Picture perfect versus relatable reality:

Examining the effect of momfluencers' Instagram posts on purchase intention among first-time mothers, considering the role of wishful identification, perceived similarity, and advertising scepticism.

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Abstract

The new generation of mothers are the first to grow up with a role model on social media from whom they want to draw inspiration to further develop their own identity as a mother. The commercial effects of looking up to such a role model are investigated in the current study, which draws on the Social Comparison Theory and the Social Identity Theory, by looking at the impact of different Instagram captions (idealistic vs. realistic) on first-time mothers' purchase intentions. This research examines the role of perceived similarity, wishful identification, and the moderating effect of advertising scepticism in this relationship. A survey was conducted among 235 mothers who were active users of Instagram. The findings indicate that the type of Instagram post caption does not directly influence purchase intention, proving that it is irrelevant from a commercial standpoint whether a momfluencer writes a realistic or idealistic caption for their sponsored post. However, high levels of perceived similarity and wishful identification significantly influence purchase intention. Realistic captions have a significant impact on perceived similarity, while idealistic captions do not affect wishful identification. Furthermore, advertising scepticism does not moderate the relationship between Instagram caption type and wishful identification. This study contributes valuable insights for marketers targeting first-time mothers, offering a unique perspective on the influence of textual content in shaping consumer buying behaviour.

Key words: first-time mothers, momfluencers, perceived similarity, wishful identification, advertising scepticism, purchase intention

Contents

Introduction

'Momfluenced', a recently published book by Sarah Petersen, argues that momfluencers have transformed motherhood from a private activity into an idealised public performance, generating billions of dollars for the marketing industry (Petersen, 2023). According to Market research agency Rebel, momfluencers are the latest trend in influencer marketing (Rebel, 2023). This is reflected in the number of followers momfluencers have, ranging from 1,000 to over a million (Geyser, 2023). With outliers like momfluencer Savannah Labrant, who has more than 7.2 million followers on Instagram (Instagram, n.d.).

Momfluencers use their social media influence to promote brands and share information about parenting, family life, and children's products with their followers who are mostly other mothers (Kirkpatrick & Lee, 2022). Momfluencers are mostly active on Instagram (Mendelson, 2023), which is one of the leading social media platforms across the globe as this platform has over a billion monthly active users and influencers who share content every day (Germic et al.; Wong et al., 2019). Influencers can be considered as online opinion leaders who interact with a large social network of followers through tweets, blogs, and social media posts that include both text and images (Harrigan et al., 2021).

By posting this content, influencers earn money through sponsorships and collaborations. Mothers perceive sponsored Instagram content made by momfluencers as more credible, in turn increasing their followers' purchase intent (Beuckels & De Jans, 2022). The sense of credibility that influencers exude is an important aspect in motivating their followers to heed their advice and purchase the products they recommend (Gräve, 2017).

Next to momfluencers being perceived as highly credible, the momfluencers phenomena and its popularity among their followers is also driven by the need to interact with other parents, exchange stories, and create a feeling of community (Kokatnur et al., 2020; McDaniel et al., 2011). As motherhood involves a lot of uncertainty and change, their

followers have a great need for this content. On their Instagram accounts, momfluencers share personal stories that other mothers can identify with. Because of these intimate stories, momfluencers produce authenticity that gives their followers a strong sense of connection to the content they share (Abidin, 2017). In addition, momfluencers convey a sense of familiarity that enables their followers to imagine themselves in their position (Gräve, 2017). By following a momfluencer, the mothers receive emotional and informational support, as well as a sense of community and belonging (Archer & Kao, 2018; Haslam et al., 2017).

The content created by a momfluencer is particularly useful for women who have recently become a mother. This is because first-time mothers go through an intensive identity change when they have children, causing many insecurities (Horne et al., 2011). Qualitative research by Archer & Kao (2018) shows that first-time mothers already need inspiration and role models during their pregnancy. After giving birth, this need increases, as the initial period after the birth of their first child is very confusing and accompanied by many questions about motherhood (Coyne et al., 2017). Due to the lack of personal experience of first-time mothers, looking up to online role models is of great value (Ouvrein, 2022).

Research shows that social media influencers reinforce the purchase intention of their followers because their followers want to emulate the idealised image they have created (Dinh & Lee, 2022). Early research by Moigan et al (2017) shows that momfluencers frequently idealise their social media posts. According to their study, the main reason for this is that social media is utilized to prove good parenting. The social media posts momfluencers upload often portray the nice part of motherhood and not the reality, leading to a negative impact on first-time mothers' mental health, like disappointment in themselves, as they compare themselves to something they are unable to achieve (Kirkpatrick & Lee, 2022).

When first-time mothers look up to momfluencers because they perceive them as superior, we call this upward social comparison (Collins, 1996). This process can be

explained by the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954). According to this theory, people have a tendency to compare themselves to others, so one can use that knowledge to validate and further develop their own identity (Festinger, 1954). As such, for first-time mothers, momfluencers can be an important source for upward social comparison. To date, however, limited research has been conducted on how first-time mothers' purchase intentions change when they compare themselves to momfluencers after reading their Instagram captions.

To what extent first-time mothers compare themselves to momfluencers is possibly determined by the type of captions they see on Instagram. An Instagram caption can be either idealistic or realistic. It is important to distinguish idealistic and realistic captions to examine if the type of Instagram post influences first-time mothers' purchase intentions. Idealistic captions depict the situation in a more positive and idealistic perspective than it actually is. Realistic captions depict the situation without exaggeration or embellishment (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2020).

However, on online platforms such as Instagram, a countermovement can be seen as people are finding it increasingly important to post realistic Instagram images to counter the negative effects of social comparison (Tiggemann & Anderberg, 2020). Realistic captions are becoming more common in momfluencers' social media posts. These realistic captions, which include references to parenting difficulties, represent motherhood in a more realistic way (Kirkpatrick & Lee, 2022).

The current study investigates whether the type of Instagram caption written by a momfluencer affects first-time mothers' purchase intention. It thereby examines whether the extent to which a first-time mother identifies with a momfluencer or wants to identify with a momfluencer can explain this effect. The degree to which someone perceives to have similar things as another person is known as *perceived similarity* (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). A

psychological process known as *wishful identification* occurs when a person desires to be like the other person (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). Both perceived similarity and wishful identification are personal and depend on one's cognitive processes (Montoya et al., 2008). They have a significant impact on social perception and may change how people think about other people, behave, and make decisions (Montoya et al., 2008; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Turban et al., 2002).

The degree to which a first-time mother experiences wishful identification after reading a caption of a momfluencer may depend on her tendency to doubt the credibility of advertising claims and messages, which refers to *advertising scepticism* (Raziq et al., 2018). If a first-time mother has a high level of advertising scepticism, this may cause her to doubt the credibility of momfluencer when she notices that the post is sponsored, which could have a negative impact on wishful identification and therefore purchase intention.

To the best of our knowledge, previous research has not yet explored the impact of textual expressions on social media in relation to purchasing behaviours. Given that first-time mothers are a particularly susceptible target audience for marketing messages, the current study focuses on the effects of momfluencer content on this specific group. Therefore, the aim of this study is to provide new insights into this topic by addressing the following research questions:

RQ1: How does the Instagram caption type (idealistic vs. realistic) created by momfluencers impact the purchase intention of first-time mothers?

RQ2: How do perceived similarity and wishful identification explain the relationship between different types of Instagram captions and purchase intention?

RQ3: How does advertising scepticism influence the relationship between Instagram caption type and wishful identification among fist-time mothers?

Theoretical framework

With the advent of influencers and, with them, influencer marketing, manipulating consumer buying behaviour has changed a lot.

First-time mothers

First-time mothers are very sensitive when it comes to buying (baby) products and are therefore an interesting target group for marketers (Akgül, 2021). Mothers who now have children between 0 and 3 years old belong to the millennial generation, which means they were born between 1981 and 1996 (Prior, 2016). These mothers are looking for parenting advice, products, and lifestyle ideas. First-time mothers experience a lot of uncertainty as having their first child requires a significant change in lifestyle (Mercer, 2004). They have to adjust to numerous physical and emotional changes, learn new skills, and establish new routines. First-time mothers follow momfluencers, because they feel overwhelmed by all the recommended baby products and need guidance and recommendations from people who have experience as mothers (Kao, 2018).

Given the low threshold and personal nature of social media interactions, first-time mothers frequently interact with momfluencers (Johnson, 2015). This interaction fosters the development of parasocial relationships, wherein the follower feels a sense of connection and familiarity with the influencer as a result of the influencer sharing personal information (Dibble et al., 2016).

A parasocial relationship is a long-term, one-sided relationship between a follower and media figure that is developed over time (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Research has shown that parasocial relationships are conducive to marketing a product (Aw & Labrecque, 2020). In fact, a follower who has a parasocial relationship with an influencer is more likely to buy something the influencer recommends because the follower feels he has a bond of trust with the influencer (Balaban et al., 2022; Purnamaningsih and Rizkalla, 2020).

When discussing how useful social media is for first-time mothers, a conflicting emotion seems to emerge. On the one hand, social media platforms like Instagram are very beneficial in this situation because they can get a lot of inspiration from role models like momfluencers. On the other hand, Instagram actually feeds into the insecurity that first-time mothers already experience because of all the flawless posts they see in their feeds (Ouvrein, 2022). As mothers strive to do the best they can for their child, this insecurity makes them more likely to be persuaded to buy something by momfluencers they look up to (Akgül, 2021).

Changing trends in social media

In recent years, significant changes have occurred in the realm of social media. The demand for more authentic and realistic portrayals has increased, not only in the context of body positivity - a movement that promotes self-acceptance and challenges societal beauty standards - but also in the content of momfluencers (Vandenbosch, 2022; Cohen, 2021). This shift was evident years ago with the emergence of the first momfluencer accounts, which sparked a countermovement against the idealized image of motherhood perpetuated by traditional media (Ouvrein, 2022). These pioneering momfluencers chose to share the realities of motherhood, including the challenges and setbacks that accompany it (Friedman, 2013; Zappavigna, 2016).

However, as influencers began to be increasingly utilized for commercial purposes, the content shared by mom influencers also underwent changes. Naturally, momfluencers had to adhere to certain requirements imposed by the brands that paid them to promote their products (Ouvrein, 2022). Consequently, the content became more realistic, deviating from the distorted version of reality often found on social media, where users tend to focus on presenting only the positive aspects of their lives while omitting any mention of difficulties or setbacks (Vogel & Rose, 2016).

Idealized depictions of individuals that make them seem happier and greater achievers than they actually are enhances the likelihood that others will compare themselves to these images (Chou & Edge, 2011; Park & Baek, 2018).

Social comparison Theory

Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory posits that individuals engage in the process of assessing and adjusting their own skills, beliefs, and social status by observing and learning from the behaviours of others. According to Festinger (1954), people have a natural inclination to make comparisons with those they perceive as superior in order to motivate themselves towards self-improvement and achieving greater success. However, for the social comparison process to be effective, it is crucial for individuals to perceive the person they are comparing themselves to as similar (Festinger, 1954). Comparable individuals who share similarities provide more relevant and accurate information, facilitating a more meaningful self-assessment (Festinger, 1954).

When someone compares themselves to someone who is in a worse position than themselves, we call this downward comparison. When there is a downward comparison, mothers experience positive feelings (satisfaction, relief, and increased self-esteem) (Tosun et al., 2020). When someone compares themselves to someone in a better position, we call this upward comparison. According to Tosun et al. (2020) this can cause feelings of frustration, jealousy and can cause a worse self-image among mothers. Consumers' negative social comparisons to social media posts created by influencers are positively correlated with customers' impulsive purchases (Mundel et al., 2023). Research by Dinh and Lee (2022) shows that consumers view influencers as role models they strive to imitate, which increases social comparison and influences purchasing intentions for products they are endorsing.

As discussed previously, individuals compare themselves to others out of a desire to be like them (*wishful identification*). However, this process can only occur when the

individual perceives themselves as similar to the role model (*perceived similarity*), thus

enabling them to believe that they can achieve the same goal (Festinger, 1954). This parallel

process is ignited after viewing an Instagram post (Meier & Schäfer, 2018). Since individuals

tend to compare themselves to similar others whom they aspire to emulate, they feel

compelled to minimize perceived differences between themselves and their desired role

models (Festinger, 1954). When faced with such differences, individuals may experience an

increase in motivation to modify their behaviours, such as purchasing the same products to

resemble the role model, in order to bridge the perceived gap (Festinger, 1954; Goethals &

Darley, 1987).

　　　While several studies have explored the psychological effects of idealized versus

realistic images on Instagram, limited research has been conducted on the impact of these

different types of Instagram posts on users' purchase intentions. However, Shoenberger and

Kim (2022) found that individuals place significant importance on sharing similarities with

the influencers they follow, which results in increased purchase intentions. Additionally,

previous research conducted by Shoenberger et al. (2020) on advertisement models revealed

that participants who viewed realistic and authentic portrayals of women identified more

strongly with these images, leading to higher purchase intentions. Furthermore, Abdullah et

al. (2020) discovered that the perception of similarity between influencers and Instagram

followers is a key factor in increasing purchase intentions, particularly in the context of

fashion products.

　　　These findings suggest that the presence of similarity, authenticity, and relatability in

Instagram posts can influence users' purchase intentions (Abdullah et al., 2020; Shoenberger

et al., 2020; Shoenberger & Kim, 2022). Applying this to the context of momfluencers and

first-time mothers, it is known that a key reason why first-time mothers follow momfluencers

is to find a role model they can relate to (Ouvrein, 2022). Idealized images are likely to

trigger upward comparisons (Tian et al., 2023), while realistic images foster identification and recognition (Tiggemann and Anderberg, 2020). Multiple studies indicate that both types of images can increase purchase intention. However, considering the uncertainties experienced by first-time mothers and their need for reassurance from momfluencers that not everything is perfect in the life of a mother, coupled with the growing demand for realistic portrayals on social media, and existing research suggesting that perceived similarities play a significant role in increasing purchase intention, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: *Realistic Instagram captions will have a more positive influence on first-time mothers' buying intentions than idealised Instagram captions.*

To better understand this process, we will now delve into the underlying mechanisms that could explain what increases purchase intention.

Perceived similarity

As mentioned earlier, the degree to which someone perceives themselves as similar to a person they admire is an important aspect to consider (Festinger, 1954). Perceived similarity refers to the extent to which someone finds himself or herself similar to another person (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). This process of comparison is subjective and can involve comparing external features, behaviour, beliefs, norms and values (Turner & Oakes, 1986)

In the realm of influencer marketing, research comparing the effects of influencers and traditional celebrities has shown that perceived similarity is higher among participants who have been exposed to influencers, leading to increased trustworthiness perceptions (Gräve, 2017). Furthermore, in the context of persuasive communication, Moyer-Gusé (2008) conducted research to develop a theoretical framework explaining the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages. Moyer-Gusé highlighted the importance of perceived similarity in enhancing the persuasive impact of entertainment-educational content. According to Moyer-Gusé, when viewers perceive a high level of similarity between

themselves and the characters or situations depicted in the content, their perception of vulnerability is heightened. This increased perception of vulnerability, combined with the identification with relatable characters, can enhance the persuasive effects of entertainment-education messages.

Tiggemann and Anderberg (2020) investigated the difference in Instagram images that were realistic or idealistic. The women aged between 18 and 30 years who participated in this experiment saw a set of photos of a woman depicted in an idealized representation and photos of a woman depicted in a more realistic representation. The participants reported higher perceived similarity when they saw realistic Instagram posts. This is in line with research by Kirkpatrick and Lee (2022), who specifically examined the effects of different type of Instagram images on new mothers. This study demonstrates that mothers who saw non-idealized portrayals as opposed to idealized images felt more similar to the influencer they saw in the image.

This can be explained by the fact that realistic photos not only depict the positive aspects of motherhood but also the negative aspects (i.e., problems or challenges of motherhood) (Kirkpatrick & Lee, 2022). Within the current study, we aim to investigate whether textual captions have the same effect on perceived similarity among first-time mothers. Based on the preceding information, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2a: *When first-time mothers see a realistic Instagram caption created by a momfluencer, this will lead to higher perceived similarity than when they see an idealistic Instagram caption created by a momfluencer.*

Social Identity Theory

The concept of perceived similarity and its influence on individuals' perceptions and behaviours can be linked to the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). The Social Identity Theory posits that individuals derive their sense of self and social identity from their

membership in various social groups (Amiot & Aubin, 2013). These social groups provide a framework for individuals to define themselves and compare themselves to others who share similar characteristics or qualities (Tajfel & Turner, 2004).

In the context of influencer marketing and perceived similarity, the Social Identity Theory suggests that individuals are more likely to identify with and follow influencers who they perceive as similar to themselves (Farivar & Wang, 2022). When individuals find similarities in external features, behaviours, beliefs, or values between themselves and an influencer, they are more likely to feel a sense of connection and identification with that influencer (Hogg et al., 2004).

Perceived similarity and purchase intention

Cialdini (1995) contends that greater perceived similarity boosts advertising and sales performance. This can be explained by the "similarity-attraction" principle, which states that people are more drawn to those who have similar personality traits to them (Cialdini, 1995). This could, for instance, involve shared interests, values, or backgrounds. When people recognize themselves in another person or situation, they feel a sense of connection which increases the urge to make a purchase (Cialdini, 1995).

Research conducted by Onofrei et al. (2022) reveals that homophily, which refers to the tendency of individuals to connect with others who are similar to them, has a positive effect on purchase intention. This study specifically focused on social media interactions between consumers. Research on influencer marketing on social media conducted by Kim and Kim (2021) reveals that homophily also has a positive effect on purchase intention between influencer and consumer. In their study, they found that trust mediates this relationship, as individuals tend to have more trust in people they perceive as similar, which in turn increases their purchase intention (Kim & Kim, 2021).

Based on the aforementioned findings, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2b: *High perceived similarity among first-time mothers increases purchase intention.*

Due to the expectation that realistic captions will lead to increased perceived similarity among first-time mothers with mom influencers, which in turn results in heightened purchase intention, the following mediation is expected:

H2c: *Perceived similarity mediates the relationship between the realistic Instagram captions written by a momfluencer and purchase intention among first-time mothers.*

Wishful identification

Wishful identification focuses on the desire to resemble someone (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). The extent of wishful identification depends on various factors. For instance, wishful identification is influenced by a person or brand's attractiveness. When someone finds another person attractive, they want to be more like that person than when someone finds a person unattractive (McCracken, 1989). It is also important to note that wishful identification cannot occur without some level of similarity. People often copy and identify with influencers based on wishful identification, but they may also feel a connection to a certain influencer due to a sense of shared values (Fraser and Brown, 2002). Therefore it is unlikely there will be wishful identification if a person does not recognize themselves in a person due to significant differences in values and lifestyle (Escalas & Bettman, 2005).

In addition to attractiveness and similarity, wishful identification is also influenced by cultural norms and social expectations. When a particular celebrity is popular within a social group, chances are that the people within that group would like to be that celebrity in order to belong (Rempel et al., 1985). The last factor that influences wishful identification is exposure. When someone sees a particular celebrity passing by frequently, wishful identification is more likely to occur (Cha et al., 2019).

Idealistic momfluencers want to portray an idealized version of motherhood that is better than reality and that first-time mothers can strive for (upward social comparison). Therefore, the following result is expected:

H3a: When first-time mothers see idealistic Instagram posts created by a momfluencer, this will lead to higher wishful identification than realistic Instagram posts created by a momfluencer.

Wishful identification and purchase intention

Based on research by Hoffner and Buchanan (2005), the desire to imitate is a fundamental aspect of people's wishful identification with media personalities. This desire to emulate can manifest through various means, such as imitating the behaviour of the media personality or purchasing the same products as the media personality to replicate their image.

According to McCracken (1989), increased satisfaction occurs when a consumer uses the same product as their idols. Choi and Rifon (2012) found that when consumers see a celebrity whose image matches their ideal self-image, they are more likely to have a stronger intention to make a purchase. This finding can be applied to momfluencers and first-time mothers, suggesting that the extent to which a momfluencers' Instagram post aligns with the self-perceived ideal image of a first-time mother may impact their purchase intention.

In addition, wishful identification, involving the desire to compare oneself to admired individuals, is associated with upward comparison (Tian et al., 2023). Meier et al. (2020) indicate that upward comparison can lower an individual's self-esteem, potentially creating a motivation to address the perceived gap between oneself and the influencer. Bi and Zhang (2022) find that individuals with lower self-esteem exhibit higher purchase intentions as they seek to enhance their self-perception through the acquisition of products associated with the influencer's image.

Another negative emotion that may be released when someone looks up to another person very much, in this case a mother to a momfluencer, is jealousy. Liu et al. (2019) explore the role of envy in shaping consumer behaviour. They find that engaging in upward social comparison on social media platforms increases envy towards influencers. According to (Antonetti & Maklan, 2016), the combination of admiration and jealousy makes people want to improve themselves and imitate the person they look up to. This phenomenon can lead to increased purchase intentions as individuals strive to emulate the influencer's lifestyle or achievements.

Altogether, these studies suggest that both feelings of envy and admiration towards a person can influence purchase decisions. First-time mothers, who already experience high levels of insecurity in their role as mothers, place even greater value on looking up to role models for inspiration (Akgül, 2021; Ouvrein, 2022). As they strive to emulate the lifestyle portrayed by mom influencers on social media, it is expected that they will be more inclined to purchase the products recommended by these influencers. In doing so, they aim to bridge the perceived gap between their own lives and the idealized image depicted on social media. Building on this understanding, the following theory has been formulated:

H3b: *High perceived wishful identification among first-time mothers will have a positive effect on purchase intention.*

Due to the anticipated impact of idealized captions on wishful identification, subsequently leading to higher purchase intention, wishful identification is expected to mediate the relationship between idealized captions and purchase intention among first-time mothers. Based on this rationale, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3c: *Wishful identification mediates the relationship between the idealistic Instagram captions written by a momfluencer and purchase intention among first-time mothers.*

Influencer techniques

Studies have explored the persuasive techniques used by influencers, such as product placement, subtle endorsements, and storytelling, to seamlessly integrate promotional messages into their content (Rundin & Colliander, 2021; Wojdynski & Evans, 2016). The persuasive nature of embedded advertising in influencer content is further supported by research on the unconscious effects of persuasion. Individuals can be influenced by persuasive messages without consciously recognizing the persuasive intent (Russo & Chaxel, 2010). This is particularly relevant in the context of influencer marketing, as first-time mothers, overwhelmed by the challenges of parenthood, may rely on influencers for advice and recommendations, inadvertently accepting and acting upon the embedded persuasive messages without full awareness of their impact (Rundin & Colliander, 2021). According to Hudders et al. (2017), an individual's ability to critically evaluate advertisements is strongly linked to their expertise and knowledge in the field of advertising. This expertise, referred to as dispositional advertising literacy, encompasses cognitive, affective, and moral dimensions. The cognitive dimension pertains to knowledge-based skills, the affective dimension relates to emotion regulation, and the moral dimension involves perceptions of fairness and appropriateness in advertising, often including skepticism towards deceptive or unrealistic advertising practices.

Advertising scepticism

The concept 'advertising scepticism' describes consumers' distrust or cynicism against advertising. This mistrust stems from the notion that marketers frequently employ manipulative and deceptive methods to promote products and services (Raziq et al., 2018). Advertisers use misleading language, exaggerate product advantages, and the appearance of necessity in order to convince people to buy their products. Consumers now often distrust advertising as a result of these techniques (Obermiller et al., 2005). Consumers who are more

ad-literate and therefore more critical of advertisements are less likely to be influenced by advertisements and have lower purchase intentions for the advertised product, according to several studies about the influence of persuasion knowledge (Friestad & Wright, 1994; Panic et al., 2013; Vanwesenbeeck et al. 2017).

The association between idealized Instagram captions written by momfluencers and wishful identification is anticipated to decrease as a result of advertising scepticism. This is due to the fact that those who are sceptical of advertisements are more prone to doubt the accuracy and truthfulness of the idealized images they see on Instagram. They might view the posts as unrealistic and unreachable as a result, which will decrease their desire to mimic the image. Based on this information, the following hypothesis was drawn up.

H4: Advertising scepticism weakens the positive relationship between idealistic Instagram captions and wishful identification among first-time mothers.

Conceptual model

Based on the literature, Figure 1 represents schematically the expected mediation model, the moderating influence, and the related hypotheses for the current study.
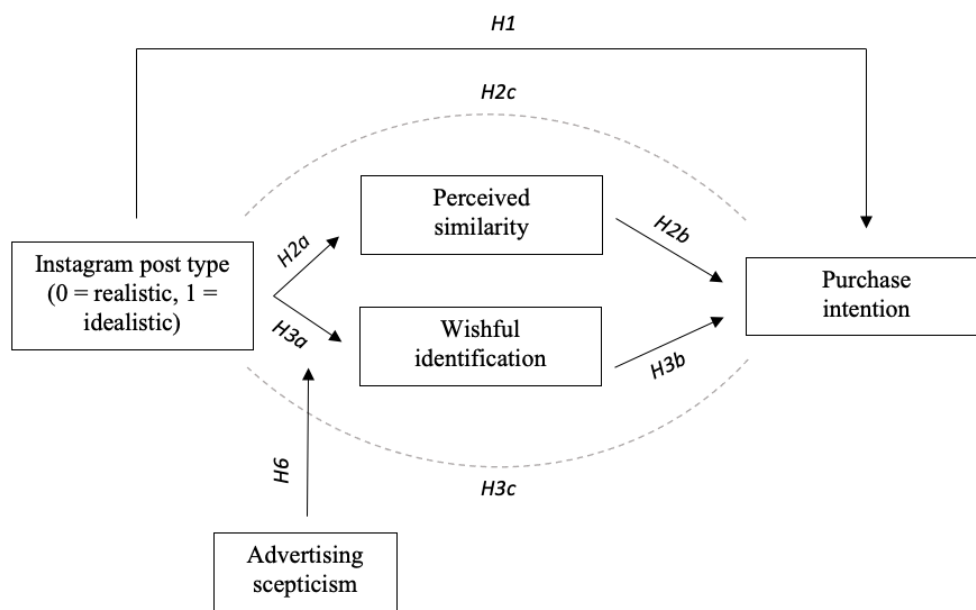

Figure 1:
The Influence of Instagram caption type on Purchase Intention: the mediating Roles of Perceived Similarity and Wishful Identification, moderated by Advertising Scepticism

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the type of a sponsored Instagram caption (realistic vs. idealistic) created by a momfluencer has an impact on the purchase intention of first-time mothers. This was done through an experimental quantitative survey-based design, where participants were randomly assigned to view either a realistic or idealistic Instagram post created by a momfluencer. The study also investigated whether wishful identification and perceived similarity strengthened the relationship between caption type and purchase intention, as well as whether advertising scepticism moderates this relationship.

Participants

The participants ($M = 28.75$, $SD = 3.84$) for the study were first-time mothers who are active users of Instagram (i.e., participants who check their Instagram daily to weekly for new content). Participants were recruited through WhatsApp, Facebook groups and Instagram. In addition, the survey link was shared by a momfluencer with over 22,000 followers. Inclusion criteria for participants were that they were women, actively used Instagram and they had at least one child between 0 and 3 years old ($M = 0.72$, $SD = 1.12$). 75.9% of the participants had 1 child ($M = 1.28$, $SD = 0.53$). Most participants (38.7%) had earned an HBO bachelor's degree; nearly as many (37.5%) had completed a MBO education; 9.7% had earned a WO bachelor's degree; and the remaining participants had earned either an HBO master's degree or a WO master's degree. 3.4% had finished high school.

In total, 420 respondents filled in the survey. 22 respondents had their participation in the survey cut short because they used Instagram infrequently or not at all, were male, had no children under the age of three, or refused to give their informed consent. Additionally, 53 respondents did not complete the survey, therefore some of their responses were missing. Before the analysis began, the responses of respondents who did not belong to the target

group or who did not complete the survey in its entirety were eliminated. As a result, 345 completed surveys remained to be analysed.

Procedure

After clicking on the link, participants were first shown a home screen. This outlined the research objective, and the time participants were expected to spend on filling in the survey which was created using Qualtrics. In addition, critical instructions were given to ensure effective completion of the questionnaire. The introduction screen mentioned that the questionnaire would be kept highly confidential, and participants would remain anonymous. Respondents outside the target group were automatically redirected to the final page of the survey. In addition, the home screen included a consent form. Participants who did not agree to this consent form did not participate in the experiment. Lastly, the introduction screen included a text that the participants could stop the survey at any time without consequences. After seeing the home screen, participants in condition 1 were shown an Instagram post with a picture of a momfluencer and her baby in which a baby carrier was recommended via a realistic caption. Participants in condition 2 were shown the same photo with an idealistic caption. Participants were then asked to complete a survey assessing their purchase intention, advertising scepticism, wishful identification and perceived similarity.

Participants were debriefed immediately after completing the survey. They were informed about the purpose of the study and were provided with contact information for the researcher in case they had any questions or concerns (Appendix D).

Stimulus material

The Instagram post shown to the participants was a fictious Instagram post created using Zeoob (Zeoob, 2023). The image originated from a baby carrier company's website (see appendix A for an overview of the materials). In the experiment, the momfluencers' face is obscured by the photo's cropping. The participants would then not be influenced by the

momfluencers' appearance. Instead of focusing on how the image would affect mothers' purchasing behaviour, this study sought to determine whether manipulating the caption would have an effect. To keep everything outside the manipulation under control, we decided to use the exact same photo in both conditions to avoid participants being attracted to one photo than the other.

The captions were written in Dutch and were manipulated to an idealistic caption or realistic caption. Based on Ouvrein (2022), the caption in the realistic condition referred to an idealistic, admirable portrayals of mothers that only highlights the advantages of motherhood. Based on Kirkpatrick & Lee (2022), the caption in the idealistic condition referred to references to parenting difficulties which represent motherhood in a more realistic way. The Instagram post showed a baby with a baby carrier which was recommended by the momfluencer. The baby blanket was from a made-up brand, so participants could not have a prior preference for the brand and therefore the purchase intention was not influenced by it. The length of captions was the same within both conditions, the same number of emoticons were used and the same number of hashtags. This was to ensure that text length and emoticon or hashtag use did not influence the results.

Pre-test

To test which captions would be used in the final experiment, three realistic captions and three idealistic captions were created. These captions were inspired by actual captions written by real momfluencers active on Instagram. For each realistic caption, a similar idealistic caption was written with the same number of characters, hashtags, and emoticons. In an online survey, participants ($N = 35$) were asked to what extent they perceived a caption as very realistic (1) or very idealistic (7).

After the participants completed the pre-test, we conducted an independent t-test. Despite the fact that pair 3's captions (see Apendix B) varied the most from one another, we

decided to use pair 2's captions as stimulus material. This is due to the fact that pair 3's captions are about toy storage boxes, which implies that keeping the house tidy automatically involves projecting an idealistic image. The independent t-test showed that the realistic caption ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 1.14$) we wanted to use in the final experiment was lower than the idealistic caption ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.22$) we wanted to use in the final experiment. This difference was significant ($Mdif = -1.05$, $t(37) = -4.07$, $p < .001$). The difference represents a large-sized effect $d = 1.23$. All tested captions with results from the independent t-test can be found in Appendix B.

Conditions

Since both captions went strongly to the middle of the scale, it was decided to increase the contrast between the captions by adjusting them. The realistic caption added that the baby cried a lot and the idealistic one added that the momfluencer had finished her entire to-do list, where the momfluencer in the realistic post had not.

In the end, we chose to use the following caption as the realistic caption in the final experiment: "Mari is not feeling well today. Her teeth are coming through, and this unfortunately bothers her a lot. She cries a lot, but luckily, I can cuddle her all day while trying to finish my to-do list with this awesome @coco baby carrier!". The caption used as a counterpoint to outline an ideal situation is: "With this @coco baby carrier, I finish my to-do list every day in no time! Today Mari was happy as ever and it was amazing to carry her with me all day while I cooked, cleaned the house and sorted out her wardrobe!".

Measurements

Respondent's purchase intention was measured with the purchase intention scale, consisting of three items on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., To what extent do you agree with the statement 'I would consider buying the baby carrier I just saw in the future'). The mean of the scale was 3.95 ($SD = 1.26$) and reliability of the scale was acceptable, $\alpha = .75$.

Respondent's perceived similarity for the idealistic Instagram caption type was measured with the perceived similarity scale, consisting of four items on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., To what extent do you agree with the statement 'I feel like I resemble this momfluencer'). The mean of the scale was 3.38 (SD = 1.29) and reliability of the scale was good, α = .86.

Respondent's perceived wishful identification for the idealistic Instagram caption type was measured with the perceived wishful identification scale, consisting of four items on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., To what extent do you agree with the statement I would like to emulate the momfluencer in the picture.'). The mean of the scale was 3.06 (SD = 1.43) and reliability of the scale was excellent, α = .90.

Respondent's advertising scepticism for the idealistic Instagram caption type was measured with the advertising scepticism scale, consisting of four items on a 7-point Likert scale (e.g., To what extent do you agree with the statement 'I think (generally) advertisers give honest information in an ad'). The mean of the scale was 4.72 (SD = 1.01) and reliability of the scale was good, α = .77.

Data Analysis

The hypothesised moderated mediation model (see Figure 1) was tested in a single model using a bootstrapping approach to assess the significance of the indirect effects at differing levels of the moderator (Hayes, 2013). Instagram caption type was the independent variable, with wishful identification and perceived similarity as mediators. The dependent variable was purchase intention and advertising scepticism was the proposed moderator. Moderated mediation analyses test the conditional indirect effect of advertising scepticism on the relationship between Instagram caption type) and purchase intention via wishful identification and perceived similarity. The "PROCESS" macro, model 7, v2.16 (Hayes, 2013) in SPSS version 23 with bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (n = 10000) was used

to test the significance of the indirect (i.e., mediated) effects moderated by advertising scepticism, i.e., conditional indirect effects. To test the significance of moderated mediation, or the difference of the indirect effects across levels of advertising scepticism, an index of moderated mediation was used (Hayes, 2015). The absence of zero in the confidence intervals indicates significant effects.

Results

Manipulation test

To test whether the idealistic caption was perceived as idealistic and the realistic caption as realistic by the participants, we conducted an independent sample t-test. Participants could rate the caption they saw from very realistic (1) to very idealistic (7). The mean of the caption in the condition where the idealistic caption was shown ($M = 4.53$, $SD = 0.12$) was higher, and thus perceived as more idealistic, than the realistic caption ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.11$). The difference between the idealistic Instagram caption and the realistic Instagram caption was significant ($Mdif = .86$, $t(343) = 5.10$, $p </= .001$). The difference represents a *large-sized* effect $d = 1.56$.

Mediation analysis

A mediation analysis using SPSS Hayes' Model 7 was conducted to examine the effect of Instagram caption type (idealistic vs. realistic) on purchase intention, mediated by perceived similarity and wishful identification, while considering the moderating effect of advertising scepticism. Before reporting the results, several assumptions like linearity, normality and homoscedasticity were assessed and assumed.

The direct effect of Instagram caption type on purchase intention was not significant; *effect* = .07, *SE* = .12, $p = .57$, [95% CI = -.17; .31]. Which means that mothers who were in condition 1 did not have significantly higher or lower purchase intention than mothers who were in condition 2. This means that realistic Instagram captions do not have a stronger

positive influence on first-time mothers' buying intentions than idealised Instagram captions, H1 thus rejected.

The effect of Instagram caption type on perceived similarity was found to be significant; *effect* = .39, *SE* = .14, *p* = .01. Perceived similarity was higher when participants saw a realistic Instagram caption (*M* = 3.56, *SD* = 1.22) compared to when they saw an idealistic Instagram post (*M* = 3.22, *SD* = 1.34), suggesting that realistic Instagram captions created by a momfluencer will lead to higher perceived similarity among first-time mothers than idealistic Instagram captions created by a momfluencer. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2a) is accepted.

The effect of the mediator perceived similarity on the independent variable purchase intention was also analysed. Greater perceived similarity was associated with higher purchase intention, *B* = .24, *Bse* = .06, *t* = 4.31, *p* < .001. Which means that first-time mothers who experience high levels of perceived similarity, were more likely to buy the recommended product. Therefore, hypothesis H2b is accepted.

To test whether the indirect effect of Instagram caption type on purchase intention mediated by perceived similarity was significant, a mediation analysis using SPSS Hayes' Model 4 was conducted. The results showed a significant effect of the indirect path of Instagram caption type on purchase intention; *effect* = .15, *SE* = .06, [95% CI = .03; .27]. Therefore, hypothesis H2c is accepted.

Instagram caption type had no significant effect on wishful identification; *effect* = 0.11, *SE* = .16, *p* = .48. This means that hypothesis (H3a) is rejected.

The effect of the mediator wishful identification on the independent variable purchase intention was also analysed. Greater wishful identification was associated with higher purchase intention, B = .32, Bse = .05, t = 6.40, p < .001. Which means that high levels of

perceived wishful identification among first-time mothers will have a positive effect on purchase intention. Therefore, this hypothesis (H3b) is accepted.

To test whether the indirect effect of Instagram caption type on purchase intention mediated by wishful identification was significant, a mediation analysis using SPSS Hayes' Model 4 was conducted. The results showed a significant effect of the indirect path of Instagram caption type on purchase intention; *effect* = .06, *SE* = .07, [95% CI = -.08; .39]. As zero is within the CI this does not indicate a significant mediating effect. Therefore, H3c is rejected.

Lastly, it was tested whether advertising scepticism would significantly moderate the relationship between wishful identification and wishful identification. The moderated mediation model with wishful identification as mediator was not supported with the index of moderated mediation = -.01 [95% CI = -.11; .10] (see Appendix C). As zero is within the CI this does not indicate a significant moderating effect of advertising scepticism on Instagram caption type on the indirect path via wishful identification (Hayes, 2015).

These results indicate inconsistent mediation, given that the direct effect of Instagram caption type on purchase intention is not significant, but the indirect path of post type on perceived similarity on purchase intention is (MacKinnon et al., 2007).
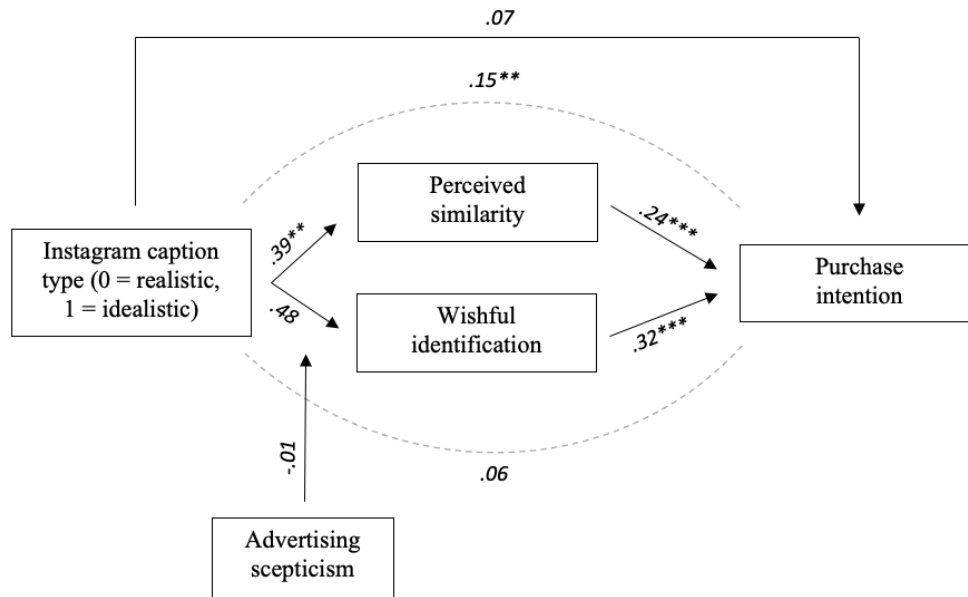
Research model

Figure 2:
The Influence of Instagram caption type on Purchase Intention: the mediating Roles of Wishful Identification and Perceived Similarity, moderated by Advertising Scepticism.
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of different Instagram caption types (idealistic vs realistic) created by momfluencers on first-time mothers' purchase intentions, and to investigate whether this effect is mediated by perceived similarity and wishful identification, while also taking into account the moderating influence of advertising scepticism.

Interpretation of the results

Firstly, the findings showed that there was no direct statistically significant relationship between the type of Instagram caption and purchase intention. This suggests that the degree to which first-time mothers were exposed to idealistic or realistic Instagram captions written by momfluencers had little to no impact on their ultimate purchasing intentions.

While the direct relationship between Instagram post type and purchase intention did not show a signification relationship, the indirect path from Instagram post type via perceived similarity to purchase intention is positive correlated. When exposed to a realistic Instagram caption as opposed to an idealized Instagram image, participants reported higher degrees of perceived similarities, which in turn lead to a higher purchase intention. This implies that realistic captions helped first-time mothers identify with the momfluencer more, because they considered the information more relevant and similar to their own experiences, which may have strengthened their feeling of connection to the momfluencer as discussed before (Festinger, 1975; Suls et al., 2002).

However, this finding is not reflected in the differences between the two conditions, which could be attributed to the presence of another unmeasured variable that may exert an opposing effect. Credibility could potentially play a role in this regard, as the level of credibility associated with the Instagram post type may influence its impact on purchase intention (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Further research is needed to investigate the impact of credibility in the relationship between Instagram post type, perceived similarity, and purchase intention among first-time mothers. Specifically, examining the perceived credibility of momfluencers, including factors like trustworthiness, could shed light on how it influences the effectiveness of different Instagram caption types on purchase intention.

Contrary to the initial predictions, the study findings revealed that participants who were exposed to an idealistic caption, as opposed to a realistic caption, did not exhibit significantly higher levels of wishful identification. This unexpected result prompts a deeper exploration into the role of visual information in shaping participants' responses. Although this experiment focused on the effect of captions, or written language, on purchase intention, it is possible that visual information was more salient for respondents. This could be explained by the fact that participants were first shown the Instagram post and thirty seconds

later redirected to a subsequent page with the questions they had to answer, which prevented them from seeing the Instagram post again. Research shows that people generally remember visual information better than textual information, in other words, people's visual memory is better than their verbal memory (Blanco et al., 2010; Martin, 2020; Pezdek & Evans, 1979). In this context, it is plausible that participants remembered more about the visual elements of the Instagram post, such as the accompanying photo, rather than the specific details of the caption. The captivating and idealized nature of the photo could have stimulated wishful identification irrespective of the caption type. This suggests that visual cues might have played a more significant role in triggering participants' identification with the depicted ideal image, overshadowing the influence of the written caption.

The results also showed that, among first-time mothers, greater degrees of perceived similarity were linked to higher purchase intentions. This shows that first-time mothers were more inclined to buy the things the momfluencer advised when they thought they shared comparable experiences with the momfluencer. This is consistent with the previously discussed similarity-attraction principle by Cialdini (1995), which holds that consumers are more likely to purchase a product when they identify with the person recommending it.

In addition, the study revealed a positive association between wishful identification and purchase intention. This suggests that when individuals strongly desire to be like the momfluencer they see on Instagram, it enhances their inclination to make a purchase. This is consistent with the aforementioned literature showing that individuals experience feelings of adoration and jealousy when looking up to a role model such as a momfluencer. These feelings make them want to emulate the lifestyle or qualities of a momfluencer, making them more likely to want to buy products endorsed or associated with that momfluencer (Antonetti & Maklan, 2016; Bi & Zhang, 2022).

Examining the effects of advertising scepticism, the findings show that this moderator did not weaken the relationship between Instagram caption type and wishful identification. As previously mentioned, mothers often strive for perfection due to feelings of insecurity stemming from their lack of experience (Ouvrein, 2022). A potential explanation for this lack of significance is that the importance of upward comparison with the momfluencer may overshadow any level of scepticism a first-time mother may have. The desire to emulate the momfluencer may outweigh other emotions, such as scepticism. In a study conducted by Lim et al. (2020), they emphasize the intensity of wishful identification, as it is a cognitive phenomenon that has not been extensively explored by researchers. This strong need for identification may override the relationship between Instagram caption type and wishful identification, rendering advertising scepticism insignificant.

Practical implications

The current study examined the commercial effects of different Instagram caption types, in contrast to earlier studies that primarily focused on the mental effects of Instagram posts on mothers. Although the results show that Instagram caption type has no direct effect on the purchase intention of first-time mothers. While the results did not show a direct effect of Instagram caption type on purchase intention, marketers and momfluencers are advised to use realistic captions on Instagram to foster a sense of recognition and connection among first-time mothers. The literature review for this study reveals that first-time mothers are extremely insecure and in need of a role model who shows both the difficulties and benefits of motherhood, even though the caption type has no direct influence on the purchase intentions of first-time mothers. Despite the fact that this study concentrated on the commercial marketing effects of momfluencers on first-time mothers, the mental consequences may be even more important and should be took into account in order to protect this vulnerable target group from the negative effects of social media.

Limitations & future research

Despite careful planning of the current study, important limitations should be noted. First, in interpreting our results, we need to consider the possibility of participant bias due to their pre-existing opinions or preferences regarding the baby carrier featured in the Instagram posts. Since the study used a made-up brand for the baby carrier, participants would not have had prior exposure or familiarity with the brand. It is still conceivable that the first-time mothers developed prejudices based on their own preferences or subjective perceptions of baby carriers in general. It is possible that the participants based their purchase intention on their prior opinion and not on the fact that they read a realistic or idealistic caption manipulated for this study. To reduce the influence of participants' pre-existing beliefs, future research could do a data analysis of an existing brand or product recommended by different momfluencers to see what this does to audience responses. Another option for future research is for participants to be shown multiple Instagram posts recommending different products that measure their purchase intentions.

Another limitation of this study is that the survey was conducted exclusively in Dutch. This language restriction limits the generalizability of the findings to a specific population of Dutch-speaking first-time mothers. The cultural context, societal norms, and experiences of Dutch mothers may differ from those of mothers in other countries or cultures. Therefore, caution should be exercised when attempting to apply the results of this study to a broader population of first-time mothers. To enhance the external validity and cross-cultural applicability of future research, it is recommended to conduct similar studies in different linguistic and cultural contexts. By including participants from various countries or regions, a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing purchase intention among first-time mothers can be achieved.

Another possibility for future research, is to investigate the effect of the #ad that was added to the Instagram posts as a disclosure in both conditions. The participants' advertising literacy may have been activated as a result of this disclosure, making them more sceptical of the posts than they would have been otherwise ((Van Reijmersdal et al., 2013; Youn & Shin, 2019). It would be interesting to find out what happens to first-time mothers' purchase intentions depending on whether momfluencers are transparent about the fact that they are promoting a product in a post or whether the promotion is incorporated into their regular content.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations of this study, the current study contributes to the existing research on the effects of different Instagram post types created by momfluencers on first-time mothers. Specifically, by examining the relationship between Instagram post type, wishful identification, perceived similarity, and purchase intention among first-time mothers, this research sheds light on the complex dynamics of social media influencer marketing. The findings highlight the importance of creating relatable and realistic content for momfluencers to enhance the perceived similarity and connection with their audience, ultimately influencing purchase intention. The limitations identified provide avenues for future research to further explore and refine our understanding of the impact of momfluencer marketing on consumer behaviour in the context of social media platforms like Instagram.

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Appendix A
Stimulus material

Condition 1. Instagram post with a idealistic caption about motherhood

Condition 2. Instagram post with an realistic caption about motherhood

Appendix B

Pre-test results

Pair 1: "This is life. My uncombed hair in a bun, laundry scattered on the floor and Noor upset by teething. This teddy fabric wrap blanket from @coco is my lifesaver. When I wrap my little girl in this soft blanket, she feels that extra bit of love and security she so desperately needs right now." versus "This morning I had time to spare so I curled my hair and did laundry. My two boys are sweetly playing downstairs with their new toys and I wrapped Noor in this teddy fabric wrap from @coco. This blanket is super soft, looks really cute and provides extra sense of security for my little girl."

Pair 2: "Mari is not feeling well today. Her teeth are coming through, this is unfortunately bothering her a lot. Luckily, I can cuddle her all day while (trying to) finish my to-do list with this awesome @coco baby carrier!" versus "We had such a nice and productive day! Mari was happy as always and I carried her with me all day in this amazing @coco baby carrier. We cooked together, cleaned Mari's room and cleaned the bathroom!"

Pair 3: "It is impossible to keep all my kids' toys tidy when they are in the same room. When they go to bed and my hectic day is over, it's finally time to tidy up. Thankfully, with these storage boxes from @coco, that's in no time and this tired mum can still enjoy an evening of Netflix in a tidy house!" versus "With these storage boxes from @coco, I make sure my house is always tidy and all my kids' toys are neatly in place, even when my kids are in the same room! So in the evening, I no longer have to tidy up, which means I still have enough energy to exercise after a long day. Lovely to come home afterwards to a tidy house!"

Results pre-test

Pair 1: realistic caption (M = 2.77, SD = 1.20) was lower than the idealistic caption (M = 3.05, SD = 1.17). This difference was not significant (Mdif = -1.54, t(83) =7.54, p <.001).The difference represents a large-sized effect d = 1.15.

Pair 2: the realistic caption (M = 2.41, SD = 1.14) was lower than the idealistic caption

(M = 3.42, SD = 1.22). This difference was significant (Mdif = -1.05, t(37) =--4.07, p

<.001).The difference represents a large-sized effect d = 1.23.

Pair 3: the realistic caption (M = 1.97, SD = 1.06) was lower than the idealistic caption

(M = 3.51, SD = 1.23). This difference was significant (Mdif = -1.54, t(38) =7.54, p

<.001).The difference represents a large-sized effect d = 1.61.

Appendix C
Moderation effect graph
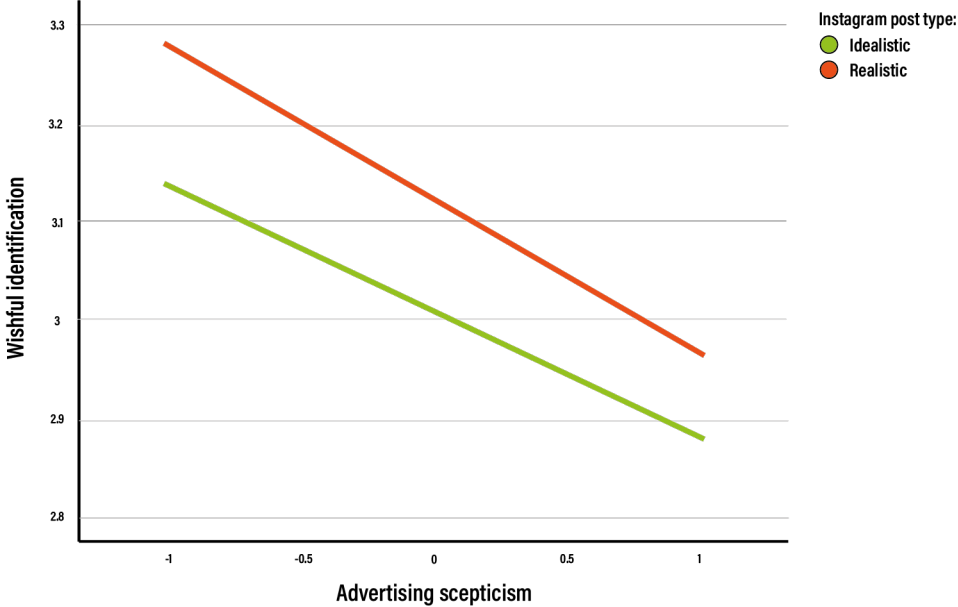
Mijn naam is Kim Entjes en door middel van dit onderzoek wil ik meer inzicht krijgen in de invloed van Instagram posts die zijn gemaakt door momfluencers op het koopgedrag van moeders. Voor dit onderzoek vraag ik je een aantal vragen in te vullen, dit zal ongeveer 5-10 minuten duren. Je maakt door je deelname aan dit onderzoek kans op één van de 4 cadeaubonnen t.w.v. 25 euro te besteden bij de online of fysieke winkel van Kroost Kids Concept Store! Op het einde van de enquête kun je je e-mailadres invullen om kans te maken op een cadeaubon.

Ontzettend bedankt dat je deel wilt nemen aan mijn onderzoek.

Kim Entjes
Master student Business Communication and Digital Media

Voordat we beginnen, wil ik je vragen het onderstaande goed door te lezen.

Je deelname is volledig vrijwillig en je hebt het recht om op ieder moment te stoppen met de enquête zonder nadelige consequenties. De verzameling van data gebeurt geheel volgens de regels van de Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming. Dit houdt in dat jouw gegevens en antwoorden volledig anoniem worden verwerkt en dat deze gegevens vertrouwelijk worden behandeld. De geanonimiseerde data zullen 10 jaar lang beveiligd worden bewaard en zullen alleen voor onderzoeksdoeleinden worden gebruikt. Na deze periode wordt alle data omtrent dit onderzoek gewist. Als je ervoor kiest deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek ga je akkoord met alles dat hiervoor is benoemd. Mocht je nog vragen hebben of interesse hebben in het onderzoek, dan mag je altijd een mail sturen naar k.entjes@tilburguniversity.edu

Door op "Ja, ik ga akkoord met deelname voor dit onderzoek" te klikken bevestig je dat:
• Je de bovenstaande informatie hebt gelezen;
• Je 18 jaar of ouder bent;
• Je vrijwillig deelneemt en op elk moment kunt stoppen met het onderzoek;
• Je geanonimiseerde data 10 jaar lang kunnen worden opgeslagen en worden gebruikt voor andere onderzoeken.

Appendix E
Survey questions

1.   Heb je een of meer kinderen die tussen de 0 en 3 jaar oud zijn?
    - Ja
    - Nee

2. Hoeveel kinderen heb je?
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5 of meer

3. Hoe oud is je kind/zijn je kinderen? (Meerdere opties mogelijk)
    - 1
    - 2
    - 3
    - 4
    - 5
    - 6
    - 7
    - 8
    - 9
    - 10
    - 11
    - 12 of ouder

4. Hoe vaak maak je gebruik van Instagram?
    - Dagelijks
    - Wekelijks
    - Maandelijks
    - Ik gebruik geen Instagram

Beeld je in dat je op zoek bent naar een draagzak. Je krijgt nu een Instagram post te zien die is geplaatst door een Nederlandse momfluencer. Kijk naar de foto en lees de caption goed door. Neem de tijd om de vragen te beantwoorden. Je mag (anoniem) je mening geven, er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden.

Je krijgt even de tijd om de post te bekijken/lezen, na 30 seconde kun je doorklikken naar de vragen.

5. Geef aan in welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Sterk mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Enigszins mee oneens (3)	Neutraal (4)	Enigszins mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Sterk mee eens (7)
Ik zou overwegen de draagzak die ik net zag in de toekomst te kopen. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als er een shopping link (linkje waarmee je doorverwezen wordt naar een site waar je het product kan aanschaffen) zou staan bij deze post, zou ik hierop klikken. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Als ik op dit moment zou moeten beslissen, zou ik de draagzak kopen. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

6. Geef aan in welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Sterk mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Enigszins mee oneens (3)	Neutraal (4)	Enigszins mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Sterk mee eens (7)
Ik heb het gevoel dat ik op deze momfluencer lijk. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Deze momfluencer gedraagt zich zoals ik. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Deze momfluencer is gelijk aan mij. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Deze momfluencer denkt zoals ik. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

7. Geef aan in welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Sterk mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Enigszins mee oneens (3)	Neutraal (4)	Enigszins mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Sterk mee eens (7)
Deze momfluencer is het type persoon dat ik wil zijn. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik zou willen dat ik meer was zoals deze momfluencer. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik zou deze momfluencer op de foto graag willen evenaren. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik zou graag dezelfde levensstijl hebben als deze momfluencer. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

8. Hoe zou je de caption van de voorgaande Instagram post beoordelen, waarbij 1 zeer realistisch is (zonder overdrijving of verfraaiing) en 7 zeer idealistisch is (er wordt een beeld geschetst van een perfecte situatie die niet noodzakelijk overeenkomt met de werkelijkheid)?

- Zeer realistisch
- Realistisch
- Enigszins realistisch
- Neutraal
- Enigszins idealistisch
- Idealistisch
- Zeer idealistisch

9. Geef aan in welke mate je het eens bent met de volgende stellingen:

	Sterk mee oneens (1)	Mee oneens (2)	Enigszins mee oneens (3)	Neutraal (4)	Enigszins mee eens (5)	Mee eens (6)	Sterk mee eens (7)
Ik denk (over het algemeen) dat adverteerders eerlijke informatie geven in een advertentie (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk (over het algemeen) dat adverteerders mij proberen te manipuleren om een product te verkopen. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk (over het algemeen) dat er vaak valse claims worden gemaakt in advertenties. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ik denk (over het algemeen) dat advertenties vaak niet helemaal eerlijk zijn. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

10. Waarmee identificeer je jezelf het meest?

- Man
- Vrouw
- Dat zeg ik liever niet

11. Hoe oud ben je?

_____

12. Wat is de hoogste opleiding die je volgt of hebt afgerond?

- Basisschool
- Middelbare school
- MBO
- HBO bachelor
- HBO master
- WO bachelor
- WO master
- PhD of hoger
- Anders namelijk: _____