defined as the likelihood of a consumer to purchase a product or service (Dodd & Supa, Understanding the effect of corporate social responsibility on consumer purchase intention, 2011) & (Sam & Tahir, 2009). It is also defined as a conscious plan made by an individual to make an effort to purchase a brand (Spears & Singh, 2004). The concept of purchase intention is rooted in psychology, and it is extensively used in behavioural studies (Dodd & Supa, 2011). Purchase intention is characterised as a behavioural tendency that the consumer will purchase the product (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985), and as an essential indicator of the actual purchasing decision (Tan, 1999). This statement is then further supported by Li, Davies, Edwards, Kinman and Duan (2002), in which they state that purchase intention is a standard measure that usually employed to assess the effectiveness of purchase behaviour.

1.3 Research Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this research is to understand whether influencers of high-street fashion brands have a positive effect on the purchase intention of consumers on Instagram. Therefore, the following research question is developed: *How can high-street fashion brands choose the right influencer on Instagram to improve the purchase intention of consumers?*

The related sub-questions (SQ) are:

SQ1: What type of influencer has a more significant impact on the subjective norm?

SQ2: Does the outcome of the Influence Formula influence the subjective norm; thus, the purchase intention?

SQ3: What type of influencer is perceived more credible?

SQ4: Does influencer marketing impact the subjective norm, and if so, does it affect it positively?

The sub-questions are also transitioned into hypotheses for this study.

1.4 Research Outline

This research is structured into six chapters. Firstly, chapter 2 contains the methodology and research design in which the data collection method and the objective, method, and approach of the research is given. In chapter 3, the literature of purchase intention, influencer marketing, influencers, influencer's credibility and Instagram is explained. The conceptual framework is shown there, and the hypotheses are also formulated in the chapter. Chapter 4 consist of the results in which the outcome of the survey is shown. In chapter 5 the results of the previous chapter are discussed, and the sub-questions are answered in this chapter. The limitation of the study is also given in the chapter. In chapter 6 the conclusion regarding the study is given. Lastly, the references are listed, and the appendix is shown; which contains the survey.

2. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter explains the process and approaches taken to conduct the research and complete this dissertation.

2.1 Research Objective

Since influencer marketing has not been extensively studied yet, the purpose of this research is to gain more insight about influencer marketing and the purchase intention of consumers. The focus of this study aims at high-street fashion brands on Instagram. By the end of the research, the research question should be answered, by analysing the data which is collected. The results should give a more unobstructed view of how high-street fashion brands can make use of influencer marketing through Instagram to improve the purchase intention of consumers.

2.2 Research Method

For this dissertation, the combination of qualitative and quantitative research method had been chosen. Qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations related to influencer marketing and the purchase intention. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for quantitative research. Therefore, it was essential to conduct firstly qualitative research to have a deeper understanding of influencer marketing and the purchase intention. Once the theory of influencer marketing and purchase intention was formed, hypotheses could be formed related to influencer marketing and purchase intention. Quantitative Research uses measurable data to formulate facts and uncover patterns in research. Quantitative data collection methods are much more structured than Qualitative data collection methods. Quantitative data collection methods include surveys. The survey was based on the data related to purchase intention of people; based on influencer marketing, which is used to measure the results, which subsequently helped to draw a conclusion.

2.2.1 Research Method per Sub-question

As stated before in chapter 2.6, the four sub-questions were transitioned into four hypotheses. For all four hypotheses, the same method was used. For all sub-questions, desk research was first done. That was followed by getting the right theories for the sub-questions which resulted in the theoretical framework. To answer the sub-questions and to test the hypotheses, related survey questions were asked. See table 2 for elaborated details.

Table 2
Research method per sub-question

Sub-question	Chapter Theoretical Framework	Survey Approach
SQ1: What type of influencer has a more significant on the Subjective norm?	2.1 Purchase Intention 2.3.2 Macro – and Micro-influencers	Questions were asked whereby the participants had to answer whether micro or a macro-influencer has a bigger impact on them, which would result in the influencer having more influence on them. It would subsequently prove which type of influencer influences the subjective norm better.
SQ2: Does the outcome of the Influence Formula influence on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention?	2.1 Purchase Intention 2.3.1 Influence Formula	Questions were asked whereby the participants had to answer whether the constructs (Reach, Engagement, Relevance) of the Influence Formula influenced them. If it has, then it does, in fact, influence the subjective norm.
SQ3: What type of influencer is perceived more credible?	2.1 Purchase Intention 2.3.2 Macro – and Micro-influencers 2.4 Influencer's Credibility	Questions were asked to participants whereby questions are asked to see which type of influencer is perceived as more trustworthy to them.
SQ4: Does Influencer Marketing impact the Subjective Norm, and if so, does it affect it positively?	2.1 Purchase Intention 2.2 Influencer Marketing	For this sub-question, questions were asked whereby the participants had to answer if they would take recommendations or purchase the endorsed clothes based on their posts. Thus, it proves whether influencer marketing does impact the subjective norm positively.

2.3 Research Approach

Initially, desk research was done. Search engines, such as Google Scholar and the online database of The Hague University of Applied Sciences were used. Other researches and reports were used from these databases to formulate a proper research question and to find more information regarding the topic. The book 'Influencers' by C. Lamarque (2017) was used to gain more information about influencer marketing and influencers. By doing desk research, the following research question was formed:

How can high-street fashion brands choose the right influencer on Instagram to improve the purchase intention of consumers?

Before formulating the hypotheses, related theories which support the variable purchase intention were researched. It became clear that the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was applicable. Therefore, hypothesises were formulated from the constructs of TPB. Subsequently, the literature review was written which are based on the following theoretical frameworks: purchase intention (and TPB), Influencer Marketing, Influencers and Instagram.

By doing more desk research, and trying to formulate the hypothesises, showed the inclination of using the deductive approach of research. It is done in the following five steps: [1] deducing hypothesis from theory, [2] formulating hypotheses, [3] observing/testing hypotheses, [4] confirmation/rejection the theory. The deductive approach is when a hypothesis is developed from existing theory. See figure 6.

Deductive Research Approach for Influencer marketing based on the Purchase Intention backed and influencer marketing.
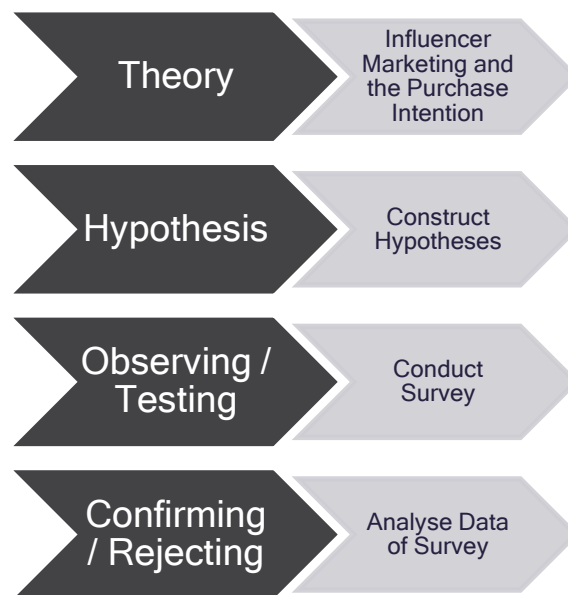

Figure 6. Deductive Research Approach

All variables involved are firstly researched and described, based on secondary data which comes from existing research. That is followed by the collection of primary data, achieved with the resource to a

survey in which respondents were assessed on their levels of credibility to follow an influencer on Instagram and its impact on purchase intention.

2.4 Data Collection Method

For this particular research, as stated before, qualitative data was collected in order to have a strong foundation of literature to review it. Subsequently, the main method which had been used to get results is the survey. Surveys are often used in quantitative studies, and it can be conducted in two different ways, either it can be a structured interview, where all the interviews are identical, and the answering alternatives are decided in advanced (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Alternatively, it can be done by sending out the survey to a large number of people that answers the different questions by choosing from different answering options (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The main difference between these two approaches is that while conducting a structured interview, someone has to be present to gather the information from the respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2011). In comparison with if the survey is sent out, which it is more convenient to administer, and it is more cost-effective (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Due to the advantages of using surveys, this data collection method was chosen for this study.

2.4.1 Survey

A survey is a research method that is conducted by asking the same questions to a large number of respondents, in order to investigate their attitudes and opinions (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The survey can be done in two ways, either with a quantitative or a qualitative approach (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A survey with closed questions is a quantitative survey, which is an effective way to gather information (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Although, there is a risk that the respondents could misinterpret the questions and there is also a risk that the respondents did not take the survey seriously (Bryman & Bell, 2011). The other alternative is to conduct a qualitative survey, this is done when open questions are asked, and the respondents can answer exactly what they want to, without any answering options (Bryman & Bell, 2011). This alternative takes a bit more time but will give the researchers more detailed answers (Bryman & Bell, 2011). While creating a survey, it is important that the questions and the answering options, if there are any, are well formulated (Albaum, 2010). While creating a survey, the researchers should create few open and more closed questions, since closed questions are easier to answer (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is also essential to take into consideration the structure and the design of the survey. The survey is supposed to be easy to follow and to understand (Albaum, 2010).

In the creation of the survey, an evaluation, of which questions that are important and appropriate, was made. Subsequently, a population that is relevant for the subject was chosen (Christensen et al., 2010). It is of great importance to ask questions that are relevant as well as adequately formulated to avoid

leading questions (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). When the survey is answered, the gathered material is interpreted, and a result can be concluded (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). The risk of performing a survey is that all the respondents could belong to the same category of people who have the same attitudes and opinions (Albaum, 2010). Furthermore, a survey does not give any significant information that can be used to create solutions; it will only show where the problem is. A survey can be distributed through several different channels, for example, it can be sent out by email or by post; hence it is called mail or postal survey (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). Another way to spread the survey is when the researcher hands out the survey to different respondents (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). The advantage of a mail or postal survey, it will reach more respondents (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010).

A survey has several benefits, the most significant advantages with a survey are that it is fast and easy to administer in large quantities and that the respondents can answer the survey whenever they have time for it (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). Another advantage is the fact that the respondents do not get distracted or affected by an interviewer, although this could be seen as a disadvantage as well, due to the fact that if there are any questions that the respondents do not understand or are unsure about, there is no one they can ask (Christensen, Engdahl, Grääs, & Haglund, 2010). That can be avoided if the researchers physically hand out the survey because in that case, the researchers are there to answer the respondents' questions (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Another disadvantage is the fact that if the survey has open questions, the researchers cannot further investigate the answers; hence, the researchers cannot explore if there is any more information to gather (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A challenge that the researchers face while conducting a survey is to prevent a low response rate, which is something that is very common in this data collection method (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Individuals tend to avoid participation in a survey (Bryman & Bell, 2011). That can be avoided by writing an explanation of why the research is of great importance and also create a short survey as possible since this normally increases the participation rate (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Although, there cannot be too few questions because then the gathered information will not be enough to make an analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2011). A trick to increase the response rate could be to start off with more interesting questions and not ask too personal questions at the beginning of the survey (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

2.4.2 Survey Design
The survey which was created for this research consists of 20 research question related to the sub-questions and hypotheses. The questions were based on the operationalisation table which increases its validity. According to the website steekproefcalculator.com, the required sample size was 377. However,

due to the short time span, only 219 participants filled in the survey. The survey which had been created for this research can be found in the appendix.

The population of the survey was chosen of men and women between the ages of 15-45. According to Dellrium (2016), H&M (Hennes&Mauritz) targets men and women ageing between 15 and 30 years; commonly known as generation Y who are ambitious and have high buying power. However, Zara's target age of men and women is between ages 0-45 (UK Essays, 2013). According to Statista (2018), the distribution of Instagram users (both men and women) worldwide, as of April 2018, is 85% from the ages 13-44. Statistics on the gender distribution of high-street fashion brands were not specifically available. However, based on many international high-street fashion brands, most brands do target more at women (UK Essays, 2013). Many brands do also have sub-sections (in shops) for men; however, their main target is women.

The survey consisted of 20 questions. The first two questions were general questions, which asked for the participant's age and gender. Questions three and four were Instagram usage related questions. Questions 1 till 4 were closed questions whereby the answers are based on the participant's stats and their Instagram habits. The rest of the questions were based on two influencers of different H&M campaigns. In one whereby micro-influencer, Julia Bergshoeff was chosen and in the other campaign whereby the celebrity The Weeknd was chosen. Question 5 till 21 were questions based on rating scales, measured from 1 to 7. Rating scales are among the most important and most frequently used instruments in social science data collection. There was an extensive body of methodological research on the design and (psycho)metric properties of rating scales. Within the question, it was indicated what number 1 indicates and what number 7 indicates. The participants had the option to express their opinion on the scale from 1 to 7. That means that number 4 shows that the participant was neutral.

For the opinion scale measurement, it was chosen to look at the average number and also at the percentage of the left side and right side of the scale. That means, for example, the percentage who agrees, disagrees or is neutral; so basically, the seven scales could be divided into three categories. So, if there was a question whereby the outcome is that the majority of 140 / 219 participants chose one of the numbers between 1 to 3 (Agree), means that 140 / 219 = 63.9 % of the participants agreed.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework consists of three concepts which are elaborated in this chapter: Purchase Intention, Influencer Marketing, Influencers and Instagram. Together with the concepts, definitions, reference to relevant scholarly literature and existing theory are used.

3.1 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is a kind of decision-making that studies the reason to buy a particular brand by a consumer (Shah et al., 2012). They define purchase intention as a situation where consumer tends to buy a particular product in a specific condition. Furthermore, the theory of reasoned action suggested that consumer behaviour can be predicted from intentions that correspond directly regarding action, target and context to that consumer behaviour (Azjen & Fishbein, Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior, 1980). According to Day (1969), the voluntary measures can be more effective than behavioural measures to capture customers' mind, as a customer may make purchases due to constraints instead of real preferences when a purchase is considered. Spears and Singh (2004) define purchase intention as "an individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand". Consumers' purchase decisions are a complex process, and purchase intention is a part of this process (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Ghosh (1990) states that understanding consumers purchase intentions is of great importance, as it relates to consumers' behaviour, perception and attitude, and can, therefore, be used to predict the buying process. There are several types of research which have attempted to look at the relationship between behaviour, such attitudes and purchase intention. Icek Ajzen proposed the same with the Theory of Planned Behaviour in 1985, Theory of Reasoned Action and Miniard and Cohen Model in 1983 (MCM).

3.1.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour and Reasoned Action

According to the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in 1985, people behave according to their intentions and perceptions of control over the behaviour. Azjen (2001) states that intentions are formulated by attitude towards the behaviour, a personal factor (age, income, occupation, lifestyle etcetera), and a social factor (family, reference group, role and status etcetera), subjective norm, perceived social pressures from significant others to perform the behaviour and the actors' motivation to comply with the referents. Attitude and subjective norm are in turn determined by the salient beliefs people hold about the behaviour (2001). The TPB extends the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which is another behavioural model by Azjen and Fishbein. The TRA proposed, as a central concept for the prediction of behaviour in any defined social situation, the intention of performing that behaviour. The model of TRA can be seen below in figure 1:
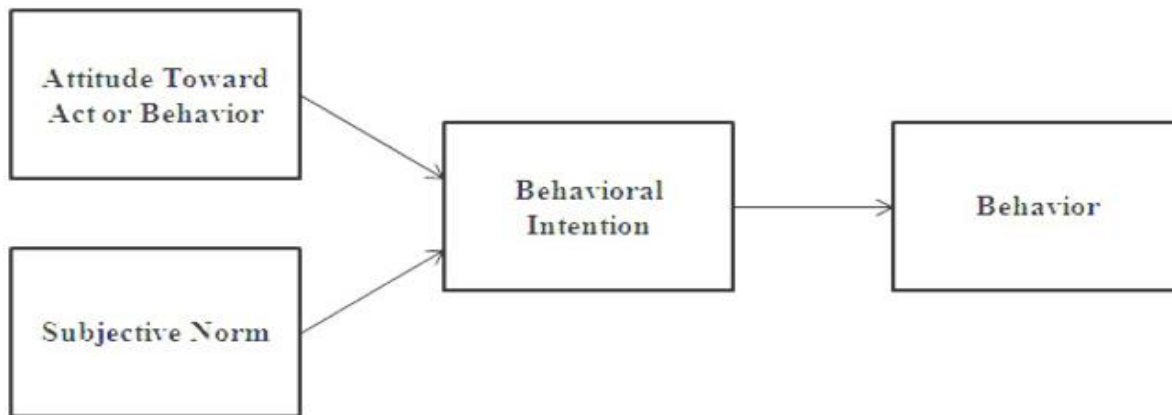
Figure 1. Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). (Source: Sathapornvajana & Watanapa, 2012)

The original TRA postulated that intentions are the most immediate antecedents of any behaviour that is under voluntary control and are assumed to capture the motivational influences on behaviour. PBC is assumed to reflect experience with the performance of the behaviour and anticipated obstacles that could inhibit behaviour. See figure 1 below:
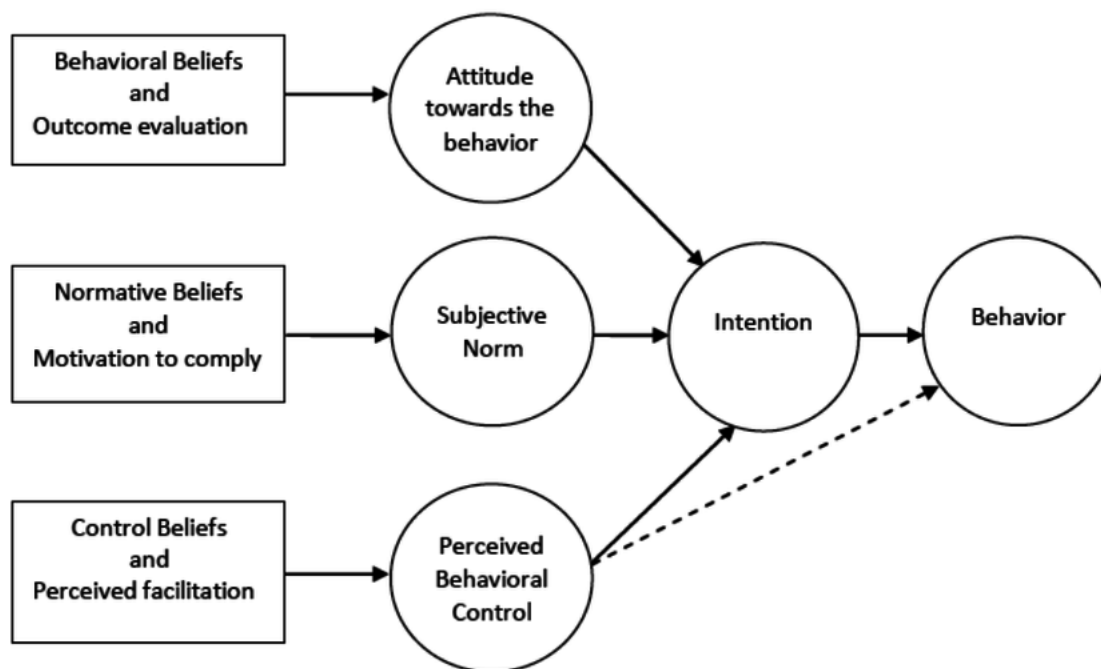
Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). (Source: Warrington & Derrick, 2010)

Figure 2 explains how the attitudes towards the behaviour, subjective norm, and PBC together shape an individual's behavioural intentions and behaviours. With this, the intention is the predictor of behaviour.

The central idea of TBP is to determine behaviour from behavioural intention, which are functions of independent TBP constructs: Attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control.

The first construct of this model is called attitude. Behavioural believes and the outcome form the attitude towards the behaviour. It is the degree to which performance of the behaviour is positively or negatively valued. It is the individual's overall positive or negative feelings of favourableness or unfavourableness for performing the behaviour. For example, an individual's attitude towards high-street fashion brands can be unfavourable, because he/she is not interested in that style.

Subjective norm is the second construct, and it is the normative beliefs and motivation to comply. It is perceived normative pressure whereby an individual takes into consideration what other people think that one should (or should not) perform the behaviour in question. For example, an individual may not like high-street fashion brands, but the person finds the attitude and opinion of his/her friends or idols important when it comes to fashion. So basically, the individual will take the opinion of his/her friend or idols into consideration, when their opinion of high-street fashion brands is favourable and might get 'influenced'. Therefore, influencer marketing may influence the subjective norm of individuals.

The third construct is the perceived behavioural control (PBC). It is the perceived ease or difficulty of performing a behaviour in different situations when the behaviour may go beyond one's controllable aspects of predicting behaviour directly or through intention (Azjen, 1991). PBC has an impact on intentions and actions as it deals with an individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour. The actual role of PBC, however, varies according to the situational factors. PBC is basically the same idea as self-efficacy (SE); the measure of a person's perception of his or her ability to complete a task (Britt, Hatten, & Chappuis, 2014). What differentiates PBC from SE, however, is that PBC incorporates two specific aspects: perceived capacity (PC) and perceived autonomy (PA) (Yzer, 2007). PA is the degree to which one believes they can perform a behaviour; It is the degree to which they believe they have control over the actual behavioural performance (Yzer, 2007). PC and PA tend to converge. This perceived behavioural control is the perceived control over each factor that goes into a behaviour.

The original conception of the TRA assumed that influences other than beliefs, attitudes, social pressure and intention would act through these variables (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980); this would also apply to the TPB, although here perceived control would be an additional component of the model. Thus, demographic variables, such as age or social class, should influence behaviour only through the model variables and not act as independent influences on behaviour.

3.1.2 The Miniard and Cohen Model (MCM)

The Miniard and Cohen Model (MCM) is another behavioural model that suggests that informational influence should be reflected in one's attitude and should be unrelated to normative beliefs about behaviour. Their research is based on previous work of social psychology (of Deutch & Gerard (1955) and Kelman (1961)) and states that the opinions of others often serve as an essential source of information about one's environment (Netemeyer, 1993). The acceptance of this information depends on the source's credibility, and behaviour based upon this information is independent of its; visibility or knowledge to a referent. The normative aspects of MCM are restricted solely to a referent's normative power. Behaviours motivated by normative reasons are directly connected to an individual's desire to attain a reward or avoid some sanction from referent to whom the behaviour would be known or visible. Miniard and Cohen state that these two influences are conceptually and empirically distinct in their model (Netemeyer, 1993). The MCM was developed to reflect the separate effects of normative and personal influence for explaining intention, and to predict behavioural intention. Their model is similar in structure to the theory of reasoned action but has important theoretical and operational differences. The present research investigates the effects of experimental manipulations on both models' constructs, as well as a comparison of their causal structures and predictive ability. The results offer support for the independent effects of personal and normative influences in the Miniard and Cohen model and corroborate previous findings on crossover effects in the theory of reasoned action.

For this research, the Theory of Planned Behaviour / Theory of Reasoned Action is chosen as the framework on which the hypotheses are based. Since this research focusses on the construct Subjective Norm, it is not necessary to choose between both theories. The Miniard and Cohen Model is a more complex model whereby it is harder to predict or measure behaviour such as purchase intention. The TBA is applied to studies of the relations among beliefs, attitudes, behavioural intentions and behaviours in various fields such as advertising, public relations, advertising campaigns, healthcare, sports management and sustainability. Therefore, TBA is the most profound and applicable theory for this research.

3.2 Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing may appear as an entirely new marketing strategy; however, some may argue that its roots go way back. Academics and marketers have talked about influencers for more than five decades: In 1955, when (1963) wrote about a "two-step" communication process in their landmark work,

Personal   Influence   (Free   Press),   see   figure   3   below:
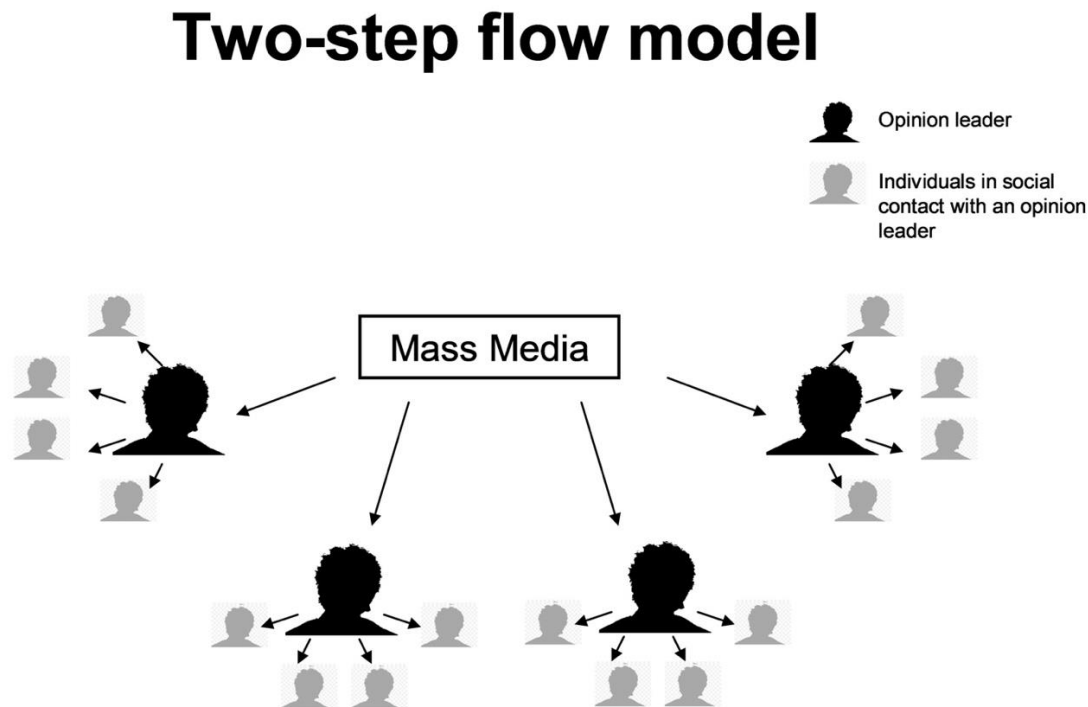
Figure 3. Two-Step Flow model. (Source: Communication Theory, n.d.)

Their concept, which has stood the test of time, is that some people have a disproportionate degree of influence on others and can be effective communications channels. Celebrity endorsements, as well as product placements, can be recognised as the prototypes of influencer marketing. Reese's Pieces made use of the product placement in the movie E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial (1982). The movie was a hit, sales of Reese's Pieces increased dramatically (by 65%), and to some, the product placement industry was born (Snyder, 1992). In the case of influencer marketing the concept is the same, only the platforms differ. According to Brown & Fiorella, influencer marketing is "Typically a noncustomer or business incentivised to recommend/create content about a business brand or product" (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). Another explanation which Brown & Hayes gave is that the word "Influence" can be broadly defined as the power to affect a person, thing or course of events (Brown & Hayes, 2008). Brown and Hayes define an Influencer as "A third- party who significantly shapes the customer's purchasing decision but may ever be accountable for it." (Brown & Hayes, 2008).

As stated previously, influencer marketing may influence the subjective norm of individuals. Subjective norm is social influence. Subjective norm is defined as "the person's perception that most people who are important to him or her think he/she should or should not perform the behaviour in question". Also,

the subjective norm is a component included in the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behaviour showing that subjective norm can influence one's behaviour by impacting on one's behavioural intentions. Therefore, the subjective influences the behavioural intention.

Influencer marketing can also be seen as a virtual word of mouth. According to Woods (2016), consumers are much more likely to positively perceive and react to a message that comes from a trusted friend or persona over a sponsored post that comes from a company (Pophal, 2016) (Wroblewski, 2017). Nielsen validates this statement. According to Nielsen, over all forms of advertising, 92% of consumers believe recommendations from friends and family (Whitler, 2014). However, influencer marketing works differently than word of mouth. Instead of family or friends, a company uses influencers to reach consumers. The message and the way it is presented are to be both agreed by the company and influencer. Therefore, influencer marketing is a less organic way of word of mouth.

Fashion influencers on social media often have a high number of followers. That can be useful for brands since they have a high reach to consumers. According to Paul Lazarsfeld's Two-Step Flow Theory (1963), most people form their opinions under the influence of opinion leaders, who in turn are influenced by mass media. See figure 2 below:

This model is also applicable to social media channels. With this, the mass media could be for example Instagram, the opinion leaders the influencers, and the individuals in social contact with an opinion leader the followers of that particular influencer.

Influencer marketing can be beneficial for both the influencer and the company. On the one hand, the influencers can be an inexpensive way to reach the consumers directly (Weiss, 2013). On the other hand, influencers benefit from free goodies from the company which the influencer endorsed and earn money from the endorsement. A recent report from the Fashion and Beauty Monitor (2015) together with Econsultancy revealed that 82% of the surveyed influencers main motivation, when collaborating with a brand, is a monetary reward. It also mentioned that the rising costs of using fashion influencers for collaboration are a challenge since the influencer marketing campaigns are hard to measure (Fashion and Beauty Monitor Report, 2015). Therefore, 65% of the respondents feel that it becomes difficult to justify the investment in influencer because their payment requests increase (Fashion and Beauty Monitor Report, 2015). However, only 31% of the questioned companies have paid influencers for the collaborations, but the tendency of using fashion influencers has risen. A study by Nielsen and Tapinfluence's (2016) discovered that consumers who were exposed to influencer marketing saw

significantly purchased more products in each purchase occasion than the group that had been exposed to traditional online marketing tools.

This research focusses on influencer marketing based on high-street fashion brands. Therefore, the whole research, which is conducted, focusses solely on influencer marketing based on high-street fashion brands.

3.3 Influencers

This paragraph discusses who influencers are and how brands can use them. The information for this paragraph is taken from the book ''Influencers'' by Carole Lamarque (2017) and influencer marketing tool company: Traackr. This paragraph explains the influence formula, macro – and micro-influencers, segmentation of influencers, goals of influencers and finally, how they can be brought in by brands.

3.3.1 Influence Formula

According to Lamarque, influencers with the highest reach does not necessarily have the biggest influence on the behaviour of its followers. In fact, it is more difficult to be relevant for his/her whole network. Therefore, marketers such as Wong and researchers such as Katona designed a formula to measure the worth of influencers:

Influence= Reach x Engagement x Relevance.

Reach: Reach is the total amount of followers of an influencer. The higher the audience of the influencer, the more people an influencer could reach.

Engagement: The reach of an influencer does not signify anything about the relationship with his network. The more interactions (likes, shares, reactions) an influencer provokes the stronger the engagement is with its followers.

Relevance: If a brand sees profiles with thousands of followers which generate many interactions, it could have a potential to be the right profile of an influencer. However, their worth for the brand, product or service might be zero. The success of influencer marketing depends on the match between the brand and the influencer. A famous athlete would be more likely to influence his followers into buying sportswear, rather than fast-food burgers. The match between the brand and influencer is calculated by the behaviour of the followers of the influencer.

This formula can be used as a basis. If a brand hesitates between choosing an influencer with three or one thousand followers, then the brand might use this formula, to calculate the influence of these influencers.

3.3.2 Macro – and Micro-influencers

Before a brand chooses an influencer, it should decide whether it wants to choose a macro – or micro-influencers.

Macro-influencers have a reach of masses. The engagement is interchangeable. The relevance is not always high, because it is targeted at the masses.

Micro-influencers target a niche audience. Their engagement is higher because the advertisements, for example, are directed to the niche audience, and therefore the relevance is also high to the niche audience.

3.3.3 Segmenting the Influencers

In order to identify the different influencers, it is essential to segment them. According to influencer marketing tool Traackr which Lamarque analysed, influencers can be segmented into ten categories. For each category an example is given of Dutch influencers who would fit that category with their possible tagline:

1) The Celebrity (Through Sponsoring): "My reach is higher than the population of Gent or Utrecht." *Pascale Naessens: Bestseller of cookbooks.* Celebrities have a huge reach, but their relevance is usually restricted. Therefore, brands should only collaborate with celebrities when they are truly into the brand and products, to convey credibility to their followers. The celebrities should be central during promotion because they generate interest at their broad audience.

2) The Authority (By Convincing): "My Opinion is worth of gold in my field.'' *Marion Debruyne: Dean of Vlerick Business School.* An authority could decrease fear, uncertainty, doubt (FUD) of the target audience. That can be crucial for an innovative product. In return, the brand can help them with the added value content. The authorities have a great reach, are relevant in the brand's domain, and the engagement of their community is high.

3) The Connector (Networking): ''I love connecting different puzzle pieces.'' *Elke Jeurissen: Founder of Glassroots en Strafe Madammen.* Connectors only have an indirect impact on the marketing campaign. The connectors are keen on bringing new people and information together. Brands should collaborate with them on projects where they can expand

their network. In exchange, the influencers could introduce new influencers to the brand which the brand could not reach before.

4)   The Personal Brand: (Strengthen their reputation and visibility) ''My name is the biggest asset.'' *Linda de Mol: Actress and TV personality.* These influencers collaborate when the brand also contributes to building their brand. Companies could strengthen their image, reach, content with which they can be found on Google search results or by boosting their followers up. These influencers will surely collaborate if the brand can provide some of the given examples.

5)   The Analyst (Provide new data and insights): ''I create and spread valuable insights.'' *Imke Courtois: Football player and analyst for Sporza.* These influencers are often underestimated because of their micro-level and limited reach. However, they could be relevant and independent sources. Brands can provide analysts with raw data and market researches, and they will in return provide elaborated analysis. Their findings are useful for the brand's own branded communication because they can be used for advertisements, sales presentations and blog posts, with references to the independent source.

6)   The Activist (Involve them into the conversation): ''My beliefs could reach mountains''. *Michel Vandenbosch: Chairman Gaia.* Activists position themselves often against companies. A brand should not avoid this confrontation. Activists are usually not susceptible to emotional arguments, but they can be reached with factual information and knowledge. The more so when a third party can confirm the reliability of a brand's message.

7)   The Expert (Share his/her expertise into the brand's network): ''I wrote a book about my domain.'' *Carole Lamarque: Founding partner Duval Union Consulting.* An expert usually knows as much or even more than the brand in their domain. If an expert is not used on time, the competitors might use them and possibly make a better infographic for example.

8)   The Insider (Constructively debate): ''I am a respected source with my own agenda.'' *Michel Maus: Professor and Columnist.* Brands should identify insiders' hidden agenda as good as possible. They can use the information against the brand if it is against their interests. However, when the interests are in sync, then the brand has an influencer which is reliable and motivated.

9)   The Innovator (Think and debate about innovation and disruption): ''I question things and start a debate.'' *Rudi Pauwels: Founder Biocartis.* The innovators talk about hundred topics. The brand should restrict to their own interests and business, and they should provide them content with which constructive debate could be held.

10)   The Journalist (Provide scoop news): ''I am the new news industry''. *Wim de Preter: Business journalist for De Tijd.* These influencers work with limited resources and tight deadlines. The brand could make journalist happy, which could save them their time. With press releases or visuals for example. With their help, the brands can decide what could be said about them in the press.

It is crucial to know that a company or organisation which is unique, these segments might not apply. Therefore, the company creates its segments. A segment can also be dynamic. With each new campaign, a company should recheck or reconsider their segments. Choosing an upcoming influencer can also be helpful in the long run. Most of the time they are loyal to the brand they endorse on long-term, and the company also has a unique group of new influencers which the brand's competitors do not have. Social influencers keep on innovating when it comes to new videos, photos and popular filters. Therefore, it is vital to give influencers the freedom of their creativity. It will also make their post look more authentic.

Figure 4 below indicates the connection between influencer segments with company departments and the success measures:

Figure 4. The Cross-Functional Influence Model. (Source: Lamarque, 2017)

The model contains six influencer segments: thought leaders, customers, advocates, employees and journalists. The associated departments are usually related to marketing or sales, but it could also be related to the HR department. They use internal influencers to promote vacancies to find the right participant.

3.3.4 Goals of Influencer Marketing
A brand may have different goals which it wants to meet through influencer marketing:

1)   Awareness: Use influencers to create awareness among their followers, to improve the brand image or to boost the awareness of a new product.

2)   Sales: Use influencers to get more leads and sales through influencer marketing campaign.

3)   Retention: Increase loyalty of current customers and to increase the Net Promotor Score (NPS). The influencers are valuable during crisis time to limit the damaged brand reputation.

3.3.5 When to bring in Influencers?

Influencers come into the picture in different phases of a life cycle of a brand's product, service or event. Using feedback of influencers as input for the product development is vital for a brand. They are the so-called 'power users' who use the brand's product intensively. There are four main situations where influencers can be used:

3.3.5.1 Product Launch

During a product launch, brand awareness, image, sales etcetera, are crucial. Brand awareness can quickly be attained via mass-communication. However, when a brand wants to create buzz for the new product, and it does not have the finances to advertise on TV or radio, then influencer marketing can be used:

- It increased brand awareness of the product with a niche and relevant target audience
- The image of the product gets an instant boost. Partly, because of the positive image of the influencer and partly because of his/her enthusiasm for the product.
- The sales go higher because the followers of the influencers would like to try out and buy the product.

3.3.5.2 Awareness Campaign

Awareness was already a part of the hypothesis product launch, but in the most competitive markets, awareness is essential. With this, the brand works on a sustainable relationship or collaboration with the influencer:

- Influencers are inclined to pick up the smallest news items of the endorsed brand on a regular basis
- Influencers produce contents spontaneously a brand's product or service.
- The influencers will more often link the brand when it comes to related products, markets and businesses.

The increased visibility of a brand on influencers will lead to more visibility and awareness in their network.

3.3.5.3 Lead Generation

If increasing sales is a direct goal of a brand's influencer marketing, then influencers are used for lead generation. The brand has to know in advance which influencer will work on which leads or customers. That could be done to publish influencer content on the brand's webpage. With a tool like Google Analytics, the brand has access to relevant data's. A brand can see where the visitors come from, what they do on the website, which visitors leave their data or buy online etcetera. If an influencer reviews a brand's product on a YouTube video, then they should make sure they will put a hyperlink to the brand's website. These links can also be tagged, so the brand can see which influencer leads which traffic to the brand's website. Affiliate links can also be created which will link directly to the sales page. If the visitor finishes the payment process entirely, the influencers will receive a commission on that sale. This method is beneficial because it is apparent for the brand which influencer brings which traffic and the influencer will get a commission reasonably, based on their traffic.

3.3.5.4 Crisis Management

When a brand lands into a crisis, it has to manage everything itself. Nobody else would like to be related to a brand which is shown in a negative light. Most of the time the brand will have a press conference or an interview. Whether the audience believes in the brand's message, which is conveyed by the influencer. Their opinion might help to change the perception of their followers. It is essential to talk about this beforehand with the influencers. The public admires when a brand:

- Dares to go into a discussion or conversation
- Communicate publicly about facts and numbers
- Admits his/her faults

These points should be discussed too with the influencers.

As of today, it is still a challenge to track the consumer journey from an influencer touchpoint to a sale. While there is still no perfect formula to quantify ROI, that does not mean a brand's influencer marketing efforts should not be measured.

According to Lamarque (2017), brands can measure how often people talked about their brand, product or service by collecting data by search results, such as names of the influencers and related keywords, hashtags and URL. A qualitative analysis could also be done of the tones and feelings of the conversions

by counting the positive and negative engagement. If the campaign was based on leads and sales, it is easily measurable which influencers got a certain number of visitors and the traffic with the help of Google Analytics. However, Lamarque states that it is impossible to measure the full impact of influencers. A part of the results remains invisible. Many people see posts by influencers, but they do not always react to it. Therefore, it can be difficult to understand how they processed the message and if they had an impact on the brand's image.

The applicable theory .which is used for the purpose to answer the research questions. is the influencer formula (sub-question 2) and the type of influencers (micro/macro-influencers) (sub-question 1 and 3). The rest of the theory stated here is to elaborate when brands can make use of influencer marketing and what the goals are, for background information.

3.4 Influencer's Credibility

According to Gotlieb and Sarel (1991), source credibility is made up of different components - perceived trustworthiness and perceived expertise. It is also supported by Jargalsaikhan & Korotina (2016), who found that trustworthiness plays an important role when it comes to the attitude towards the endorser (influencer). In the same concern, they also stress the importance of credibility and expertise of the influencer. The importance of these two characteristics and its impact on the perception of an ad has also been found by Gupta, Kishore and Verma (2015). Ohanian (1990) who developed the source credibility model, based on review and analysis of existing literature and source credibility measures, names attractiveness of the source as another component of credibility. According to Ohanian (1990) source credibility is an indicator of the persuasiveness of a message based on characteristics of the source concerning attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Gotlieb and Sarel (1991) pointed out how important the credibility of the source in advertisements is. The effectiveness seems to depend on whether the source which is supposed to transmit the persuasive message is perceived as credible or not, which is why, amongst others, La Ferle and Choi (2005) argue that source credibility even acts as a mediating variable.

Whenever influencers promote fashion brands on Instagram, their post could be seen as advertisement. Therefore, it is essential to look into the credibility of the influencers to be able to look whether people view their posts as being attractive, trustworthy and if they are perceived as experts to the products or clothes they endorse.

This theory applies to sub-question three whereby the influencer's credibility is tested. Relevant survey questions are asked to test the influencer's attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise, which are the constructs of trustworthiness.

3.5 Instagram

Instagram is a free, online photo-sharing application and social network platform that was acquired by Facebook in 2012. The application has 800 million monthly active users and 500 million daily active users as of December 2017 (Aslam, 2018). Instagram allows registered users to upload photos and videos, whereby they can apply digital filters to their images, and add locations through geotags. Every user on Instagram has a profile and news feed. Each user has "Follower" and "Following" count which represents how many people the user follows or is followed by. Instagram is also an interactive application. Double tapping a photo is a way to like a picture, and the user can also comment on a picture. As the application developed, more features were added. On January 2011, Instagram added the use of hashtags to help users discover both photographs and each other. The use of the hashtag symbol (#) behind keyword makes the content of a user discoverable and increases the chances of engagement. Whenever a person clicks on a hashtag, posts from other users are shown who have used the same hashtag. Instagram also gives their users option to add location to their post, while or after uploading. Once a user taps on the location, posts from other users are shown, which are taken from the same location. Instagram allows users to use their so-called "search bar". Users can search by People (i.e. other users on Instagram), Tags (i.e. Hashtags), (Places (i.e. Location tags) and Top (i.e. all previous options combined). These features give business also the opportunity to use it as a marketing tool. The photo sharing community is significantly important as a marketing channel (Reinartz, 2015). It is particularly suitable for setting up young target groups since 41% of the world's active users are between 16 and 24 and 35% are between 25 and 35 years old. Both age groups' together account for 76% of users (Mander, 2014).

The advantage of Instagram is that the application is readily available on all smartphones. Hence, it makes it easy for people to use the application, furthermore, any time of the day or night, and in all countries. Therefore, this social media channel is not bound to any barriers, which justifies the success of the application. Posting pictures can also support interactive communication between the target group and the brand, which in turn strengthens customer loyalty (Bovensiepen & Müller, 2011). Hence, Instagram makes way for a new way of brand communication and presentation. Nowadays, brands make use of fashion influencers to reach consumers. Through regular uploads, a unique visual aesthetic of their pictures/videos and a close connection to their followers, these influencers become micro-celebrities and serve as idols for their followers. By allowing their followers to participate in their daily

life, Influencers appear approachable (Jargalsaikhan & Korotina, 2016) and are sometimes even perceived as friends or peers by their followers (Jargalsaikhan & Korotina, 2016). These perceptions increase trust and an influence on the followers' buying decisions. As shown previously in figure 2 with the Two-Step Flow model, Instagram can be used as a mass media channel, whereby influencers take a roll of opinion leaders, and their followers are individuals who get influenced by their opinions. Influencers can, therefore, motivate their followers to buy a particular brand or avoid other brands to be like them (Lueg & Finney, 2007). Due to these factors, influencers offer great potential for marketers.

Instagram is the social media platform on which this research is based. This research will therefore only focus on influencer marketing on Instagram. Since nowadays many brands use Instagram to promote their brand, this platform has been chosen. Also, the fact that Instagram is widely used amongst fashion influencers worldwide. Therefore, the new term 'Instagram influencers' is used.

3.6 Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The sub-questions which were formulated in chapter 1.3 are transitioned into hypotheses for this research, to test the presumptions.

For this research the following conceptual model was created with the formulated hypotheses:
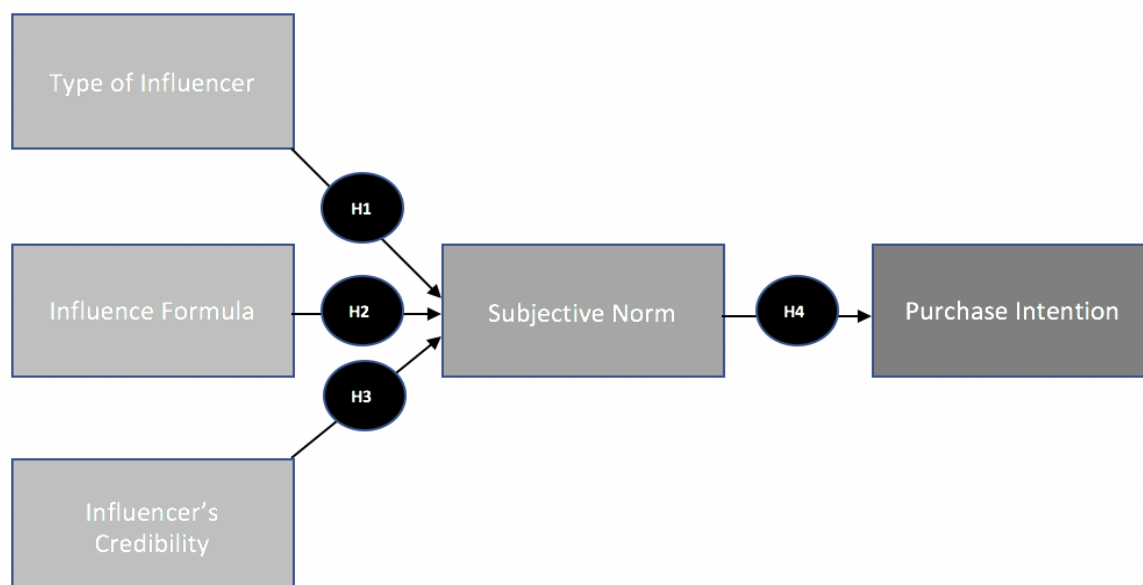
Figure 5. Conceptual Framework.

H1: Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm than the Macro-Influencers

H2: The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm' thus, the Purchase Intention.

H3: The credibility of influencers depends on the type of influencer: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy since they hold the expertise.

H4: Influencer Marketing has an Impact on the Subjective norm which affects the purchase intention positively.

The hypotheses are tested by conducting a survey related to the hypotheses. The data is collected and analysed to observe whether they are supported or rejected.

3.7 Operationalisation Table

Operationalisation involves the conversion of concepts into measurable items; this is done to use the clearly defined concepts in the analysis of the study's gathered data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). It is essential to design a well-grounded operationalisation that describes the concepts and how it can be used in the measurement for the specific study (Ghauri & Gronhaugh, 2005). The researcher should review previous operationalisations/measurements used to capture the same construct (Ghauri & Gronhaugh, 2005). Without the precise definitions of the different concepts in the specific study, it is impossible to connect the gathered empirical data to a theoretical basis (Ghauri & Gronhaugh, 2005). Therefore, it was also essential to create an operationalisation table before creating survey questions. This table made sure that the survey questions which were to be formulated, were based on the leading theory.

The operationalisation table, created for this research, can be seen below:

Table 1
Operationalisation table

Model	Variables of Influencer Marketing	Characteristics	Related Field Research Questions
Type of Influencer	Macro-Influencers	**Reach / Followers:** 100,000 to Millions **Engagement:** Slightly less relevant Engagement / Interactions **Relevance:** Less relevance to HSFB/C	5. *The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence:* Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree 6. *Influencer A's relevance to High-Steet Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B* Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Disagree
	Micro-Influencers	**Reach / Followers**: 1,000 to 100,000 **Engagement:** Slightly more relevant Engagement, Interactions **Relevance:** Higher relevance to HSFB/C	16. I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree 17. I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree

			18. It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree
			19. It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree
Influence Formula	**Reach**	By cooperating with an influencer with a high number of reach, brands can achieve an enormous amount of reach for their sponsored content, but it typically comes at a hefty price.	*5. The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest* influence: Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree
	Engagement	Influencers who generate a higher number of Engagement (Likes, Comments, Shares), have a stronger engagement with its followers.	*7. The post with a higher number of likes (Post C) has a more positive influence on me than the influencer on Post D:* Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree
	Relevance	The success of influencer marketing depends on the match between the brand and the influencer. Influencers whose relevance to HSFB is	*6. Influencer A's relevance to High-Steet Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B's* Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree

		higher will more likely be the right Influencer.	
Influencer's Credibility	**Attractiveness**	The attractiveness of an influencer is considered when Instagram users perceive them as elegant, classy, attractive, beautiful or sexy (Ohanian, 1990)	*8. 9. I find Post C/D:* Elegant Classy Attractive Beautiful Sexy
	Trustworthiness	The trustworthiness of an influencer is considered when Instagram users perceive them as dependable, honest, reliable, sincere or trustworthy (Ohanian, 1990)	*10. 11. I perceive the influencer on post C/D as:* Dependable Honest Reliable Sincere Trustworthy
	Expertise	The expertise of an influencer is considered when Instagram users perceive them as an expert, experienced, knowledgeable, qualified or skilled (Ohanian, 1990)	12. 13. I would follow Influencer A/B because (s)he is: An Expert Experienced Knowledgeable Qualified Skilled
	Subjective Norm	With subjective norm, the individual takes into consideration what other people think that one should (or should not) perform the behaviour in question; as well as the perception that these important others are (or are not) themselves performing the behaviour.	16. I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree 17. I would take recommendations from

Theory of Planned Behaviour			influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree 18. It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree 19. It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B Strongly agree - Strongly Disagree

4. RESULTS

The four formulated hypotheses are tested in this chapter. The survey's result is shown in various tables, to test the hypotheses.

4.1 Survey Outcome

The created survey is completed by 219 participants from which 43 people filled it in on paper, and 176 participants filled it in online. However, as stated before, 377 participants are required to fill in the survey. It was shared on social media accounts such as Facebook (pages), Instagram and WhatsApp. Participants come from different countries, but mostly from the Netherlands (79%). As stated previously in chapter 3.4.2, the high-street fashion brands target somewhat more at women. That is also represented by this survey, whereby 60.7% of the participants are women. Also, all participants are between the ages of 17 (or younger) till 39. These ages are representable since the target ages of the survey were between 15 to 45.

4.2 Hypotheses Testing

The four hypotheses are tested based on the survey questions. Below, in table 3, the hypotheses with their related survey questions can be seen.

Table 3
Hypotheses and related survey questions.

Hypothesis	Related Survey Questions
H1: Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm than the Macro-Influencers.	**5.** The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence **6.** Influencer A's relevance to High-Street Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B's. **16.** I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands. **17.** I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands.

	18. It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A. **19.** It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B.
H2: The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention.	**5.** The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence. **6.** Influencer A's relevance to High-Street Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B's. **7.** The post with the higher number of likes (Post C) has a more positive influence on me than the influencer with the lower number of likes (Post D)
H3: The credibility of influencers depends on the type of influencer: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy since they hold the expertise.	**8. / 9.** I find Post C/D: Elegant Classy Attractive Beautiful Sexy **10. / 11.** I perceive the influencer on post C/D as: Dependable Honest Reliable Sincere Trustworthy **12. / 13.** I would follow Influencer A/B because (s)he is: An Expert Experienced

	Knowledgeable Qualified Skilled
H4: Influencer Marketing has an Impact on the Subjective norm which affects the purchase intention positively.	**16.** I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands. **17.** I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands. **18.** It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A. **19.** It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B.

4.2.1 Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis to be tested is **hypothesis 1**:

Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm than the Macro-Influencers.

The related survey questions and the results can be seen in table 4

Table 4
Survey results related to hypothesis 1

Question	Type of Question	Outcome / Average	Percentage
Question 5: The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement,	2	<u>81.7 %</u> Disagree

	and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.		
Question 6: Influencer A's relevance to High-Street Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B's.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	6	76.7 % Agree
Question 16: I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands**.**	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	6	86.3 % Agree
Question 17: I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands**.**	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	58.9 % Agree
Question 18: It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	68.9 % Agree
Question 19: It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	56.2 % Agree

Questions 5, 6, 16, 17, 18 and 19 were asked in the survey to justify whether hypotheses one is accepted or rejected

4.2.2 Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis to be tested is **hypothesis 2**:

The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention.

The three survey questions which were asked are based on the Influencer formula: RxExR. Reach (Question 5), Engagement (Question 7) and Relevance (Question 6).

The related survey questions and the results can be seen in table 5.

Table 5
Survey results related to hypotheses 2

Question	Type of Question	Outcome / Average	Percentage
Question 5: The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	2	<u>81.7 %</u> Disagree
Question 6: Influencer A's relevance to High-Street Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B's.	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement. and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	6	<u>76.7 %</u> Agree
Question 7: The post with the higher number of likes (Post C) has a more positive influence on me than the influencer with the lower number of likes (Post D).	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement, and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	3	<u>71.7%</u> Disagree

4.2.3 Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis to be tested is **hypothesis 3**:

The credibility of influencers depends on the type of influencer: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy since they hold the expertise.

The credibility of influencers can be the perceived credibility of an influencer is measured in three dimensions, which are composed of influencers' perceived attractiveness (questions 8 & 9), trustworthiness (questions 10 & 11) and expertise (questions 12 & 13), as proposed by Ohanian (1990).

The related survey questions and the results can be seen in table 6.

Table 6

Survey results related to hypothesis 3

Question	Type of Question	Outcome / Average	Percentage
Question 8: I find post C	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) Classy - Not Classy (7) = **5** **B.** (1) Not Elegant – Elegant (7) = **4** **C.** (1) Attractive – Not Attractive (7) = **3** **D.** (1) Not Sexy – Sexy (7) = **6**	**A.** 59.4 % Not Classy **B.** 65.3 % Elegant **C.** 79.9 % Attractive **D.** 81.7 % Sexy
Question 9: I find post D	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) Classy - Not Classy (7) = **2** **B.** (1) Not Elegant – Elegant (7) = **2** **C.** (1) Attractive – Not Attractive (7) = **3** **D.** (1) Not Sexy – Sexy (7) = **5**	**A.** 84.5 % Classy **B.** 86.3 % Elegant **C.** 75.3 % Attractive **D.** 68.0 % Sexy
Question 10: I perceive the influencer on post C as	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) Not Dependable – Dependable (7) = **3** **B.** (1) Honest– Dishonest (7) = **5**	**A.** 54.3 % Not Dependable **B.** 53.0 % Dishonest

		C. (1) Unreliable– Reliable (7) = **5**	**C.** 62.1 % Reliable
		D. (1) Sincere– Insincere (7) = **3**	**D.** 56.2 % Sincere
		E. (1) Not Trustworthy– Trustworthy (7) = **2**	**E.** 77.6 % Not Trustworthy
Question 11: I perceive the influencer on post D as	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) Not Dependable – Dependable (7) = **5** **B.** (1) Honest– Dishonest (7) = **2** **C.** (1) Unreliable– Reliable (7) = **5** **D.** (1) Sincere– Insincere (7) = **3** **E.** (1) Not Trustworthy– Trustworthy (7) = **6**	**A.** 65.8 % Dependable **B.** 60.3 % Honest **C.** 63.9 % Reliable **D.** 63.5 % Sincere **E.** 79.9 % Trustworthy
Question 12: I would/would not follow Influencer A because she seems	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) As an Expert – Not as an Expert (7) = **2** **B.** (1) Inexperienced – Experienced (7) = **6** **C.** (1) Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable (7) = **6** **D.** (1) Qualified – Unqualified (7) = **2** **E.** (1) Unskilled– Skilled (7) = **6**	**A.** 75.8 % As an Expert **B.** 71.7 % Experienced **C.** 77.6 % Knowledgeable **D.** 68.0 % Qualified **E.** 77.2 % Skilled
Question 13: I would/would not follow Influencer B because he seems	Multiple Opinion Scale 1 to 7.	**A.** (1) As an Expert – Not as an Expert (7) = **5** **B.** (1) Inexperienced – Experienced (7) = **5**	**A.** 62.1 % Not as an Expert **B.** 56.2 % Experienced

		C. (1) Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable (7) = **3**	C. 53.9 % Unknowledgeable
		D. (1) Qualified – Unqualified (7) = **5**	D. 57.1 % Unqualified
		E. (1) Unskilled– Skilled (7) = **3**	E. 51.6 % Unskilled

4.2.4 Hypothesis 4

The final hypothesis to be tested is **hypothesis four**:

Influencer Marketing has an Impact on the Subjective norm which affects the purchase intention positively.

The related survey questions and the results can be seen in table 7.

Table 7
Survey results related to hypothesis 4

Question	Type of Question	Outcome / Average	Percentage
Question 16: I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	6	86.3 % Agree
Question 17: I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	58.9 % Agree
Question 18: It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	68.9 % Agree

Question 19: It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B	Opinion Scale 1 to 7. Number 1 shows the strongest disagreement and Number 7 shows the strongest agreement.	5	56.2 % Agree

5. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the outcome of the results from the previous chapter are discussed per sub-question, and subsequently, the limitation regarding this study are given.

5.1 Sub-question 1

The outcome of **Question 5** shows with the score of 2/7 that the average and 81.7% of participants disagree that the influencer with the highest number of reach has more likely the biggest influence on them. That signifies that the participants believe that the influencer with the highest followers, which in many cases are macro-influencers, do not necessarily have the most significant influence on them. Which means that micro-influencers, with a lower number of followers, could be more influential. Macro-influencers do have the advantage of having more followers, but with this outcome, the overwhelming majority believes that influencers with higher reach do not necessarily influence them more. That is in the advantage of the micro-celebrities. Since collaborating with them is less expensive. Therefore, the outcome of this question is more in favour of micro-celebrities.

The outcome of **Question 6** shows with the score of 6/7 and 76.7% that the average of participants agrees that influencer A's (Julia's) relevance to high-street fashion brand is higher than influencer B's (The Weeknd's). That means that the majority, more than ¾ of participants, believe that the relevance of Julia Bergshoeff to high-street fashion brands is higher than The Weeknd's. Therefore, this outcome of this question is in favour of micro-celebrities.

The results of **Questions 16** and **17** are discussed together since both questions are the same, but they differ on the type of influencer. Question 16 is: I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to high-street fashion clothes/brands. Influencer A, in this case, is the micro-influencer Julia Bergshoeff**.** Question 17 is: I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to high-street fashion clothes/brands. Influencer B is the macro-influencer The Weeknd. The result of question 16 is that with the score of 6/7 and 86.3% of the participants agree with the statement that they would take recommendations from the micro-influencer when it comes to high-street fashion clothes/brands. The result of question 17 shows with the score of 5/7 and 58.9% that the participants agree with the statement that they would take recommendations from the macro-influencer when it comes to high-street fashion brands/clothes. The difference between the scores and percentages shows that more participants are willing to take recommendations from Julia Bergshoeff than The Weeknd. That could be because Julia Bergshoeff is a fashion influencer by profession and could. Therefore, she could be seen as a professional. The outcome of these questions is thus in favour of micro-celebrities.

Questions 18 and **19** are also similar and are discussed altogether since they differ on the type of influencer. Question 18 is: It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of high-street fashion brands from Influencer A (Julia Bergshoeff). Question 19 is It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of high-street fashion brands from Influencer B (The Weeknd). Both influencers scored 5/7; however, 68.9% agree to purchase/recommend high-street fashion clothes from Julia Bergshoeff while 56.2% agrees with the same statement from The Weeknd. That means that more participants would purchase or recommend clothes from Julia Bergshoeff and therefore these questions which were asked are in favour of micro-celebrities.

All the questions which were asked before were more in favour of the micro-celebrity Julia Bergshoeff. Therefore, based on the current analysis it appears that hypothesis one: 'Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm than the Macro-Influencers', could be **supported**.

5.2 Sub-question 2

The outcome of **Question 5** shows with the score of 2/7 and 81.7% of the participants disagree with the statement that the influencer with the highest number of reach is most influential. Therefore, the participants believe that influencers with a higher number of followers do not necessarily have more influence. Therefore, the number of followers which the influencer has do not influence the participants' subjective norm.

In **Question 6** the participants were asked whether Influencer A's (Julia Bergshoeff) relevance to high-street fashion brands is higher than Influencer B's (The Weeknd). The outcome of the question shows with the score of 6/7, and 76.7 % of participants agree with that statement. Even Though The Weeknd is more well-known than the fashion influencer Julia Bergshoeff; the participants have chosen the latter's relevance to high-street fashion higher than the former. Therefore, the higher the influencer's relevance to high-street fashion brands, the more impact it may have on people's subjective norm.

The outcome of **Question 7** shows, with the score of 3/7, that the average people disagree with the fact that the post with the higher number of likes has a more positive influence on them than the post with the lower number of likes. Therefore, the higher the engagement (number of likes etcetera) does not influence the participants and thus does not influence their subjective norm.

So basically, according to the outcome of these survey questions, the participants believe that the influencer's relevance does influence them. However, the reach and the engagement rate of the

influencer do not matter much to them. For the influence formula to work, all three constructs should influence them. Therefore, based on the current analysis it appears that the tested hypothesis: 'The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention', could be **rejected** since only 1/3 construct (relevance) matters to the participants.

5.3 Sub-question 3

Attractiveness

Questions 8 and 9 were asked to obtain results whether micro-influencers' or macro-influencers' posts are perceived more attractive. The four constructs of attractiveness are based on whether participants found their posts: classy, elegant, attractive and sexy. Table 8 compares these constructs between the two influencers.

Table 8
Results of the construct attractiveness

Construct	Results of The Weeknd (Macro)	Results of Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)	Influencer with higher results
Classiness (1) Classy - Not Classy (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 59.4 % **Verdict:** Not Classy	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 84.5 % **Verdict:** Classy	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Elegance (1) Not Elegant – Elegant (7)	**Score:** 4 / 7 **Percentage:** 65.3 % **Verdict:** Elegant	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 86.3 % **Verdict:** Elegant	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Attractiveness (1) Attractive – Not Attractive (7)	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 65.3 % **Verdict:** Attractive	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 86.3 % **Verdict:** Attractive	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Sexiness (1) Not Sexy – Sexy (7)	**Score:** 6 / 7 **Percentage:** 81.7 % **Verdict:** Attractive	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 68.0 % **Verdict:** Attractive	The Weeknd (Macro)

According to the results, Julia Bergshoeff has scored higher in classiness, elegance and attractiveness. The Weeknd only scored higher in sexiness. That means that the micro-influencer Julia Bergshoeff scores higher in overall attractiveness with 3/4 being in her favour.

Trustworthiness

The second dimension of the credibility of influencers is trustworthiness. The five constructs which relate to this dimension are dependability, honesty, reliability, sincerity and trustworthiness. Questions 10 and 11 were asked regarding these dimensions of the micro and macro-influencer. The outcome of these questions can be seen in table 9 below, whereby these constructs are compared between the two influencers.

Table 9
Results of trustworthiness construct.

Construct	Results of The Weeknd (Macro)	Results of Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)	Influencer with higher results
Dependability (1) Not Dependable - Dependable (7)	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 54.3 % **Verdict:** Not Dependable	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 65.8 % **Verdict:** Dependable	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Honesty (1) Honest – Dishonest (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 53.0 % **Verdict:** Dishonest	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 60.3 % **Verdict:** Honest	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Reliability (1) Unreliable – Reliable (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 62.1 % **Verdict:** Reliable	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 63.9 % **Verdict:** Reliable	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Sincerity (1) Sincere – Insincere (7)	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 56.2 % **Verdict:** Sincere	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 63.5 % **Verdict:** Sincere	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Trustworthiness (1) Not trustworthy – Trustworthy (7)	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 77.6 % **Verdict:** Not Trustworthy	**Score:** 6 / 7 **Percentage:** 79.9 % **Verdict:** Trustworthy	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)

By analysing the results, the micro-influencer Julia Bergshoeff scored higher in all the constructs which means that the participants perceive Julia Bergshoeff as more trustworthy.

Expertise

The final dimension of credibility of influencers is expertise. The five constructs which relate to this dimension are expertise, experience, knowledgeability, qualification and skills. The participants were asked about the influencer's perceived expertise regarding these constructs. The results can be seen in table 10 below.

Table 10
Results of the construct expertise

Construct	Results of The Weeknd (Macro)	Results of Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)	Influencer with higher results
Expertise (1) Expert – Not an Expert (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 62.1 % **Verdict:** Not an Expert	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 75.8 % **Verdict:** Expert	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Experience (1) Inexperienced – Experienced (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 56.2 % **Verdict:** Experienced	**Score:** 6 / 7 **Percentage:** 71.7 % **Verdict:** Experienced	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Knowledgeability (1) Unknowledgeable – Knowledgeable (7)	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 53.9 % **Verdict:** Unknowledgeable	**Score:** 6 / 7 **Percentage:** 77.6 % **Verdict:** Knowledgeable	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Qualification (1) Qualified – Unqualified (7)	**Score:** 5 / 7 **Percentage:** 57.1 % **Verdict:** Unqualified	**Score:** 2 / 7 **Percentage:** 68.0 % **Verdict:** Qualified	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)
Skills (1) Unskilled – Skilled (7)	**Score:** 3 / 7 **Percentage:** 51.6 % **Verdict:** Unskilled	**Score:** 6 / 7 **Percentage:** 77.2 % **Verdict:** Skilled	Julia Bergshoeff (Micro)

Overall, Julia Bergshoeff scored higher on all three dimensions: attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. That means that micro-influencers are indeed perceived as more trustworthy than macro-influencers. Therefore, based on the current analysis it appears that hypothesis 3 could be **supported**.

5.4 Sub-question 4

Based on the results of questions 16 and 17, participants would take recommendations from both influencers when it comes to high-street fashion brands. It is notable that participants would rather take recommendations from the micro-influencer with almost 30%. That could be since they perceive them as more credible, as proven in the previous hypothesis.

The outcome of questions 18 and 19 also indicates that the participants would purchase or recommend clothes of high-street fashion brands which the influencers endorsed. Also, here it is notable that they prefer the micro-celebrity more with more than 10%.

Therefore, the influencers do have a positive impact on the participants' subjective norm since they are willing to recommend or purchase the endorsed clothes from brands, therefore based on the current analysis it appears that this hypothesis could be **supported**.

5.5 Hypothesis Outcome

The results will now be used to detect whether the hypotheses are supported or rejected. Since this research is not a statistical research, the hypotheses are supported/rejected based on current analysis. The outcome can be seen in Table 10.

Table 11
Hypotheses outcome (based on current analysis)

Hypotheses	Supported / Rejected
H1: Micro-influencers have a more significant impact on the Subjective Norm. than the Macro-Influencers	Supported
H2: The higher the outcome of the Influence Formula, the higher the impact is on the Subjective Norm; thus, the Purchase Intention.	Rejected
H3: The credibility of influencers depends on the type of influencer: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy since they hold the expertise.	Supported
H4: Influencer Marketing has an Impact on the Subjective norm which affects the purchase intention positively.	Supported

5.6 Limitation of the Study

Although this paper provided high-street fashion brands results on which type of influencer on Instagram is more effective and can improve the purchase intention, the limitations of the study have to be stated.

Firstly, in order for the survey to be representative, the required sample size had to be met with the sample size of 377. However, due to the short time span, the required sample size could not be met. Therefore, the outcome of the survey could not be entirely accurate.

Secondly, there are only two influencers chosen to be used in the survey: Julia Bergshoeff who is a micro-influencer and The Weeknd who is a macro-celebrity. So basically, these two influencers

represent their respected type of influencer. It could be possible if other influencers would be chosen, the results might have (slightly) differed.

Thirdly, if a participant knows these influencers beforehand and they fill in the questions based on their judgements. When a participant does not like one of the influencers, he/she might not answer objectively. Therefore, the outcome could be in this case, not objective.

Finally, the posts which have been chosen are based on one high-street fashion brand: H&M. It is possible that some participants might not like the brand which again can cause less objectivity. Negative views towards the brand could thus also manipulate the outcome of the results.

6. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the conclusion of the research is given.

6.1 Conclusion of the Research

The purpose of this dissertation was to research whether influencer marketing on Instagram for high-street fashion brands can improve the purchase intention. The purchase intention and the behaviour are based on the theory of planned behaviour, whereby it was assumed that influencer marketing could affect the subjective norm of people. Based on this theory, the following central research question was formulated: How can high-street fashion brands choose the right influencer on Instagram to improve the purchase intention of consumers?

In order to answer how high-street fashion brands can choose the right influencer, it was essential to differentiate between two types of influencers: macro-influencer (The Weeknd) and micro-influencer (Julia Bergshoeff).

Subsequently, four sub-questions were formulated which were also transitioned into hypotheses. *Sub-question one* was the following: What type of influencer has a more significant on the subjective norm? The majority of the participants favoured the micro-influencer, Julia Bergshoeff. They found her relevance to high-street fashion brand higher, and the majority would recommend or purchase the clothes which she had worn. Therefore, based on current analysis, a micro-influencer could have a more significant impact on the subjective norm. Since micro-influencers could have a more significant impact on the subjective norm, high-street fashion brands should choose them to endorse their clothes on Instagram.

In *sub-question two* was asked whether the outcome of the influence formula influences the subjective norm; thus, the purchase intention. To validate the influence formula, all constructs (reach, engagement, relevance) should influence the subjective norm of the participants. However, only relevance seemed to be the only construct to affect the subjective norm. Therefore, based on current analysis the (higher) outcome of the influence formula could not affect the subjective norm; thus, the purchase intention.

Sub-question three was formulated as the following: What type of influencer is perceived more credible? According to the results, the micro-influencer scored higher on all three constructs (attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise). Hence, according to the current analysis, micro-influencers could be seen as being more credible. Since micro-influencers could be seen as being more

credible, high-street fashion brands should use them to endorse their clothes on Instagram. Information from a credible source can in fact influence believes, opinions, attitudes and behaviours; in this case the purchase intention. Hence, it seems more appropriate to choose micro-influencers.

Finally, *Sub-question four* was formulated as the following: Does influencer marketing impact the subjective norm, and if so, does it affect it positively? According to the survey, the majority of participants said that they would recommend or purchase the endorsed clothes by the influencers. Thus, according to the current analysis, influencer marketing could impact the subjective norm positively. Since influencer marketing seems to affect the subjective norm, high-street fashion brands should use influencer marketing as a marketing strategy. Since many fashion brands and influencers use Instagram to endorse the clothes, Instagram seems to be the right social media platform.

To conclude, by analysing the four sub-questions, high-street fashion brands should rather use micro-influencers on Instagram than macro-celebrities. It seems that people find that their credibility lays much higher than the latter. Besides, they are also less expensive than celebrities and can be more loyal to the brand after partnership. The only slightly negative aspect is that they have much less reach than macro-influencers. However, the match between high-street fashion brands' consumers with micro-influencers' followers is greater since they have built a niche-audience with the brands' consumers. Therefore, based on current analysis, high-street fashion brands should opt for micro-celebrities on Instagram when it comes to influencer marketing.

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APPENDIX

The following survey was shown to all the participants.

Survey: Influencer Marketing on Instagram for High-Street Fashion Brands and the Purchase Intention

The purpose of this survey is to research what type of influencers on Instagram of High Street Fashion Brands have a positive effect on the purchase intention of consumers.
A lot of brands approach influencers on Instagram in order to be a part of their marketing campaign nowadays.

An influencer is basically someone who has influence over people of a certain demographic or niche and is not limited to people with a certain number of Instagram followers. Therefore, an influencer could be a celebrity, media personality, sporting professional or reality TV star, or it could simply be someone with great fashion sense.

Influencers use real world stories based on their personal experience and observations which makes them more credible than advertisements or paid reviews.
Modern-age customers who have all the self-sufficiency to research and find about a product before buying them trust in someone who has an original voice. Thus influencers become indispensable for branding.

The influencers are differentiated between Macro (celebrities)- and Micro (niche) influencers in this particular research whereby questions will be asked related to influencers in the context of High-Street Fashion Brands (HSFB).

1   What is your Gender?

☐ Male   ☐ Female

2   What is your age?

☐ 17 or younger   ☐ 18-20   ☐ 21-29

☐ 30-39   ☐ 40-49   ☐ 50 and above

3   Do you use Instagram?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

4   Do you follow fashion influencers on Instagram?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

The following two posts are official accounts of Influencers: The influencer on post A is **Julia Bergshoeff,** A Dutch model and fashion influencer who has modelled for brands like H&M and Topshop. The influencer on post B is **The Weeknd** (Abel Makkonen Tesfaye) who is a Canadian singer, rapper, songwriter and a record producer. Several questions will be asked related to their posts which can be seen below

5 *The influencer with the highest reach (Followers) has more likely the biggest influence*
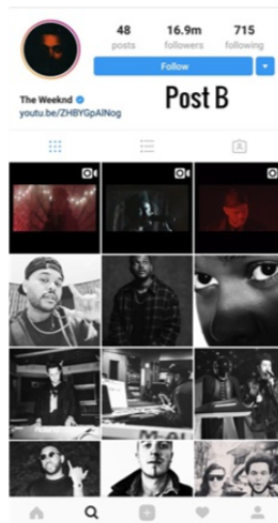
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

6 *Influencer A's relevance to High-Street Fashion Brands is higher than Influencer B*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

The two Instagram posts, which are shown below, are both campaign shoots by H&M. The brand has used both influencers for their different campaigns. Questions related to these posts will be asked.
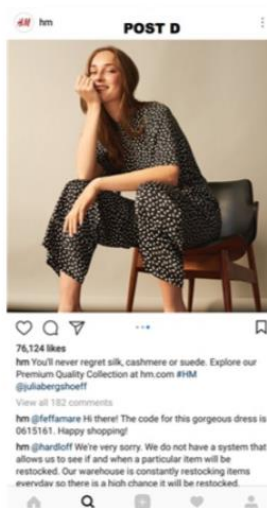
7   **The post with higher number of likes (Post C) has a more positive influence on me than the influencer with lower number of likes (Post D)**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

8   **I find Post C**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Classy						Not Classy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Elegant						Elegant

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attractive						Not Attractive

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Sexy						Sexy

9   **I find Post D**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Classy						Not Classy

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Elegant						Elegant

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Attractive						Not Attractive

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Sexy						Sexy

10 I perceive the influencer on post C as

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Dependable						Dependable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Honest						Dishonest

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unreliable						Reliable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sincere						Insincere

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Trustworthy						Trustworthy

11 I perceive the influencer on post D as

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Dependable						Dependable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Honest						Dishonest

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unreliable						Reliable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sincere						Insincere

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Trustworthy						Trustworthy

12 I would/would not follow Influencer A because she seems

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As an Expert						Not as an Expert

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inexperienced						Experienced

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unknowledgeable						Knowledgable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Qualified						Unqualified

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unskilled						Skilled

13 I would follow influencer B because he seems

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
As an Expert						Not as an Expert

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Inexperienced						Experienced

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unknowledgeable						Knowledgable

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Qualified						Unqualified

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unskilled						Skilled

14 My attitude towards High-Street fashion clothes portrayed in post C is positive

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

15 My attitude towards High-Street fashion clothes portrayed in post D is positive

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

16   **I would take recommendations from influencer A when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

17   **I would take recommendations from influencer B when it comes to High-Street Fashion Clothes / Brands**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

18   **It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer A**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

19   **It is likely that I will purchase or recommend clothes of High-Street Fashion Brands from Influencer B**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree

20   **My attitude towards the brand has changed positively because of the use of these influencers**

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree