

AN INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTIONS
TOWARDS COSMETIC BRANDS PROMOTED
ON YOUTUBE AND INSTAGRAM

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ON YOUTUBE AND INSTAGRAM

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, İrem Duygu Göçer, certify that

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ABSTRACT

An Investigation of Consumers' Purchase Intentions Towards Cosmetic Brands Promoted on YouTube and Instagram

This study focuses on purchase intention of consumers towards cosmetic brands promoted through sponsored content on social media platforms, namely Instagram and YouTube. Although marketers recognize the value of this form of social media advertising, limited number of research studies have been undertaken on sponsored content on Instagram and YouTube in the literature. This study analyzes how brand experience influences consumers' purchase intention. Predicted mediating factors include attitudes toward sponsored content and brand attitude. The survey for this study applied in an online setting (n=160). As an outcome of the regression and mediation analyses, the study's findings indicated that brand experience had a favorable influence on purchase intention mediated by the attitude toward the sponsored content and brand attitude. This study's essential contributions include not only addressing the aforementioned gap in the literature but also providing substantial management implications.

ÖZET

Tüketicilerin YouTube ve Instagram'da Tanıtılan Kozmetik Markalarına Yönelik Satın Alma Niyetlerinin İncelenmesi

Bu çalışma, tüketicilerin kozmetik markalarına yönelik satın alma niyetlerine odaklanmaktadır. Pazarlamacılar sosyal medya reklamcılığının değerini kabul etseler de Instagram ve YouTube'daki sponsorlu içerik üzerinde literatürde sınırlı sayıda araştırma yapılmıştır. Bu çalışma, marka deneyiminin tüketicilerin satın alma niyetini nasıl etkilediğini analiz etmektedir. Bu ilişkiye sponsorlu içeriğe yönelik tutum ve marka tutumunun aracılık ettiği varsayılmıştır. Araştırma kapsamında kozmetik sektörü ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışma için çevrimiçi bir anket yapılmıştır (n=160). Regresyon ve aracı değişken analizleri bulguları, marka deneyiminin satın alma niyeti üzerinde pozitif bir etkisi olduğunu ve ayrıca sponsorlu içeriğe yönelik tutumun ve marka tutumu aracılığıyla satın alma niyeti üzerinde bir pozitif etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın temel katkıları, yalnızca yukarıda bahsedilen boşluğu ele almakla kalmayıp, aynı zamanda önemli yönetsel çıkarımlar sağlamayı da içerir.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1 Instagram and YouTube as platforms for sponsored content	5
2.2 Brand experience.....	8
2.3 Attitude toward the ad.....	13
2.4 Brand attitude	15
2.5 Purchase intention	16
CHAPTER 3: HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT	18
3.1 The link between brand experience and key consumer metrics.....	18
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY	29
4.1 Measures	29
4.2 Sampling, data collection and sample characteristics	32
4.3 Pretest and questionnaire design	34
CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS	37
5.1 Missing values and outliers	37
5.2 Factor analysis.....	38
5.3 Hypotheses testing	43
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	64
6.1 General discussion	64
6.2 Limitations and further research	66
6.3 Practical implications	67
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH	69
APPENDIX B: FIGURES	75
APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (1/2)	76

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS (2/2)	77
APPENDIX D: REGRESSION ANALYSIS	78
APPENDIX E: MEDIATION ANALYSIS (1/4)	79
APPENDIX E: MEDIATION ANALYSIS (2/4)	80
APPENDIX E: MEDIATION ANALYSIS (3/4)	81
APPENDIX E: MEDIATION ANALYSIS (4/4)	82
APPENDIX F: HYPOTHESES STATUS (1/2)	83
APPENDIX F: HYPOTHESES STATUS (2/2)	84
REFERENCES.....	85

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. List of Hypotheses	27
Table 2. The Adapted Scale Items	34
Table 3. PCA for Brand Experience, Instagram I	39
Table 4. PCA for Brand Experience, Instagram II.....	40
Table 5. PCA for Brand Experience, YouTube I.....	41
Table 6. PCA for Brand Experience, YouTube II.....	42
Table 7. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content, Instagram.....	44
Table 8. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content, YouTube.....	45
Table 9. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Brand Attitude, Instagram...46	
Table 10. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Brand Attitude, YouTube...47	
Table 11. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Brand Attitude, Instagram.....	48
Table 12. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Brand Attitude, YouTube.....	50
Table 13. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, Instagram	51
Table 14. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, YouTube	52

Table 15. Regression Model for Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, Instagram...	54
Table 16. Regression Model for Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, YouTube.....	55
Table 17. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Purchase Intention, Instagram.....	56
Table 18. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Purchase Intention, YouTube.....	57
Table 19. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, Instagram.....	58
Table 20. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, YouTube	60
Table 21. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, Instagram.....	61
Table 22. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, YouTube.....	62
Table E1. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, Instagram	78
Table E2. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, YouTube	79
Table E3. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, Instagram	80
Table E4. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, YouTube	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Attitude toward the sponsored content (I).....	44
Figure 2. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Attitude toward the sponsored content (Y).	45
Figure 3. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (I)	47
Figure 4. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (Y)	48
Figure 5. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (I)	49
Figure 6. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (Y)	50
Figure 7. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)	52
Figure 8. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)	53
Figure 9. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)	54
Figure 10. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)	55
Figure 11. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)	56
Figure 12. Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)	57
Figure 13. Value of the Global Cosmetics Market from 2018 to 2025.....	75
Figure 14. Breakdown of the Global Cosmetic Market from 2011 to 2020	75

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To initiate the history of the cosmetics industry, the ancient Egyptians filled their papyrus with formulas of cosmetics through practicing on natural elements. Those triggering motives to use cosmetics, such as to attract the lovers, intimidate the enemy, to hide the signs of aging, (Parish & Crissey, 1988), to protect the health, to feel better, enhance the appearance, and boost self-esteem (“You & Your Products”, n.d.), have remained almost the same over the years, even though the industry has advanced. The cosmetics industry is projected to reach an estimated value of over \$750 billion by 2025 globally (Statista, 2020) as exhibited on Figure 13 in Appendix B. The increasing trend of cosmetic consumption brought a 40% global growth in online cosmetics sales in 2020 based on the L’Oréal Cosmetics Market Annual Report (2020).

The Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (2020) categorized cosmetic products as baby products, preparations of bath, makeup, fragrance preparations, hair (non-coloring and coloring), manicuring, oral hygiene, shaving, skincare, suntan, and personal cleanliness. According to the annual report published by L’Oréal, 42% of the global beauty market consists of skincare products with the largest share of the market followed by hair care and make-up (Statista,2021) as seen on Figure 14 in Appendix B.

Particularly throughout the accelerating impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, consumer behavior has shifted dramatically to online channels (Lingqvist, Nordigården, & Roeper, 2021). Digital media and the rise of social media have

shaped consumers' decision-making processes due to new technological developments such as live streaming and virtual try-ons (Welsh, 2021), advanced social commerce, which created an online setting where consumers can interact with brands or buy products through online channels. Sponsored content, acknowledged as a part of the marketing strategies implemented by companies, influencer marketing on social media (Hansson & Stanic, 2017). Sponsored content is a form of advertisement that has been delivered to users through a paid promotion which has attained a considerable place in the literature.

Cosmetic products are also considered as experience goods (Lian & Yen, 2013). According to WARC Marketing Trends for Beauty (Welsch, 2021), there has been a deliberate transition from perceiving beauty as a "means to an end" towards appreciating the beauty process as an experience. Before making a purchase action, consumers not only utilize information provided by peer consumers to assess the products (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991) but also consider various dimensions such as attitudes and experiences. Brand experience, one of the most studied concepts related to experience, which includes genuine sensations, sentiments, cognitions, and behavioral reactions that are heightened by stimuli associated with a brand, has piqued the interest of marketers (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009).

Previous academic studies have provided findings on the impacts of brand experience on attitude toward the ad (Brakus et al., 2009), purchase intention (Yang & He, 2011), and brand attitude (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010). However, theoretical and empirical research remains limited considering the constructural relationship between sponsored content, brand experience, and purchase intention, exclusively regarding the contents that integrates a cosmetic product on Instagram and YouTube platforms. The literature does consider the importance of brand experience on

purchase intention through the sponsored content that aims to promote a product on Instagram and YouTube, which are highly preferred two social media platforms by cosmetic companies to reach out to their prospects. Even though many researchers have shed light on the impacts of various social media platforms on purchase behaviors of consumers from multiple aspects, studies on purchase intention regarding YouTube and Instagram remained relatively scarce.

It's important to note that this study excludes paid advertising on social media channels that are implemented and distributed by the promoted brand. The marketing strategy that will be discussed in this paper consists of a relationship that occurs exclusively between the company being sponsored, and a YouTube influencer or Instagram influencer. In this format, companies initiate their marketing campaigns and get in touch with influencers.

As reported by the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Trade, the collaboration between a brand and an influencer should be clearly and comprehensively stated through a paid partnership disclosure on Instagram or YouTube by social media influencers who publish the content due to legal regulations regarding the issue implemented (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Trade, 2021).

Many studies investigated the impacts of influencer marketing on consumer behavior from different aspects, such as the role, impact or credibility of influencers (Djafarova & Matson, 2021) on consumer's purchase decision process. However, past research on social media influencers and sponsored content mostly focused on a single social media platform (Hansson & Stanic, 2017; Ishani, 2019).

The sum and substance of it, limited information provided in the literature on which social media platform is considered to have greater stimulant on buy intentions of consumers, as well as the consequences of sponsored content made by

influencers. For this very reason, this research expands on the concept of influencers' effect on customer buying behavior by examining the link between brand experience, attitude toward sponsored content, and brand attitude on purchase intention using YouTube and Instagram as analogies. This paper seeks to provide meaningful insights to marketers of the cosmetics sector so that they can utilize sponsored content collaborations more effectively both on YouTube and Instagram. In the light of the aforementioned findings, this article will examine the essential aspects of purchase intention for cosmetic products when they are exposed to sponsored content on Instagram and YouTube, through brand experience factor.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Instagram and YouTube as platforms for sponsored content

As a fundamental component of any marketing strategy, social media platforms are built on user-generated content (UGC) in which users can be engaged like interacting with a brand, sharing content, or making collaborations or vice versa. Companies can build relationships and create conversations with their customers through shared content. All the knowledge that is spread via social media is found to be related to consumers' attitudes, awareness, information seeking, and purchasing intentions (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). When it comes to marketing, the emergence of UGC has enabled specific content-producers become opinion leaders, or so-called influencers, who are escalated as essential part of a marketing strategy for brands.

The research conducted by Global Web Index showed that 44% of Instagram users and 39% of YouTube users engage on the social platform to search for products online (Mander, 2019). Companies utilize Instagram and YouTube to connect with consumers, perceive consumer engagement, and compel consumers to take actions that will result in profitable conversions that will meet their key performance indicators (KPI's). Moreover, evaluating brand experience, consumers' attitudes toward advertising and attitude toward brands on social media is important for businesses to enhance their know-how to understand consumers' decision mechanisms, and ultimately that will lead to an urge to present contents to users driven by experience and attitudes.

Sponsored content represents a kind of paid endorsement sponsored by the company and shared by the content creator that promotes a product or service. In this

paid promotion (sponsored content) model, the deal is between the sponsored brand and the influencer. The reimbursement could be given not necessarily in the form of money, but it could be free product samples, or gifts, namely, public relations (PR) packages so that influencers can use and experience the product and share reviews with its audience. The content creator, namely the influencer, can produce and share the sponsored content with a disclosure of the sponsorship with the wordings of “sponsored by brand x”, “collaboration”, paid partnership with the brand x”, etc. Sponsored content is created by content providers in collaboration with a business (Hansson & Stanic, 2017).

2.1.1 Sponsored content on Instagram

Instagram as a popular social media channel has exceeded the 1 billion global users (Enberg, 2020) and 80% of its users benefit from the UGC on Instagram in their purchase decisions while considering a product (“How Instagram Boosts Brands and Drives Sales”, 2019). As reported by the “Influencer Marketing Benchmark Report”, with \$13.8 billion expected growth in 2021, influencer marketing continues to be a go-to strategy for the companies on Instagram. Instagram provides various formats for the creators/influencers/publishers to share content with collaboration (Instagram Business Team, 2020) as listed below:

- (1) Posts: the content can be shared in the form of a visual or a video without an affiliate link
- (2) Stories: the content can be shared in the form of a visual or a video with an affiliate link
- (3) Reels: the content can be shared in the form of a video with an affiliate link

(4) Instagram Videos: the content can be shared in the form of a video with an affiliate link

Reels are a kind of entertainment multi-clip videos that can be edited up to 60 seconds with music, sound, and certain visual effects. IGTV was introduced in 2018 and was designed to become a video platform like YouTube in the first place. With the latest updates, the Instagram video combines IGTV and feed videos in a single format (Instagram Business Team, 2021) that could last up to 60 minutes. Instagram has been constantly developing new tools for creators to share sponsored content to engage more users since content success metrics such as engagement or reachability rates depend on Instagram's ever-changing algorithm designed differently for each format.

Marketers embrace the fact that Instagram is a visually enhanced platform to integrate cosmetic products on sponsored content. Despite the existence of studies regarding the impact of advertisements of cosmetics or beauty products on Instagram (Djafarova & Matson, 2021), there is still room for exploring the different determinants of purchase intention on this social media platform.

2.1.2 Sponsored content on YouTube

YouTube can be described as a social media channel where users can participate to create, engage, and share video content with over two billion monthly active users ("YouTube for Press", n.d.). YouTube is the top digital source for browsing beauty-related content among U.S. consumers (ThinkwithGoogle, 2020a). Accordingly, "How-to" videos on beauty are one of the most-watched content types by YouTube users (ThinkwithGoogle, 2020b). Another supporting data that describes penetration of the influencers on YouTube found that 86% of the top 200 beauty videos on

YouTube were made by content creators (ThinkwithGoogle, 2020a) which highlights the significance of these creators in the cosmetics sector. From a managerial perspective, YouTube, is an essential and advantageous social media platform for cosmetic brands to implement their content strategies.

When content creator partners with a brand, sponsored content agreements or endorsements on YouTube may occur in two different models:

- (1) Sponsorship takes place where the influencer shares an affiliate link and receives a commission from the purchases resulting from the related links
- (2) Sponsorship takes place when brands send their product samples (also known as PR packages) to influencers for free for them to show or apply the products to themselves in a video, without an affiliate link.

2.2 Brand experience

Experience, as an established concept, has been explored through a variety of marketing and consumer contexts, studied as consumption experience (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982), customer experience (Homburg, Jozić, & Kuehnl, 2017), experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), service experience (Chandler & Lusch, 2015), brand experience (Brakus et al., 2009), online brand experience (Simon, Brexendorf, & Fassnacht, 2013), and also brand experience in social media framework (Beig & Khan, 2018).

Brand experience as a notion, has garnered substantial importance in consumer behavior research since Holbrook and Hirschman (1982, p.135) have expressed a new form of consumption that seeks “fun, amusement, fantasy” and advanced through the many scholars within various contexts. These authors pioneered the interpretation of consumption with the experiential aspect that has

become the antecedent of the contemporary articulation of brand experience. Pine and Gilmore (1999) considered markets with "staged experiences" as outstanding since they provide experience enhanced by sensations and led by consumer. Unlike the conventional marketing approach, which assumes consumers make their purchase decisions rationally based on utilitarian qualities like price and quality (Cleff, Lin, & Walter, 2014), experiential marketing approaches customers as emotionally oriented individuals who seek joyful experiences (Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2011). This perspective stresses previously neglected aspects (such as the influence of emotions on behavior) and views customers as more than emotional individuals; and also thinkers (Addis & Holbrook, 2001). Afterward, brand experience has taken a place in the literature and was conceptualized as a new brand dimension contrary to conventional brand measurements that conveys the essence of branding far more adequately rather than measurements (Brakus et al., 2009; Schmitt, 1999).

Unlike attitudes that rely on instinctive emotional responses or preconceived notions, brand experiences concentrate on unique emotional, sentimental, and cognitive and behavioral reactions elicited by brand-specific stimuli, as stated by Brakus et al. (2009) in their introduction to the argument. In other words, brand experience not only covers how customers interpret brands but also how reactions are expressed. Thus, "brand experience" refers to the scope of emotions, ideas, perceptions, and actions elicited by stimuli associated with the brand: aesthetic identity, product packaging, tone of voice, and physical surroundings (Brakus et al., 2009). All things considered, it can be concluded that brand experience may emerge at a variety of interaction points such as when consumers seek, assess, purchase, consume or get after-sales services.

Brand experience may occur in three different forms according to Brakus et al. (2009), first; when consumer interacts with a product, secondly; when user purchase the product or benefit from a service, finally; the experience may occur as a consumption experience. Product experience takes place either directly when consumers interact with the products if there is a contact in the physical environment (Hoch & Ha, 1986), or indirectly if the product is delivered to the consumer in an online setting or presented in an advertisement framework (Kempf & Smith, 1998). Based on this description, the product experience occurs through social media ads, which is the topic of this study. Shopping and service experience encompasses a concept of consumer interaction with the brand's identities such as the store, salespeople, and its procedures (Kerin, Jain, & Howard, 1992). Furthermore, consuming experiences are diverse and encompass hedonic characteristics such as the aforementioned sentiments, fantasies, and enjoyment (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982) and arise when consumers use or consume the product. Hence, taking into consideration all these interactions, the brand experience encompasses the merge of all responses that users perceive as an outcome of the interactions with the brands at any potential touchpoint (Alloza, 2008). This concept encompasses all aspects of an individual's consuming journey, from the moment of decision to the long-term memories engendered by the encounter (Brakus et al., 2009).

Schmitt (1999) contributed to the body of knowledge by advancing the "experience" and built aspects of brand experience that encompasses sensorial (such as sight, sound, touch, etc.), affective (includes emotions and moods), intellectual (involves imaginative thinking), behavioral (relates to motor actions), social (relates to future ideal self) and subsequently Gentile, Spiller, and Noci (2007) enhanced the notion by adding pragmatic dimension, and lifestyle experiential components of the

brand. The social dimension, in other words, “relate experience”, includes experiences that connect the individual to the outer state, beyond the individual’s own, private feelings according to Schmitt (1999). The author also put forward that the relate experiences that intrigued by the consumers which speaks to the self-improvement that consumers seek for (e.g., “a future ideal self that individuals envision to be”). The frequency of each of these aspects is triggered, as well as the intensity of the stimulus, determines the magnitude of the brand experience a consumer perceives (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010).

2.2.1 Sensorial experience

Schmitt (1999) defines the sensorial experience as related to aesthetic and sensory stimulations that appeals to the five senses (i.e., sight, taste, touch, hear and smell) that attract consumers. These sensory dimensions were utilized to anticipate perceptions and the implementation of prospective designs and aesthetics (Hultén, 2011). According to Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), marketers should utilize sensory approaches to distinguish a brand on the grounds of branding, and this point of view will positively accelerate consumers’ brand attitude.

2.2.2 Affective experience

Affective, or feel experience responds to consumers' inner feelings (Richins, 1997) (such as positive or negative moods), and emotions (such as joy or pride). Emotions influence an individual's subconscious level and attract the items to mind associated with making customers feel good (Law, Wong, & Yip, 2012), hence altering consumer behavior. The affective dimension of the experience also allows consumers to interact with a brand thus creating a bond (Fournier, 1998).

2.2.3 Intellectual experience

Intellectual or think experiences participate in meaningful analytical and imaginative thinking that evokes the problem-solving stimuli with which consumers can engage (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013). A brand's creative utilization is predicted by this sub-dimension, which represents customers' creative mental processes (Brakus et al., 2009). An individual's broad evaluative perceptions of a brand are shaped by their intellectual brand experience (Ishida & Taylor, 2012) where consumers can creatively interact with the brand through problem-solving experiences (Schmitt, 1999).

2.2.4 Behavioral experience

Behavioral experience or act experience as Schmitt (1999) describes is assumed to be the tangible form of the brand, that aims to link the relationship between consumers and brands which can result in motor or physical actions (e.g., workout). As an illustration, when a consumer takes on behavioral actions during or after using the product of a brand, the experience may be formed as behavioral experience (Brakus et al., 2009; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). According to Brakus et al. (2009), triggering factors such as colors or designs may develop not only in sensory experience but also emotional experience or intellectual experiences, indicating that the link between a particular stimulus type and particular experience aspect is mutual.

Since product experience does not necessarily happen in a physical environment, one can consider social media as an important online setting for companies to assess the brand experience. In recent years, scholars explored

experience to provide a broader perspective of this idealization in various situations and contexts. These relationships differ concerning the brands (e.g., BBVA) (Alloza, 2008), environments (e.g., coffeehouses) (Choi, Ok, & Hyun, 2011), and social media context (e.g., Facebook) (Beig & Khan, 2018) which illustrates the diversity of experience studies.

In latest years, there has been a surge in interest in examining the determining factors and implications related to brand experience as an antecedent of purchase intention. However, there is still room to interpret brand experience and the link between these constructs when evaluated in an online setting such as social media channels. Even though how consumers perceive and evaluate brand experience on social media is discussed, studies related to Instagram and YouTube that has been elevated by marketers which became a sort of a marketplace for companies to promote their products through sponsored content, has remained scant in the experiential framework.

2.3 Attitude toward the ad

Several scholars have developed theories around the notion of attitude since the reference to attitude traced back as far as Charles Darwin, according to Fleming who mentioned attitudes as “strong motor expressions of a particular emotion” (as cited in Fleck, 2015, p. 175). Petty and Cacioppo (1986) developed the theory of attitude through the Elaboration Likelihood Model, which simply stated that individuals would process information or messages based on their interests and needs, rather than relying on the attitude theory represented by Fishbein and Ajzen (as cited in Mitchell & Olson, 1981, p. 318) that linked salient beliefs triggered from memory and regarded by the individual in a specific context. As outlined by Breckler and

Wiggins (1989), attitudes act as mental and cognitive perceptions that are developed throughout time by experience and eventually impacts the decision process of individuals. Attitudes are interpretations that people hold about items, other people, and themselves (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) and these evaluations might be derived from a range of different experiences (i.e., behavioral, cognitive, or emotional).

Owing to the importance of attitudes and advertising for many consumer goods, several extensive research has concentrated on determining how ads impact consumer perceptions. Introduced by MacKenzie and Lutz (1989), attitude toward the ad could be presented as proclivity to reacting to the advertisement with positive or negative feelings, in a persistent way. Many scholars approached attitude toward the ad from an emotional aspect: as the consumer's thoughts and feelings after being exposed to an advertisement (Kirmani & Campbell, 2009).

Social media advertisement has attracted much attention recently by many scholars. As a popular form of an advertisement on social media, sponsored content has not been researched adequately in the literature. Based on the aforementioned definitions, we can define attitude toward the ad on social media as consumers' cognitive responses to advertisement stimuli on a sponsored content. Within the transformation of new advertisement approaches from traditional marketing channels to digital channels like social media, recent studies have scrutinized the impact of advertisements on Instagram on purchase intention (Ishani, 2019; Wardhani & Alif, 2019) and attitude toward the ad on YouTube videos (Yang, Huang, & Yang, 2017).

While Shimp (1981) emphasized the transference of impact from ad to the brand, studies conducted about attitude (Gardner, 1985) have proved that consumers' perceptions about the advertisement impacts their attitude toward brands promoted in an ad.

2.4 Brand attitude

Conceived by scholars as a major contributing component to the realm of customer behavior (Keller, 1993; Mitchell & Olson, 1981), brand attitude is defined as interpretations about a brand based on aspects like attributes, endurance, serviceability, performance, perceived quality, and perceived value (Aaker & Keller, 1990), as well as the functional and experiential advantages of the brand (Keller, 1993). As defined by Spears and Singh (2004), brand attitude is a reasonably long-lasting, one-dimensional summary judgement of the brand that, at the very least, enlivens behavior., the way brand attitude is generated and how it might affect critical behavioral outcomes such as purchase intention (Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch, 1983) have been profoundly investigated (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

Scholars have associated attitude toward the ad with brand attitude as discussed above, and particular advertisements allows building a connection between individuals and the brand in question and ultimately evaluate the brand positively (Yoon & Park 2012). In the social media context, recent research has focused on brand attitude from a variety of perspectives, including the effect of sponsorship on brand attitude (Jalleh, Donovan, & Giles-Corti, 2000).

Given that past research focused on the antecedents and implications of brand attitude, less emphasis has been placed to the constructural association of brand attitude and brand experience (Brown & Stayman, 1992). Therefore, there is still a need to progress towards a greater degree of knowledge of how brand attitude and brand experience interacts within the advertising context. Furthermore, marketers should take into consideration of the consumer's brand attitude extensively, given that previous research have shown a strong correlation between brand attitude and purchase decision of consumers (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995).

2.5 Purchase intention

As an outcome of the previously mentioned consumer behavior metrics, purchase intention is associated with the tendency to predict the purchase behavior of the consumer (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). Intention to purchase can be recognized as a mirror of actual purchasing behavior, as a direct antecedent of purchase (Bebber, Milan, & Toni, 2017).

The possibility that a purchase intention may end up within an actualized purchase action could frequently driven by a particular necessity or urge, or when the price of an item hits a specific desirable level (Lu et al. 2014), availability of the product, new information, or other attractive options may alter the decision process (Bebber et al., 2017). Furthermore, when a brand meets the needs of the consumer by offering a certain product, eventually the consumer will build an intellectual bond with the brand itself, consequently, the consumer will establish a subjective connection with the brand and correspondingly will shape her/his purchase behavior (Fournier, 1998).

Consumers seek product information and recommendations to make an informed selection before buying a product (Cheong & Morrison, 2008). Since social media platforms enable consumers' information searching process relatively quick, convenient and accessible, consumers utilize social media to obtain information to assist their purchase decisions (Mir & Rehman, 2013) and tend to rely on UGC (Riegner, 2007). Purchase intention towards beauty products promoted on social media has been investigated on Instagram (Chen & Dermawan, 2020) and YouTube (Yüksel, 2016) from different aspects separately; however, the behavioral link between sponsored content on purchase intention of consumers on Instagram (Ishani,

2019) and YouTube (Hansson & Stanic, 2017) while considering the role of the brand experience construct has remained limited in literature.

Purchasing decisions are impacted by a consumer's perceptions of both the brand in question and rival brands that are available as alternatives, according to Laroche and Brisoux (1989). Concurrently, purchase intention has also been associated with various constructs, as determinants of purchase intention mentioned in this study, such as brand experience (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010), brand attitude (Spears & Singh, 2004), and attitude toward the ad (Kempf & Smith, 1998; Lutz et. al., 1983).

CHAPTER 3

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The link between brand experience and key consumer metrics

Schmitt (1999) pioneered conceptualizing experience as composed of multidimensional construct: sensory (five-sense experiences), affective (referring to customer emotions and feelings), cognitive (related to divergent thinking), behavioral (bodily experiences and lifestyles, and interactions), and social experiences (pursuing self-improvement). The term "brand experience" was conceptualized to embrace consumer responses engendered by the interactions between consumer and brand, triggered by stimuli that are related to the characteristics of a brand such as advertisement language or packaging (Brakus et al., 2009). In this study, the key consumer components that are all highlighted to have tied to brand experience, attitudes and intent to purchase will be analyzed. Accordingly, we'll scrutinize how these concepts manifest in social media contexts in this research.

3.1.1 Attitude toward the sponsored content

Considering how brand experience may occur indirectly, when consumers encountered with the product presented in a context of advertisement stimuli (Hoch & Ha, 1986) understanding on how advertising stimulates brand experience (Schmitt, 2009) is still needed to be assessed from variety of aspects. As an outcome of the advertising context of the product experience, consumers may cognitively perceive components of the consumption experience (Wright & Lutz, 1993). According to a thorough evaluation of several research, brand experience is positively associated with the likelihood of making a purchase (Moreira, Fortes, & Santiago, 2017).

Similarly, studies have shown that customers' willingness to make a purchase is favorably influenced by their perception about an advertisement (Wardhani & Alif, 2019). Eventually, it can be ascertained from the cumulative findings that purchase intention of consumers influenced by both attitude toward the ad and brand experience correspondingly. Therefore, we can presuppose the positive correlation between brand experience and attitude toward the sponsored content. Considering this interpretation of the previous findings, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1A For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.

H1B For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.

3.1.2 Brand attitude

Brand attitude is widely considered to be the primary outcome of brand experience. Therefore, it is anticipated to encounter with the studies that focused on evaluating brand experience from the aspects of attitude toward the brand and intent to purchase (Brakus et al., 2009; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013). According to Brakus et al. (2009), impressions of customers related to a brand are shaped by their own personal experiences with the product or service. Furthermore, the authors claimed that by reinforcing beliefs, experience may influence consumers' attitudes and behaviors, consequently influencing a future action (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010; Hoch & Deighton, 1989). Marketers have extensively examined consumers' emotional

responses to ads (Burke & Edell, 1989) and discovered that emotions may considerably alter brand attitude and attitude toward the ad.

Consumers interact with brands through many occasions and times, where experience is developed based on these encounters which has found to have a direct impact on brand perceptions (Biedenbach & Marell, 2010), or feelings and emotions (Gentile et al., 2007), and behavioral consequences (Fazio & Zanna, 1978). Vice versa, brands can also develop an emotional bond with their consumers derived from positive experiences (Gentile et al., 2007). Echoing this sentiment, many authors discussed that a unfavorable product experience may impact on brand attitudes and cognitions negatively as well (Deighton & Schindler, 1988). On the grounds of these findings, we also expect that the experience perceived through a sponsored content that promotes a brand, will impact consumers' attitude toward the brand positively, considering Instagram and YouTube. On the grounds of these denoted findings, the following hypotheses are presumed:

H2A For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.

H2B For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.

As an always-on strategy for brands, advertising is an essential component of the marketing for promoting a broad variety of consumer goods and services. A cumulatively rising amount of literature has concentrated on grasping how ads impact consumers' attitudes toward promoted brands over the many years. Recent studies conducted (MacKenzie et al., 1986; Mitchell & Olson, 1981) have asserted

evidence that brand attitudes could be influenced by consumers' perceptions toward the advertisements. Additionally, MacKenzie et al. (1986) discovered empirical evidence for the notion that consumers' attitudes regarding advertisements may influence their attitudes toward brands. Based on these articulations, we anticipate that consumers' brand attitude will be shaped positively by the perceptions of consumers towards the ads (i.e., sponsored content). Thus, our following hypotheses are represented as:

H3A For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.

H3B For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.

3.1.3 Purchase intention

As previously stated, scholars pointed out the structural link between brand attitude and purchase intention from the advertisement framework (Brown & Stayman, 1992; MacKenzie et al., 1986). Based on most of the research evaluating these constructs, attitude toward the ad could be expressed an individual's favorable or unfavorable judgments of an advertisement (Kempf & Smith, 1998).

Considering the sponsored contents as a form of advertisement, Hannson and Stanic (2017) have provided evidence that a positive attitude toward sponsored content has an impact on purchase intention of consumers regarding the promoted product, brand, or service in question. Looking from the social media perspective; Chen and Dermawan (2020) and Yüksel (2016) have studied purchase intention on YouTube and findings revealed that there is a considerable influence of make-

up/beauty product-related videos on purchase intention. Consistent with the previous research, Wardhani and Alif (2019) investigated the influence of advertising on Instagram by taking into account of components of brand attitude and as an outcome variable, purchase intention. Since sponsored content has perceived as a kind of advertisement delivered by influencers and promoted by marketers, we also consider the positive link between attitude toward the sponsored content on purchase intention. As a conclusion, our hypotheses are:

H4A For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.

H4B For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.

As discussed above, many researchers have discovered that purchase intention is substantially linked to attitude and individual's preference for a certain brand or product, hence gauging future behavior is dependent on customers' attitudes. A brand's positive attitude, which influences a consumers' decision to purchase a certain brand, contributes to the creation of confidence towards the brand eventually (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In an unclear circumstance regarding a brand, customers rely on certain corporate items for which they have already built a favorable view (Hess & Story, 2005). When consumers have a favorable perception of a brand, it not only affects their long-term preference for the brand but also their likelihood to make a purchase for the brand or service in question (Aaker & Keller, 1990).

From the social media aspect, Yüksel (2016) argued in her research that consumers who developed a favorable attitude toward a product after watching related beauty videos on YouTube had a greater urge to buy the product. In accordance with these assessments of the literature, several research have established a common argument that brand attitude is linked with purchase intention in a favorable and significant manner (Mitchell & Olson, 1981). However, the link between these constructs is needed to be researched on social media platforms, Instagram and YouTube. Regarding the cumulative findings provided by literature, we can also expect the positive relationship among those two constructs. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been developed following the preceding discussions:

H5A For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.

H5B For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.

Purchase intention is highlighted as a significant consequence of brand experience in prior studies (Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011). Consumer experience consists of psychological reactions, cognitive perceptions, and behavioral manifestations arising from mutually overlapping encounters with inputs (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Previous research claims that customers would form preferences and make purchase decisions as a consequence of these interactive encounters (Holbrook, 2007).

According to previous studies, functional benefits do not generate customer attention to take a purchase action; instead, consumers increasingly take their buying

decisions according to the experience elements of the products in question (Schmitt, 1999). Studies conducted within focusing on customer experience have confirmed that the purchase decisions of the consumers will be influenced by brand experience (Ahn & Back, 2018; Yang & He, 2011). Shim, Forsythe, and Kwon (2015) revealed that consumers' online purchasing behaviors are favorably influenced by their perceptions of brand experience when conducted in an online context. Likewise, we also anticipate that consumers' experience related to perceived brand on the social media channels of Instagram and YouTube, will shape their purchase-making decisions. Correspondingly, the hypotheses are postulated below:

H6A For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.

H6B For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.

3.1.4 Attitude toward the sponsored content as a mediator

Prior literature studies have found empirical evidence that attitude toward the ad indicated a mediating impact and linked with brand attitudes and purchase intentions (Lutz, MacKenzie, & Belch, 1983; Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Also, research conducted within experience have confirmed the impact of advertising on the consumers' approach to product experiences (Kempf & Smith, 1998).

Product experience may occur either with the direct physical contact of the consumer with the product, or indirect contact through advertisement or if it is virtually presented (Hoch & Ha 1986). Including Kempf and Smith (1998), previous studies attempted to demonstrate that advertising on product trials can be a decisive

determinant in influencing brand interpretations and attitudes through consumers' buying process. According to the results of these analyses, advertising may mitigate the detrimental effects of poor product experiences on brand perceptions (Deighton & Schindler 1988). Additionally, according to this study, exposing customers to advertising prior to having a negative product experience results in more positive attitudes as compared to having a poor product experience without being exposed to advertising.

In the light of the foregoing literature, we also claim that attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the link between brand experience and purchase intention since we refer to the advertisement in the social media context as sponsored content. Considering these findings, we posit the following hypotheses:

H7A For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

H7B For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

3.1.5 Brand attitude as a mediator

As pointed out by scholars, purchase intention has linked with the brand experience in the same manner that brand attitude has been linked with it (Gabisch & Gwebu, 2011; Moreira et al., 2017; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). It should be denoted that brand experience is widely accepted as a significant construct linked with brand-related responses. Consumers' views of the brand are formed by their past knowledge and experience with it, and these perceptions are the fundamental sources of brand attitude (Lutz et al., 1983) which is a considerably consequence of brand

experience. According to Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010), for the individuals who perceive and value the aspects of experiences (sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral) holistically, brand attitude is more effective on shaping their purchase intention with a stronger correlation, and for the altruistic consumers who are uninterested in experiences the relationship is found to be weaker. Additionally, a positive view about a particular product is an important determinant of customers' purchase intention (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Several studies regarded brand experience as a primary determinant of attitude toward the advertised brand, therefore both constructs are expected to influence consumers' purchase intentions. In line with these arguments, brand attitude as a mediator of purchase intention has been broached by many scholars (Chen, Chang, & Li, 2020).

Marketers should grasp the mediating impact that brand attitude may offer converting the brand's evaluations linked into various prepositions. In the light of the preceding debate and cumulative findings, we also assert that as evaluating the effect of brand experience on purchase intention, the relationship will be significant when the mediator variable involved as brand attitude. Hence, the following hypotheses are presented:

H8A For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

H8B For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

Table 1 below contains a list of asserted hypotheses.

Table 1. List of Hypotheses

HYPOTHESES	
H1A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.
H1B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.
H2A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.
H2B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.
H3A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.
H3B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.
H4A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.
H4B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.
H5A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.
H5B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.
H6A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.
H6B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.

H7A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.
H7B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.
H8A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.
H8B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Measures

4.1.1 Brand experience

In the extant literature, numerous scales were developed to assess each experience dimension and these measurements are concerned with consumers' responses to certain stimuli (e.g., aesthetic items) or activities (e.g., creative thinking). Unlike the brand measures adopted from previously established psychological scales, the scale built by Brakus et al. (2009) that incorporating a more holistic and exhaustive search for the items. Hence, the authors conducted confirmatory factor analyses to determine the appropriate model, which resulted in the development of a four-dimension scale. Therefore, grounding on Schmitt's (1999) dimensions, Brakus et al. (2009) conducted an analysis and generated a scale focused on four distinct dimensions (sensory, emotive, intellectual, and behavioral components) which is also employed to assess brand experience in this study.

For brand experience scale, each experience dimension specified according to Cronbach's alpha values followed as sensory .77, affective .74, behavioral .72, and intellectual .79 which was reported by Brakus et al. (2009). Therefore, to be able to analyze the hypotheses on brand experience, the above mentioned four-dimension scale was adopted in this study and with three different items related to each dimension. However, a reliability test and factor analysis indicated that four items (Sensory3-I, Affective2-I, Behavioral3-I, and Intellectual3-I) needed to be deleted for the Instagram group to build a component for brand experience scale. For the YouTube group, also with the same analyses, four items were eliminated since they

indicated low factor loadings (Sensory3-Y, Affective2-Y, Intellectual3-Y, and Behavioral3-Y). After the removal of specified items, the scales were reliable since Cronbach's alpha values were above .70 for both groups; brand experience on Instagram ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 3.93$ $SD = 10.36$) brand experience on YouTube ($\alpha = .89$, $M = 3.88$ $SD = 9.95$)

4.1.2 Attitude toward the ad sponsored content

The main source of the scale developed within attitude toward the ad to evaluate a person's attitude to a certain advertisement can be traced back to Lee and Mason (1999), with a Cronbach's alpha of .91 reported. Using a four-item scale, Kim, Haley, and Koo (2009) put forward that the Cronbach's alpha of the scale was .946 when they assessed attitude toward the ad. Nevertheless, since sponsored content is regarded as a form of social media advertising, we adopted the attitude toward the ad items to assess sponsored content. For the Instagram group, reliability test and factor analyses were conducted for the attitude toward the sponsored content scale and findings ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 4.12$ $SD = 6.08$) revealed that no item needed to be deleted. YouTube group scores ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 4.10$ $SD = 6.04$) were also computed with the same analyses.

4.1.3 Brand attitude

Although most of the scales assess the attitude toward the brand with semantic differential measures in prior literature studies, brand attitude scale was built by Lee and Mason (1999) with 4 items on a 7-point scale. Likewise, brand attitude was assessed with a four-item Likert scale adapted from Lee and Mason (1999) and also Lee (2000). The reported values for assessing the reliability of the scale, an alpha of

.92 and .93 by Lee and Mason (1999) and Lee (2000) reported an alpha of .89 when they used the scale on two different ads.

For the Instagram group, a reliability test and factor analysis were conducted and findings ($\alpha = .71$, $M = 4.20$ $SD = 4.77$) revealed that there is no need to remove an item. Reliability and factor analysis of the YouTube group however indicated that item4 needed to be removed to increase Cronbach's alpha from .654 to .802.

4.1.4 Purchase intention

A three-item scale adapted from Bruner and Gordon (2009) was used to assess purchase intent. Since this paper attempts to determine the consumers' purchase intentions toward the brand promoted in an ad, or in the same manner, promoted on a sponsored content, the items adopted to this study from the scale of "purchase intention toward the product in the ad". Lepkowska-White, Brashear, and Weinberg (2003) developed the 3-item scale that measure purchase intention toward the ad and reported a Cronbach's alpha of .90.

A reliability test and factor analysis were conducted, and findings ($\alpha = .92$, $M = 4.49$ $SD = 4.47$) revealed that no item required to be eliminated for the Instagram group. Reliability and factor analysis of the YouTube group also showed very similar results ($\alpha = .92$, $M = 4.37$ $SD = 4.56$) and no item needed to be deleted.

All four constructs that this study established on were assessed as multi-item scales and evaluated utilizing previously established scales. To assess all the items that indicated above seven-point Likert scale was utilized in questionnaire (with answers from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized (Cronbach, 1951) to test reliability and for all items,

Cronbach's α was greater than .70 which proves that the internal reliability for this questionnaire is adequate (Nunnally, 1978).

4.2 Sampling, data collection and sample characteristics

As a most-used social media platform and most-visited website, YouTube has an audience of over the age of 18, that consists of 65% of the entire population aged above 18 (Kemp, 2021). Also, YouTube users dispersed into age groups as 18-24 (19%), 25-34 (34%), and 35-44 (16%) (Kemp, 2021), hence, illustrating the fact that the majority of users are between the age of 18-44 (%69). As of November 2021, the Instagram users in Turkey have reached over 50 million (NapoleonCat, 2021) Considering the age distribution of this population (Statista, 2021a), the largest age groups of Instagram are among the ages of 25-34 (35.6%), followed by of the age group of 18-24 (22%) and then the ages of 35-44 (19.6%). Based on the given data above, we identified our target respondents' ages between the range of 18-44. The required sample size at 95% confidence level is calculated as 150 for any population size approximately greater than 56,000,000.

The convenience sampling method was used to collect our sample for the questionnaire since it was an easy and quick approach to gather participants. An online English questionnaire (see Appendix A) was conducted on Google Forms and participants were contacted through e-mail and messages. To reach the target population of 18-44 age group, the survey was distributed to the participants from one of the top state University students and global media agency employees in Istanbul. The university students are selected not only due to their age ranges but also due to their educational background in English. The employees of that global media agency employees were also selected due to the fact that the majority of its

employees consist of very recent graduates of top universities satisfying the age and educational background in English criteria. The data collection period was from October 15 to November 15, 2021. Sample for this research was gathered from a random sample of 222 participants who volunteered and were not rewarded in any manner to participate in the research.

As the first question of the survey, participants were evaluated based on whether they have ever watched sponsored content on Instagram and YouTube to eliminate the non-users and 54 respondents who were not an user of both social media platforms had to be excluded from the sample. Since our target audience was between 18-44 ages, 8 respondents who are out of the 18-44 age limit had to be eliminated. Following the refining process, a total of 62 respondents were eliminated, 160 respondents were included in the study.

4.2.1 Sample characteristics

160 participants (23 male, 134 female and 3 prefer not to say) have contributed to the study with the mean age of the group 21. Monthly household incomes of participants were dispersed (30% with 5000-9999£, 26.5% with 2800-4999£, 21% with 10000-20000£, 10% with above 20000£, 11% with below 2800£). The respondents were asked to select a brand among from a variety of cosmetic product categories at the beginning of the poll (i.e., skincare, shave, makeup, hair care, fragrance, etc.) and more than half of the responses were based on skincare products (52,5%), followed by make up (%24) and hair care (17%). Also, participants who stated that they purchase cosmetic products 1 or 2 times in a typical month were more than half of the responses (58%).

On YouTube, more than half of the participants (53%) spend less than 1 hour watching any content in a typical day, while responses were more dispersed for Instagram participants (33% - watching less than 1 hour, 20% - watching 3 hours or more). All the remaining details of sample characteristics can be seen in Appendix C.

4.3 Pretest and questionnaire design

The survey was pre-tested with the participation of ten respondents between the age groups of 18-44 who submitted the survey. Their recommendations for comprehensibility and clarity were considered in the survey's final design. As a consequence of the pre-test, some definitions and explanations were added to the survey to alleviate any confusion and limit future open interpretations that might contribute to bias. The survey improved due to this pre-test, becoming far more grammatically correct, comprehensible, and clear to prospective participants. Table 2 provides all scale items, and the complete questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2. Adapted Scale Items

Construct	Dimension	Item	Statement	Source
Brand experience	Sensory	SEN1	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	Brakus, Zarantonello & Schmitt (2009)
		SEN2	I find the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform interesting in a sensory way.	
		SEN3	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform does not appeal to my senses. (R)	
	Affective	AFF1	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform induces feelings and sentiments.	

		AFF2	I do not have strong emotions for the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform. (R)	
		AFF3	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social platform is emotional.	
	Intellectual	INT1	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform stimulates my curiosity and problem-solving.	
		INT2	I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform.	
		INT3	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform does not make me think. (R)	
	Behavioral	BEH1	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I see the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform.	
		BEH2	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform results in bodily experiences.	
		BEH3	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform is not action-oriented. (R)	
Attitude toward the sponsored content		ASC1	I like the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X”.	Kim, Haley & Koo (2009)
		ASC2	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is attractive to me.	
		ASC3	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is interesting to me.	
		ASC4	The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is appealing to me.	
Brand attitude		BA1	The “Brand X” in the sponsored content is likely to have the stated ad claims.	Lee and Mason (1999) and Lee (2000)
		BA2	I feel positively towards the “Brand X” as a result of seeing the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X”	
		BA3	I react favorably to the “Brand X” that appears on the sponsored content.	
		BA4	I dislike the “Brand X” promoted on the sponsored content. (R)	

Purchase intention	PI1	If I were looking for this type of product, my likelihood of purchasing the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.	Bruner & Gordon (2009)
	PI2	If I were to buy this type of product, the probability that I would consider buying the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.	
	PI3	If I had to buy this type of product, my willingness to buy the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.	
<i>Note: (R) denotes the reverse item.</i>			

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The dataset became easier to analyze after it was refined, and the open-ended answers obtained in the questions with "other" and "open-ended" options were adjusted. IBM SPSS Statistics software (version 27) was used for the analyses. The analyses were conducted on two groups: participants' responses to the items for Instagram and YouTube, separately.

For all variables, factor analysis was performed under Pallant's (2016) guidelines. In this research, the twelve variables were examined using factor analysis while brand experience dimensions were quantified using twelve independent questions. Reliability and factor analysis were used to examine the other components, such as attitudes and purchase intention as well. The hypotheses related for the brand experience, attitude toward the sponsored content, brand attitude, and purchase intention were tested using a regression analysis. Mediation analysis was also undertaken using SPSS PROCESS extension, which tested if brand attitude and attitude toward the sponsored content could influence the link among brand experience and purchase intention.

5.1 Missing values and outliers

Due to the constraints used in online surveys, which prohibit respondents from missing any answers when answering the questions, the data did not include any missing values. Due to not complying with the age criteria, 8 respondents were removed from the dataset. After excluding the 8 replies, the remaining data ($n = 160$) was examined for univariate and multivariate outliers. For univariate outlier analysis,

the data was first transformed into standard scores (z-scores) and then evaluated using the threshold value of 4 proposed by Hair, Black, and Babin (2010). As a result, no values were discovered as univariate outliers.

Using a threshold value of 3, the Mahalanobis distance was calculated and verified for multivariate outliers (Hair et al. 2010). Three respondents were found to be multivariate outliers. Following a thorough analysis of each case, no unique conditions that may have influenced the outcomes were uncovered. Furthermore, no statistically significant difference in R square values was found when comparing the deletion and inclusion of outliers in the data set. As a consequence, the outliers were kept based on Hair et al. (2010)'s proposal to keep outliers until they have a major influence on the outcome.

5.2 Factor analysis

Before conducting factor analysis, assumptions were checked on scale items of all measures independently. A sample adequacy metric known as Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was found to be .85 for the Instagram group, while the YouTube group's KMO was .84, which is above the .60 criterion asserted by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). Hair et al. (2010) suggested that factor loadings should be between .30 and .40 for the minimum values.

As a first step, following Pallant's (2016) guideline on SPSS, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) method was employed to evaluate the twelve brand experience items for the Instagram group. Varimax Rotated Component Matrix is used to get more accurate findings. On the first run, contrary to Brakus et al.'s (2009) findings, the 12 items did not load on 4 distinct factors. However, the dimensions were loaded mostly into one single factor. The remaining items showed

inconsistency since they loaded into the second factor while belonging to the different dimensions (e.g., Sensory3-I, Affective2-I, Behavioral3-I, and Intellectual3-I). All factor loadings of the first run are demonstrated in Table 3 below:

Table 3. PCA for Brand Experience, Instagram I

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
SEN1I	0,862	0,028
SEN2I	0,820	0,041
SEN3I	0,080	0,731
AFF1I	0,747	0,067
AFF2I	0,071	0,803
AFF3I	0,688	0,009
BEH1I	0,788	0,084
BEH2I	0,761	0,082
BEH3I	-0,154	0,648
INT1I	0,762	-0,025
INT2I	0,739	-0,016
INT3I	0,144	0,755

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

To have a more meaningful data model, the Sensory3-I item has been removed that had less than the .3 threshold value. Also, according to the reliability test, removing the Sensory3-I item would enhance the Cronbach's alpha from .649 to .879. We also excluded Affective2-I item with threshold values less than .30 on the loaded factor for the same reasons. Furthermore, removing the Affective2-I component would raise the Cronbach's alpha from .403 to .585. After removing Sensory3-I and Affective2-I, the sensory and affective dimensions yielded consistent results, accumulating into one component.

Measuring the behavioral component alone did not provide a single factor loading. Therefore, Behavioral3-I item with a factor loading of less than .30 was required to be eliminated, and a reliability test revealed that after the Behavioral3-I item was removed, the Cronbach's alpha would increase from .466 to .749. In the same vein, the reliability test revealed a rise from .573 to .780 if the item Intellectual3-I was deleted. When Behavioral3-I and Intellectual3-I were removed from the data set, the remaining four behavioral and intellectual variables produced consistent findings since they were also loaded into a single component.

Following all the eliminations mentioned above, in the final sprint of PCA, one component is yielded that comprises 8 total items as sensory (2 items), affective (2 items), behavioral (2 items), and intellectual (2 items) for the Instagram group. The table below shows the final factor loadings. The scale was reliable since Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale (.903) was above 0.70.

Table 4. PCA for Brand Experience, Instagram II

Component Matrix^a

	Component 1
SEN1I	0,864
SEN2I	0,820
BEH1I	0,793
BEH2I	0,771
INT1I	0,759
AFF1I	0,752
INT2I	0,735
AFF3I	0,685

Extraction Method: Principal Component

Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

For the YouTube data group, the same analysis was conducted with PCA, and the first run yielded two factors similar to Instagram group results. However, the items loaded into the same factor also did not disseminate meaningfully. All factor loadings of the first run are demonstrated in Table 5 below:

Table 5. PCA for Brand Experience, YouTube I

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
SEN1Y	0,800	0,064
SEN2Y	0,811	0,083
SEN3Y	0,105	0,697
AFF1Y	0,767	0,066
AFF2Y	0,051	0,765
AFF3Y	0,692	0,059
BEH1Y	0,773	0,109
BEH2Y	0,690	0,124
BEH3Y	-0,133	0,669
INT1Y	0,794	0,015
INT2Y	0,686	-0,066
INT3Y	0,206	0,674

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

With factor loading value below .30, Sensorial3-Y item were eliminated while the reliability test also verified that the deletion of the item would increase Cronbach's alpha from .655 to .844. After deletion of Sensorial3-Y, 3 other items still loaded below the threshold value .30. Another item, Affective2-Y showed a case with the item removal, Cronbach's alpha would increase from .429 to .664. For the sake of clarity, sensory and affective items were eliminated from the factor analysis. Behavioral3-I and Intellectual3-I items were the only ones to remain after the

elimination. Numerous scenarios with selected variables were tested to get a comprehensive understanding of the structure. As an interesting fact, intellectual variables loaded into the same factor with values above .30 when tested independently. Yet, the scale reliability was below the .70 threshold value, so this case was also not adequate to build a one-component factor with all intellectual items. Removing the intellectual variables from the data set demonstrated that all items loaded on the same factor except Behavioral3-Y. When deleted, the reliability test indicated an increasing Cronbach's alpha value from .481 to .715 and all the remaining variables loaded into the same factor.

Eventually, what the analyses yielded in the final sprint of PCA are one component that involved 8 total items as sensory (2 items), affective (2 items), behavioral (2 items), and intellectual (2 items) for the YouTube group. Table 6 below shows the final factor loadings. The scale is reliable since Cronbach's alpha for the whole scale (.892) was above .70

Table 6. PCA for Brand Experience, YouTube II

Component Matrix^a	
	Component 1
SEN1Y	0,804
SEN2Y	0,814
AFF1Y	0,774
AFF3Y	0,696
BEH1Y	0,782
BEH2Y	0,704
INT1Y	0,790
INT2Y	0,673

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 1 components extracted.

5.3 Hypotheses testing

Linear regression analysis approach was employed to test the assumptions of this study, in accordance with Pallant's SPSS guideline (2016). As a result of PCA, the brand experience dimensions loaded as one factor. Therefore, brand experience was employed in three distinct regression analyses against the single attitude toward the sponsored content, brand attitude, and purchase intention as dependent variables. In order to analyze the correlation between brand experience with other dependent variables, linear regression analysis was utilized.

First, we looked at scatterplots to see if there was a linearity between brand experience and the dependent variables. Scatter plots did not demonstrate any nonlinear relationship. Also, conducting a prior Pearson Correlation test indicated that the variables are positively correlated when analyzed for Instagram and YouTube data groups separately and the p-value was smaller than 0.01, hence significant. The data's multicollinearity was investigated to see whether there was any correlation between multiple independent variables. Therefore, the tolerance and variation inflation factors (VIF) were investigated. None of the variables surpassed the threshold value of 5 as Kline (1988) suggested hence there was no concern with multicollinearity.

5.2.1 Hypotheses 1A and 1B

The first two hypotheses investigate the link between brand experience and attitude toward the sponsored content constructs, for Instagram and YouTube. The regression analysis was performed where the independent variable was brand experience and the dependent variable was attitude toward the sponsored content, with a 95% confidence interval.

In this model, a significant result was found ($F(1,158) = 156.597, p < 0.001$) with $R^2 = .498$. For hypothesis 1A, brand experience was accountable for about 50% of the variance in attitude toward the sponsored content.

Table 7. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,706 ^a	0,498	0,495	1,08148
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI				
b. Dependent Variable: ASCI				

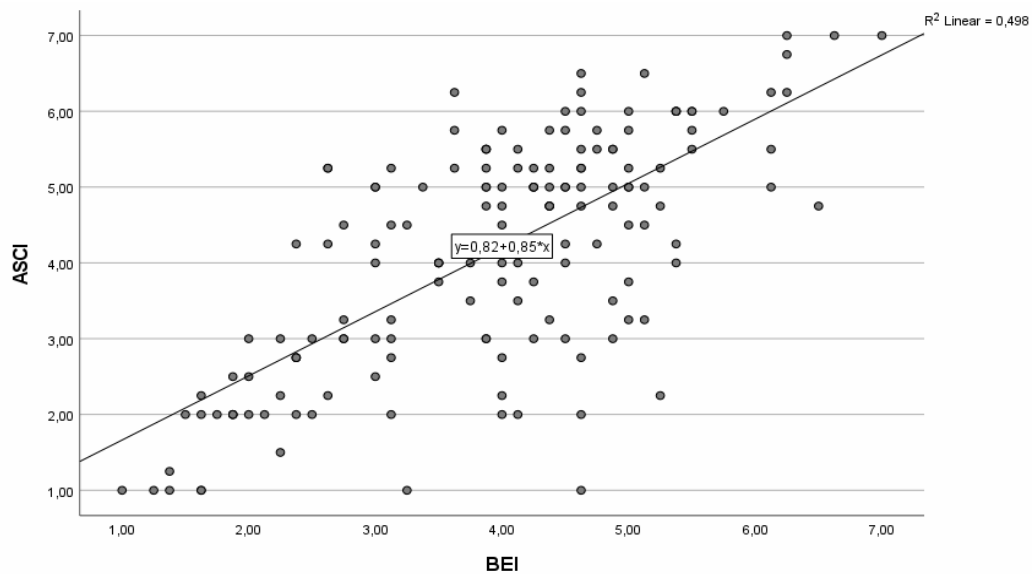


Figure 1: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Attitude toward the sponsored content (I)

Table 7 and Figure 1 reveal that H1A was supported and that brand experience has a favorable influence on the attitude toward sponsored content

published on Instagram, as shown by the findings. For the testing of Hypothesis 1B, a similar analysis method was used. In this model, a significant result was found ($F(1,158) = 151.413, p < 0.001, R^2 = .489$). Thus, brand experience was accountable for about 49% of the variance in attitude toward the sponsored content.

Table 8. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	,700 ^a	0,489	0,486	1,08355
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY				
b. Dependent Variable: ASCY				

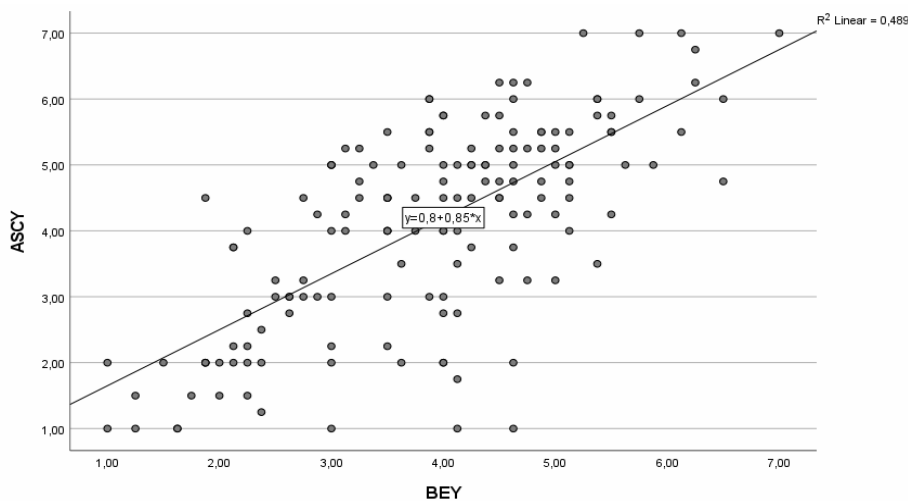


Figure 2: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Attitude toward the sponsored content (Y)

With regards to the YouTube, it is evident from the findings in Table 8 and Figure 2 that there is a favorable relationship between brand experience and attitude

toward sponsored content on that platform. Hence, H1B was supported. With regards to current findings, very similar results have been found for the Instagram group ($R^2 = .498$) and YouTube group ($R^2 = .489$).

5.2.2 Hypotheses 2A and 2B

In the hypothesis group of H2, it was hypothesized that brand experience has a favorable influence on brand attitude for both social media platforms Instagram and YouTube. For testing H2A for Instagram, we also conducted regression analysis. A significant result was found ($F(1,158) = 108.310, p < 0.001$) with $R^2 = .407$. It can be concluded that about 41% of the variance in brand attitude can be predicted by brand experience. Based on these findings, H2A can be considered as supported.

Table 9. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Brand Attitude, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	,638 ^a	0,407	0,403	0,92304
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI				
b. Dependent Variable: BAI				

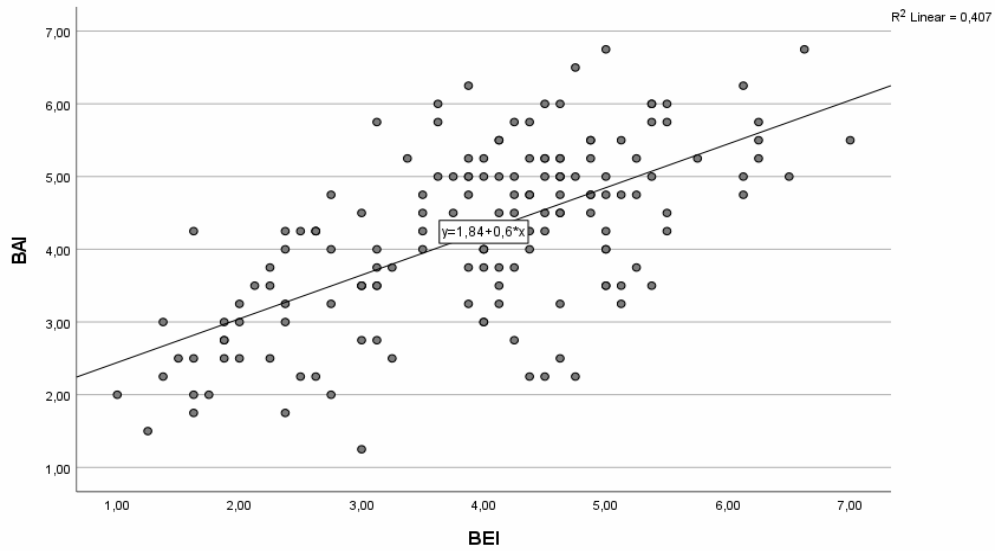


Figure 3: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (I)

Following the same method, we conducted the regression analysis for the YouTube data group to test H2B. The results indicated very similar values to the H2A findings. A significant result was found ($F(1,158) = 114.580, p < 0.001$) with $R^2 = .420$. In the model, brand experience was observed to explain 42% of the variance in brand attitude. Considering these findings, H2B was supported.

Table 10. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Brand Attitude, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
4	,648 ^a	0,420	0,417	1,02702
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY				
b. Dependent Variable: BAY				

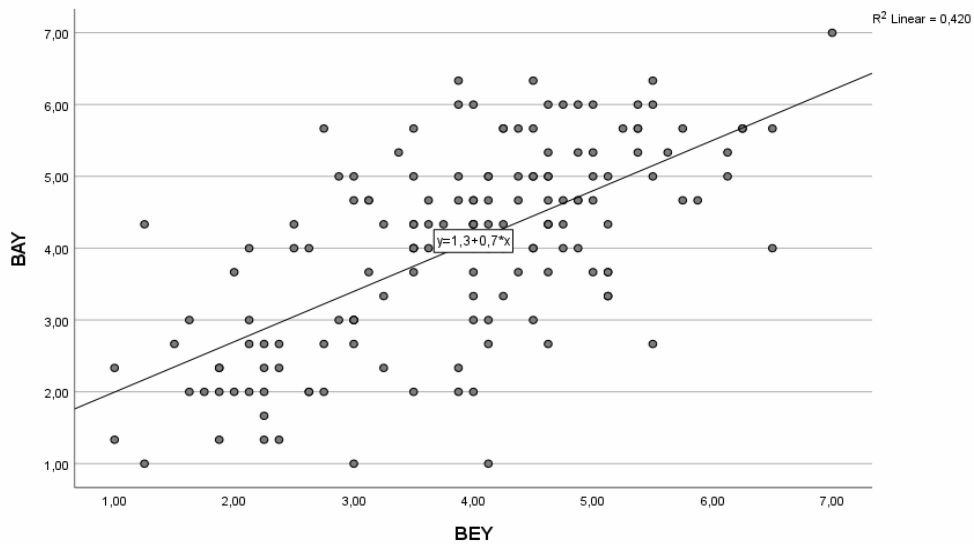


Figure 4: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (Y)

5.2.3 Hypotheses 3A and 3B

Stepping forward to the third group of hypotheses, the link between attitude toward the sponsored content and brand attitude was assessed for both social media platforms. In testing H3A, the analysis showed that $p < .001$ with $F(1,158) = 216.496$ so this model was accepted as statistically significant.

Table 11. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Brand Attitude, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
5	,760 ^a	0,578	0,575	0,77838
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCI				
b. Dependent Variable: BAI				

According to the results of the model, attitude toward sponsored content accounted for around 58 % in brand attitude. Figure 5 illustrates the association between these variables using a linear regression graph, which is provided below:

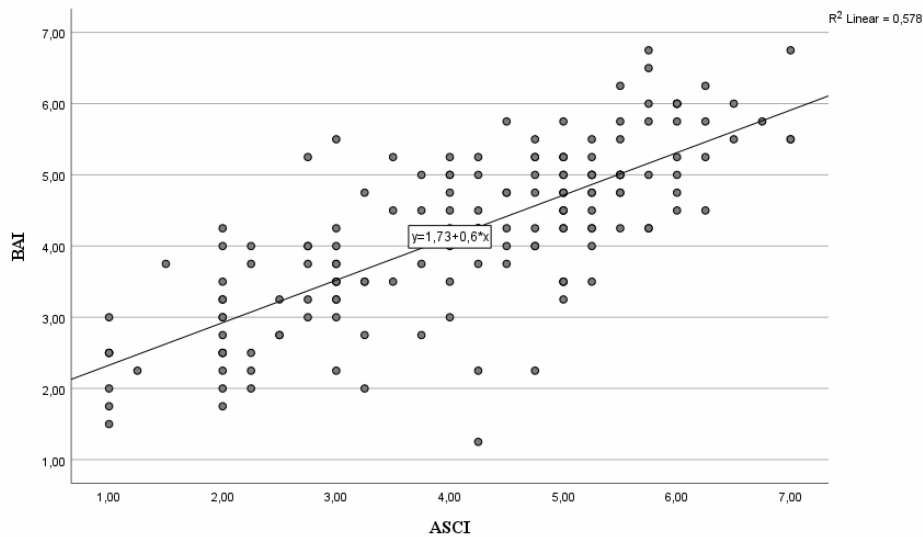


Figure 5: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (I)

Based on the findings presented in Table 11 and Figure 5, H3A was supported and for Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive influence on brand attitude of consumers.

Testing H3B, the analysis showed that $p < .001$ with $F(1,158) = 172.761$ so this model was accepted as statistically significant. Also, for YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content explained the 52% of the variance in brand attitude. The linear regression graph is presented below in Figure 6 to demonstrate the positive relationship between the variables.

Table 12. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Brand Attitude, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,723 ^a	0,522	0,519	0,93233
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCY				
b. Dependent Variable: BAY				

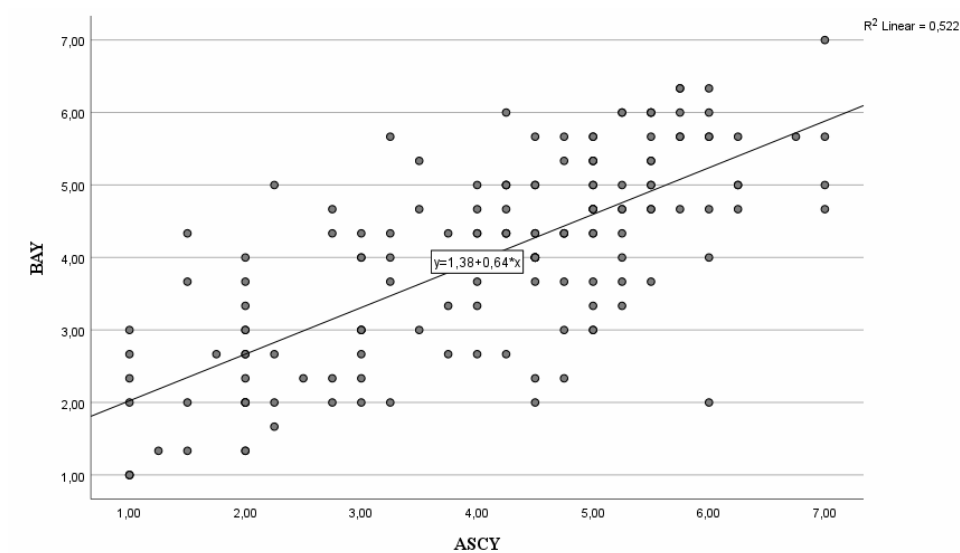


Figure 6: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Brand attitude (Y)

Following these results, H3B was given support, and when taking into consideration YouTube, it can be concluded that one's attitude toward sponsored content has a beneficial impact on one's attitude about a particular brand. Regarding the findings, it can be stated that the attitude toward sponsored content has more predictive potential in predicting the increase in brand attitude for the Instagram group than it does for the YouTube group.

5.2.4 Hypotheses 4A and 4B

Proceeding on hypotheses with 4A and 4B, we tested the positive impact of attitude toward the sponsored content on purchase. Conducting linear regression analysis, attitude toward the sponsored content significantly predicted purchase intention with $p < .001$ ($F(1,158) = 120.788$).

Table 13. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
7	,658 ^a	0,433	0,430	1,12647
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCI				
b. Dependent Variable: PII				

According to the revealed findings, attitude toward the sponsored content accounted for 43% of the variance in purchase intention. A linear regression graph was created for Instagram group in order to determine the positive influence of attitude toward sponsored content on purchase intention. The graph is shown below in Figure 7.

Based on the presented findings, H4A was supported, and considering Instagram, these results clearly depict that attitude toward the sponsored content positively affects purchase intention.

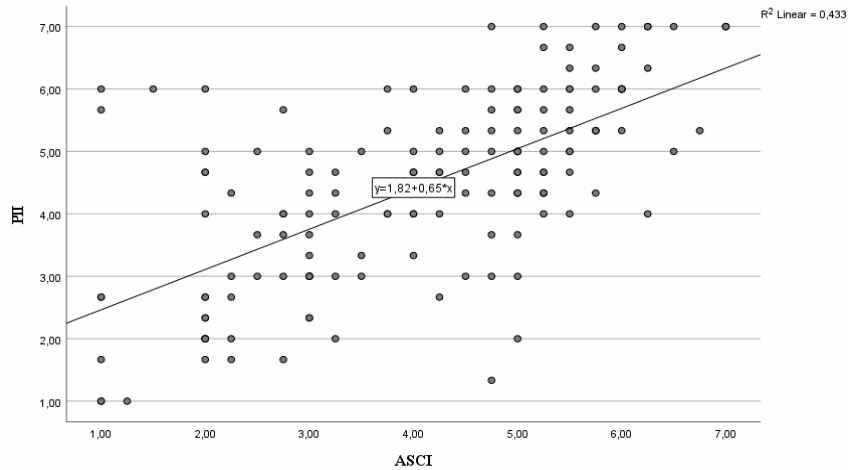


Figure 7: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)

Testing the hypothesis H4B, the same regression analysis was employed, and the model was also statistically significant with $p < .001$ ($F(1,158) = 90.308$). Moreover, $R^2 = .364$ depicts that attitude toward the sponsored content explains 36% of the variance in purchase intention. A linear regression graph was built for the YouTube group provided below in Figure 8 to observe the relationship between attitude toward the sponsored content and purchase intention.

Table 14. Regression Model for Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
8	,603 ^a	0,364	0,360	1,21876
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCY				
b. Dependent Variable: PIY				

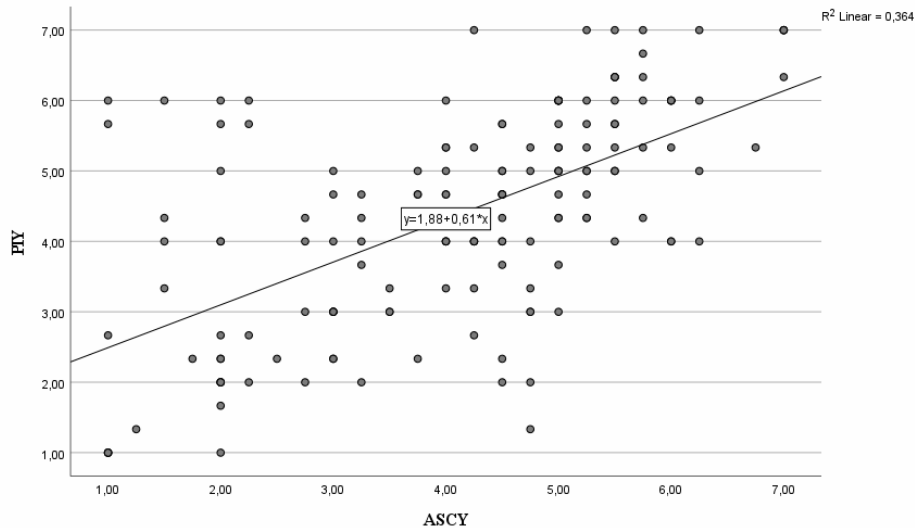


Figure 8: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)

The results presented above indicated that for YouTube, consumers' attitude toward the sponsored content positively affects purchase intention. Thus, it can be regarded as H4B was supported.

YouTube analysis findings showed that attitude toward the sponsored content explained 36% of the variance in purchase intention which was relatively lower than Instagram findings (43%). In this instance, Instagram group's findings compared to the YouTube's yielded a greater predictor value of attitude toward the sponsored content to explain the variance in purchase intention.

5.2.5 Hypotheses 5A and 5B

Hypotheses 5A and 5B were concerned with the link between brand attitude and buy intention on Instagram and YouTube. In testing hypotheses 5A and 5B with regression analysis, findings showed that both models were statistically significant with $p < .001$. Testing H5A, the model predicted 45% of the variance in purchase

intention for the Instagram data group with ($F(1,158) = 131.056, p < 0.001$). A linear regression graph is presented below.

Table 15. Regression Model for Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
9	,673 ^a	0,453	0,450	1,10629
a. Predictors: (Constant), BAI				
b. Dependent Variable: PII				

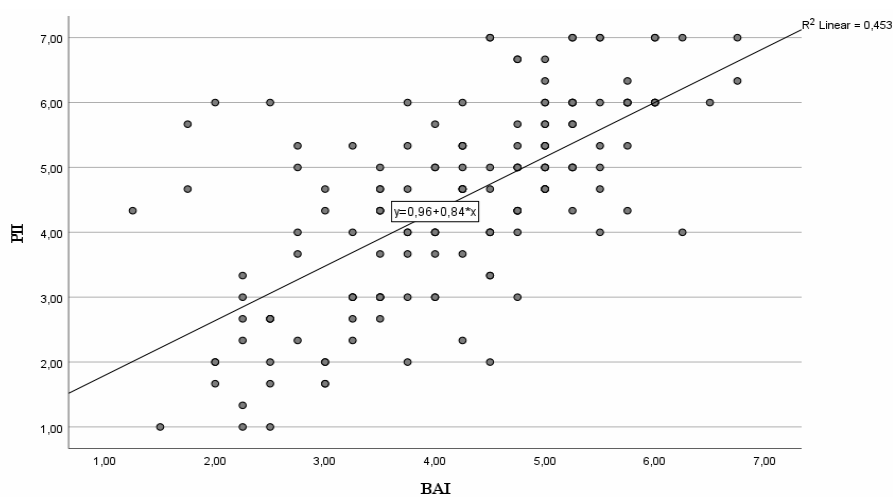


Figure 9: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)

The results presented above clearly depict that the more that a consumer have a favorable attitude toward the brand, the more likely that consumer will buy its product. Therefore, H5A was supported. Testing H5B, also yielded very close results with H5A ($F(1,158) = 130.225, p < 0.001$). Brand attitude explained 45.3% of the variance in purchase intention for Instagram whereas for YouTube the value was 45.2%. Eventually, it is claimed that brand attitude has a comparable favorable

significant influence on customers' purchase intentions across both social media platforms: Instagram and YouTube. Thus, H5B was also supported.

Table 16. Regression Model for Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
10	,672 ^a	0,452	0,448	1,13123
a. Predictors: (Constant), BAY				
b. Dependent Variable: PIY				

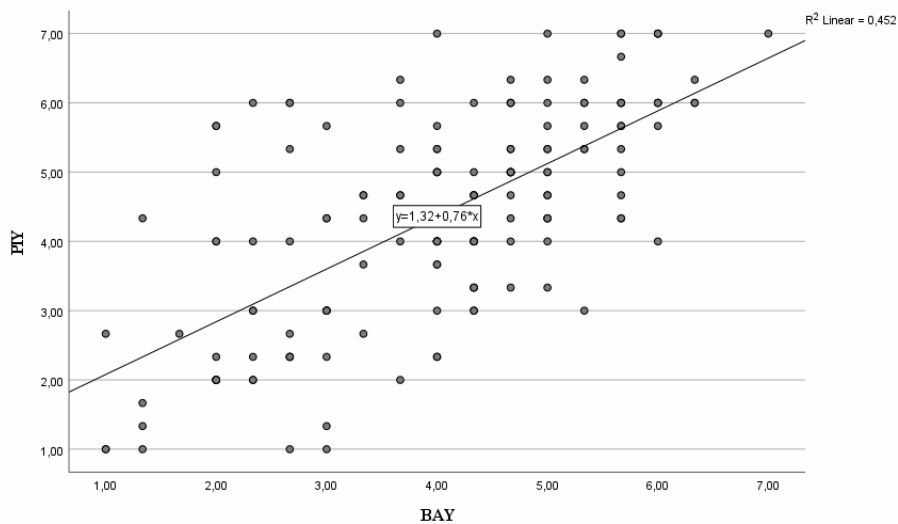


Figure 10: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)

5.2.6 Hypotheses 6A and 6B

Hypotheses 6A and 6B assume that brand experience has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention for both social media platforms. Following the same methods explained above, regression analysis in testing H6A showed a statistically significant result ($p < .001$, $F(1,158) = 62.025$). For Instagram group, brand

experience explained the 28% variance in purchase intention which an acceptable finding that confirms the correlation between the constructs.

Table 17. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Purchase Intention, Instagram

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
11	,531 ^a	0,282	0,280	1,26801
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI				
b. Dependent Variable: PII				

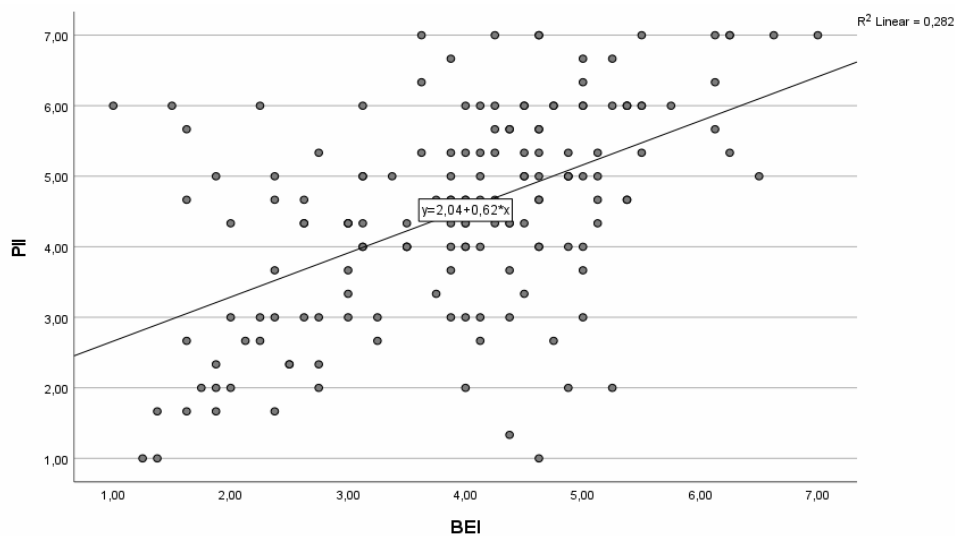


Figure 11: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (I)

All things considered, H6A was supported since specified results predicted that brand experience positively affects purchase intention. Testing H6B, brand experience explained only 22% of the variance in purchase intention ($p < .001$, $F(1,158) = 46.722$) for the YouTube group which is lower compared to the Instagram group (28%). However, H6B was also supported.

Table 18. Regression Model for Brand Experience and Purchase Intention, YouTube

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
12	,478 ^a	0,228	0,236	1,34225
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY				
b. Dependent Variable: PIY				

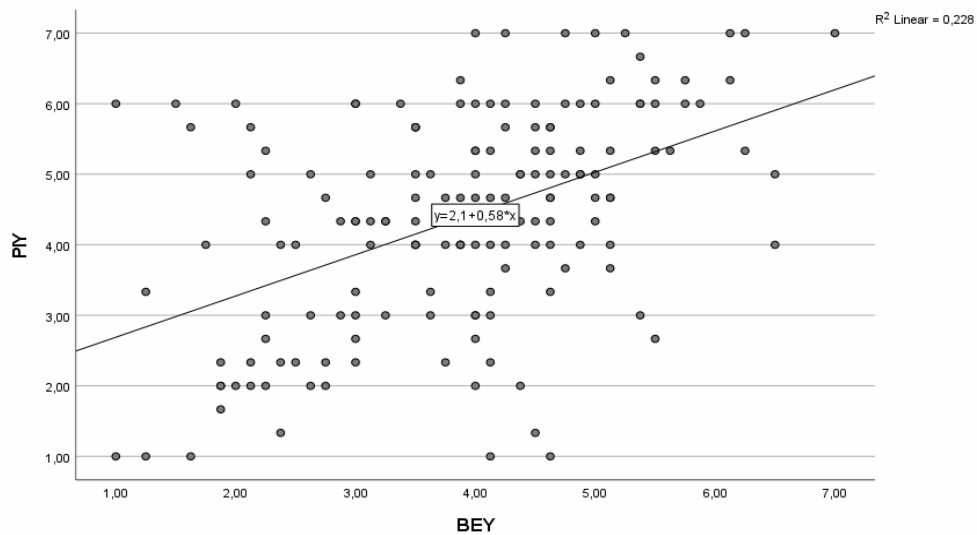


Figure 12: Scattered Linear Regression Plot. DV: Purchase Intention (Y)

5.2.7 Hypotheses 7A and 7B

For testing H7A and H7B, a mediation analysis was carried out on SPSS using Hayes' PROCESS (v4) extension, to test the postulated hypotheses that attitude toward the sponsored content has a mediating role on the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention. Mediating factors explain the process through whether an intervention produces the result. In mediation analysis, we used Model 4 to process variables on SPSS.

To test hypothesis 7A, the model is analyzed with the given variables respectively: brand experience as independent variable, purchase intention as the dependent variable, and attitude toward the sponsored content as a mediator variable. First, brand experience is significantly affected by the attitude toward the sponsored content ($\beta = .8469$, $s.e. = .0677$, $p < .001$). Second, results showed that brand experience positively and significantly predicts purchase intention ($\beta = .6249$, $s.e. = .0793$, $p < .001$). Third, regression was used to determine purchase intention, with the mediating variable representing attitude toward sponsored content in the brand experience. However, when mediated by attitude toward the sponsored content, the direct effect of brand experience to purchase intention is not significant ($\beta = .1559$, $s.e. = .0990$, $p = .1172$) which indicates full mediation.

Table 19. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, Instagram

OUTCOME	VARIABLE: PII						
Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,6649	0,4421	1,2572	62,2008	2	157	0
Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
constant	1,5855	0,2972	5,3351	0	0,9985	2,1725	
BEI	0,1559	0,099	1,5752	0,1172	-0,0396	0,3515	
ASCI	0,5537	0,0825	6,7138	0	0,3908	0,7167	
Standardized coefficients							
	coeff						
BEI	0,1325						
ASCI	0,5647						

The findings indicate that as a consequence of brand experience, the β value of purchase intention decreases from 0.6249 to 0.1559. As a result, the impact of brand experience on purchase intention were diminished when the mediator variable, attitude toward sponsored content, has been included. Additionally, the model can anticipate around 44% of the change in purchase intention. ($R^2 = .4421$). In this setting, the predictability power of brand experience on explaining the purchase intention is positive, which is considerably mediated by attitude toward sponsored content (95% *CI*, .3248 to .6032) for the Instagram group. Considering these findings, H7A is accepted. The total, direct and indirect impacts of mediation analysis are presented in Appendix E.

As testing H7B, the same methodology was followed with a mediation analysis for the YouTube group. As a starting point, we observed that brand experience and attitude toward sponsored content had favorable and statistically significant impacts on purchase intention $p < 0.001$ in this model. Overall, brand experience has a favorable and considerable total effect on purchase intention ($\beta = .5849$, *s.e.* = 0856, $p < .001$). However, when mediated by attitude toward the sponsored content, the direct effect of brand experience to purchase intention is not significant ($\beta = .1339$, *s.e.* = 0967, $p > .005$) which indicates the mediator role of attitude toward the sponsored content. Also, the model can predict approximately 37% of the increase in purchase intention ($R^2 = .3698$). The detailed analysis of mediation is presented in Table 20.

In this context, a favorable predictive correlation existed between brand experience and purchase intention in this scenario, which is mediated by attitude toward sponsored content significantly (95% *CI*, .2798 to .6026) for the YouTube

group. Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that hypothesis 7B is also acceptable.

Appendix E includes the overall, direct, and indirect impacts of mediation analysis.

Table 20. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Attitude Toward the Sponsored Content and Purchase Intention, YouTube

OUTCOME	VARIABLE: PIY						
Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,6081	0,3698	1,4805	46,0642	2	157	0
Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
constant	1,6798	0,3241	5,1828	0	1,0396	2,32	
BEY	0,1339	0,1086	1,2337	0,2192	-0,0805	0,3483	
ASCY	0,5306	0,0893	5,939	0	0,3541	0,707	
Standardized coefficients							
	coeff						
BEY	0,1094						
ASCY	0,5266						

5.2.8 Hypotheses 8A and 8B

Following the previous analysis method, the link among brand experience and purchase intention is investigated when mediated by brand attitude for H8A and H8B. The hypotheses are assessed with the given variables correspondingly: brand experience as the independent variable, purchase intention as the dependent variable, and brand attitude as a mediator variable. First, analysis findings demonstrated that brand experience is significantly affected by brand attitude ($\beta = .6011$ s.e. = .0578, $p < .001$). Second, brand experience positively and significantly predicts purchase

intention (β . 6249, s.e. = .0793, $p < .001$). Third, regression was carried out predicting purchase intention when the mediating variable involved as brand attitude. Consequently, when mediated by brand attitude, the direct effect of brand experience to purchase intention is not significant ($\beta = .2014$, s.e. = .0887, $p = .0246$) indicating full mediation.

Table 21. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, Instagram

OUTCOME	VARIABLE: PII						
Model Summary	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,6861	0,4708	1,1925	69,8279	2	157	0
Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
constant	0,7396	0,331	2,2345	0,0269	0,0858	1,3933	
BEI	0,2014	0,0887	2,2702	0,0246	0,0262	0,3766	
BAI	0,7045	0,0941	7,4852	0	0,5186	0,8904	
Standardized coefficients	coeff						
BEI	0,1711						
BAI	0,5642						

Based on the foregoing data, brand experience and purchase intention are positively correlated and mediated by brand attitude significantly (95% *CI*, .3015 to .4563) for the Instagram group. Thereupon, hypothesis 8A is supported. The total, direct, and indirect impacts of mediation analysis are presented in Appendix E.

H8B was also assessed using the same methodology for the YouTube group. The total effect of brand experience to purchase intention is positive and significant ($\beta = .5849$, $s.e. = 0856$, $p < .001$). Nonetheless, when mediated by brand attitude, the direct effect of brand experience to purchase intention not resulted statistically significant ($\beta = .0886$, $s.e. = 0948$, $p = .3515$) which signifies the mediation role of brand attitude. Additionally, the model can predict the increase in purchase intention by approximately 45%.

Table 22. Mediation Analysis for Brand Experience, Brand Attitude and Purchase Intention, Youtube

OUTCOME	VARIABLE: PIY						
Model Summary							
	R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	0,6744	0,4548	1,2807	65,4969	2	157	0
Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
constant	1,1866	0,3152	3,7645	0,0002	0,564	1,8092	
BEY	0,0886	0,0948	0,9345	0,3515	-0,0986	0,2757	
BAY	0,7082	0,0877	8,0788	0	0,5351	0,8814	
Standardized coefficients							
	coeff						
BEY	0,0723						
BAY	0,6253						

Furthermore, the study found that as a mediator, brand attitude positively and substantially influences the connection between brand experience and purchase intention (95% *CI*, .3531 to .6542) for the YouTube group. As it can be observed, the mediating impact of brand attitude is .49 which indicates a strong mediation.

Consequently, it is expected that hypothesis 8B is supported. The total, direct, and indirect impacts of mediation analysis are exhibited in Appendix E. The hypotheses and their confirmatory status are also stated in Appendix F.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 General discussion

The way back from 1980s, brand experience has been the focus of academics. As a result, sponsored content as a contemporary form of advertising has been a significant concern since the ascent of social media channels. Due to the long-term consequence of pandemic, the prominence of many advertisement forms on social media platforms has been escalated.

From four different perspectives, this research makes a contribution to literature from the consumer behavior aspect. Initially, this study evaluates consumers' brand experience through sponsored content shared and promoted both on Instagram and YouTube. Second, it also aims to explore how brand experience relates to "sponsored content" considering it as an attractive form of advertising, whereas the link between those two constructs has not been put under the scope from the social media framework. Brand experience has a considerable impact on key customer metrics (i.e., attitude toward the sponsored content, brand attitude, purchase intention), according to this study. Correspondingly, both attitude toward sponsored content and brand attitude found to be acting as mediators while explaining the link between brand experience and purchase intention.

In pursuit of elucidating and comprehending brand experience in relation with other metrics that embodies consumer behavior (i.e., purchase intention), the main outcomes of the analysis affirmed the positive and significant relationship with brand experience and for across all constructs. For example, regarding brand experience as a fundamental independent variable, the findings proved that for both

Instagram and YouTube groups, brand experience influences each construct separately in a favorable and significant manner. Similarly, initial findings pointed out that attitude toward the sponsored content influenced by brand experience substantially and positively, with very close results for Instagram and YouTube. Also, Instagram and YouTube both received remarkably similar scores in our study due to the obvious favorable influence of brand experience on brand attitude while confirming empirical findings of previous studies (Rajumesh, 2014; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013). As expected, attitude toward sponsored content is positively and significantly linked to brand attitude and purchase intention as an outcome for both social media platforms. In accordance with previous research, brand attitude had a favorable influence on purchase intention (Mitchell & Olson, 1981) resulted in statistically similar scores on both Instagram and YouTube.

All things considered, brand experience was also positively associated with purchase intention, indicating that brand experience influences the behavioral outcomes of customers, which is persistent with previous findings (Shim et al., 2015, Yang & He, 2011; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). As an outcome, the Instagram group has shown higher impact scores for explaining the purchase intention through brand experience. Lastly, the study verifies that both attitude toward the ad and brand attitude demonstrated significantly mediating effects on explaining the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention constructs.

It is essential that consumer research should examine the concept of experience and social media advertisements in a broader context, given its relevance. Leveraging technology and social media, marketers should embrace novel ways to build connection with their consumers via brand experience. That interaction between brand experience, attitude toward the sponsored content and brand attitude

might be a strategic asset for influencing customers' purchase intentions, according to this study. This research not only derives from the contemporary articulation of brand experience by Brakus et al. (2009), but also provides insight on the fundamental relationship through which brand experience affects behavioral outcomes such as purchase intention, for both social media platforms Instagram and YouTube.

6.2 Limitations and further research

A cross-country study could be the focus of future study due to the fact that this study's sample is restricted to one country (i.e., Turkey). As a result, future studies should explore multiple cultures to expand the comprehensiveness of the results. Additionally, the online implication of the questionnaire reduced the number of replies and since it was not convenient to monitor the progress of the questionnaire online, the chance to compute the response rate was eliminated.

In the survey, before answering the questions, participants were requested to pick from a variety of cosmetics product categories and a brand that is promoted on both Instagram and YouTube. The next study should be conducted on a variety of product segments, and cross-segment analysis should be used in subsequent research to better understand the brand experience construct. Further research should aim at investigating the brand experience influence on purchase intention mediated by attitudes on different social media channels (e.g., TikTok). This research puts an effort to discern the effects of brand experience on the sponsored content produced by content creators. Further studies may investigate brand experience and brand attitude toward Instagram ads and YouTube ads.

The scope of this paper is on brand experience and brand attitude toward sponsored content in general. Further research may consider specifically the influencer impact by covering influencer credibility, product familiarity to assess experience and attitude toward brands promoted by sponsored content.

Future research might widen the scope of this study by considering more determinants that could explain the dynamics within development of brand experience (e.g., brand credibility) and therefore, contributing to the pursuit of depicting consumer behavior. Nonetheless, as a result of the brand experience model, future research may include unique outcomes in addition to purchase intention and other customer indicators (e.g., brand loyalty, consumer satisfaction).

6.3 Practical implications

This research provides considerable deductions for advertisers, especially those that have a target audience of experiential consumers with their campaigns. According to our findings, brand experience has a substantial influence on customers' purchasing decisions. When seen in a broader context, our results provide a perspective on the validity of brand experience as a meaningful brand attribute. We believe that relationships built via brand experience may extract value beyond inherent product qualities. Sponsored content strategies on Instagram and YouTube may benefit from enhanced knowledge of the value and breadth of brand experience on these two social media platforms. Also, marketers should elevate brand experience as a meaningful brand attribute and as a novel performance indicator for the evaluation of sponsored content, along with the other measurement metrics of social media, such as engagement rate, reach or impressions.

As the study's core conclusion, that strong predictive power of brand experience on purchase intention, should be enhanced by marketers. It is essential to have a deeper knowledge of the dynamics of brand experiences through sponsored content on Instagram and YouTube, to amplify and improve the success of brand initiatives aimed at stimulating positive brand experiences. Ultimately, the outcomes of this study may shed light for managers with emerging brand experience as a new determinant of performance along with other customer metrics (e.g., brand loyalty) to grasp the essence of the underlying behaviors and eventually accelerate the behavioral outcomes of consumers such as intent to purchase.

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

The study you are about to participate in is an academic research about promoted brands on social media platforms namely Instagram and YouTube. To complete this research, you will be asked to answer 6 demographic questions, 1 purchase frequency question, 2 questions about social media platform usage habits, and 23 different statements. The aim of the study is to understand your experience and feelings about sponsored content that promotes a brand on Instagram & YouTube. We kindly ask you to support this research by devoting approximately 10 minutes of your time.

Your responses will remain anonymous. If you received the survey link sent by the Human Resources Department, the participants who attended the survey will also be anonymous for the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department has no access to the data. Only the researcher and the project coordinator will have access to the data just for educational research purposes. Since no identifiable data (i.e. Id, Name & Surname, IP address, etc.) is collected from the respondents, there is no way to match the responses with the respondents. Collected data will not be shared with other parties and will be kept confidential and can be used for further research. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. If you decide to participate in this research survey, you may withdraw at any time without any penalty. Upon exit, the responses will not be saved or used. If you participate in this survey, there are no known risks. Participation in this study does not imply any payment or compensation.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact researcher İrem Duygu Göçer (iremdygocer@yahoo.com, +905558510857) and project coordinator Assist. Prof. Belgin Arisan (belgin.arisan@boun.edu.tr, +902123597150). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact The Ethics Committee for Master and Ph.D. Theses in Social Sciences and (SOBETİK) via sbe-ethics@boun.edu.tr

Thank you for your participation.

Sponsored content is a type of promotional media when an influencer partners with a brand and gets paid to promote a product. (If the content has the sponsorship disclosure, it's shared by the influencer with the hashtags such as #ad, #affiliate, #brandname, etc.)

Cosmetic products include categories of makeup, skincare, hair care, shave, fragrance, etc.

Have you ever watched any sponsored content that promotes a specific cosmetic brand both on Instagram and YouTube?

Yes _____ No _____

In a typical day, how much time do you spend watching any content on Instagram and YouTube?

	Less than 1 hour	1- 2 hours	More than 2 – less than 3 hours	3 hours or more
Instagram				
YouTube				

In a typical month, how often do you shop for cosmetic products?

Less than once	1 or 2 times	3 or 4 times	More than 4 times
----------------	--------------	--------------	-------------------

Please rate the following statements thinking of 1 specific Cosmetic Brand (Brand X) and any sponsored content that promotes Brand X, that you watched on both Instagram and YouTube. While answering the questions, please keep in mind “Brand X” and rate each statement for both Instagram and YouTube.

Please select the specific category that “Brand X” belongs to:

- Makeup (Lipstick, mascara, foundation, etc.)
- Skincare (moisturizer, cleanser, toner, soap, etc.)
- Hair care (shampoo, hair gel, hair dye, etc.)
- Shave (shaving cream, aftershave lotion, etc.)
- Fragrance (perfume, deodorant, cologne, etc.)
- Other (please specify) _____

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform, makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses (i.e., stimulation on senses such as sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing).							
2. I find the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform interesting in a sensory way (i.e., in a way of senses such as sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing).							
3. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform does not appeal to my senses (i.e., senses such as sight, taste, smell, touch, hearing).							

4. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform induces (stimulates) feelings and sentiments.							
5. I do not have strong emotions for the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform.							
6. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social platform is emotional.							
7. I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I see the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform.							
8. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform results in bodily experiences (i.e. taking physical action or feeling active during/after seeing the published content of a brand. e.g., applying make-up or changing hair style)							
9. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform is not action-oriented. (action-oriented: willing or likely to take practical action to deal with a problem or situation)							
10. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform stimulates my curiosity and problem-solving.							
11. I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform.							
12. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” on this social media platform does not make me think.							

Please rate your overall feelings about the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” that you watched on this social media platform.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I like the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X”.							
14. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is attractive (very pleasing in appearance or sound) to me.							
15. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is interesting to me.							
16. The sponsored content that promotes “Brand X” is appealing to me.							

Please rate your overall feelings about the “Brand X” after you watched in a sponsored content on this social media platform.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. The “Brand X” in the sponsored content is likely to have the stated ad claims.							
18. I feel positively towards the “Brand X” as a result of seeing the sponsored content that promotes “Brand X”.							
19. I react favorably to the “Brand X” that appears on the sponsored content.							
20. I dislike the “Brand X” promoted on the sponsored content.							

Please rate your likelihood of purchasing the “Brand X” after you watched in a sponsored content on this social media platform.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. If I were looking for this type of product, my likelihood of purchasing the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.							
22. If I were to buy this type of product, the probability that I would consider buying the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.							
23. If had to buy this type of product, my willingness to buy the “Brand X” in the sponsored content would be high.							

24. Which of the following age groups do you belong to?

Under 18 ____ 18-24 ____ 25-34 ____ 35-44 ____ Above 44 ____

25. What is your gender? (open-ended) _____

26. What is your current education status?

Undergraduate Student ___ Master's Student ___ Ph.D. Student ___ Not a Student ___ Other _____

27. What is the highest education level you have completed?

High school degree ___ Bachelor's degree ___ Master's degree ___ Ph.D. Degree _____

28. What is your current employment status?

Unemployed ___ Full-time Employed ___ Part-time Employed ___ Other _____

29. What is your monthly household income?

< 2800 TL ___ 2800-4999TL ___ 5000-9999TL ___ 10000-20000TL ___ > 20000TL _____

APPENDIX B

FIGURES

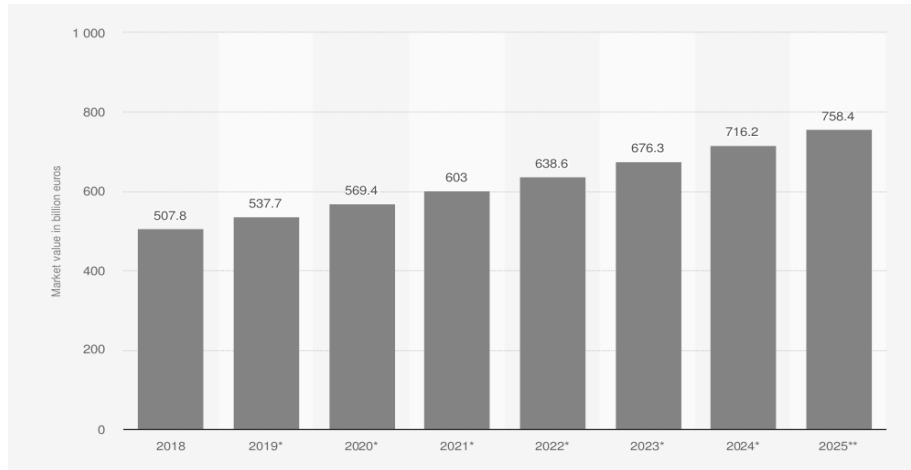


Figure 13 Value of the Global Cosmetics Market from 2018 to 2025
(in billion U.S. dollars)

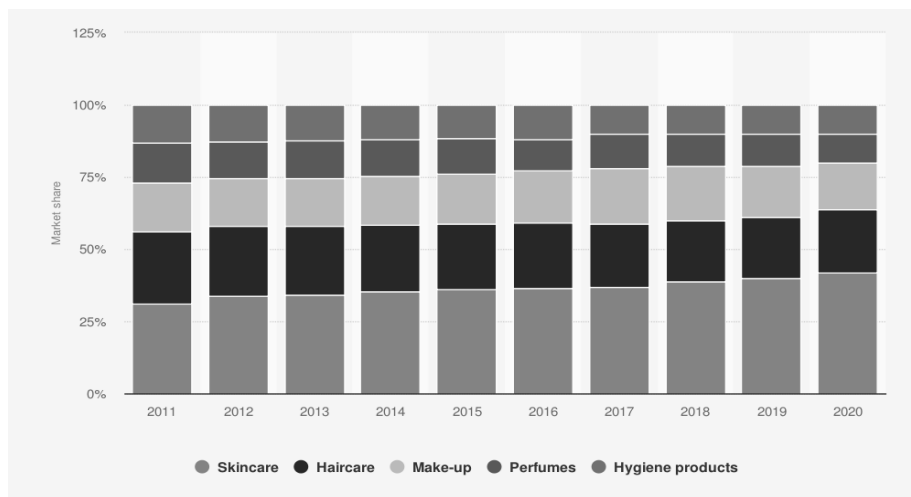


Figure 14 Breakdown of the global cosmetic market from 2011 to 2020,
by product category

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

(1/2)

	Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	23	14.37
	Female	134	83.85
	Prefer not to say	3	1.87
Age	18-24	56	35
	25-34	91	56.87
	35-44	13	8.12
Education Status	Undergraduate student	49	30.6
	Master's student	39	24.37
	Ph.D. student	6	3.75
	Not a student	66	41.25
Employment Status	Unemployed	46	28.75
	Full-time employed	99	61.87
	Part-time employed	15	9.37
Monthly Household Income	<2800£	18	11.25
	2800-4999£	42	26.25
	5000-9999£	48	30
	10000-20000£	35	21.87
	>20000£	17	10.62

Note that n=160, % = 100

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

(2/2)

	Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Time spend on watching any content (Instagram)	Less than 1 hour	34	21.25
	1- 2 hours	54	33.75
	More than 2 – less than 3 hours	38	23.75
	3 hours or more	34	21.25
Time spend on watching any content (YouTube)	Less than 1 hour	86	53.75
	1- 2 hours	38	23.75
	More than 2 – less than 3 hours	18	11.25
	3 hours or more	18	11.25
Frequency to shop for cosmetics	Less than once	45	28.12
	1 or 2 times	93	58.12
	3 or 4 times	17	10.62
	More than 4 times	5	3.12
Category of the chosen cosmetic brand	Make up	38	23.75
	Skincare	84	52.5
	Hair care	27	16.87
	Fragrance	6	3.75
	Shave	5	3.12

Note that n=160, % = 100

APPENDIX D

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Model Summary ^b					
	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI b. Dependent Variable: ASCI	1	,706 ^a	0,498	0,495	1,08148
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY b. Dependent Variable: ASCY	2	,700 ^a	0,489	0,486	1,08355
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI b. Dependent Variable: BAI	3	,638 ^a	0,407	0,403	0,92304
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY b. Dependent Variable: BAY	4	,648 ^a	0,420	0,417	1,02702
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCI b. Dependent Variable: BAI	5	,760 ^a	0,578	0,575	0,77838
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCY b. Dependent Variable: BAY	6	,723 ^a	0,522	0,519	0,93233
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCI b. Dependent Variable: PII	7	,658 ^a	0,433	0,430	1,12647
a. Predictors: (Constant), ASCY b. Dependent Variable: PIY	8	,603 ^a	0,364	0,360	1,21876
a. Predictors: (Constant), BAI b. Dependent Variable: PII	9	,673 ^a	0,453	0,450	1,10629
a. Predictors: (Constant), BAY b. Dependent Variable: PIY	10	,672 ^a	0,452	0,448	1,13123
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEI b. Dependent Variable: PII	11	,531 ^a	0,282	0,280	1,26801
a. Predictors: (Constant), BEY b. Dependent Variable: PIY	12	,478 ^a	0,228	0,236	1,34225

APPENDIX E
MEDIATION ANALYSIS

(1/4)

Table E1. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, Instagram

```

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****

Total effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c_cs
  ,6249      ,0793     7,8756   ,0000   ,4682     ,7816     ,5309

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c'_cs
  ,1559      ,0990     1,5752   ,1172   -,0396     ,3515     ,1325

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
      Effect    BootSE  BootLLCI  BootULCI
ASCI    ,4689    ,0709    ,3248    ,6032

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
      Effect    BootSE  BootLLCI  BootULCI
ASCI    ,3984    ,0542    ,2859    ,4990

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

----- END MATRIX -----

```

APPENDIX E

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

(2/4)

Table E2. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, YouTube

Mediator variable: Attitude toward the sponsored content

```

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****
Total effect of X on Y
  Effect      se        t        p      LLCI      ULCI      c_cs
  ,5849      ,0856     6,8353   ,0000   ,4159     ,7539     ,4777

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect      se        t        p      LLCI      ULCI      c'_cs
  ,1339      ,1086     1,2337   ,2192   -,0805     ,3483     ,1094

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI  BootULCI
ASCY      ,4510     ,0825     ,2798     ,6026

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI  BootULCI
ASCY      ,3683     ,0617     ,2407     ,4857

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

----- END MATRIX -----

```

APPENDIX E

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

(3/4)

Table E3. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X On Y, Instagram

Mediator variable: Brand attitude

```

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****
Total effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c_cs
    ,6249    ,0793    7,8756    ,0000    ,4682    ,7816    ,5309

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect      se      t      p      LLCI      ULCI      c'_cs
    ,2014    ,0887    2,2702    ,0246    ,0262    ,3766    ,1711

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE      BootLLCI      BootULCI
BAI    ,4235    ,0654    ,3015    ,5539

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE      BootLLCI      BootULCI
BAI    ,3598    ,0483    ,2683    ,4563

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

----- END MATRIX -----

```

APPENDIX E
MEDIATION ANALYSIS

(4/4)

Table E4. Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X on Y, YouTube

Mediator variable: Brand attitude

```

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****
Total effect of X on Y
  Effect      se        t        p      LLCI      ULCI      c_cs
  ,5849      ,0856     6,8353    ,0000    ,4159     ,7539     ,4777

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect      se        t        p      LLCI      ULCI      c'_cs
  ,0886      ,0948     ,9345     ,3515    -,0986     ,2757     ,0723

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI  BootULCI
BAY      ,4964     ,0761     ,3531     ,6542

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
  Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI  BootULCI
BAY      ,4054     ,0561     ,2984     ,5184

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *****

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

----- END MATRIX -----

```

APPENDIX F

HYPOTHESES STATUS

(1/2)

HYPOTHESES		Status
H1A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.	Supported
H1B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on attitude toward the sponsored content.	Supported
H2A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.	Supported
H2B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on brand attitude.	Supported
H3A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.	Supported
H3B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on brand attitude.	Supported
H4A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported
H4B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported

APPENDIX F

HYPOTHESES STATUS

(2/2)

H5A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported
H5B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported
H6A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported
H6B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand experience has a positive impact on purchase intention.	Supported
H7A	For the social media platform Instagram, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.	Supported
H7B	For the social media platform YouTube, attitude toward the sponsored content mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.	Supported
H8A	For the social media platform Instagram, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.	Supported
H8B	For the social media platform YouTube, brand attitude mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.	Supported

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