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Ugnė Kurklietytė

THE FINAL MASTER THESIS

<p>NUOMONĖS FORMUOTOJO KOMUNIKACINĖS ŽINUTĖS POVEIKIS ASMENINIO PREKĖS ŽENKLO VERTINIMUI SOCIALINĖJE MEDIJOJE</p>	<p>THE EFFECT OF AN INFLUENCER COMMUNICATIVE MESSAGE ON PERSONAL BRAND EVALUATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA</p>
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SUMMARY

VILNIUS UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL
DIGITAL MARKETING STUDY PROGRAMME
STUDENT UGNĖ KURKLIETYTĖ

THE EFFECT OF AN INFLUENCER COMMUNICATIVE MESSAGE ON PERSONAL BRAND EVALUATION IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Supervisor - Doc. Dr. Elzė Rudienė

Master's thesis was prepared in Vilnius, 2024

Scope of Master's thesis - 90 pages.

Number of tables used in the FMT - 19 pcs.

Number of figures used in the FMT - 12 pcs.

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Aim of research: to identify if an influencer communicative message about non-related products in Social Media could negatively impact evaluation on its personal brand.

The problem of research: influencer communicative message with non-related products could negatively affect influencer personal brand evaluation in Social Media.

Research object: two communicative messages from Beata Nicholson personal Instagram profile with related and non-related to influencer products.

Structure of FMT:

1. Literary analysis - in this part examined the concepts of personal brand and influencers, their mutual interaction and communication in Social Media. On the basis of previous studies and their models, the model of this study was created which is examined in more detail in the methodological part of the study.
2. Methodology of research: the research objects were selected, the research was described, research hypotheses were set according to the research model, the research sample was determined, data collection methods and tools for their analysis were selected. An online survey was created and activated to collect research data.
3. Analysis of research data: processing collected research data, describing demographic data of survey participants, approving or denying hypotheses, describing insights based on survey results.
4. Conclusions and suggestions: summarizing the results of the study which revealed that communication message of influencer when promoting a related or non-related

products has a relationship with the evaluation of the personal brand through credibility, engagement and acceptance toward consumers, but only the acceptance of influencer communicative message has positive and negative impact on the evaluation on influencer personal brand.

Methodology of research: during the research, a platform Google Forms was used to create an online survey and collect data which later were processed by the SPSS data analysis program.

The results of the study: Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvé" is too strong to be related or affected on evaluation in a negative way by advertisements with non-related to influencer product.

Application of the study: the methodology and results of the conducted study can be applied in future research related to the communication about influencers and brand evaluation in Social Media.

SANTRAUKA
VILNIAUS UNIVERSITETO VERSLO MOKYKLA
SKAITMENINĖS RINKODAROS STUDIJŲ PROGRAMA
STUDENTĖ UGNĖ KURKLIETYTĖ

**NUOMONĖS FORMUOTOJO KOMUNIKACINĖS ŽINUTĖS POVEIKIS
ASMENINIO PREKĖS ŽENKLO VERTINIMUI SOCIALINĖJE MEDIJOJE**

Darbo vadovas - Doc. Dr. Elzė Rudienė

Darbas parengtas - Vilnius, 2024

Darbo apimtis – 90 puslapių.

Lentelių skaičius darbe - 19 vnt.

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Darbo tikslas: nustatyti ar nuomonės formuotojo komunikacinė žinutė su nesusijusiu produktu gali neigiamai paveikti asmeninio prekės ženklo vertinimą socialinėje medijoje.

Darbo problema: nuomonės formuotojo komunikacinė žinutė su nesusijusiu produktu gali neigiamai paveikti nuomonės formuotojo prekės ženklo vertinimą socialinėje medijoje.

Tiriamasis objektas: dvi komunikacinės žinutės iš Beata Nicholson asmeninio Instagram profilio, kuriose reklamuojama susijęs ir nesusijęs, su nuomonės formuotoju, produktas.

Darbo struktūra:

1. Literatūrinė analizė - šioje dalyje buvo nagrinėjama asmeninio prekės ženklo ir influencerių sąvokos, jų tarpusavio sąveika ir komunikacija socialinėje medijoje. Remiantis ankstesniais tyrimais ir jų modeliais, sudarytas šio tyrimo modelis, detaliau nagrinėjamas tyrimo metodinėje dalyje.
2. Tyrimo metodika - pasirinkti tyrimo objektai, aprašyta tyrimo eiga, pagal sudarytą tyrimo modelį buvo iškeltos tyrimo hipotezės, nustatyta tyrimo imtis, pasirinkti duomenų rinkimo metodai bei įrankiai jų analizei. Sudaryta ir aktyvuota internetinė apklausa tyrimų duomenims rinkti.
3. Tyrimo duomenų analizė: apdorojami surinkti tyrimų duomenys, aprašomi demografiniai apklausos dalyvių duomenys, patvirtinamos ar paneigiamos hipotezės, aprašomos įžvalgos remiantis apklausos rezultatais.
4. Išvados ir pasiūlymai: apibendrinami tyrimo rezultatai, kurie atskleidė, kad nuomonės formuotojo komunikacinė žinutė reklamuojant susijusį arba nesusijusį produktą, turi

ryšį su asmeninio prekės ženklo vertinimu per patikimumą, įsitraukimą ir priimtinumą vartotojų atžvilgiu, bet teigiamą ir neigiamą įtaką vertinimui skirtingais atvejais turi tik nuomonės formuotojo priimtumas.

Tyrimo metodai: tyrimo metu, internetinės apklausos sudarymui ir duomenų rinkimui buvo naudojama platforma Google Forms, o duomenys apdoroti SPSS duomenų analizės programa. Tyrimo metu gauti rezultatai: ištirta, kad nuomonės formuotojo komunikacinė žinutė, reklamuojant susijusį arba nesusijusį produktą, turi ryšį su asmeninio prekės ženklo vertinimu socialinėje medijoje per patikimumą, įsitraukimą ir priimtinumą vartotojų atžvilgiu, bet teigiamą ir neigiamą įtaką prekės ženklo vertinimui, turi tik nuomonės formuotojo komunikacinės žinutės priimtumas reklamuojant, susijusį arba nesusijusį, produktus.

Išvados: buvo išsiaiškinta, kad Beatos Nicholson asmeninis prekės ženklas „Beatos virtuvė“ yra per daug stiprus, kad būtų neigiamai susietas ar paveiktas komunikacinės žinutės, kurioje yra reklamuojamas nesusijęs su influenceriu produktas.

Tyrimo pritaikymas: atlikto tyrimo metodika bei rezultatai gali būti pritaikomi ateityje atliekant tyrimą susijusį su nuomonės formuotojų komunikacija bei prekės ženklo vertinimu socialinėje medijoje.

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INTRODUCTION

Social Media is a rapidly growing digital marketing channel which has become an integral part of human daily life and business communication. Some sales executives notice that “without online presence you don’t exist” (Rangarajan et al., 2017) which confirms Social Media importance for communication with consumers. From the first sight, personal branding and influencing can appear as similar subjects because of the ability to actively communicate and engage with consumers, however both are differently represented.

Researchers characterize influencers as a person who shares content about daily life on different Social Media accounts (Schouten et al., 2020) such as Instagram, Youtube, Facebook etc. Influencer could be any person who can endorse other people while advertising products or services from different brands and creates a need to followers even if in the absence of necessity. Unlike influencer, personal branding is described as showing power of communication uniqueness (Liu, Suh, 2017) and equated to art where person skills show as creation of brand (Suryatmaja, Astawa, 2022). In addition, personal brand can be explained as an opportunity to grow connections with consumers through emotions (Rangarajan et al., 2017) which brand causes through communication generated by influencers too. Despite this, both subjects complement each other in certain ways, the question is - how?

In general, Social Media is explained as online media where users are available to share various content through different virtual spaces (Suryatmaja et al., 2022) as well as brands and influencers. Because of the many options Social Media has, researchers recommend to select the most suitable (Zabojnik, 2018) before starting to communicate. In order to select appropriate Social Media channel, Godey and others (2016) identify two major aims of different Social media networks in general:

- profile-based where important encourage connection (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp);
- content-based which focus on the content creation (Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube).

Communicative messages about products or services shared by consumers are different compared to influencers because the latter is capable of influencing consumer relations and associations with personal brands even possibly stronger than the personal brand by itself. According to previous studies, communicative messages should be valid to consumers for better engagement with brands (Ashley et al., 2015) which confirms the statement - better consumer involvement ensures improved brand appearance (Borges-Tiago et al., 2023). In order to control favourable consumer interaction with brands, Suryatmaja et al., (2022) suggest

to regularly create valuable content, keep consistent feed structure and include influencer marketing to provide additional reliability for personal brand communication through Social Media. In reference with Borges-Tiago et.al, (2023) and Dwivedi et al., (2015) previous research in a background of influencers and celebrities impact on personal brands, in this paperwork influencer communicative messages will be evaluated by different evaluation criteria to measure its relationship with and impact on personal brand evaluation towards consumer based personal brand equity.

Following the structure of this paperwork, will be selected two different communicative messages from the same influencer, with related and non-related to influencer products to identify if communicative messages with non-related product could negatively affect personal brand evaluation on consumer based brand equity through Social Media.

The relevance of the topic: influencer communicative messages about related or non-related to influencer products can form consumer attitudes in a negative way towards its personal brand evaluation. Some previous studies (Godey et al., 2016; Borges-Tiago et al., 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2015) underline the cases about influencing impact on personal brand equity in general while neither of researchers analyzed what impact communicative message with non-related products can have on influencer personal brand evaluation on consumer based brand equity.

Essential aspects of the topic: to identify how differently influencer communicative messages could impact its personal brand evaluation in Social Media while advertising related and non-related to influencer products.

The problem of research: influencer communicative message with non-related products could negatively affect influencer personal brand evaluation in Social Media.

Aim of research: to identify if an influencer communicative message about non-related products in Social Media could negatively impact evaluation on its personal brand.

Research goals:

1. To analyze scientific literature about personal branding and influencing;
2. To distinguish differences between personal branding and influencing;
3. To analyze theoretical background of Social Media channels;
4. To find out how personal brand and influencers communicate on Social Media;
5. To determine how consumers recognize and evaluate brands;
6. Based on literary analysis, develop own research model to identify how influencer communicative messages affects personal brand on Social Media depending on related and non-related products;

7. To analyze research data and compare influencers communicative messages relationship with and impact on personal brand evaluation;
8. To present research conclusions and suggest recommendations for future studies.

The Final Master Thesis includes theoretical research method about personal brand and influencers communication in Social Media. The methodology part will include quantitative data collection by using online survey. Results of research will be represented by a method of descriptive and statistical data analysis including calculations of Cronbach alpha, correlation and multiple linear regression.

Keywords: influencers, communicative message, personal brand evaluation, social media.

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1. LITERATURE ANALYSIS

1.1. Personal Brand development

Year by year, personal branding and influencing became strongly related, the possible reason - being an influencer and promoting personal brand simultaneously. Improvement of personal brand awareness, promotions on Social Media by influencing consumers purchasing decisions could be explained as influencing although researchers extract some differences between these two subjects. First of all, Rangarajan, Gelb and Vandaveer (2017) personal brand describing as an opportunity to create relationships with audiences regardless of personal activity while Katryna M. Johnson (2017) in her article about Personal Brand development in Social Media noticed that personal branding describes what, how and why certain activities are unique. Important to mention that personal branding includes not just advertising launch and sales improvement, it also focuses on various factors which characterize business itself (Zabojnik, 2018) and represents how differently brands communicate with consumers. Influencer integration in personal brand development explains the fact that endorser credibility impacts brand equity (Dwivedi, Johnson, McDonald, 2015) by attaching additional value to personal brand.

Some previous research about advertising effectiveness noticed that identification, similarity and trust are important criterias for effective product endorsement (Schouten, Verspaget, 2019) through influencer communication. Moreover, influencers are described as individuals or opinion leaders who make an impact on consumer buying decisions (Lou, Yuan, 2019) through different Social Media channels especially on Instagram which has strong power for self-branding and self-promotion (Jin et al., 2019) to be shared with target audience. Even though influencers became important to connect consumers with the brand (Godey et al., 2016) in some cases influencer communicative messages could become unrelated by possibly causing different engagement with consumers than was expected by brands. Interview with U.S. and European sales executives and managers about strategic personal brand management conducted in 2017, explain that irrelevant Social Media content became potential threat to personal brands (Rangarajan et al., 2017) because companies not in full control of influencers behavior (Seiler, Kucza, 2017) while Social Media platforms are able to spread information to mass market in particularly short time and cause possibly unwanted evaluation by consumers. To ensure favourable impact of an influencer communicative messages on personal brand evaluation towards consumers, important to ensure integrity influencer and personal brand communication. Since influencers became a part of personal brand online presentation,

consumer engagement and response with personal brand became more simple and easier, unlike control of consumer evaluation on personal brand communication generated by influencers which can be either positive or negative. Examination of influencer communicative messages impact on personal brand evaluation toward consumers will be based on different theoretical models such as Source Credibility model by Ohanian (1990) and Brand Equity model by Aaker's (1992) which were used by many researchers (Schouten et al., 2019; Kay et al., 2019; Dwivedi et al., 2015) on purpose to evaluate influencer communication messages impact on consumer perception on personal brand equity.

To summarize, personal branding represents uniqueness of business itself where influencer integration complements personal brand and strengthens its equity. In addition, Instagram is assumed as an effective tool for promotions and brand growth where feeling identified, trusted and related to followers can be caused just by integrating influencers in daily communication of personal brand. By influencer ability to have an impact on consumer behaviour, it became risky to control consumer interactions with personal brands. It has become mandatory to follow and analyse criterias of consumer evaluation of personal brands since influencers were integrated in general personal brand communication strategy.

1.1.1. Concept of personal branding

As a concept, personal branding is described as unique personal identification, relationship development, brand image creation and evaluation of impact (Shafiee et al., 2020) while trying to interact and engage with consumers through different marketing channels. Other researchers explain that a personal brand is the presentation of itself (Zabojnik, 2018) or a continuous process (Potgieter, 2018) in order to be valued and noticed towards consumers in a competitive and rapidly changing digital environment. Conducted investigations had a deeper analysis where personal brand concepts were represented by different characteristics. Tasci (2021) observes main components of consumer based brand equity (CBBE):

- brand familiarity/ awareness;
- brand image/ associations;
- perceived quality;
- consumer value;
- brand loyalty.

For personal brand evaluation in Social Media, these characteristics should be considered as impactful criteria to ensure favourable brand performance towards consumers. Adding to this, personal brand was divided and examined by 3 categories (Scheidt et al., 2020): brand value,

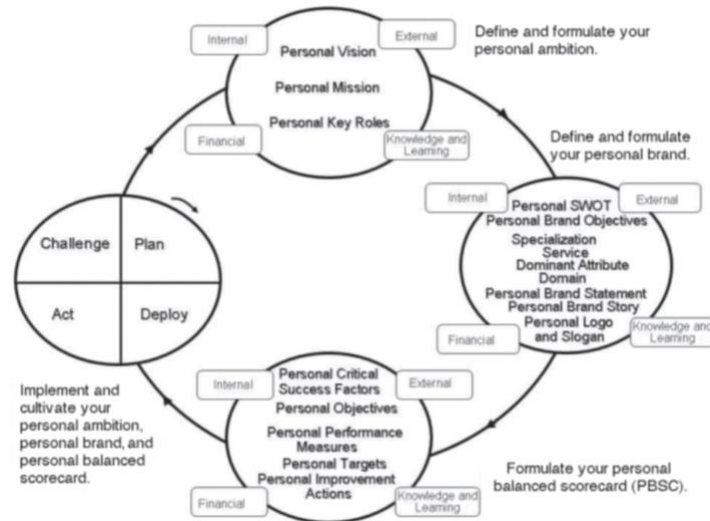
target audience perception and selling proposition where first category was based on personal qualifications and experience, second on associations and third focused on uniqueness since these parameters are significant for brand communication in digital environment. Moreover, different explanations of personal brand help to identify personal brand attributes and benefits compared to influencers. Hontiveros (2015) on the strength of authors Montoya et al., (2008) and Rampersad (2008) theoretical substantiation of personal branding, specified several criterias of effective personal brand:

- Authenticity: grow brand as real personality based on vision, characteristics, behavior etc.;
- Integrity: maintain ambitions while keeping moral and behavioral codes;
- Consistency: being brave and coherent in actions;
- Specialization: focusing on certain area, grow uniqueness and strength motivation;
- Authority: effective leader in certain field;
- Distinctiveness: the ability to create additional value to consumer comparing to others;
- Relevant: strong understanding of target audience;
- Visibility: the ability to stand on top of consumer minds;
- Persistence: consistent and stable personal brand growth;
- Goodwill: the ability to sustain positive image of personal brand;
- Performance: continuous improvement and satisfaction of needs.

Listed above attributes of an effective personal brand also should be followed in Social Media communication as well as in the general brand development process to maintain desired brand evaluation of consumers. Following the background of an effective personal brand, Dr. Hubert K. Rampersad, investigator of personal brand concept and creator of Authentic Personal Brand (APB) model, in his book (2008) describes APB model with 4 different personal brand growing phases as shown in Fig. 1. Each development stage particularly explains certain actions which are inseparable from Authentic Personal Brand development.

Figure 1. *Authentic Personal Brand Model (Rampersad, 2011)*

See Figure 1. on page 15.



As mentioned previously, digital environment became significant for self-branding, Hontiveros (2022) applied APB model to measure effects of Social Media engagement to personal brand and described in 4 stages belonging to this model:

1. Define and formulate personal ambition – identification of brand, values, uniqueness and ambitious;
2. Define and formulate personal brand – formulate personal brand promise;
3. Formulate personal balanced scorecard (PBSC) – personal ambition changing into action;
4. Implement and cultivate personal ambition, personal brand and personal balanced scoreboard – implementation of 4 different phases together.

Consistent analysis based on Authentic Personal Brand Model helps to develop personal brand strategy by identifying main characteristics of personal brands to strengthen brand position on the market. To become favorable for consumers, businesses should actively try to ensure valuable personal brand properties. Another example about personal brand strategy has been completed by Shafiee et. al., (2020) where he represents brand positioning by different dimensions such as strategy, capability, differentiation, audience and performance where strategy and performance had the highest influence regarding personal brand positioning.

Following the process of Personal brand development, Aaker's Brand Equity model is indicated as a versatile tool (Tsaur et al., 2016) to examine and recognize characteristics of strong personal brands. Salehzadeh and Pool (2017) highlighted that consumer perceived value has a positive impact on purchase decisions why brands have to be visible in Social Media to be desired for consumers especially when Social Media is accessible to everyone. This type of

digital channel is a direct way for businesses to connect (Holton, Molyneux, 2017) and communicate with audiences since stronger relationships between actively communicating brands and their following consumers are proved by Hudson and others (2016).

1.1.2. Concept of influencing

Woods (2016) shared Greg Manago (managing director and senior producer at Mindshare) thought: „Influencers are such an important part of what brands are doing today” which validate the fact that growth of influencer marketing significantly increased (Loua et al., 2019) of being appeal and justified for many businesses. According to Childers et al., (2019) 90% of clients use influencer marketing. Major advantage of Social Media branding is affordance for influencers to interact directly with followers (Jin, et al., 2019) while sharing daily activities and helping businesses to promote products or services. According to previous research (Lo, Peng, 2021; Godey et al, 2016; Karaduman, 2013) Social Media and influencer marketing take an important role on personal brand success. Centeno and Wang (2017) describes influencers as “activating power of human brands that translates words and images into behavior“ which explain that influencers have strong ability to cause a demand even if it is not necessary to have, for example a product or service. More stronger influencers interactions with followers are more likely for personal brands to be fortunate and successful (Lo, Peng, 2021) while communicating in Social Media. Following this, the value of influencers communicative messages and potency to engage with consumers make an impact on brand awareness and intention to buy (Loua and Yuan, 2019) certain brand products or services. Moreover, perceived quality affects purchasing habits (Ogunnaike et al., 2017) because one of the purposes of influencer communication is to cause behavior of advertised products or services through creative messages on Social Media. Hautala (2019) shared Riedl & Luckwald (2019) insight that the most effective advertising while promoting products which consumers are already using or willing to use. Besides, influencers strengthen brand trust and satisfaction with followers (Dhanesh, Duthler, 2019), increase brand awareness (Loua, Yuan, 2019) which play an important role on consumer perception of a brand. Following this, Childers et al., (2019) described that influencer marketing can be measured by reach, credibility and success in order to evaluate influencer suitability to promote a brand.

Previous research (Sheldon, Bryant, 2016) explains what motivates consumers to use Instagram as several factors were excluded: surveillance/knowledge about authors, documentation, coolness, creativity where knowledge was selected as the most important motivator. Insights on Nielsen ROI (2022) report showed that 71% consumer trust on influencer

advertising and brand preference increased by 80% by proving that selection of influencers is a significant decision for brands to ensure correct communication toward consumers. The major attributes associated with influencers are followers, percent of engagement and promotions (Jin et al., 2019) which composes a general image about certain influencers. They can be divided as micro and macro (Hatton, 2018) influencers which are distributed by the number of followers each has. In reference to Porteous (2018), micro-influencers attract at least 1,000 followers and macro-influencers are followed by more than 100,000 consumers. In addition, Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) shared insight that influencers who have a lot of followers are more trusted and attractive.

On the other hand Kay, Mulcahy and Parkinson (2020b) in previous research about differentiation of influencers determined that micro-influencers are more effective than macro-influencers regarding consumer engagement therefore this topic is not clearly explained. Whereas influencers can be any person able to be reliable to consumers according to Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) who explained that personal experience of influencers is more valuable to their communication according to consumer opinions. Especially if the influencer is related to the advertised product, endorser credibility impacts consumer perception of the brand in the desired way (Dwivedi et al., 2015) for the purpose of creating new or strengthening existing relationships with consumers. Chan et al. (2013) distinguished popularity as an important factor of influencer attractiveness even if having a wide audience of followers can be more risky than giving desired results.

Therefore, brands have carefully chosen influencers (Loua, Yuan, 2019) as Nielsen report (2022) based on Influencer Scope clients data shows that 86% search for reliable influencer referred to a challenge as their content not related to brand vision. Hautala (2019) explained about distrust of influencers the highest evaluation of distrust caused by commercialism which assumes that most influencers communication is not real, but purchased. The ability to be original and create unique content became difficult to implement because irrelevant posts are risky to share (Rangarajan et al., 2017) and may cause false impressions about personal brand than expected. Furthermore, inappropriate influencer messages reduce effectiveness of its communication (Chung, Cho, 2017) on Social Media as well as excessive influencer activity negatively touches trust and loyalty (Molinillo et. al., 2017) related to brand. However, influencer communication control causes reduced credibility (López, et al., 2020) and may lead to negative consequences (Seiler, Kucza, 2017) toward brand communication with consumers.

To summarize, influencers became an inseparable part of most brands' development because of being a trustful source of advertising to consumers. Favourable evaluation of the influencer can be caused by sharing personal experiences related to consumers or promoting products, services already used by them. For this reason, selection of influencers is a significant decision for brands to reduce a possible risk of irrelevant and inappropriate content, commercialism and excessive communication as it could bring more damage than expected benefits.

1.1.3. Interaction between personal brands and influencers

Halm (2022) affirmed that “personal brand <...> must be promoted”, why brands are forced to include influencers to increase brand equity based on endorser trust, attractiveness and expertise as some of previous researches (Schouten et al., 2019; Seiler, Kucza, 2017; Dwivedi et al., 2015) identify it based on Source Credibility Model (Ohanian, 1990). Important to notice that personal brands and influencers complement each other as confirmed by several cases:

- generation Z women are more confident to buy products recommended by celebrity (Ameen et al., 2022);
- Loua and Yuan (2019) observed that consumers purchase intention reflected on trust of influencer post;
- The final consumer buying decision determine information on Social Media (Alalwan et al. (2016) with Powers et. al., (2012));
- influencers directly impact customer journey in a positive way (Pop et al., 2022).

Even though personal branding and influencing concepts are familiar, researchers envision several differences. Firstly, personal brand can be explained as brand characteristics based on life (Rangarajan et al., 2017) while influencers communication can be mixed if product is promoted. Potgieter and Doubell (2019b) added that Social Media helps personal brands to be visible. Rampersad (2011) through his Authentic Personal Branding model display personal brand as a long-term process in order to reflect strengths, values and uniqueness (Pathmanathan & Dodamgoda, 2018) of brand while supplementing Baltezarevic (2014) explanation of personal brand development as define, formulation, implementation and cultivation processes in order to grow authenticity of personal brand. In this case, influencers should be respected by being reliable to endorsed products (Janssen et al., 2022) and helping spread information about the brand (Ahmad et al., 2016) by engaging with consumers toward its communication. The latter statement proves that influencer marketing helps evaluate brand equity based on

consumer behavior through different dimensions: credibility perception, brand attitude and envious emotions (Jin et al., 2019) while predicting actions for further communication. Tsordia et al. (2018) shared an example from the sports industry context where influencers affect consumer behavior unlike brand awareness by proving the power of influencer marketing. In order to increase demand of consumers, Calvo-Porrall and Lévy-Mangin (2014) recommend using advertising campaigns where influencers are on top of marketers' minds.

In conclusion, personal brands' communication through influencers can impact consumers behavior while in some cases lack of information, previously mentioned as a significant factor, could possibly reduce consumer engagement at the same time. In addition, it is important to attract consumers with information about brands in order to divert consumers' minds about sponsored advertising which sometimes does not influence connection between consumer and influencer (Dhanesh, Duthler, 2019) though could possibly change interaction with the brand in the long-term perspective. Furthermore, many researchers (Lo & Peng 2021; Kay et al., 2020; Elbedweihy et al., 2016; Dwivedi et al., 2015) analyze consumer behavior by personal brand and influencer credibility toward trust, attractiveness and extract as it explains consumer intentions. Lo and Peng (2021) assume that information sharing leads to real interaction with followers which nowadays should be the main focus for influencers and brands.

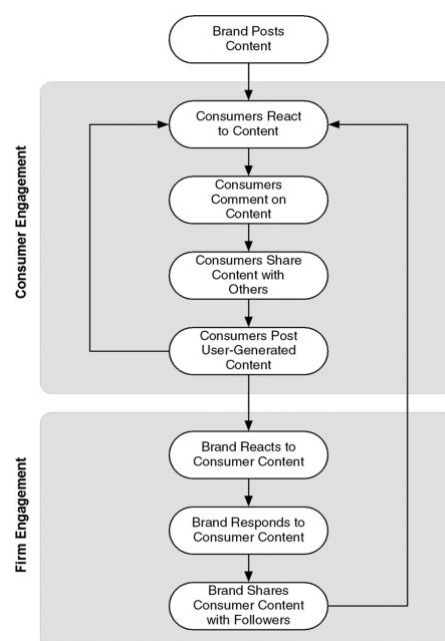
1.2. Personal brand communication on Social Media

Decreasing trust and growing skepticism of consumers towards influencers (Dhun, Dangi, 2022) encourage brands to strengthen digital marketing strategy. Social Media is one of digital marketing channels that was accurately outlined by Filo et. al., (2015) that content sharing helps to communicate, develop relationships and promote the brand in Social Media. Following this insight, influencer marketing as part of the Social Media environment was confirmed to be an effective branding strategy tool (Jin et al., 2019) important to include. Wu, Martínez and Martín (2020) based on previous research insights (Godey et al., 2016; Culotta, Cutler, 2016; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Harrigan et.al., 2017) distinguish general Social Media benefits such as brand perception and customer relationship improvement, business value rise, time and cost resources saver. Although Li et al., (2022) in reference with previous studies (Zhang et al., 2017; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Nam & Kannan, 2014; Choudhury & Harrigan, 2014; Cartwright et al., 2021) suggested five marketing research streams where Social Media is distinguished as selling place, communication and branding channel, monitoring and

intelligence source, CRM platform and strategic marketing tool. In addition, these streams relate to personal brand marketing strategy including Social Media as an important part of marketing strategy which positively affects brand (Godey et. al., 2016) by awareness, associations, perceived quality and loyalty toward consumers. Based on this subject, Barger et. al. (2016) connects Social Media strategy with consumer engagement where brand communication on Social Media is fully related to consumer reaction as it assures Pelsmacker et al., (2018) insight that marketers should provide quick online reaction to ongoing processes to ensure full engagement with consumers. As shown in Fig. 2., model of consumer and brands engagement on Social Media (Barger et al., 2016) represents the whole engagement process divided in two blocks which leads to consumer content connected by brand due to uninterrupted process where:

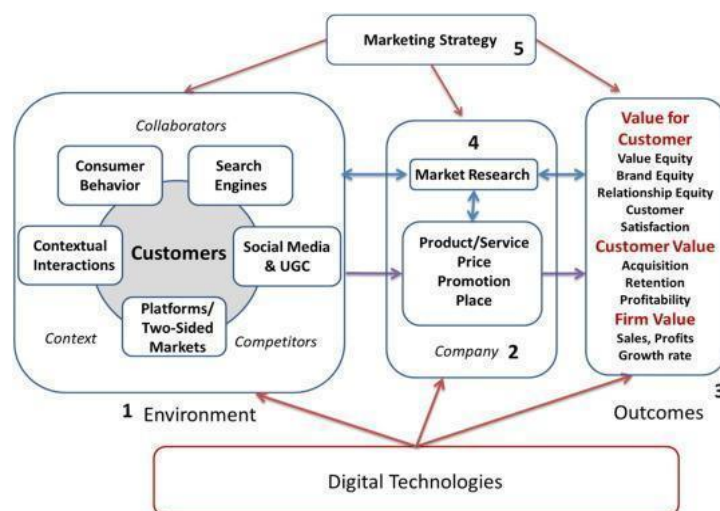
1. consumer engagement starts at consumer interaction point with brand communicative message and leads to either UGC which directly return to consumer reaction point;
2. consumer engagement starts at consumer interaction point with brand communicative message and leads to brand shared consumer content which directly return to consumer reaction point;
3. brand engagement starts at brand interaction point with UGC and leads to consumer content shared by brand which directly causes consumer reaction.

Figure 2. *Consumer engagement and firm engagement on social media. Compiled by author (Barger et al., 2016)*



This model indicated insight by Li et al., (2020) where Social Media initiates exchanges between brands and consumers on purpose to analyze Social Media communication effectiveness by optimizing Digital Marketing strategy. Following this process, Kannan and Li (2017) created a framework (Fig. 3) which observed major indicators of the Digital Marketing strategy such as company, environment, market research etc., where consumers affect the whole marketing process (Barger, Peltier, Schultz, 2016) depending on their engagement on Social Media. Adding to this framework, different factors belong to certain frames as attributes of each position. In detail, digital technologies cover environment, company and outcomes parts which are related to improvement of brand from context, collaborators and competitors perspective. Following this framework, the company includes a 4P marketing model (Hafezi et al., 2013), evaluates perceived value from consumers and brands perspectives. By confirming these models, Lo and Peng (2021) shared insight that the brand and its customers are on top of all marketing elements. For this reason, authors compiled a conceptual research model (2021) as this model has similarity with Barger et al. (2016) and Kannan et al. (2017) models which represent the importance of Social Media communication for personal brand success. In addition, previous studies implement more related conceptual models (Dwivedi et.al, 2015; Godey et.al., 2016; Elbedweihy et al., 2016) which analyze personal brand development in Social Media where communication, content, relationship, perceived value and brand equity were highlighted.

Figure 3. *The Framework for Research in Digital Marketing. Compiled by authors (Kannan, Li, 2017)*



As long as relationships towards personal brand and Social Media engagement level exist (Karaduman, 2013) business development through digital channels is a must. Based on Social

Media theoretical background, Tyrväinen et al. (2023) highlighted that Social Media environment was not analysed by certain media platforms while Social Media are able to engage with consumers (Gao, Feng, 2016) in long-term perspective.

In summary, personal brands communication in Social Media helps to improve brand awareness while interacting and creating connections with consumers. Also, Social Media is beneficial for generating desired brand perceptions toward consumers by promoting the brand and giving additional value to them. Based on represented models from a Digital Marketing background, it can be assumed that the whole marketing strategy depends on interaction between consumers and brands to ensure a coherent marketing strategy which includes Social Media communication.

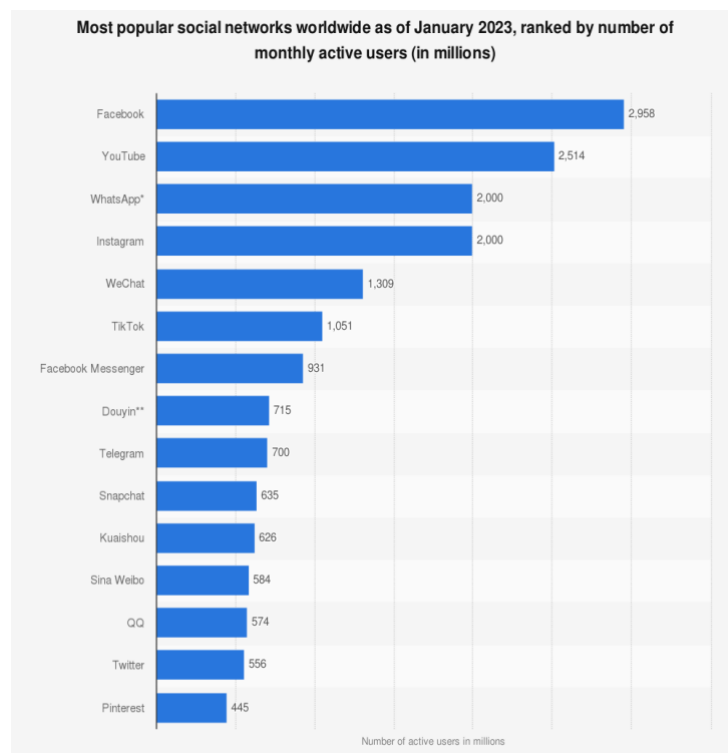
1.2.1. Social Media channels

Mills and Plangger (2015) explained social media as “a set of distinct and complementary online channels for building and maintaining customer relationships which influences customer perceptions of their relationship with service brands, brand trust <..>” where selection of Social Media channels is a first step to create relationships with consumers. Previous findings observed major Social Media advantages such as increasing brand awareness and loyal customer base, generating traffic and leads (Hur et al., 2020) where most focus are on development of exposure about the brand. Moreover, brands are able to observe and investigate consumer behavior (Li, Larimo, Leonidou, 2020) in order to implement stronger connections with their target audience. Schivinski and Dabrowski (2016) shared suggestions for Social Media communication regarding consumer perception about the brand where author's recommended to focus on strengthening associations since brand equity is impactful on consumer behavior. Tsordia, Papadimitriou and Parganas (2018) quoted Aaker's (1992) idea that brand property consists of associations with brands in order to add or take value from product or service businesses provide. Brands worldwide use Social Media to expose its businesses (Alalwan et al., 2017) as it provides increasing engagement through brands and consumers (LeeFlang et al., 2014) in long-term perspective while consumers worldwide according to Statista.com report (Dixon, 2022) use Social Media for communication with friends, getting inspirations, spending spare time or reading latest news.

Since Social Media suggests a wide selection of communication platforms it becomes difficult to choose appropriate for personal brand communication. Following statistical data regarding today's digital environment, Meta takes the largest market share as it manages Facebook, Whatsapp, Messenger and Instagram (Dixon, 2023). In addition, Statista.com portal

shared insights about most popular social networks until January 2023 (see Fig. 4) which divided it as follows: Facebook, Youtube, WhatsApp and Instagram. Following this, previous researches distinguish valid insights to better comprehend Social Media channels positions. Dhun and Dangi (2023) according to Geysers (2023) and Vrontis et al. (2021) notice that Instagram are one of the most popular channel for collaborations with influencers while its daily usage are 83% (Djafarova, Trofimenko, 2019). Beside this, influencers are able to provide authenticity and credibility as its standard practice from influencer marketing (Abidin, Ots, 2016) even though followers recognize that content is sponsored. Previous findings implicating that sponsored influencer messages sometimes cause negative evaluation (Lee, Kim, 2020) however Kutthakaphan and Chokesamritpol (2013) confirmed Instagram as a satisfying Social Media platform.

Figure 4. *Most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2023, ranked by number of monthly active users (Dixon, 2023, Statista.com)*



Following this, Facebook is another the most used social media platform already with 2.98 billion active users worldwide (Dixon, 2023) based on Statista (1st quarter 2023) statistical data. Gamboa and Gonçalves (2014) observed Facebook as a loyalty builder towards consumer trust, satisfaction, perceived value and attachment while its credibility and trustworthiness are attributed as relationship foundation (Ye et al., 2021) in a social media environment. Following this, Pinterest, Tumblr and Snapchat were named as fast growing channels (Arli, 2017) where

Shamim and Islam (2022) added that social media platforms are dynamic and influencer marketing should be analyzed toward different channels. Moreover, Lou, Taylor & Xuan (2022) shared some interesting findings related to social media platforms where authors observed that favorable experience, easy usage, positive emotions, innovations and ability to communicate with others motivates consumers to interact with influencers through different social media platforms as they are an significant elements of personal brand development. Regarding the fact that Social Media composed of powerful channels (Mills, Plangger, 2015) and helps to build relationships between consumers and brands, previous studies suggest focusing on communication message (Gvili, Levy, 2016) as it whereas provides consumer positive value of advertising from information, entertainment and credibility perspectives (Lou, Yuan, 2018) regarding to brand. Moreover Li and Leonidou (2023) together with Zhang et al., (2017) highlighted potential risk of content misfit as it affects consumer behavior with the brand as well as consumer engagement stimulation (Beckers et al., 2018) that might have consequences for the relationship between consumers and brands.

1.2.2. Creative message formats and parameters

According to previous findings (Abidin & Ots, 2016; Rampersad, 2011; Liu & Suh, 2017) authentic and unique communication on Social Media are superior as it requires to maintain consistent brand identity through different Social Media platforms (Gao & Feng, 2016) since their performance were not analyzed in detail by platform (Tyrväinen et al., 2023) in the background of Social Media communication. To determine consistency of communication in Social Media, marketers Grewal et al. (2021) and Hudders et al. (2021) identify three levels of communication:

- the communicator;
- the interaction;
- message content.

First level shows that consumers value influencer authenticity (Hudders et al., 2021) unlike obvious sponsored content. Since influencer became a part of brands Social Media strategy it is important to pay attention to selection of influencers for campaigns even if search of suitable influencer equates to challenge (Veirman et al., 2017). In addition, 47% of consumers do not trust influencer content according to Shoukat et al. (2023) and Farivar et al. (2021) as authors analyzed influencer marketing concepts. Jeong et al. (2022) notice that consumers may be more involved if paid Instagram advertising gives additional value like information, entertainment etc. what influencer is responsible for. Hudders et al. (2021) with Bashari & Fazl-Ersi (2020),

Francalanci & Hussain (2017) suggest to note some characteristics before choosing right influencer as follow:

- influencer competitive;
- interests of its target audience;
- influencer engaging;
- ethical concerns of influencer activities;
- consumer perceived value of influencer content;
- influencer transparency.

As an example, in 2018 WFA (World Federation of Advertisers) highlighted that 93% of brands stated that reputation and credibility are crucial factors for final consumer decision. Regarding these characteristics, Kay et al. (2022) together with Kay and others (2020) emphasize that influencer sponsorship provides active engagement, emotions based positive reactions and favorable brand approach which leads to second level of consistent Social Media communication. In the digital marketing background, interactions are associated with social network sites and self-expression as Gao & Feng (2016) highlighted that informative Social Media content according to Lo & Peng (2021) is a direct way to encourage consumer involvement. Moreover, entertainment strengthens consumer interest toward brands' Social Media activities (Arli, 2017) as long as brands satisfy consumer attitudes. Despite this, Gvili & Levy (2016) together with Chih et al. (2013) and Doh & Hwang (2009) observed that overly positive communicative messages can cause damage towards personal brand credibility as same as influencer transparency could cause harm (Hudders et al., 2021) toward influencer social personality. In order to avoid potential communications risks, previous studies (Zhu et al., 2022; Balaji et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2015; Swani et. al., 2017) analyzed influencer communication messages to identify parameters of attractive content towards consumers. According to these resources, authors identify some similar affirmative insights that Social Media messages based on feelings, detailed information and positivity are more reliable to consumers unlike visible brand names, CTA (Call-to-action) buttons and other stimulators which could possibly cause negative attitudes toward consumers. Moreover, influencer creative message could reduce its credibility (Martínez-López et al., 2020) if influencer is strictly controlled by brands, if consumers don't trust influencers (Dhun & Dangi, 2023) or advertising products are not related to influencer image (Janssen et al., 2021) and could cause confusion on consumers' perception of the brand. To being reliable and maintain consumer attention on Social Media, previous studies suggest for influencers to try various types of content (Kay et al., 2020) such a photos carousel, video content like story or Reels since Instagram have these

functions. Farivar et al. (2021) added that different types of communicative messages may improve consumer engagement toward brands since interaction with consumers is one of influencer marketing purposes.

All over, influencers play an important role in personal brand marketing strategy as being a connecting part (Mills & Plangger, 2015) between consumer and brands. Since there are a lot of influencers worldwide, brands have the ability to choose the most reliable influencers for communication in order to reinforce ads effectiveness (Zhu et al., 2022) and improve consumer interactions towards brands.

1.3. Social Media influence on personal brand equity

Credible influencers establish consumer perceptions about brand equity (Dwivedi, Johnson, McDonald, 2015) which based on Aaker's Brand Equity Model (Aaker, 1992) includes brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty. According to theoretical background about personal brand reliability towards influencers, Hautala (2019) according to Kapitan and Silvera (2015) extracted influencer attributes as likeability, high attractiveness, similarity etc. in order to relate influencer with advertised product and brand at once. Despite that connection towards social media communication and personal branding not confirmed (Karaduman, 2013), Barger et al., (2016) highlighted that previous engaging experience on Social Media motivates consumers to interact with brands again and to allocate more of their time for brand awareness (Bruhn et al., 2012) which is one of brand equity attributes. Earlier findings (Buil et al., 2013) observed that brand equity creation was based on associations with the brand, familiarity with its name and image according to Keller (1993). Following this topic, Zabochnik (2018) added that consistency, creativity, recollection and credibility are key elements regarding brand image building while influencers are able to maintain it (Chan et al. 2013) in order to strengthen personal brand. Riedl and Luckwald (2019) observed that consumers are more related to influencer messages if their advertised products are already used by followers as it leads to trust which affects brand awareness (Loua & Yuan, 2019) in a positive way. Contrary to these findings, Janssen et al. (2022) noticed that influencers who advertise products non-related to them reduce evaluation towards followers as it causes decrease of its credibility. Following this, Saima and Khan (2021) expressed an opinion that influencer credibility is evaluated according to trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness which causes consumer buying behavior because 20% of consumers consider Social Media as a reliable source (Alalwan et al., 2016) on final purchasing decisions. Previous studies (Seiler & Kucza, 2017; Ohanian, 1990) confirmed that mentioned attributes interact

with each other as it outlines higher credibility of product (Kapitan & Silvera, 2015) and consumers' understanding toward personal brand equity (Dwivedi et al., 2015). In addition, Lo and Peng (2021) observed and proved McMillan and Hwang's (2002) findings that online interaction with consumers causes personal brand accomplishment.

Regarding successful brand communication, Loua and Yuan (2019) highlighted trust as part of brand credibility and stimulating factor of favorable consumer online behavior. Chakraborty and Bhat (2018) according to previous studies (Aaker, 2009; Chang & Liu, 2009; Keller, 1993) confirmed that “purchase intention is the behavioral consequence of brand equity dimensions” as it can be explained like a creation of need since it is one of influencer marketing purposes. In the direction of stronger personal brand campaigns in Social Media, previous findings pointed out a few recommendations. Firstly, Li et al. (2020) suggest starting from exploration on consumer motivation to ensure consistent marketing strategy. Secondly, represent and cherish values of personal brand (Zabojnik, 2018) as an important point in the marketing strategy process. Thirdly, responsibly select influencers regarding content reliability and quality (Saima & Khan, 2021) rather than number of followers or engagement metrics (Lou and Yuan, 2019) even though its key metrics for popularity evaluation (Swani et al., 2017) on Social Media. The latest step is examining brand responsibility to ensure correct and useful information for influencers (Dhun & Dangi, 2023) to share and establish relationships toward brands and consumers considering brand equity.

All the recommendations above were based on different theories and models like the Source Credibility model (Ohanian, 1990), the Source Attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985), WOM psychological motivation theory, source credibility model (Hovland et al., 1953) and others in order to explain the main elements of personal brand equity.

1.2.3. Credibility, engaging and acceptance of influencer communicative message

Through many years from sharing basic, non-binding daily life activities in Social Media, influencing developed into competitive, planned and active paid content creation. Following this, communication in Social Media started to be based on advertising purposes where influencer authenticity became questioned (Leung et al., 2022; McQuarrie et al., 2013) regarding the evaluation of influencers' communicative messages. Since then, it became an important topic to analyse for a lot of researchers (Ohanian, 1990; Aaker, 1992, Dwivedi et al., 2015; Godey et al., 2016; Duh & Thabethe, 2021) as they identified various appreciation criterias like credibility, engagement and acceptance, its sub-criterion as trustworthiness, affection, familiarity, similarity etc. In general, these criterias explain how much additional

value influencer content provides for consumers, if it draws and keeps followers attention or helps to understand how strongly the influencer message is related to consumers. For instance, Lou et al. (2022) noticed that different experiences, mind sharing, similarities and the “story being told” type of content (Coursaris, 2018) motivates consumers to interact with influencers. Furthermore, a communicative message should be “soft-sell” (Zhu et al., 2022) as it conveys feelings, images and atmosphere, useful (Chang et al., 2015) and credible (Balaji et al., 2021) in order to create positive affection on consumer evaluation towards influencers because stronger engagement outcome, better consumer connection with brands (Argyris et. al, 2020) and higher advertising recognition (Yang, G., 2022) represented by influencers.

Otherwise, researchers distinguish some opposite insights regarding influencer communicative messages. First of all, Swani and others (2017) highlighted that brand names, action buttons and active links reduce interaction with influencers which could possibly cause negative appraisal of influencer content. Secondly, Veirman and Hudders (2019) following Martínez-López et al. (2020) idea about messages on commercial proposal noted that mentioned sponsorship activates ad scepticism which reduces influencer’s credibility which is one of important evaluation factors of communicative message. Thirdly, commercial communicative messages reduce influencers' trustworthiness (Gamage & Ashill, 2022) which have an effect on evaluation of influencer messages and can be possibly associated with non-related to influencer products if it is mentioned as advertising.

Following this, previous studies excluded evaluation criterias in order to understand how consumers evaluate personal brands equity and influencers impact on personal brands towards its communication in Social Media. Already analysed that influencers' communicative messages engaging, acceptance and credibility could be significant criteria to ensure brand loyalty, quality and favorable associations towards consumers as personal brand equity is a considerable concept (Aaker, 1998; Keller, 1993, 2000) for nowadays businesses.

1.3. Communication messages influence on evaluation on Personal brand equity

Whereas Zhu, Kim and Choi (2022) note that earlier studies took less attention on influencer and brand reliability towards consumers, so this paperwork focuses on the importance of the relationship between consumers and personal brands based on influencer communicative messages since influencer marketing rapidly expanding (Lou, Yuan, 2019) and becoming inseparable from personal branding (Park et al., 2020) as a part of its communication.

Already confirmed that attractive, trustworth and expertise messages are influential (Balaji et al., 2021; Veirman et al., 2017) and engageable (Argyris et al., 2020; Gvili & Levy,

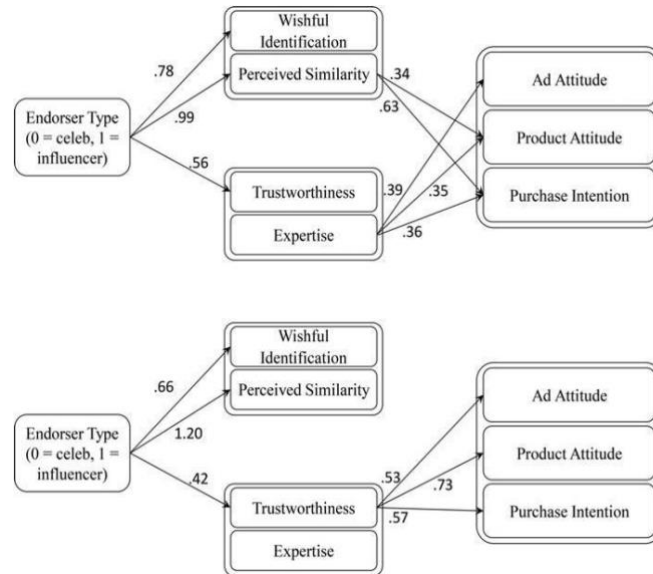
2016) as it creates relationships within consumer and personal brands. For instance, consumer perceived usefulness and preference depend on message quality and attractiveness (Chang et al., 2015) as well as on highly credible brands indicated by Lee and Kim (2020) according to Fombrun (1996), Goldberg and Hartwick (1990) and Newell (1993) findings about consumer online behavior toward advertising. When credible content satisfies the consumer, it delivers more trust to influencers (Martínez-López et al., 2020), improves interaction with endorsed brands as well as strengthens its positioning. If influencers give additional value through their communicative messages like images, environment or feelings it causes stronger influencer familiarity with products (Zhu et al., 2021) and could cause acceptance of consumers. However, influencer messages related to consumers but based on paid advertising can cause reduceness of influencer credibility (Veirman & Hudders, 2019) explained by different characteristics like attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise. Previous studies highlighted potential risks of Social Media messages regarding advertising affection on consumer online behavior: privacy concerns (Li et al., 2023) which reduces ability to share information, irritation (Arlí, 2017; Hasan, 2016; Martí-Parreño et al., 2013) as it may cause negative outcomes; negative experiences (Nguyen et al., 2022) since it is easy and fast to spread publicly. In order to reduce potential risks and consistently develop stronger brand positioning, previous studies investigate different theoretical models which represent interaction between personal brands, influencers and consumers based on different characteristics and attributes found in literary analysis. During this research, there will be applied Source Credibility (Ohanian, 1990) and Brand Equity (Aaker, 1992) models while its framework is strongly related to this research and its application will be explained later in detail.

1.3.1. Integration of The Source Credibility Model

Since consumer behavior rapidly changes in the digital environment, companies started to analyze it in order to ensure consumer satisfaction which according to Elbedweihy et al., (2016) confirmed as encouraging action on personal brand credibility. In addition, some researchers (Seiler, Kucza, 2017; Ogunnaiké et al., 2017) already observed different cases related to impact or effectiveness of advertising based on The Source Credibility Model (Ohanian, 1990) which analyzes reliability of the brand towards consumers based on inter-connection. According to earlier findings (Schouten et al., 2019; Seiler, Kucza, 2017; Duh, Thabethe, 2021b) some similarities were found and confirmed in comparison of conceptual models based on the framework of Ohanian Source Credibility Model (1990). For instance, Schouten et al. (2019) analyzed opinion leader versus celebrity advertising effectiveness on

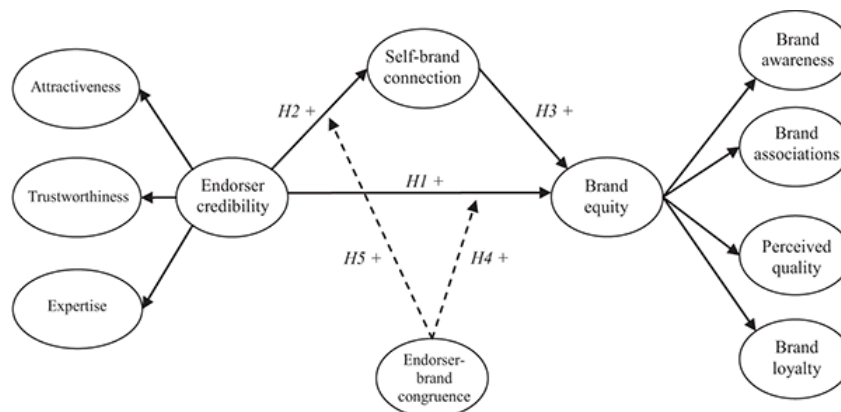
purchase intention because of attitudes on product and advertisement as shown on conceptual model (see Fig. 5) compiled by authors which represent that consumers have an attitude toward advertising, product or purchase decisions if endorsers are trustworthy, similar to them and being expert.

Figure 5. Conceptual model of influencer versus celebrity attitude toward the ad attitude toward the advertised product, and purchase intention (Schouten et al. 2019)



Following these results, Dwivedi et al. (2015) highlighted trustworthiness also as the significant evaluation criteria of consumer perception about endorser and brand equity (see Fig. 6) as it includes its awareness associations, perceived quality and loyalty.

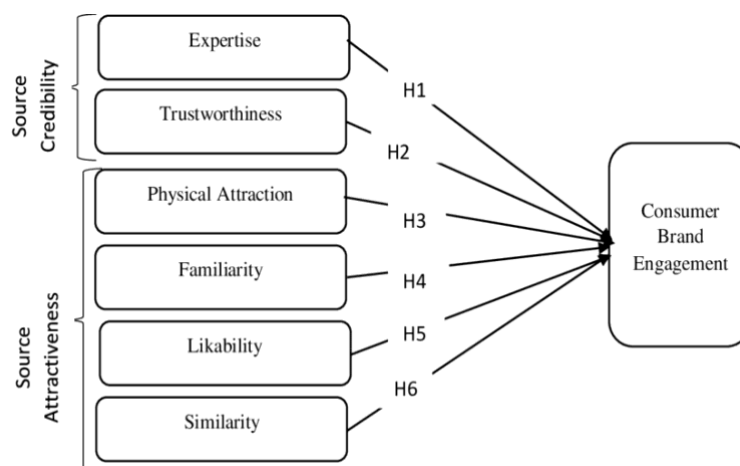
Figure 6. Conceptual research model of connection between endorser credibility and brand equity. Compiled by Dwivedi et al. (2015)



Interesting how findings complement each other since assumes trustworthiness being one of the major influencing indicators, in other words impactful toward communication on the Social Media based on The Source Credibility Model (Ohanian, 1990) where personal brand credibility is the foundation of the framework.

Another finding based on the Ohanian (1990) model was accomplished by Duh & Thabethe (2021) where authors compared influencer and traditional celebrity social presence toward consumer engagement (see Fig. 7) as it follows the structure of Source Credibility Model (Ohanian, 1990) based on source credibility and attractiveness.

Figure 7. *Instagram influencers' attributes impacting millennials' brand engagement. Compiled by Duh & Thabethe (2021)*



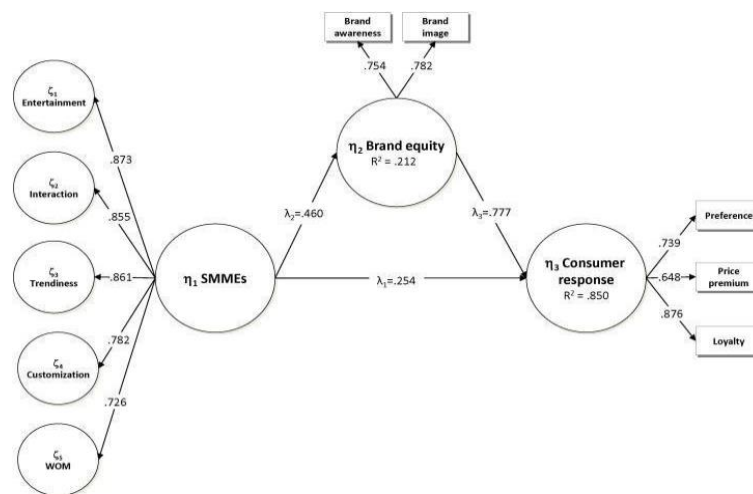
Following Fig. 7 from Duh and Thabethe research (2021) source credibility and source attractiveness were mostly approved by consumers as significant criteria of influencer reliability toward their communication messages (Hussain et al. (2022) on Social Media. According to presented conceptual models (Schouten et al., 2019; Dwivedi et al. 2015, Duh & Thabethe, 2021) which in general analyzed consumer behavior and evaluation towards influencer and personal brand communication where trustworthiness was examined as one of significant evaluation criteria while communicating on Social Media. Arli (2017) added that the approach of Social Media messaging influences brand loyalty and awareness as significant criteria for being a reliable brand as represented in previous conceptual models (see Fig. 5,6). Despite this, endorser credibility was supported toward brand equity and self-brand (Dwivedi et al. 2015) which possibly have positive impact on consumer perception and evaluation on awareness, associations, perceived quality and loyalty of brand as it can possibly cause repeat selection of the brand.

1.3.2. Conceptual frameworks based on Aaker's Brand Equity Model

Already were confirmed different brand equity concept explanations such as “key indicator of brand success” Buil et al. (2013b) while the most accurate was defined by Aaker (1991): “set of assets and liabilities linked to a brand's name or symbol that adds or subtracts from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and its customers”. Furthermore, Aaker (1991) clarified that brand equity is based on different brand assets and liabilities in order to build relationships between consumers and brands as some conceptual models were presented in previous studies (Godey et al., 2016; Molinillo, 2017; Tsordia, 2017b) and going to be compared in detail on the same framework as in 1.3.1 part.

First example (see Fig. 8) was compiled by Godey et al., (2016) based on Brand Equity Model as it shows strength of interactions between Social Media Marketing Effort (SMME) through brand equity on consumer response. According to this conceptual framework, some findings were represented below the model.

Figure 8. Conceptual framework. Links between social media marketing efforts and their consequences (Compiled by Godey et al. 2016)

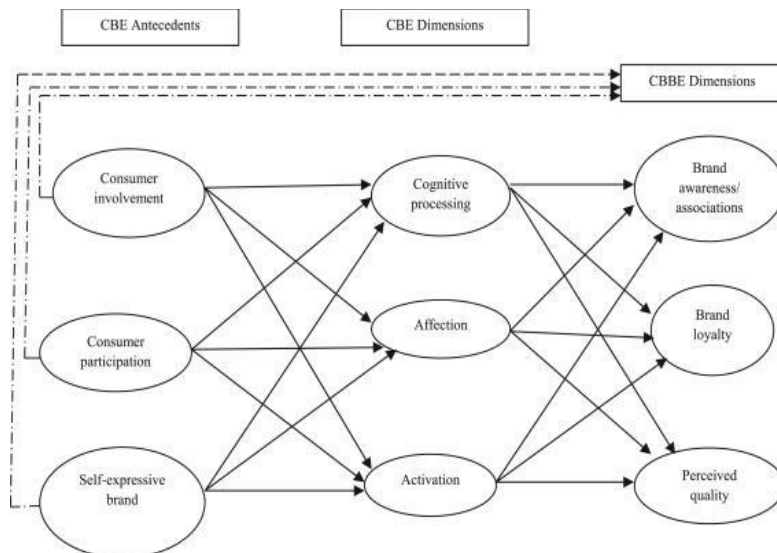


Authors confirmed the strongest interaction exists between brand loyalty, brand preferences and price premium as it explains the way of consumer response based on Social Media marketing effort and brand equity which was also discussed by Tsordia et.al (2017b) in previous studies. Accordingly, Social Media Marketing Effort positively affects brand equity which includes brand awareness and brand image as its components. Despite this, Godey et al., (2016) noted that researchers have a lack of empirical insights and SMME results became difficult to accurately measure.

Following the framework of previous brand equity models based on consumer perception, Algharabt et al., (2020) on its brand equity model (see Fig. 9) emphasized some findings. Firstly, consumer reaction toward a personal brand depends on its ability to engage and create connections with consumers. Secondly, brand awareness and associations are connected to quality which consumers perceive as it can be assumed as significant criteria for interaction between consumers and personal brands.

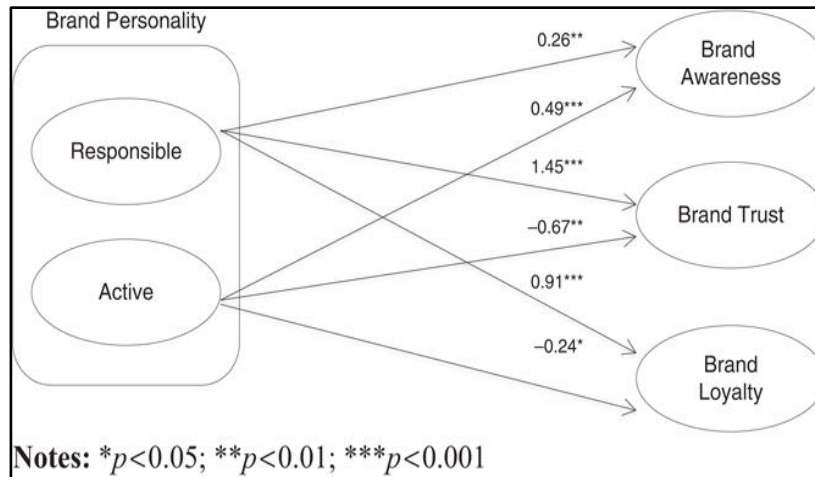
Figure 9. *Conceptual framework: combination of consumer brand engagement antecedents, consumer brand engagement and customer-based brand equity dimensions*

Model compiled by Algharabt et al., (2020) in references with other researchers (Yoo and Donthu, 2000, 2001; Schivinski and Dabrowski (2015) and others)



In order to strengthen the previous framework viewpoint, Molinillo et al. (2017) represented its findings (see Fig. 10) where authors distinguished Consumer Based Relationship (CBR) constructs such as brand awareness, brand trust and brand loyalty which was mentioned previously as an effective role to influence in perspective of responsible and active personal brands. According to Molinillo et al. (2017) findings represented in framework, brand personality and brand trust interaction are the strongest as this statement is familiar to Godey, Manthiou and Pederzoli (2016) observation where authors investigate Social Media Marketing efforts on brand equity and consumer response.

Figure 10. *Conceptual model of Consumer Based Relationship (CBR) with responsible and active brands toward brand awareness, trust and loyalty. Compiled by Molinillo et al. (2017)*



In comparison, conceptual frameworks based on Brand Equity model (Aaker, 1992) which mentioned figures (8, 9, 10) were highlighted that attributes such as brand loyalty, trust, awareness, perceived quality positively affects relationship between brands and consumers in the digital environment even though they influence repeat purchase and attachment to brand. As long as the brand message on Social Media is reliable to consumers it leads to stronger relationships and positive outcomes between influencers and personal brands in the long-term perspective.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Aim of the research and description of the subject

According to literature analysis, despite the fact that influencer and personal brand concepts are separate indicators, they are closely related for common purpose - to interact with the target audience. Since influencers started to develop their own personal brands, it became harder to anticipate and ensure favourable evaluation towards consumers because of influencers' likeness to additional sponsored products or services. In other words, different advertising messages on Social Media turn into a risky way to endorse consumers, get beneficial evaluation and avoid negative interactions from Social Media users. During literature analysis it was observed that most authors were investigating various types of influencers or celebrities' communication towards brands (Jin et.al 2019; Childers et al. 2017) but there were not many examples analysed impact of influencer communicative message on its personal brand equity based on consumer evaluation.

Regarding the importance of topic, the aim of this research is to compare evaluation of different Instagram communicative messages with related and non-related to influencer products in order to estimate if the latter type of product included in message could negatively affect influencer personal brand equity based on consumer evaluation in a Social Media. To ensure more accurate research results, influencer was selected based on several criterias:

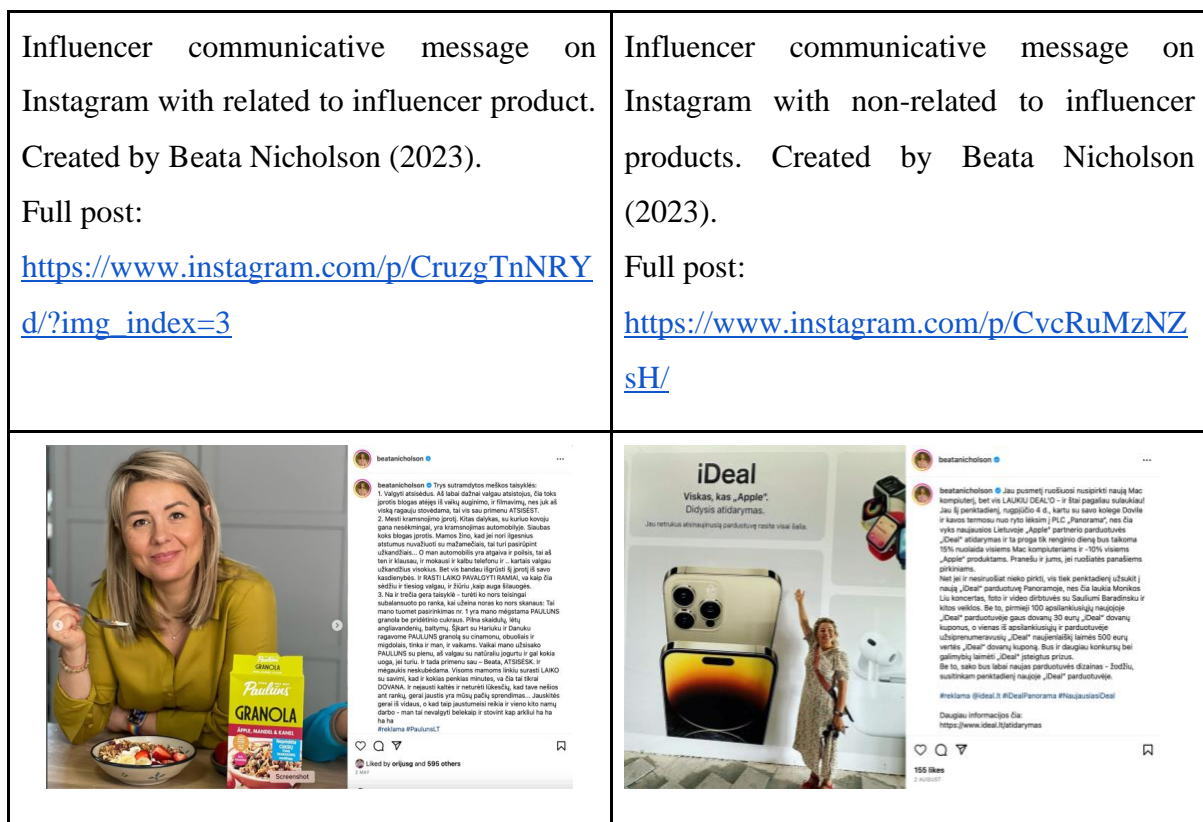
- if influencer working with paid/sponsored ads through Instagram or Facebook;
- if influencer develop its personal brand on Instagram or Facebook;
- if an influencer is widely known in the Lithuanian market regardless of its activity.

According to these criterias, the most relevant match was Beata Nicholson since she is a famous Lithuanian influencer at the moment having 187k. followers. Well known as cook, food blogger and publisher, producer of food brands and host of cooking shows. Besides, actively creates content about food, shares various recipes and her daily cooking recommendations through Social Media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, writes blogs, develops restaurant business and sells food products belonging to her personal brand "Beatos virtuvė". The latter is already completely inseparable from Beata's personal Instagram account even though she lately shares more sponsored content where some communication messages are with not related products which could possibly make a different reaction towards her personal brand equity in the long-term perspective based on consumer evaluation.

To understand how consumers evaluate different communicative messages of the same influencer, two Instagram messages were chosen from Beata Nicholson personal Instagram

account. According to previously highlighted consistent communication levels such as communicator, interaction and message content (Herhausen et al., 2021; Hudders et al., 2021) the first selected message is a picture with advertisement of healthy granola (see Fig. 11) while sponsoring the brand “Pauluns”. This message is related to influencer activity because of showing healthy eating habits, sharing recipes of quick, balanced snacks as it could possibly have positive evaluation on her personal brand “Beatos virtuvė” since Beata mostly represents food content on her Social Media. Another message, opposite to the first selection with related product, represents the phone distributor “iDeal” launch event (see Fig. 11). Communicative message explains opening event information and what special offers, discounts will be suggested during the event. This type of product can be assumed as non-related to Beata Nicholson content in general since its substance is for advertising purposes. Although, it is unknown how accurately the influencer audience is distributed it could possibly provoke unpredictable evaluation of followers according to this post.

Figure 11. *Beata Nicholson communicative messages: with related product - granola (left side) and non-related product - phone distributor (right side).*



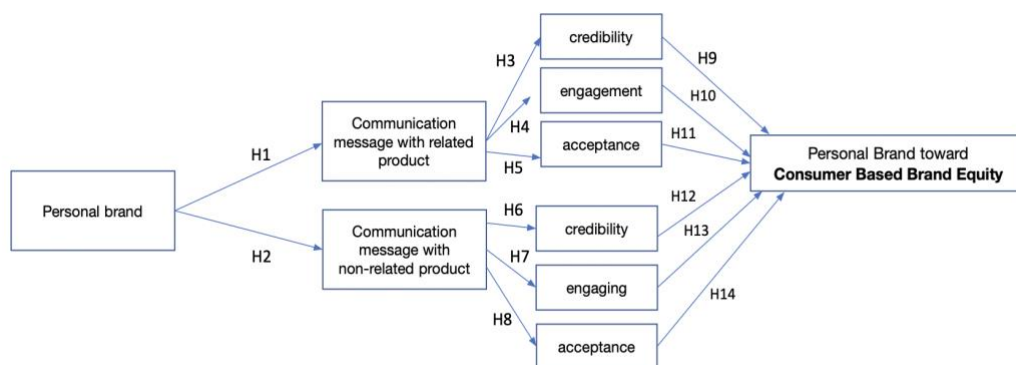
In comparison with current visible engagement results of these two communicative messages, the first image expresses more impressions than the latter since both posts were

created by the same influencer and have the exact same format despite the difference in uploading time. Based on present results, it can be possibly assumed that followers are more endorsed with related to influencer content compared to non-related, as the previous message represents influencer values, interests, activities including food products. Moreover, influencer message with non-related products could possibly provoke unpredictable associations toward the message author and its personal brand since consumers relate them to each other. Whereas these predictions are not accurately confirmed that influencer message with non-related products could negatively affect its personal brand, this investigation will be conducted to approve or deny it.

2.2. Conceptual research model

In order to determine interaction between celebrities and consumers towards evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity in Social Media, a research model (see Fig. 12) was compiled based on Source credibility by Ohanian (1990), Brand Equity by Aaker (1992) models and other conceptual research frameworks from previous studies (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Godey et al., 2016; Duh, Thabete, 2021; Algharabt et al., 2020) which relates to this investigation.

Figure 12. *Conceptual research model: Influencer communicative message with related and non-related products impact on evaluation of personal brand equity*



As previously mentioned, Source Credibility model compiled by Ohanian (1990) represents impact on consumer evaluation on personal brand towards endorser credibility. More precisely, source credibility covers attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise which influence consumer viewpoint (Veirman et al., 2017) and are impactful on consumer evaluation on personal brand equity. In this certain research, the Source Credibility model will be compiled

with the Brand Equity created by Aaker (1998) which explains additional value perception from brands towards influencer communication since Argyris et al. (2020) related stronger engagement to better connection between brand and consumers.

Following the conceptual research model based on theoretical background, evaluation of influencer communicative messages will be analysed by following 3 independent constructs: credibility, engaging and acceptance in order to find statistical relationship and influence between them and personal brand to be examined by consumer evaluation. Criteria were selected based on previous related conceptual models by Schouten et al. (2019), Dwivedi et al. (2015), Duh & Thabethe (2021) and others where authors examined consumer behaviour based on endorser advertising and brand intentions. In general, these variables were excluded as having a certain affection on evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity towards influencer communicative messages with related and non-related products while additional criteria were assigned each of them in order to estimate possible impact on consumer based personal brand equity where:

- credibility evaluated towards attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise;
- engaging evaluated towards affection, activation and cognition;
- acceptance evaluated towards familiarity, likeability and similarity.

In this research, the relationship and affection on evaluation of Beata Nicholson personal brand equity will be analysed towards appreciation of her different communicative messages with related and non-related products considering credibility, engagement and acceptance as estimation criteria. Moreover, these variables will be compared which are most influential on consumer based personal brand equity when evaluating influencer communicative messages with related and non-related products. In order to receive accurate results on evaluation of influencer communicative messages, the research development will be followed by choosing the most suitable methods and tools to collect and process survey data.

2.3. Hypothesis development

In order to evaluate influencer communicative messages with related and non-related products impact on its personal brand equity, were distinguished the most relevant evaluation criterias. According to previous studies about connection between influencer communication and personal brand evaluation were highlighted credibility, engaging and acceptance (Dwivedi et al., 2015; Elbedweihy et al., 2016; Veirman & Hudders, 2019; Aaker, 1998; Keller, 1993, 2000) as it represents a certain interaction between influencing and evaluation on personal

brand equity by consumers. Following this, research hypotheses were formulated in order to find relationships among influencer communication messages evaluation criterias and estimate impact between these elements toward credibility, engagement and acceptance. In general, investigation will be processed by following 14 hypotheses (see Table 1. on pages 45-46) based on theoretical background about influencer communicative messages affection on evaluation of consumer based personal brand equity.

Following the structure of the conceptual research model, at the beginning will be examined if there is a positive and negative relationship between personal brand and different communicative messages according to credibility, engagement and acceptance (Ohanian, 1990) since these criterias were used for similar studies (Schouten et al., 2019; Duh et al., 2021; Lou et al., 2019) to determine the effect of influencer communication via Social Media.

Hypothesis 1

Personal brand have positive relationship with related communicative message toward estimation criterias

Hypothesis 2

Personal brand have negative relationship with non-related communicative message toward estimation criterias

As previously mentioned, some studies already confirmed that identification, similarity and trust are significant evaluation criteria (Schouten et al., 2019) on personal brands which belong to credibility, engagement and acceptance as it can possibly influence evaluation on personal brand equity. Because influencers are associated with advertised brands, communicative messages could possibly formulate different reactions towards consumers in this case if credibility, engagement and acceptance could be those impactful parameters. Following the evaluation criterias of communicative messages, influencer credibility explained as ability to attract consumers and trust building (Saima and Khan, 2021), engagement as followers involvement with influencers messages by giving them additional value (Jeong et al., 2022) and acceptance estimated by how accurately influencer communicative messages match with followers' expectations to either satisfy consumers demand or create willingness for repeated interaction (Barger et al., 2016) with influencers and its personal brand. Regarding present influencer evaluation towards consumers were added related and non-related to influencer products to examine them as follow:

Hypothesis 3

Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility

Hypothesis 4

Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement

Hypothesis 5

Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance

For the testing of 3, 4 and 5 hypotheses, communicative message about granola will be used as related to influencer product and simultaneously the 6, 7, 8 hypothesis will be examined by communicative message about phone distributor which are not related to influencer product as Beata Nicholson associated with background in food industry.

Hypothesis 6

Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility

Hypothesis 7

Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement

Hypothesis 8

Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance

Since the relationship evaluation process between message and personal brand is formulated, further process will be to estimate if communicative messages are influential on evaluation on personal brand equity toward consumers. During the testing of these hypotheses will be identified what influence different communicative messages with related or non-related products could have on consumer evaluation on personal brand equity following credibility,

engagement and acceptance of influencer communication.

Hypothesis 9

Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward credibility

Hypothesis 10

Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward engagement

Hypothesis 11

Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward acceptance

According to the research framework, the influence of communicative messages on personal brand will be examined in the background of non-related product which in this case - phone distributor. Because Beata Nicholson is a well-known influencer in Lithuania, its message in different backgrounds than food or cooking could possibly cause different appreciation than expected. Even though influencer selection could be a significant decision for brand representation, choice of products is not less important for the endorser especially, if consumers already feel relatedness and loyalty to influencers and sponsored brands.

Hypothesis 12

Message with non- related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward credibility

Hypothesis 13

Message with non- related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward engagement

Hypothesis 14

Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward acceptance

According to previous studies, influencer communication about products which related or

already were used by followers could lead to a positive reaction of consumers (Riedl & Luckwald, 2019) unlike non-related products which could negatively affect consumer evaluation on personal brand equity because of decreased influencer credibility (Janssen et al., 2022) as one of significant influencer evaluation attributes. All formulated hypotheses represented below in Table 1.

Table 1. *Formulated hypothesis based on conceptual research model*

Hypothesis abbreviation	Hypothesis
H1	Personal Brand have positive relationship with related communicative message toward estimation criterias
H2	Personal brand have negative relationship with non-related communicative message toward estimation criterias
H3	Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility
H4	Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement
H5	Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance
H6	Message with non- related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility
H7	Message with non- related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement
H8	Message with non- related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance
H9	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward credibility
H10	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal

	brand equity toward engagement
H11	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward acceptance
H12	Message with non- related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward credibility
H13	Message with non- related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward engagement
H14	Message with non- related product negatively influence evaluation on personal brand equity toward acceptance

Compiled by author.

Further research development will be processed to prove or deny hypothetical statements about influencer communicative messages impact on evaluation toward consumer based brand equity with related and non-related to influencer products.

2.4. Methods and procedures for data collection

According to the design process of questionnaire (Dikčius, 2022) before starting the survey, information should be specified in order to receive precise results. At the beginning, research aim were determined - to find out if an influencer's communicative message with non-related products could negatively affect its personal brand evaluation in Social Media. In this case - if sponsoring physical stores of mobile phones distributors in Lithuania could negatively affect Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvė" equity via consumer attitude, associations and loyalty since Beata relates in context of food. Because the influencer communicative message is the evaluated object of this research, the questionnaire will be mostly focusing on Social Media users which will be reaching through various online communities. For an online survey, which is chosen as a type of survey method, Google Forms were selected as a tool to create a questionnaire, generate link to share it through online space, collect and summarize survey results for further study insights. According to the development process of the survey, the following step is wording of clear, precise questions to ensure smooth and systematic online survey on purpose to collect subjective answers. In this questionnaire will be included 17 closed questions where 5 are of an evaluative nature based on the 5-point

Likert Scale where some questions evaluated by 5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree and others by 5 - very like to 1 - very dislike. The rest of the questions will cover descriptive information about Social Media usage, influencer and its personal brand knowledge, demographic information such as gender and age. In the same online survey questions for message evaluation will be asked twice because of different cases with related and non-related products. All questions are required to answer to continue the survey.

As previously described, conceptual research will be focused on evaluation of different influencer communicative messages via consumers based brand equity in order to establish if message with non-related product have a negative impact on influencer personal brand equity. Therefore, two communicative messages from Beata's Nicholson Instagram account were selected which looked most suitable for this research according to theoretical background about communication messages where familiarity and similarity of message approved as reliable to influencer communication unlike non-related commercial message which can cause potential risk to influencer approval towards consumers. Following this, one chosen message will be with a related product to Beata Nicholson - healthy granola, since Beata is known as a food blogger and another with non-related product advertised by Beata Nicholson which is a well known mobile phone distributor in Lithuania. Both messages were selected as pictures because of the consumer's ability to instantly see and evaluate messages without additional action or direction to another page in order to avoid possible dissatisfaction with the online survey. According to the aim of conceptual research, in the same questionnaire respondents will be able to evaluate two different cases of communicative messages with related and non-related to influencer product: granola and mobile phone distributor. Such a method of data gathering is based on methodological triangulation to evaluate the same situation twice which will help to collect subjective evaluation from the same survey participants at a time of both communicative messages. Evaluation criteria of influencer messages (Table. 2) represented below.

Table 2. *Construct of evaluation criteria of influencer communicative messages*

Construct	Scale	Source
Credibility	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): - The message appears credible when influencer is competent in what he is promoting;	Chung, S., & Cho, H. (2017b)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message seems credible when influencer has the ability to deliver what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer delivers what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer himself appears credible; - The message appears credible when the influencer conveys confidence. 	
Engagement	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message is impactful when there is personal connection between the advertised brand and me; - The message is engaging when the brand promoted in the message partially describes my personality; - The message is engaging when I feel like I have a personal connection with the brand being promoted in the message; - The message is engaging when there is a sense of connection between the brand being promoted and my view of myself. 	Castillo, D. J., & Sánchez-Fernández, R. (2019b)
Acceptance	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message evokes likeability when the influencer gives a feeling of goodwill; - The message seems acceptable when the influencer is always recognizable online; - The message seems attractive when influencer has a good reputation; - The message seems attractive when the influencer creates a user-friendly online experience. 	Ha, H., & Perks, H. (2005)

Personal brand	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I choose this brand more often than other brands, even if they provide the same services; - If another brand has the same features/functions I would still choose this brand; - If there is another same brand I would still normally choose this brand; - If another brand's products are no different from this brand, I would prefer this brand. 	Machado, J. C. et al. (2019)
Advertised product	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wishful identification; - Perceived similarity; - Trustworthiness; - Expertise; - Attitude toward the advertisement; - Attitude toward the product; - Purchase intention; - Influencer familiarity; - Product - endorser fit. 	Schouten, A. et al. (2019)

2.5. Selection of respondents and survey procedure

To collect valid data for statistical analysis, sampling process details were purified before starting a quantitative survey. Firstly, the target population was set as it covers all Instagram users in Lithuania. At the beginning of 2023, in Lithuania were around 900 thousand Instagram users based on Datareportal (2023) statistical data. Adding to this, demographic questions like age were included since Napoleoncat (2023) showed that the majority of users are women from 25 to 34 years old which could be an impactful factor according to communicative message evaluation.

Because of the large population size, it is necessary to constrict research sample size to ensure validate results for analysis. Regarding the sample sizes of previous related research (see Table 3.) and background of best practice methodology (Dani, Harding, Case et al., 2006) the sufficiency number of respondents were calculated since previous practices and method

structure were identified as important and valid for reuse in future studies. According to previous studies, the average of answers should be 252 to ensure enough data for valid analysis.

Table 3. *Average of sample size from previous research*

Authors	Year	Name	Sample size
Lo, F., & Peng, J.	2021	<i>Strategies for successful personal branding of celebrities on social media platforms: Involvement or information sharing?</i>	280
Karaduman, İ.	2013	<i>The Effect of Social Media on Personal Branding Efforts of Top Level Executives</i>	201
Elbedweihy, A. M., et al.	2016	<i>Customer relationship building: The role of brand attractiveness and consumer-brand identification</i>	293
Jin, S. A., et al.	2019	<i>Instafamous and social media influencer marketing</i>	104
Dwivedi, A., et al.	2015	<i>Celebrity endorsement, self-brand connection and consumer-based brand equity</i>	382
Average:			252

Source: compiled by the author.

Adding to this, non-probability sampling was used because of a simple way to collect data without additional respondent selection process. For this reason, questionnaire were shared through Facebook groups where the target audience could possibly be reached. Even more, Beata Nicholson was reached via personal Instagram account on purpose of helping to share the online survey on her personal Instagram since it's useful for Beata to analyse her own communication through Social Media channels based on users evaluation of her content. As represented in the conceptual research model, all observed variables will be set in a common groups to proceed with Cronbach's alpha calculations to set verification or denial of the research hypothesis. Research analysis will use correlation to estimate statistical connection between independent variables and multivariate regression to estimate the highest impact of dependent variables on personal brand equity. Online survey answers were collected via Google Forms platform, data exported in Excel and processed with SPSS Statistics software.

2.6. The methods and statistics for research data analysis

Collected data from a quantitative survey continued to be processed by Cronbach's

alpha calculation (see Table 4.) to evaluate reliability of research constructs (Pakalniškienė, 2012) where reliable Cronbach's alpha construct value is in range from 0.6 - 0.95 where 0.6 is enough while the ideal value is 0.7 (Pakalniškienė, 2012) to be considered reliable. The Cronbach's alpha values of independent variables were represented below based on 2 different cases where one message is with related product and another with non-related to influencer product.

Table 4. *Cronbach's alpha coefficient of research constructs: credibility, engagement, acceptance, personal brand and advertised product*

Construct	Scale	Cronbach's alpha (related product)	Cronbach's alpha (non-related product)	Source
Credibility	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message appears credible when influencer is competent in what he is promoting; - The message seems credible when influencer has the ability to deliver what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer delivers what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer himself appears credible; - The message appears credible when the influencer conveys confidence. 	0.906	0.927	Chung, S., & Cho, H. (2017b)
Engagement	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):	0.857	0.926	Castillo, D. J., &

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message is impactful when there is personal connection between the advertised brand and me; - The message is engaging when the brand promoted in the message partially describes my personality; - The message is engaging when I feel like I have a personal connection with the brand being promoted in the message; - The message is engaging when there is a sense of connection between the brand being promoted and my view of myself. 			Sánchez - Fernández, R. (2019b)
Acceptance	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message evokes likeability when the influencer gives a feeling of goodwill; - The message seems acceptable when the influencer is always recognizable online; - The message seems attractive when influencer has a good reputation; - The message seems attractive when the influencer creates a user-friendly online 	0.770	0.840	Ha, H., & Perks, H. (2005)

	experience.			
Personal brand	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I choose this brand more often than other brands, even if they provide the same services; - If another brand has the same features/functions I would still choose this brand; - If there is another same brand I would still normally choose this brand; - If another brand's products are no different from this brand, I would prefer this brand. 	0.928	0.968	Machado, J. C. et al. (2019)
Advertised product	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wishful identification; - Perceived similarity; - Trustworthiness; - Expertise; - Attitude toward the advertisement; - Attitude toward the product; - Purchase intention; - Influencer familiarity; - Product - endorser fit. 	0.831	0.892	Schouten, A. et al. (2019)

According to Table 4. most of the constructs had reliable value < 0.95 based on Cronbach's alpha calculation where reliability range is 0.6 - 0.95 (Pakalniškienė, 2012). In case of a non-related to influencer product one statement from the Personal Brand group was excluded because total value is 0.968 which does not fit in the reliability range. The new group

of personal brand evaluation statements (see Table 5.) were computed by excluding one answer. New Cronbach's alpha value of Personal Brand construct is 0.950 as represented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Cronbach's alpha coefficient of research constructs: credibility, engagement, acceptance, personal brand and advertised product with removed statement*

Construct	Scale	Cronbach's alpha (related product)	Cronbach's alpha (non-related product)	Source
Credibility	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message appears credible when influencer is competent in what he is promoting; - The message seems credible when influencer has the ability to deliver what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer delivers what he promises; - The message appears credible when influencer himself appears credible; - The message appears credible when the influencer conveys confidence. 	0.906	0.927	Chung, S., & Cho, H. (2017b)
Engagement	5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message is impactful when there is personal connection 	0.857	0.926	Castillo, D. J., & Sánchez

	<p>between the advertised brand and me;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message is engaging when the brand promoted in the message partially describes my personality; - The message is engaging when I feel like I have a personal connection with the brand being promoted in the message; - The message is engaging when there is a sense of connection between the brand being promoted and my view of myself. 			z-Fernández, R. (2019b)
Acceptance	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The message evokes likeability when the influencer gives a feeling of goodwill; - The message seems acceptable when the influencer is always recognizable online; - The message seems attractive when influencer has a good reputation; - The message seems attractive when the influencer creates a user-friendly online experience. 	0.770	0.840	Ha, H., & Perks, H. (2005)

Personal brand	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I choose this brand more often than other brands, even if they provide the same services; - If another brand has the same features/functions I would still choose this brand; - If another brand's products are no different from this brand, I would prefer this brand. 	0.855	0.950	Machado, J. C. et al. (2019)
Advertised product	<p>5-point Likert scale (5 - totally agree, 1 - totally disagree):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wishful identification; - Perceived similarity; - Trustworthiness; - Expertise; - Attitude toward the advertisement; - Attitude toward the product; - Purchase intention; - Influencer familiarity; - Product - endorser fit. 	0.831	0.892	Schouten, A. et al. (2019)

According to Table 5. all groups of constructs were compiled based on previous related studies in background about influencers and celebrities advertising, brands equity and connections with consumers in the Social Media.

3. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

3.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

Following the framework of research development, in total 276 respondents answered the survey from which 9 were excluded because if respondents do not follow or know Beata Nicholson personal brand “Beatos virtuvė” they are not able to continue the online survey. Regardless of this, the remaining 267 answers were used for further analysis where 99.3% (N=265) of respondents are women from which 100% (N=267) follow Beata Nicholson personal Instagram profile, 59.6% (N=160) very like Beata’s personal Instagram profile. Following this, 100% (N=267) know or follow Beata’s personal brand “Beatos virtuvė” and 43.7% (N=117) like Beata’s Nicholson personal brand communication on Instagram. Since survey respondents are already following Beata Nicholson communication on Instagram, it can be assumed that perceived results are more reliable and give additional value to general analysis. Received demographic information about respondents were presented below (see Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9).

Table 6. *The evaluation of Beata’s Nicholson personal Instagram profile*

Beata’s Nicholson personal Instagram profile	N	Percentages (%)
Very like	159	59.6
Like	85	31.8
Neither like, either not like	23	8.6

Table 7. *The evaluation of Beata’s Nicholson personal brand “Beatos virtuvė” Instagram profile*

Personal brand “Beatos virtuvė” Instagram profile	N	Percentages (%)
Very like	95	35.4
Like	116	43.3
Neither like, either not like	55	20.5

The evaluation of Beata’s Nicholson communication on different accounts can possibly depend on respondents' age and spending time on Instagram. The statistical distribution of these parameters, represented below in tables 8 and 9.

Table 8. *The statistical distribution of respondents by time spending on Instagram per day*

Time spend	Sample size (N)	Percentages (%)
30 min. - 2 hours	189	70.8
2 - 3 hours	56	21
3 hours or more	22	8.2

According to the distribution, 70.8% (N=189) of respondents most often spend from 30 min. - 2 hours per day of their time on Instagram unlike 8.2% (N=22) who spend 3 hours or more throughout the day. Since all respondents are women it can be assumed they are not able to spend more time because of life habits depending on respondent age group (see Table 9.).

Table 9. *The statistical distribution of respondents by age group*

Age group	Sample size (N)	Percentages (%)
18 - 25	30	11.2
26 - 40	141	52.8
41 and more	91	34.1
N/A	5	1.9

According to the statistical data, the largest part of respondents whose evaluation could be most impactful are distributed by age in two groups: 52.8% (N=141) of respondents are from 26 - 40 age and 34.1% (N=91) are from 41 and higher age. Considering the time spent on Instagram per day, the age group from 26-40 can be the reason for spending less time per day on Instagram compared to younger age groups.

3.2. Statistical relationships and influence between evaluation constructs

Beata Nicholson is a well-known Lithuanian influencer with a background in the food industry. Moreover, two different communicative messages were selected, one with related product - "Pauluns" granola, unlike another one with phone distributor "Ideal" which is non-related considering general content of Beata Nicholson Instagram communication. However it's important to estimate the reliability of research constructs (see Table 10.) if they are

consistent. Impact of influencer communicative message on evaluation of influencer personal brand, will be estimated by 3 constructs: credibility, engagement and acceptance as represented in the table below.

Table 10. *Conceptual research constructs development and evaluation of reliability*

Construct	Number of statements	Cronbach's alpha (related product)	Number of statements	Cronbach's alpha (non-related product)
Credibility	5	0.906	5	0.927
Engagement	4	0.857	4	0.926
Acceptance	4	0.770	4	0.840

According to statistical calculations in Table 10., neither of constructs' values were <0.95 which means that all constructs are in acceptable level of reliability and can be used for consistency of conceptual research. Since reliability of constructs are confirmed, it is important to calculate normality values of new constructs if they could be normally distributed for further calculations. An evaluation of data normality is based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests (see Table 11.) where $p < 0.05$ means data is normal, if $p > 0.05$ data deviates from normal distribution. Calculations were accomplished for both evaluation cases where product related and non-related to influencer.

Table 11. *Conceptual research constructs evaluation of normality*

Construct	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Sig.
Credibility (related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Engagement (related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Acceptance (related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Credibility (non-related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Engagement (non-related product)	<0.001	<0.001

Acceptance (non-related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Personal Brand (related product)	<0.001	<0.001
Personal Brand (non-related product)	<0.001	<0.001

Confirmed that all evaluation constructs of communicative messages represented in Table 10. are significant which means normality of data to be used to determine if there are statistical differences - correlation between research constructs (see Table 11.) by using Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Following the calculations, the status of hypotheses will be determined based on conditions, if significance is greater than 0.05 - hypothesis approved, if significance is more or equal 0.05 - hypothesis denied. The strength of correlation will be determined by correlation coefficient value (see Table 12.).

H1: Personal brand have positive relationship with communicative message with related product toward estimation criterias

Table 12. *The statistical relationship between Beata Nicholson evaluation and communicative message with related product*

Construct	Metric	Message Credibility	Message Engagement	Message Acceptance
Personal brand "Beatos virtuvé"	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.449*	.293**	.317**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	267	267	267

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

According to Table 12. there is a positive relationship between personal brand and communicative message toward credibility (R= 0.449, p <.001), engagement (R= 0.293, p <.001), acceptance (R=0.317, p <.001) in case of communicative message with related product. According to results, message credibility and acceptance has the highest positive relationship on Beata Nicholson personal brand except that *correlation interpretation is low* based on the

general coefficient range see Table 13.). Engagement was determined as having the lowest relationship with personal brand as it interpreted as having *little or no correlation in general distribution*. It can be assumed that a more credible and acceptable communicative message is, more positive relationship with consumers can be created in order to generate desired evaluation of Beata's Nicholson personal brand in Social Media. H1 is accepted.

Table 13. *The strength of correlation value*

Size of r	Interpretation
0.90 to 1.00	Very high correlation
0.70 to 0.89	High correlation
0.50 to 0.69	Moderate correlation
0.30 to 0.49	Low correlation
0.00 to 0.29	Little if any correlation

Compiled by Asuero et al. (2006)

H2: Personal brand have negative relationship with communicative message with non-related product toward estimation criterias

Table 14. *The statistical relationship between Beata Nicholson personal brand evaluation and communicative message with non-related product*

Construct	Metric	Message Credibility	Message Engagement	Message Acceptance
Personal brand "Beatos virtuvé"	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.358**	.172**	.341**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.005	<.001
	N	267	267	267

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Regarding Pearson Correlation Coefficient represented in Table 14. there is a significant positive relationship between personal brand and evaluation criterias where credibility ($R=0.358$, $p<.001$) and acceptance ($R=0.341$, $p<.001$) have the highest statistical relationship between these certain criteria while in general range it obtained as *low correlation level*. Moreover, engagement ($R=0.172$, $p=.005$) has the lowest value in case of communicative message with non-related product as correlation scale is confirmed as having *little or no correlation level*. As represented in Table 13. all evaluation criterias have positive values which deny any negative relationship between communicative message and Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvé". It can be assumed that communicative message with non-related product are not associated negatively with Beata's personal brand. H2 is not confirmed.

H3: Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility

H4: Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement

H5: Message with related product have positive relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance

Table 15. *The communicative message with related product statistical relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility, engagement and acceptance*

Construct	Metric	Credibility	Engagement	Acceptance
Personal brand equity	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.351**	.322**	.430**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	267	267	267

Regarding Table 15., communicative message with related product have statistical relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility ($R= 0.351$, $p <.001$), engagement ($R= 0.322$, $p <.001$) and acceptance ($R= 0.430$, $p <.001$) where followers more positively related to personal brand equity when influencer able to be trusted and acceptable than engaging according to Beata's followers even though constructs have *low or any correlation level*. H3, H4 and H5

are supported.

As previously mentioned, conceptual research consists of different cases - two different communicative messages, one with related and another with non-related to influencer products. Based on approval of the H3, H4 and H5 hypothesis which describes the statistical relationship between personal brand and communicative messages, it is important to determine how results are distributed in the opposite case with non-related product.

H6: Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility

H7: Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward engagement

H8: Message with non-related product have negative relationship with personal brand equity toward acceptance

Table 16. *The communicative message with non-related product statistical relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility, engagement and acceptance*

Construct	Metric	Credibility	Engagement	Acceptance
Personal Brand equity	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	.382**	.470**	.444**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	267	267	267

According to calculations represented above in Table 16., communicative message with non-related product do not have a negative relationship with personal brand equity toward credibility ($R=.382$, $p<.001$), engagement ($R=.470$, $p<.001$) and acceptance ($R=.444$, $p<.001$) since all constructs have a positive Pearson Correlation Coefficient, $p <.001$ but *low correlation level*. Despite this, positive statistical relationships between personal brand equity and each variable were determined. Considering hypothesis H6, H7 and H8, it can be assumed that communicative message with non-related product are not connected in a negative way with personal brand equity toward credibility, engagement and acceptance. Hypothesis H6, H7 and H8 are not confirmed.

Already approved that personal brand have a positive relationship with communicative

message with related product and do not have any negative relationship with non-related to influencer products toward estimation criteria. Following this, it is important to estimate if the same messages have a positive and negative influence on consumer base personal brand equity (see Table. 16) toward credibility, engagement and acceptance since statistical positive connection already confirmed in both cases of communicative message. For determination of statistical impact on evaluation between communicative message and personal brand equity toward credibility, engagement and acceptance will be used in multiple linear regression for both cases: with related and non-related products. Insights will be represented by approving or denying the hypotheses based on received calculations.

H9: Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility

H10: Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement

H11: Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance

Table 17. *The descriptive statistics of communicative message with related product statistical impact on personal brand equity evaluation toward credibility, engagement and acceptance.*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.450	.202	.193	.85408

Table 17a.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	48.625	3	16.208	22.220	<.001^b
	Residual	191.848	263	.729		
	Total	240.473	266			

- a. Dependent Variable: Personal Brand evaluation (related product)
- b. Predictors: (Constant), acceptance, credibility, engagement. (related product)

Table 17b. *Coefficients*^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1		B	Standard Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.039	.472		.083	.934
	Credibility	.239	.126	.134	1.894	.059
	Engagemen t	.079	.097	.059	.812	.417
	Acceptance	.497	.118	.316	4.228	<.001

Dependent Variable: Personal Brand (related product)

Predictors: (Constant), acceptance, credibility, engagement (related product)

Statistical values of impact between communicative message and evaluation on personal brand equity based on consumers ($R^2=.202$, $F=22.22$, $p<.001$) confirmed that only acceptance of message has positive impact ($t=4.228$, $p<.001$) on evaluation unlike credibility ($t=1.894$, $p=.059$) and engagement ($t=.812$, $p=.417$) in case with related to influencer product. Following the obtained values, it can be assumed that influencer ability to be familiar, likeable and similar to followers can affect evaluation of personal brand equity in a positive direction as it motivates consumers to believe in brand values, evokes favourable associations to them and motivates consumers to be loyal to the brand. Hypothesis H9 and H10 are not supported, H11 is confirmed.

Calculations on statistical impact between communicative messages and consumer based personal brand equity will continue following the previous counting process in order to estimate impact of communicative message with non-related product on personal brand evaluation toward same estimation criterias. Impact of communicative message will be

distributed considering hypotheses where:

H12: Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility

H13: Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement

H14: Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance

Table 18. The descriptive statistics of communicative message with non-related product statistical impact on personal brand evaluation toward credibility, engagement and acceptance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.430 ^a	.257	.249	.94180

Table 18a. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	80.859	3	26.953	30.388	<0.001^b
	Residual	233.276	263	.887		
	Total	314.135	266			

Dependent Variable: Personal Brand (non-related product)

Predictors: (Constant), acceptance, credibility, engagement (non-related product)

Table 18b. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1		B	Standard Error	Beta		

	(Constant)	.237	.401		.591	.555
	Credibility	.127	.124	0.080	1.026	.306
	Engagement	.384	.089	0.304	4.308	<.001
	Acceptance	.318	.143	.190	2.221	0.27

Dependent Variable: Personal Brand (non-related product)

Predictors: (Constant), acceptance, credibility, engagement (non-related product)

Statistical values of communicative message impact on evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity ($R^2=.257$, $F=30.39$ $p<0.001$) confirmed that engagement has statistical positive impact ($t=4.308$, $p<.001$) while credibility ($t=1.026$, $p=.306$) and acceptance ($t=2.221$, $p=0.27$) do not influence consumers decisions about personal brand equity in any way. Considering the H12, H13 and H14 hypotheses which hypothetically considered that communicative message with non-related product have negative impact on evaluation on personal brand equity toward credibility, engagement and acceptance are denied because of statistically positive impact of engagement. Hypothesis H12, H13 and H14 are not supported. Distribution of all hypothesis status represented below in Table 19.

Table 19. *Results of tests of hypothesis*

Hypothesis abbreviation	Hypothesis	Status
H1	Personal Brand have positive relationship with related communicative message toward estimation criterias	Approved
H2	Personal brand have negative relationship with non-related communicative message toward estimation criterias	Not approved
H3	Message with related product have positive relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility	Approved

H4	Message with related product have positive relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement	Approved
H5	Message with related product have positive relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance	Approved
H6	Message with non-related product have negative relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility	Not approved
H7	Message with non-related product have negative relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement	Not approved
H8	Message with non-related product have negative relationship with consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance	Not approved
H9	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility	Not approved
H10	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement	Not approved
H11	Message with related product positively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance	Approved
H12	Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward credibility	Not approved
H13	Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward engagement	Not approved
H14	Message with non-related product negatively influence evaluation on consumer based personal brand equity toward acceptance	Not approved

According to Table 19. hypotheses H1, H3 - H5 were supported as having statistically positive relationship ($p < .001$) on evaluation of personal brand equity toward credibility,

engagement and acceptance in case of granola advertisement even though it has low or no correlation level based on correlation strength scale. Adding to this, H11 confirmed that acceptance of communicative message with granola have a statistically positive influence on evaluation of personal brand equity based on consumers. It can be assumed that Beata's Nicholson content with related product positively connected with her personal brand and herself as influencer what may lead to desired evaluation of consumers considering communicative messages.

Meanwhile, hypotheses H2, H6 - H8 were not confirmed as having a negative relationship as well as hypotheses H10, H12 and H13 which not supported by having a negative influence on evaluation of consumer based personal brand equity ($p > .001$) toward credibility, engagement and acceptance since obtained values were positive. However, it can be assumed that engagement was highlighted as impactful criteria on evaluation of personal brand equity based on consumers, even though hypotheses were determined as having a negative impact in case with advertisement of phone distributor. Summarizing all results, it can be confirmed that Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvè" is too strong to be related or affected on evaluation in a negative way by advertisements with non-related to influencer product. Notice that evaluation constructs mostly have low or no correlation level based on correlation strength scale as it can be assumed as being insignificant with evaluation of personal brand. Despite this, acceptance and engagement were highlighted as possibly significant criteria for positive relationship and influence on evaluation of personal brand equity which could be considered in planning further Social Media content.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. According to the theoretical background about businesses awareness in the digital environment, it was approved that personal brand communication have to be visible in Social Media to be reached by consumers since this Social Media is able to directly engage with consumers as long as brands are actively communicating based on Aaker's brand equity model. Adding to this, effective personal brand communication was described as like being identified, feeling similarity and trust toward consumers.

2. Influencer marketing was explained as the ability to quickly, widely reach and engage with consumers because of influencer potency to cause consumer demand of product or service by giving additional value through Social Media communication. Moreover, influencers form favourable evaluation on personal brand equity because consumers trust in influencers communication. Also, influencer marketing was highlighted as an effective brand strategy tool for personal brand communication and relationship with consumers development because stronger interaction with followers leads personal brands to be successful and accepted by consumers.

3. According to Social Media reports, Instagram is the most popular Social Media channel for collaborations with influencers because its daily usage 83% and influencers are able to provide credibility which is confirmed as a crucial factor of consumer decision toward brands. In addition, influencers strengthen associations about the brands towards consumers which is one of the valid consumer based brand equity evaluation constructs. Also, Instagram was confirmed as a satisfied Social Media channel even though sponsored communication sometimes causes negative evaluation by consumers if the message is not related to followers. Following the insights of Social Media communication, previous studies recommend for businesses to responsibly choose influencers which should be reliable to provide qualitative content with additional value where feelings, information of message and positivity are attractive for consumers.

4. The conceptual model of this research was compiled in reference with the Source Credibility model by Ohanian where consumer decisions are influenced by credibility of influencer communication including attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise and Brand Equity model by Aaker's together with other researchers (Dwivedi et al. 2015; Algharabat et al. 2020 etc.) as they represents strength of interactions between brand and consumers evaluation on personal brand equity described by attitude, associations with brand and loyalty toward consumers. The integration of mentioned models allowed to combine accurate research model to examine

communicative messages impact and relationship toward personal brand equity based on consumers perception. Compiled model includes two communicative messages, one with granola and other with phone distributor, equal evaluation criteria as credibility, engagement and acceptance for both messages and personal brand equity parameters based on consumers evaluation by attitude, associations and loyalty.

5. The conceptual research model was examined by 14 hypotheses which confirmed positive relationship and denied negative between personal brand and communicative messages according to hypothesis as well as confirmed positive impact of acceptance on evaluation on personal brand equity in both cases. Following this, it was highlighted that all estimation criteria of message have positive relationship with personal brand equity while only engagement positively influences evaluation with granola advertisement on consumer based personal brand equity. Can be assumed that more active and cognitive influencer content are to followers more favourable evaluation on personal brand equity. Even though statistical relationships are on a low level of positivity, any negative relationship or impact on personal brand equity weren't determined toward credibility, engagement and acceptance.

Recommendations for Beata Nicholson personal brand “Beatos virtuvé“ communication:

- continue to focus on current communication because followers evaluated existing content as having positive relationship with them;
- to strengthen personal connection through communication on Social Media since engagement were highlighted as impactful criteria for desired evaluation toward consumers;
- to focus more on messages with related product to ensure desired associations about personal brand toward followers even though message with non-related product did not have negative impact on evaluation but only in this certain case;
- to give additional value through communicative message like useful information, recommendations, discount etc.

Limitations:

- Comparison of different messages formats from same influencer to examine if evaluation on personal brand can depend on communicative message formats for instance, picture and video sharing;

- Selection of messages with same products but from different type of endorser like influencer and celebrity only if him/her having personal brand, to examine if endorser awareness can be impactful for evaluation on personal brand equity;
- Communication comparison through different Social Media channels like Facebook which is the most popular channel according to previous research (Dixon, 2023) where influencers able to advertise products or services;
- Investigation about impact on purchase intention towards influencer messages if evaluation have impact on purchase decision based on consumers.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1

Online survey questionnaire for empirical research

Influencer communicative message evaluation

I am a student of the Master's program in Digital Marketing at the Vilnius University Business School and I am conducting an empirical study, the purpose of which is to investigate the influencer Beata's Nicholson two Instagram communicative messages with products that are or are not related to the influencer personal brand and to determine the impact of these communication messages on Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvė" evaluation in Social Media.

By answering this survey, you will contribute to the research of the Master's thesis and help to find out whether a communication message with a non-related product to the activity of the influencer can have a negative effect on the evaluation of influencer personal brand.

In order to preserve confidentiality - the survey is anonymous, the obtained results will be used only for the purposes of scientific work.

The duration of the survey is about 10 minutes.

Thank you in advance for the help!

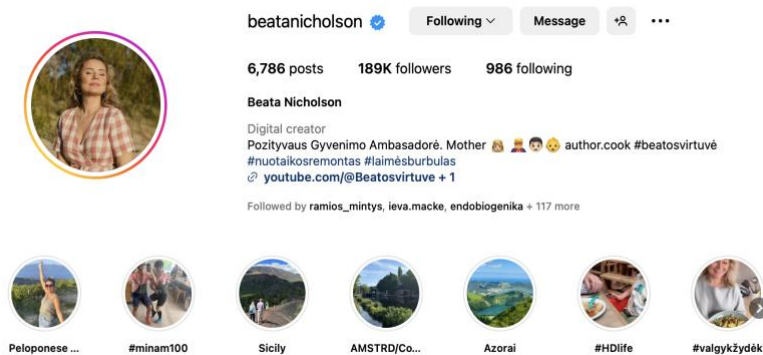
1. How much time do you spend on Instagram per day on average:
 - 30 minutes - 2 hours
 - 2-3 hours
 - 3 hours and more

2. Do you know/follow influencer Beata Nicholson?



- yes
- no

3. In scale from very like (5) to very dislike (1), how do you evaluate a personal Beata Nicholson Instagram profile?



- Very like
- Like
- Neither like neither dislike
- Dislike
- Very dislike

4. Do you know/follow Beata's Nicholson personal brand "Beatos virtuvė"?

- yes
- no



5. In scale from very like (5) to very dislike (1), how do you evaluate a personal Beata Nicholson personal brand “Beatos virtuvė”?



- Very like
- Like
- Neither like neither dislike
- Dislike
- Very dislike
-

Here is an example of an influencer communicative message where the promoted product is related to the influencer activities and personal brand. Based on the example, please evaluate according to the given questions.



6. Evaluate the credibility of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- a message appears credible when influencer is competent in what he/she is promoting
- a message seems credible when influencer has the ability to deliver what he/she promises
- a message appears credible when influencer delivers what he/she promises
- a message is credible when influencer himself appears credible
- a message appears credible when influencer conveys confidence

7. Evaluate the engagement of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- a message is impactful when there is a personal connection between the brand suggested by the influencer and myself;
- a message is engaging when part of me is defined by the brands suggested by the influencer;
- a message is engaging when feel as if have personal connection with the brands suggested by the influencer;
- a message is engaging when feel as being link between the brands suggested by the influencer and my view of myself.

8. Evaluate the acceptance of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree) through the following statements:
 - a message evokes likeability when influencer gives a feeling of goodwill;
 - a message seems acceptable when influencer always aware on the internet;
 - a message seems attractive when influencer have a good reputation;
 - a message seems attractive when an influencer creates a user-friendly experience on the website.
9. Evaluate influencer personal brand according to the evaluation statements (5- strongly agree to 1- strongly disagree) through the following statements:
 - I choose this brand more often than other brands, even if they provide the same services;
 - if another brand has the same features/functions I would still choose this brand;
 - if there is another same brand I would normally choose this brand anyway;
 - if another brand is no different than this brand, I would prefer this brand
10. Evaluate influencer personal brand according to the evaluation statements (5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree) through the following statements:
 - wishful identification
 - perceived similarity
 - trustworthiness
 - expertise
 - attitude toward the advertisement
 - attitude toward the brand
 - purchase intention
 - influencer familiarity
 - product-endorser fit

Here is an example of an influencer communicative message where the promoted product is non-related to the influencer activities and personal brand. Based on the example, please evaluate according to the given questions.



11. Evaluate the credibility of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5- strongly agree to 1- strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- a message appears credible when influencer is competent in what he/she is promoting
- a message seems credible when influencer has the ability to deliver what he/she promises
- a message appears credible when influencer delivers what he/she promises
- a message is credible when influencer himself appears credible
- a message appears credible when influencer conveys confidence

12. Evaluate the engagement of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5- strongly agree to 1- strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- a message is impactful when there is a personal connection between the brand suggested by the influencer and myself;
- a message is engaging when part of me is defined by the brands suggested by the influencer;

- a message is engaging when feel as if have personal connection with the brands suggested by the influencer;
- a message is engaging when feel as being link between the brands suggested by the influencer and my view of myself.

13. Evaluate the acceptance of the influencer communicative message according to the evaluation statements (5- strongly agree to 1- strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- a message evokes likeability when influencer gives a feeling of goodwill;
- a message seems acceptable when influencer always aware on the internet;
- a message seems attractive when influencer have a good reputation;
- a message seems attractive when an influencer creates a user-friendly experience on the website.

14. Evaluate influencer personal brand according to the evaluation statements (5- strongly agree to 1- strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- I choose this brand more often than other brands, even if they provide the same services;
- if another brand has the same features/functions I would still choose this brand;
- if there is another same brand I would normally choose this brand anyway;
- if another brand is no different than this brand, I would prefer this brand

15. Evaluate influencer personal brand according to the evaluation statements (5 - strongly agree to 1 - strongly disagree) through the following statements:

- wishful identification
- perceived similarity
- trustworthiness
- expertise
- attitude toward the advertisement
- attitude toward the brand
- purchase intention
- influencer familiarity
- product-endorser fit

16. Gender:

- men

- women
- prefer not to say

17. Age:

- 18-25
- 26-40
- 41-60
- 61 and more
- prefer not to say