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A Marketing Enigma: Consumer Brand Engagement with Health and Fitness Brands on Instagram

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Abstract

Consumer brand engagement (CBE) is a nascent concept, seen to have re-emerged alongside the development of the interactive digital world and social media (SM). However, a maintained focus on CBE as a strategic imperative in contributing in-depth consumer understandings has resulted in the majority of research omitting negative CBE expressions. This study addresses this imbalance by including characteristics of both positively and negatively-valenced CBE. Further, a wide exploration of brands is embedded in central CBE research, leaving the distinctions and dynamism within focal contexts unexplored. This study addresses this gap in the literature by investigating CBE with health and fitness (H&F) brands in the contemporary setting of Instagram. This exploratory study, conducting one-to-one interviews, investigates Generation Z's perceptions towards H&F brands, aiming to address the concept's ambiguity by understanding the key characteristics of positive and negative CBE manifestations and the subsequent consequences. Generation Z demonstrate a willingness to engage and participate with the H&F brands. Findings reveal an intensity across four prominent CBE dimensions, namely identification, enthusiasm, attention/absorption and interaction, disclosing both positive and negative expressions. This study further reveals the context dependent nature of CBE in the translation of concerns within the marketing and health psychology fields to outcomes at both the brand and consumer level. Along with a discussion of the findings above, an understanding of the theoretical and practical implications for brand strategies that aim to optimise CBE will conclude together with various future research directions.

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1.0 <u>Introduction</u>

1.1. Context

In recent years, research exploring the consumer/brand relationship has centred around the concept of consumer brand engagement (CBE) (e.g. Hollebeek, 2011a; Brodie et al., 2013). While there exists little consensus among the literature, reflecting the nascent status of the concept, CBE is most commonly defined as the level of investment within a brand interaction across emotional, cognitive and behavioural dimensions (Hollebeek, 2011b). To illustrate, Smith and Zook (2016) reference a ladder of engagement, through which brands can progress the consumer, creating brand loyalty through rich brand experiences. This visualisation affiliates with the emerging discussion that CBE presents a superior predictor of brand loyalty (Patterson et al., 2006; Hollebeek, 2011a; Chen et al., 2012) and a sustainable source of competitive advantage (Voyles, 2007; Brodie et al., 2013), demonstrating the concept as a strategic imperative, unequivocally useful for brand managers. Further, voluminous literature discusses the shortcomings of traditional marketing predictors such as customer satisfaction (Reichheld, 2001; Bowden, 2009), directing research elsewhere in the search of a measure enabling further depth into consumer understandings (Giese and Cote, 2000). This sees CBE as a reputable concept that merits further investigation (Van Doorn et al., 2010; Leeflang, 2011).

Over the last decade, CBE research has witnessed a shift towards the exploration of interactive consumer/brand relationships (e.g. Calder et al., 2009; Harrigan et al., 2017). This reflects the introduction of the digital world (Muñiz and O'Guinn, 2001), seen through the rise of Web 2.0 and the progressions that have proceeded this technological underpinning. Within this interactive environment, social media (SM) is defined as "a group of internet-based applications" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p.61). Moreover, SM's communicative strength provide a "conceptual parallel to the interactively generated nature underlying the 'engagement' concept" (Hollebeek et al., 2014, p.155) which delineates the relevance of the terms when

seen together. Certainly, Schultz (2013, p.20) names engagement the guiding light of all marketing activities in this context, claiming marketers to have "recreated engagement in a new form", while Malthouse and Hofacker (2010) reference the significance of the relationship between CBE and SM. Instagram has more latterly held the attention of research in this SM setting, (e.g. Ferrara et al., 2014; Ting et al., 2015; Russmann and Svensson, 2016) responding to its exponential popularity (Hu et al., 2014). Instagram describes itself as "the home for visual storytelling" (Instagram, 2017, p.1). The simple engagement mechanism of a double-tap to 'like' lends itself to the maintenance of high engagement ratios (VentureBeat, 2017). Thus, Instagram is a platform that provides a dynamic angle for the study of CBE.

1.2. Research Problem

Although CBE research has been recognised to have further emerged, parallel to the interactive landscape formed through SM, the concept remains considerably latent with research sparse (Hollebeek et al., 2014). Moreover, the predominant focus on CBE as a superior marketing tool has resulted in a lack of understanding of negatively-valenced engagement (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014). This two-fold representation of CBE references the inspiration for the title, an 'enigma'.

Furthermore, investigating CBE research, a large volume shares a common theme in a wide exploration of the concept. This is seen in references to unrelated brand categories (Hollebeek et al., 2014), which while facilitating a somewhat comprehensive understanding of CBE, findings may be fragmented. Significantly, CBE distinctions within brand contexts are omitted. Certainly, Hollebeek and Chen (2014, p.71) recommend that future research discuss "specific points of similarity and difference across categories, sectors, and brands", while Brodie et al. (2013) reference CBE as context-dependent. Although theory exists that overcomes this limitation (Javornik and Mandelli, 2012; So et al., 2014; Harrigan et al., 2017), many brand contexts remain largely uncharted. Moreover, little is know in regard

to the characteristics of positively and negatively-valenced CBE within specific contexts.

The aforementioned strategic role of CBE has arisen a vast list of consequences transcribed in the literature. To illustrate, Vivek et al. (2012) state trust, loyalty, and brand community to be possible outcomes of positively-valenced CBE. However, consistent with negatively-valenced CBE, outcomes of these are seldom found in the literature, meriting further research attention (So et al., 2014).

1.3. Research Aim and Questions

Simultaneous to the rise of Instagram, an advancement on the cultural agenda exists in health and fitness (H&F) (Powers and Greenwell, 2016), leading to concentrated streams of H&F brands emerging on Instagram. The platform has facilitated new ways for H&F brands to develop and maintain interactions with consumers. Indeed, Instagram has been recognised to exist at the forefront of fitness (Goldstraw and Keegan, 2016). H&F brands, for the purpose of this study are delineated as brands associated with the promotion of health or fitness goods or services. Moreover, despite the increased CBE research owing to the interactive environment and the advancing adoption of CBE strategies by many H&F brands, to date, CBE research in this area is quiescent. This relates to my motivation to understand CBE with H&F brands in the context of Instagram, addressing the knowledge gap. Furthermore, Generation Z are identified as greatly exposed to Instagram (Sloan and Quan-Haase, 2017; Sprout Social, 2017), referenced as amply connected users of "communications and media technologies" (Desai and Lele, 2017, p.802). Thus, this thesis will focus on individuals in Generation Z, considered as those born after 1990 (Desai and Lele, 2017).

Theoretically, in investigating a specific brand context, this research exhibits a divergence from Hollebeek et al.'s (2014) wide CBE angle, while responding to observations of the context-dependent nature of CBE (Brodie et al., 2013; Hollebeek and Chen, 2014). Further, this thesis acts on Graffigna and Gambetti's

(2015) reasoning of in-depth research methods as a necessary requirement in CBE research, allowing an exploration into psycho-social constructs. This research uses CBE as a lens to deeply explore consumer perceptions. Thus, the research aim is as follows

Research aim: 'to explore the perceptions of Generation Z towards H&F brands on Instagram'

This study builds on Hollebeek and Chen's (2014) comprehensive understanding of CBE through the acknowledgement of negative manifestations. However, an interview technique will be employed over observation to understand individual perceptions. Therefore, my first research question will be

Research question 1: 'what are the key characteristics of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?'

Furthermore, within the focal brand context, this thesis aims to understand the consequences of both positively and negatively-valenced CBE, adhering to So et al.'s (2014) research recommendation. As a result, my second research question will be

Research question 2: 'what are the key consequences of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?'

1.4. Scope of the Study

The present study is concerned with brands in the context of Instagram, remaining aligned with the current shift in CBE research investigating the apparent dynamism within the consumer/brand relationship. This draws on the relevance of understanding the perceptions of those most exposed to the platform, Generation

Z. In light of CBE's relevance to the H&F industry, very little is known in this domain. Thus, the aim is firmly rooted in identifying CBE exclusively with H&F brands, understanding the positively and negatively-valenced CBE characteristics and the subsequent consequences. As the above discussion indicates, by occupying a comprehensive approach, it is anticipated that brand managers will benefit from enhancing their awareness of the full range of CBE.

1.5. Disposition

This study exhibits the following structure. The discourse that follows establishes a theoretical foundation to the study. The chapter includes a review of the existing CBE literature, addressing the identified dimensions of CBE and their consequences, acknowledging both positively and negatively-valenced manifestations. The succeeding section delineates the methodology used within the research process, including a discussion of the qualitative method and interview procedure. This is followed by a presentation of the study's findings, advancing to a discussion exploring the key themes and research questions in addition to the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

2.0 <u>Literature Review</u>

The following chapter explores the literature existing around the present study. In its commencement, the inceptive nature of CBE is addressed in defining the concept, allowing a thorough understanding to be developed around the boundaries of this research. Discourse will then move onto the interactive landscape that underlies this thesis, relating to SM and Instagram. The CBE dimensions are discussed, in addition to the consequences of positively and negatively-valenced CBE, drawing on the focal context of this study.

2.1. Towards the Concept of Consumer Brand Engagement

CBE has only more recently transpired in the marketing literature. Although remaining in infancy, the concept is unequivocally gaining traction (So et al., 2014).

CBE is illustrated as an auspicious concept, relating to the enhanced understanding of consumer behaviour (MSI, 2010) that has positioned it as central within the marketing system (Vivek et al., 2012). However, there exists minimal consensus within the literature around the broader definition of the term (Schultz, 2013), illustrating a prominent critique that demands further clarification of the concept. Adopted from Hollebeek et al. (2014), an overview of the conceptualisations of CBE existing in the literature is presented in Appendix A which assists a thorough understanding around the concept. A number of observations can be made from these definitions.

Firstly, numerous engagement-based thoughts are presented within the literature including 'customer engagement behaviour', 'online engagement' and 'consumer brand engagement'. This may indeed reflect the variance in research type, for example, Calder et al. (2009) express the particular concept of 'online engagement' relating to their quantitative approach exploring advertising on news websites. Nevertheless, the multiple concepts referenced draws on the preliminary status of CBE as a topic of research, highlighting the necessity in exploring the concept further.

Secondly, the definitions present the idea of numerous dimensions as existing within CBE. This can be attributed to Graffigna and Gambetti's (2015, p.119) "umbrella concept". Offerings of emotional, behavioural, physical, psychological and cognitive engagement can be seen. While, Brodie et al. (2013) focus on CBE as a context-dependent psychological state, Van Doorn et al. (2010) emphasise the behavioural dimension of the relationship, presenting two alternative understandings. The multi-dimensional nature of CBE emphasises the need to clarify the boundaries of research that thus far, present contradictions (Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015).

Finally, references to the variance in 'levels' and 'intensity' affiliates with the thought that CBE may elicit negatively-valenced expressions. Higgins (2006,

p.442) remarks that engagement refers to being "involved, occupied and interested in something" which by nature, may indeed elicit negative manifestations. In reviewing the wider engagement concept, the overwhelming majority of research has centred around positive understandings (Calder et al., 2009; Hollebeek, 2011a; Hollebeek, 2011b; Vivek et al., 2012). Nevertheless, a number of studies are beginning to address the inconsistencies and contradictions that are found to exist within CBE as it is further explored (Van Doorn et al, 2010; Brodie et al, 2011; De Villiers, 2015). To illustrate in an interactive setting, Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) reference expressions of negative feelings as a key motivating factor in consumers contributing to online brand communities. Subsequently, research has referenced the further opportunity for this negatively-valenced CBE as facilitated over SM (Pittman and Reich, 2016). Broadly, Fournier and Avery (2011) evidence this understanding through notions of brands as unwanted guests in SM settings.

Moreover, as the above discussion suggests, it is necessary to elucidate the boundaries of the present study. Through investigating CBE, this study will concentrate on the most recent conceptions identified within the literature, focusing on CBE as an investment in specific brand interactions comprising three dimensions: cognitive, emotional and behavioural (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

The following section aligns with the contemporary focus of CBE research, exploring CBE in digital contexts. Using SM and Instagram as an instructive setting, an account is developed in how the platform delivers an interactive opportunity for brands, presenting a fertile area to explore CBE.

2.2. Social Media: An Interactive Opportunity for CBE

Brands have cemented their place in SM having fallen witness to the development of the interactive landscape that has facilitated rich and intertwined consumer/brand relationships, affording new ways for brands to "communicate, collaborate and connect" (Labreque, 2014, p.134). Notably, there exists the residing fear of falling behind in the ever present SM battle (Schultz and Peltier,

2013). SM is commonly identified as a propitious marketing tool (Labreque, 2014; Tuten and Solomon, 2015; Ogbuji and Papazafeiropoulou, 2016), recognised as holding extensive opportunity for brands as the literature unceasingly expresses a need to further emphasise it within the wider marketing strategy (Mangold and Faulds, 2009; Tuten and Solomon, 2015; Hussain et al., 2016). Indeed, Felix et al. (2017) state it to be crucial that managers and researchers understand SM in the marketing context. A further recent contribution to the literature states the advanced connection available with brands (Harrigan et al., 2017). Earlier research supports this thought through conceptions of SM as a promotional hybrid (Mangold and Faulds, 2009), and a 'goldmine' (Hussain et al., 2016).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) expand their definition of SM to include the notion of user-generated content, a new form of content creation and exchange. Relatedly, Mangold and Faulds' (2009) two-fold illustration of SM marketing demonstrates a move beyond traditional marketing, allowing consumer to consumer interaction. Significantly, this presents SM's interrelated roles, highlighting consumer's advancing participation in the consumer/brand relationship. This adheres to Hussain et al.'s (2016, p.22) reference to a plethora of activities existing beyond content consumption, including sharing "knowledge, experiences, opinions, and … discussion". As such, SM ultimately signals a change in the consumer/brand relationship (Park and Kim, 2014; Labrecque, 2014; Felix et al., 2017) and more specifically, CBE, which has recently seized the attention of much research (e.g. Phua et al., 2017; Harrigan et al., 2017). Certainly, the Marketing Science Institute (MSI) continued to identify CBE as a research priority in line with the developments in communications technology (MSI, 2006; MSI, 2010). Additionally, CBE has been delineated as better understood in the SM context, affording rich insights and understandings (Dessart et al., 2015). This consents the shift among CBE literature towards this domain, presenting an area ripe for future research.

More specifically, Instagram's simple photo sharing element highlights an opportunity for brands, understood as an effective marketing tool (Ting et al.,

2015). Instagram has been identified as an "image machine" (Wissinger, 2007), harnessing the active participation of its users (Carah and Shaul, 2016). The influence underlying the platform can be seen through Branthwaite's (2002, p.170) reference to imagery as a powerful instrument for "implanting ideas or suggestions, eliciting emotions…or turning an abstract idea into a real and credible product benefit". The aforementioned double-tap to 'like' engagement mechanism is expanded within the literature, inclusive of engagement forms such as comments, pauses on images and visits to accounts (Carah and Shaul, 2016). Thus, the evident expansive flow of images sees ample CBE opportunity. Instagram can be seen to fuel the commonly addressed participation culture, allowing the platform to be identified as a largely relevant and appropriate platform to study CBE (Phua et al., 2017).

The sections that follows draws on the fragmented nature of the emerging concept, accrediting a variation of dimensions. Those relevant to the present study will be investigated, commencing with dimensions evident within central CBE research, moving to those within digital contexts and specific industry settings.

2.3. Dimensions of CBE

Hollebeek's significant contribution to CBE research has elicited a number of key dimensions around the concept. Expressions of passion, immersion and activation are referenced, accrediting emotional, cognitive and behavioural dimensions (Hollebeek, 2011b). Hollebeek and Chen (2014) extend these dimensions in their research on CBE in particular brand communities. Studies have since linked activation with the affectivity of enthusiasm given the shared high energy levels (So et al., 2014). Support for this dimension is seen through Vivek et al.'s (2012) understanding of enthusiasm as well as extraordinary experience as creating greater overall CBE.

Affording to a digital setting, Scott and Craig-Lees (2010) identify pleasure as a dimension in media settings. Accordingly, Calder et al. (2009) quantifiably

demonstrate CBE's strong correlation with online advertising effectiveness. Although the authors explore CBE in relation to advertising, the associations are relevant to the present study in their reference to online consumer/brand interactions. CBE is delineated on two levels: personal engagement and social-interactive engagement. The former is identified as possessing an association with inspiration and stimulation, whilst also harnessing a sense of intrinsic enjoyment referencing cognitive CBE. The latter, illustrated as holding further connotation to the online environment, draws on collaborative elements, referencing behavioural CBE in the dimensions of community and participation. Persisting in this online setting, Phua et al. (2017) found individuals following brands on Instagram over other SM platforms to have higher sociability and community engagement. Further, Quan-Haase and Young (2010) demonstrate Instagram as permitting encouragement. A culture of participation and socialisation is evidently facilitated on online platforms including Instagram.

CBE research into specific settings is limited. However, the literature has expressed a contemporary interest in tourism (So et al., 2014; Harrigan et al., 2017). So et al. (2014) highlight five dimensions of CBE in *enthusiasm; attention; absorption; interaction* and *identification,* ensuing from Hollebeek's (2011b) original understandings. The authors recommend the use of these dimensions as a foundation to explore CBE in an alternative negative vein.

Through exploring the above literature, this thesis will focus on the most recent expressions of CBE dimensions, favouring those presented by So et al. (2014) and Harrigan et al. (2017), allowing relevance to be seen when investigating CBE in specific brand contexts. This approach permits an in-depth and contemporary understanding over the three broad CBE dimensions: emotional, cognitive and behavioural. Moreover, the above dimensions are pertinent to H&F brands on Instagram. It is understood that SM and CBE possess a strong relationship (Hollebeek et al., 2014). It follows that H&F brands with a presence on Instagram, such as Adidas, Nike, Fabletics and Keep it Cleaner will strive to achieve positive

CBE across each of the dimensions. It should be noted that for the purpose of this study, the attention and absorption dimensions are identified collectively due to their similarity, facilitating a more balanced consideration of emotional, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. The aim of this thesis is best served by introducing each dimension with definitions adopted from existing literature and examples relevant to the domain of this study.

2.3.1. Identification (emotional)

Identification exists where the brand assists in helping an individual meet a self-determined need (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003). It is identified as a perceived image overlap between the consumer and brand (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006). At the brand level, individuals may identify with Keep it Cleaner, because they perceive it to be current and fresh.

2.3.2. Enthusiasm (cognitive)

Enthusiasm is an individual's "strong level of excitement and interest" in a brand (Vivek, 2009, p.128). To illustrate, an example would be an engaged Adidas consumer accrediting a high level of energy to view the brand's recent Instagram post on his/her newsfeed.

2.3.3. Attention/absorption (cognitive)

Attention is the "duration of focus" on a brand (So et al., 2014, p.308). Absorption is a state in which the consumer is "fully concentrated … and deeply engrossed" (Patterson et al., 2006, p.3). Thus, we exemplify this dimension in an engaged consumer of Nike owing a greater level of investment to brand content on Instagram.

2.3.4. Interaction (behavioural)

Interaction is an individual's "online and off-line participation with the brand" (So et al., 2014, p.309). Individuals may share thoughts and feelings. In the domain of

Instagram, this could be seen as leaving comments on Fabletics' images as well as conversing with other's on the platform.

The outcomes of the dimensions referenced in the literature are discussed below, inclusive of positive and negative forms.

2.4. Consequences of Positively and Negatively-Valenced CBE

Trust is referenced expansively in the CBE literature (e.g. Malthouse and Hofacker, 2010; Hollebeek, 2011a). To demonstrate, an engaged customer of Deliciously Ella can be depicted by his/her sense of reliability and security towards the brand after viewing the content on multiple occasions, arising cognitive significance. Relatedly, Bowden (2009) presents satisfaction as fundamental when investigated in line with the engagement concept, highlighting a customer's perception of higher-performing offerings. Extending Hollebeek's (2011a) initial research, Brodie et al. (2013) delineate loyalty as prominent with CBE across digital contexts. Phua et al. (2017) in their study comparing various SM platforms, demonstrate loyalty to be most related to CBE on Instagram, allowing this outcome to show greater relevance to the present study. Loyalty is exemplified through repeated interactions between Nike and the brand's consumers over Instagram.

Dolan (2002) presents emotional and cognitive dimensions as effecting behavioural CBE. Hollebeek and Chen (2014) state that it is this interrelationship that generates the outcome. Further, the authors cite the consequence of brand attitude as inclusive of both favourable and unfavourable forms, highlighting negative CBE expressions as arising undesirable outcomes. The potential for these outcomes to present effects exceeding that of the positively-valenced counterpart is recognised. The above knowledge highlights the opportunity for negatively-valenced CBE outcomes. Moreover, consistent with the aforementioned positively-valenced focus within the CBE literature, these unfavourable outcomes are seldom found. However, several studies have addressed this imbalance. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) illustrate negative CBE

expressions as far-reaching, referencing a probable outcome in the exploration into competitor offerings. Meaningfully, the literature expresses thoughts of a multi-dimensional effect. Indeed, Van Doorn et al. (2010) demonstrate a three-fold representation of consequences (consumer, firm and community-based), while De Villiers (2015) identifies a possible two-fold negative impact, highlighting common themes effecting both consumer well-being as well as brand reputation and economic prosperity.

Pittman and Reich (2016) describe the further opportunity for connectivity that exists with SM as rationally associated with an increase in psychological well-being, however, significantly, acknowledge evidence demonstrating a contrasting effect. Indeed, the former of the negative impacts referenced by Villiers (2015), consumer well-being, can be seen to be heavily reflected within the health psychology literature. It is hard to ignore this stem of research when exploring the literature around the study. Certainly, the current literature calls for the CBE concept to be broadened (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; So et al., 2014; De Villiers, 2015), thus, one way of satisfying this recommendation is through the investigation of the lesser documented negative understandings that may translate to negative CBE outcomes. Therefore, it is useful to draw upon perspectives held in alternative disciplines.

The health psychology literature cites Instagram as exposing users to negative consequences (Lup et al., 2015). Fitspiration is commonly referenced (e.g. Boepple et al., 2016; Simpson and Mazzeo, 2016), presented as an online trend designed to inspire viewers towards a healthier lifestyle (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2016, p.1). The focus is centred upon positivity, however, there are elements that present concern (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2016). Certainly, SM platforms have been cited to facilitate the notion of ideals in terms of weight and body image (Mabe et al., 2014; Fardouly and Vartanian, 2016), viewed as unattainable for most. Krane et al. (2001) stipulate the inability to achieve the ideal as inducing negative consequences, emphasising the trend's paradoxical nature (Robinson et al.,

2017). Indeed, Sabiston and Chandler (2010) identified women exposed to fitness ideals as experiencing increased body-related anxiety. It can be understood that brands contribute largely to these consequences as a blurred line exists between the marketing communications of fitness brands and the fitspiration phenomena (Goldstraw and Keegan, 2016), implying brand marketing efforts over SM platforms are becoming liable to the trend. Moreover, although benefits of such trends are discussed within the literature (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2015; Simpson and Mazzeo, 2016), a consensus can be seen in the high cost of engagement with such content. Thus, arising a plausible thought in the translation to negative CBE outcomes.

Moreover, translating marketing principles to the health field has long been recognised as holding a moral imperative (Buchanan et al., 1994; White et al., 1995). This suggests that apprehensions are cemented in the marketing of content of this nature. Although Buchanan et al. (1994) look primarily at social marketing, similar issues can be understood when looking to H&F brands in a more commercial marketing setting. The authors illustration of ethical issues as pressed into the background relates to a contemporary concern reflected in the health psychology literature that there exist unintended negative feelings associated with H&F content on SM (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2016). It should be noted that this tension is not simply emerging, but rather established when applied to the mass media context. Lignowska et al. (2015) reference an underestimation of consumers' mental disposition when promoting healthy lifestyles in the mass media, citing the subsequent limited influence this may evidence. Thus, it seems plausible to understand a similar consequence when related to SM.

2.5. The Research Gap

As is presented above, CBE research has only more recently transpired in the marketing literature. Thus, there exists the need to broaden research in line with the negative manifestations (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; So et al., 2014; De Villiers, 2015) as well as exploring it in specific contexts (Brodie et al., 2013;

Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; So et al., 2014). Moreover, it is evident that this study exemplifies significance and creativity in the exploration of a largely relevant CBE context, Instagram and the uncharted H&F industry. Furthermore, in investigating a focal unexplored industry, it is important to bring together relevant studies around the research aim, drawing upon alternative disciplines in this case. The study attempts to bridge the current research existing around the topic area, incorporating an understanding of the tensions that exist in the marketing and health psychology literature. As such, a necessary and developed understanding is achieved. Having discussed the literature present around the research, the methodology of the present study will next be addressed.

3.0 <u>Methodology</u>

This chapter explains the methodology behind the present study. The qualitative research approach is explored, in addition to the semi-structured interview style and interview procedure. Ethical considerations are also discussed. In response to the discourse within the literature adhering to a further in-depth exploration of CBE (Graffigna and Gambetti, 2015), the purpose of this thesis is to understand the perceptions of individuals most exposed to H&F brands on Instagram. Thus, a qualitative method is delineated as appropriate to this research in its allowance to gain deep insights into participant accounts.

3.1. Research Approach and Method

The study is exploratory in nature, evidenced through the research of a previously unchartered CBE setting, H&F. In congruence with this exploratory underpinning, an interpretive ontology reaffirms the research aim, relating to the attached meaning and emotions of individuals (Myers, 2013). Relatedly, this justification highlights the limitations with the most dominant philosophical ontology in business research when applied to the present study. The positivist approach leaves little scope for exploration in its objectivity and measurement properties (Myers, 2013). Thus, limiting the in-depth understanding of respondent perspectives.

Moreover, it is essential to explore this study from a qualitative position in order to thoroughly understand the perceptions of Generation Z, recognising the subjectivity. In getting as close to participants as possible, becoming an "insider" (Creswell, 2013, p.21), respondents' experiences are further understood. The intent of qualitative research avoids generalisation but rather, focuses on the specific (Pinnegar and Daynes, 2007). Guba (1981), in line with his naturalist perspective, sees limitation in generalisations when understood through the dynamism found in contexts that calls for a more individualist approach. Further, a qualitative methodology in the specific domain of Instagram shows relevance to the rich and interpretable data available (Sloane and Quan-Haase, 2017). This draws on the unsuitability of quantitative methodologies in line with the present study's research aim. The perceptions of the selected respondents are more valuable than larger sets of data which do not gain in-depth insights.

3.2. Research Population and Sample

The research population of the present study focused on Generation Z, consisting of ten individuals aged 18-23. These individuals were identified as largely exposed to Instagram and thus H&F brands marketed across this platform. In this way, a purposeful style of sampling was adopted to ensure the research aim was understood (Maxwell, 2013), as well as inducing trustworthiness (Guba, 1981). The demographic is not reflective of the entire generation, however, the sample can provide great depth into the emotions and perceptions of individuals largely exposed to the specific domain. It is worth noting that the present study was less concerned with determining differences in advance that is typical of maximum variation sampling (Miles and Huberman, 1994), however, rather aimed to move beyond traditional categorisations such as age or ethnicity in seeing the importance in exploring the respondents' feelings and emotions (Davies, 2007).

3.3. Research Design

The semi-structured interview method relates to the aforementioned interpretive ontology in its ability to enable in-depth interviewing (Rubin and Rubin, 2005), gaining unique and penetrating insights (Kvale, 2007). Ten interviews were conducted, each between thirty minutes and an hour long to ensure conversations were detailed. The approach allowed the respondent to reflect, talking at length of their experiences which relays the thought that the response be somewhat closer to the "reality of the interviewee's life" (Davies, 2007, p.140). It is not altogether irrelevant here to acknowledge that focus groups, the primary alternative to the interview technique in qualitative research, would also arise useful results. However, this method occupies a reliance on group interaction. This reveals interviews as a technique allowing further information to be shared (Morgan, 1997) by the increased attention awarded to each individual. Moreover, the present study aimed to gain detailed and in-depth understandings of individual's emotions and feelings, allowing focus groups to be seen as a less appropriate method.

The semi-structured interview technique held opportunity in focusing the study somewhat to ensure consistency was gained, allowing central understandings and themes to develop. The interview schedule (Appendix B) included questions relating to the research questions, and was developed based on the CBE and health psychology literature. Thematic analysis was used, facilitating a comprehensive approach, incorporating the entire conversation (Thomsen et al., 1998).

3.4. Data Collection Method

Audio recordings were used as a tool to allow accurate recordings of the interviews (Creswell, 2013). Technology can invoke limitations in terms of reliability (Davies, 2007), thus, the pilot interview was useful to ensure the data collection method was tested and thus, efficient, limiting this risk as well as gaining confidence as an interviewer (Silverman, 2013). Furthermore, a mobile device was used as this

facilitated ease in practice in a device that was familiar to both the interviewer and participant. An alternative recording option, note taking, limits the depth of understanding and interpretation that is possible with audio recording (Davies, 2007) as there is the opportunity to hear what could be potentially missed while the focus is on taking notes. This demonstrates careful and complex analysis in the limitless nature of the tool in replaying the interview (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006). The ability to pause the audio facilitated an efficient transcription process whereby all significant information could be transcribed and analysed with ease. An example transcription can be found in Appendix C.

3.5. Procedure

Participants were contacted through email, whereby each individual was given a date and time that worked with their schedule. The interviews took place in a booked room on the university campus, ensuring a calm and relaxed setting with little distraction in order to concentrate both party's attention on the present interview. This facilitated the best possible response (Miles and Huberman, 1984) and efficient use of the recording device (Creswell, 2013). Upon commencing the interview, the interviewer introduced themselves and provided an information sheet (Appendix D). This allowed the respondent to become familiar with the topic, eliciting an understanding as well as facilitating trust and rapport to be built in the initial stages of the interview (Miller et al., 2012). This links to the degree of closeness and thus, the level of comfort that leads to open and sensitive responses (Davies, 2007).

The interview procedure began with open ended questions, typical within exploratory research, to invite respondents to speak in detail of their experiences (Hennink et al., 2011). Vocabulary was chosen as close to the participant's normal parlance as possible to induce identification with the questions (Flick, 2015). This was used in combination with a conversational style to encourage participants to respond to the questions in a personal manner (Silverman, 2013), thus gaining insightful understandings (Kvale, 1996). The repetition of an interviewee's last

statement with questioning inflection directed the semi-structured interviews, acting as a continuation probe to encourage completion of the respondents' thoughts (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). This was often accompanied by elaboration probes in using cited CBE dimensions in the literature, eliciting a richer answer inclusive of positive and negative forms. The dimensions did not form an exhaustive list, however, rather were prominent within CBE research exploring specific settings, namely identification, enthusiasm, attention/absorption and interaction. This allowed focus in line with the research questions.

Additionally, asking the research questions directly was avoided to ensure careful data analysis that moved beyond simply reporting back what was answered, evading 'lazy research' (Silverman, 2013). A gentle approach was reflected in the avoidance of interruption, allowing the respondent to explore all ideas at their own pace (Kvale, 1996) within their unique narrative (Silverman, 2013). The nature of the data collection method enabled interruption to be minimised as replaying the interviews introduced the opportunity to judge when interruption adversely impacted the interview (Davies, 2007). This draws on the significance of the pilot interview. It was important to reaffirm the confidentiality agreement upon concluding the interview and further reassure the participant of the discretion present.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

This thesis has gained ethical approval through the University of Leeds (Appendix E). To ensure ethical practice, participants were given an information sheet (Appendix D) detailing the research purpose and how information provided would be used. Respondent data was kept strictly confidential on a password protected laptop, with a code assigned to each respondent during data analysis, respecting their anonymity. Furthermore, respondent's agreement to the process was clarified in the consent form, signed by each individual (Appendix F). Participants understood they could withdraw from the process at any point, without reason. Morrow (2005) acknowledges the importance of trustworthiness in qualitative

research, highlighting a key criterion in respondent's understanding the significance of the study. As such, a summary of the study's contributions existed in commencing each interview, included in the interview schedule (Appendix B).

4.0 <u>Results</u>

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will present the results of the interviews administered and the subsequent data analysis. Findings will draw on the template analyses (Appendix G) which communicate the themes and sub-themes around the research questions. The discourse will be presented in two sections, based on the research questions. First, the positively and negatively-valenced CBE characteristics will be considered, followed by the findings of their consequences.

It is useful to begin with a general observation that consumers engage intensely with H&F brands on Instagram. The interview analysis revealed respondent's willingness for participation in the brand community. All participants emphasised influencer and celebrity endorsement, interesting videos and meaningful content as significantly increasing respondent willingness to engage. It is also worth noting that most participants refrain from following brands or 'liking' content, rather, engage through scrolling and pausing on images or videos.

4.2. Positively and Negatively-Valenced CBE

(RQ1) 'what are the key characteristics of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?'

4.2.1. Identification

Nearly all participants demonstrated a sense of identification with the H&F brands. P10 stated "Adidas are very current and fresh". Referencing Fabletics, P2 continued this theme- "the influencers really target me as a young individual".

Moreover, several respondents were found to have a stronger level of identification. P7 suggested "I view the content throughout the day, everyday; it's pretty addictive so I guess I've formed an attachment" [Body by MG] while P4 referenced Keep it Cleaner, commenting "their successes are your successes". P4 extended this identification proposing "when I can see someone has criticised in the comments, it can feel a bit personal". Relatedly, P1 suggested "it's a message of go world, lets get everyone fit. It makes me happy when I see they've done a great workout" [Gains4Girls].

4.2.1.1. Idealism

The idyllic and desirable lifestyle presented by brands was an aspect that participants identified with. This theme ran through several interviews, for example P2 suggested "she has a great lifestyle but also works and studies hard, she balances everything" [Grace Fit UK]. Similarly, P3 talking on Lean in 15 stated "he is toned and fit and very proactive; a lifestyle I aspire to". Further, it was found that participants were motivated by this lifestyle. This is evidenced by "I have the attitude if they can do it, I can do it" [Body by MG] (P7). Additionally, P5 suggested "it coincides with wanting to be healthy yourself. You get all these great ideas" [Lucy Meckleborough].

4.2.1.3. Unhappiness

However, within this emotional dimension, negatively-valenced expressions were also observed. P9 commented "sometimes it makes me a bit sad like 'oh no, they have a better body than me', you get a bit jealous". P9 was not alone in this view as P1 described "when I see an image, I will see that I can't look like that and get in an unconfident mind-set". This was echoed by P10 stating "brands are probably trying to give off positive feelings but indirectly, sometimes, it is definitely negative". It does sometimes make me feel bad". Comparably, P4 explained "sometimes it makes me feel worse and that's why I exercise more or eat less" [VS Sport]. Extending this thought, P5 signified "it often provokes guilt so I think I should buy

their workout guide or whatever" [Lucy Meckleborough], highlighting the paradoxical effect of H&F brands.

4.2.2. Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm was found to be extensively associated with positively-valenced CBE, represented by most respondents in feelings of excitement and content. To illustrate, P5 explained "H&F brands are a part of my life because it's such a trend at the moment. I'm curious, I want to see what all the fuss is about and how others keep fit and healthy".

4.2.2.1. Intrinsic Enjoyment

Findings demonstrated an overwhelming significance in Generation Z's intrinsic enjoyment. P2 stated "I've always been into H&F but viewing Grace Fit UK, makes me enjoy it even more; it extends my passion". P3 shared this thought, commenting "I loved viewing Nike's 'This Girl Can' campaign on Instagram, it was inspirational". Additionally, Generation Z were found to enjoy the message of certain brands. P9 exclaimed "Any Body Co celebrates differences. It's good to see H&F brands take measures to include variety in their promotions". This was echoed by P3, who suggested "she says whatever your body type, position or schedule, it's okay to be different and sometimes put on weight" [Eat Well Steph]. Interestingly, a number of participants demonstrated their enjoyment through subsequent positive action. Certainly, P10 commented "Sweat' gets me active and motivated". In a related vein, P7 specified "I like the feeling I get after viewing her brand. I feel motivated and ready to go" [Body by MG]. This draws on the nature of H&F brands, associated with activity and motivation. It is of note that these participants were found to possess a common characteristic in doing exercise a lot in their spare time.

4.2.2.2. Unrealistic

However, within this theme of enthusiasm, several participants mentioned the brands as unrealistic. In expressing a generalisation, P2 stated "there is a lack of

diversity which isn't really realistic" while P7 evidenced a similar thought detailing "I find the content quite samey, I know it's a big community but they need some variation" [Gym Shark]. Referencing the same brand, P5 addressed a similar tension "I don't think they're promoting health, I think they're promoting a certain physique and image that people should have. That's not health".

4.2.3. Attention/Absorption

This dimension demonstrated the intensity with which Generation Z viewed H&F brands, both in a positive and negative vein. To exemplify, P4 emphasised the repeated time investment, specifically in reference to Tracy Anderson- "there's always videos, I literally sit there and copy them multiple times". Similarly, P2 suggested "I save a lot of workout images and videos with the intention of referring back" [Grace Fit UK].

4.2.3.1. Investment

A few participants referenced an extensive time allowance to be awarded to H&F brands. P10 suggested "there's so many posts all the time, I can get lost in it and suddenly an hour has past" [Gains4Girls], while, P3 confessed "subconsciously, I interact more than I think, it's a way to get away from everyday life" [Clean Eating Alice]. P8 referenced a similar thought stating "it's something I do in my spare time; I place little time constraint on it". These participants were not alone in this view as P9 declared "the time I spend on Instagram may be longer because of it" [Spearman Chris]. Interestingly, a predominant sample referenced the influence of endorsements on their investment with certain brands. P7 stated "as a newly turned Vegan, I love to learn about Wicked Kitchen through celebrities". Similarly, P6 commented "I often get carried away viewing Adidas' tags and endorsements, I get carried away with the links".

4.2.3.2. Invasive

Within this theme, Generation Z categorised the brands as invasive. P10 suggested "I may not follow the brand but the content is there anyway" [Gym

Shark]. P9 offered the thought "sometimes I am demotivated by looking at all the images, it can be a bit too intense" [Adidas]. Following this viewpoint, P6 drew on H&F brands' applicability to the fitspiration trend stating "I think a lot of brands are riding the hype. I think Instagram is a really good place for that as it is so efficient". P2 highlighted this intensity, "it's a bit scary because looking on the website once, I get loads of ads on Instagram. It can be too much" [Fabletics]. Certainly, P1 observed "I only need a small dose' I don't need to see it everywhere" [Sweat by Kayla].

4.2.4. Interaction

A number of participants commented on the interaction specific to Instagram. P10 acknowledged "I can even vote on stories now for what workouts I want Grace Fit UK to post". More generally, P3 stated "I think the collaborative nature of Instagram really allows me to get invested with opportunities to post opinions and comments".

4.2.4.1. Brand Community

Several participants highlighted the social element of Instagram. P4 commented "it's a supportive platform with so many brand communities interacting which is great". P3 extended this view, stating "I love doing group training classes and the feeling it gives so I think the social aspect of these brands on Instagram allows me to feel a virtual element of this". Similarly, P7 suggested "people from all over the world comment and exchange ideas; it allows me to use her service while talking to people with the same interests as me" [Body by MG]. P3 offered a particular example of this exchange, commenting "Lean in 15 post progress pictures and everyone seems to be posting positive comments and cheering everyone on". P10 supported this thought commenting "it coincides with the belief that as a generation, everyone needs to come together and be healthier". Furthermore, P5 emphasised the advantage of the brand community stressing "through participation, I can take from the brand without having to purchase" [Lucy Meckleborough]. P8 stated "they have a big group of girls within the community so I can comment and chat as much as I wish" [Sweaty Betty]. In addition, P8

referenced a subsequent offline interaction stating "I can sign up to group workout sessions with the brand, meeting fellow Sweaty Betty followers and enthusiasts".

Within the interaction, negatively-valenced CBE appeared less prevalent. Moreover, two participants emphasised negative expressions. In reference to Spearman Chris's brand community, P9 generalised "it can get quite heated, everyone is young with a lot of time on their hands". P10 provided further detail on this, claiming "If I'm irritated by it, I'll sometimes leave negative comments" [Gym Shark].

Adopted from Hollebeek and Chen (2014), *Figure 1* demonstrates the relationship between the above emotional, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. Interestingly, it is understood that the emotional and cognitive CBE themes collectively contribute towards the behavioural CBE.

Positively-valenced CBE

Identification

Enthusiasm

Attention/absorption

Interaction

Negatively-valenced CBE

Brand-level consequences

Brand attitude

Consumer-level consequences

Consumer well-being
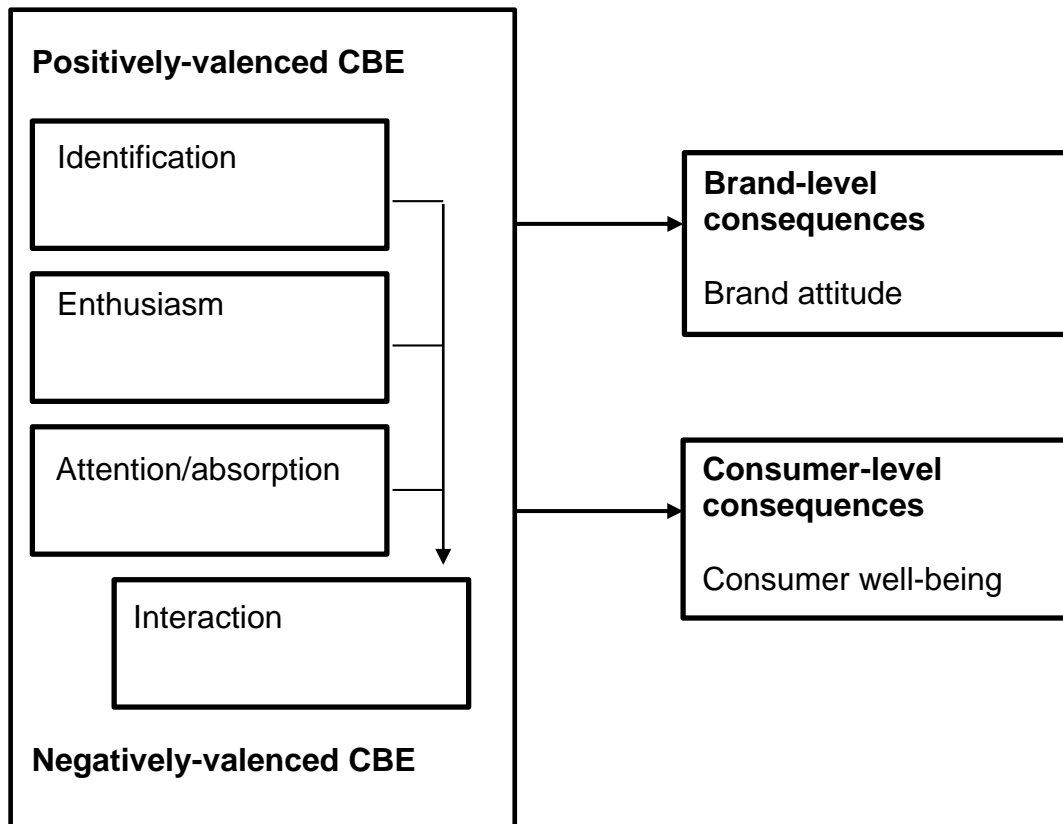
Figure 1: Positively and Negatively-Valenced CBE and Consequences

4.3. CBE Consequences

(RQ2) 'what are the key consequences of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?'

Based on analysis, CBE consequences were identified across both brand and consumer levels (*Table 2*), presenting two key consequences:

1. *Brand attitude*
2. *Consumer well-being*

4.3.1. Brand Attitude

Outcomes at the brand level were largely documented within Generation Z upon analysis.

4.3.1.1. Favourable Brand Attitude

Positively-valenced CBE was identified to generate brand attitude in a favourable manner. P1 certified this in talking of Deliciously Ella- "it just oozes positivity; it makes me happy". Following this viewpoint, in reference to Sweaty Betty, P8 commented "they have great CSR initiatives, I am reminded of these on Instagram". Additionally, comments were raised regarding the trust in a brand, relating to the associated reliability. Indeed, P6 suggested "I know it's popular, they have so many followers" [Adidas]. Relatedly, P9 claimed "it's authentic and real, I can really see this on Instagram" [Spearman Chris], referencing a sense of transparency facilitated over the platform.

Generation Z were found to cite a sense of brand loyalty, in that participants felt the investment in the H&F brand, particularly when viewing influencers, translated to their loyalty. P7 provided detail on this- "I love Lucy Watson, knowing she buys it, I wouldn't feel the need to purchase from anywhere else" [Wicked Kitchen], while P5 confirmed "I would go and buy those leggings because I've seen them in influencer's workouts etc. It's a subconscious connection" [Adidas]. However, unexpectedly, a number of participants revealed brand loyalty to exhibit little influence on their purchase intension for more infant H&F brands, predominantly on Instagram. P4 stated "there is stuff you can buy but I can see all the workouts etc I need to on Instagram" [Tracey Anderson], additionally, P2 confirmed "I'd rather have elements of the brand for free and just follow them on Instagram" [Grace Fit UK]. P5 summarised "she's inspiring but this doesn't follow through to my actual behaviour" [Lucy Meckleborough]. This demonstrates a detrimental factor of the platform's interactive engagement mechanism.

4.3.1.2. Unfavourable Brand Attitude

Negative CBE manifestations were identified as harnessing the outcome of unfavourable brand attitude. To illustrate such consequence, P5 suggested "I associate it with a stereotype and not a good one" [Gym Shark]. Additionally, P6

offered the comment "I just view the brand as so inauthentic" [JD Sports]. P1 delineated the psychological impact of Sweat and similar brands "I saw the effect on people like my housemate, I don't want a brand to make me feel like that". Similarly, P4 commented "I don't like that they are contributing to this obsessive H&F trend" [Gains4Girls]. P7 offered further insight into the fitspiration trend stating "they are obviously benefitting a lot from this trend but with what consideration for us consumers".

Two participants described the unfavourable brand attitude as provoking an investigation into competitor offerings. P10 confirmed "I've naturally turned to competitors as I no longer support what the brand is representing" [Gym Shark]. In referencing Spearman Chris, a brand predominantly on Instagram, P9 stated "I would probably switch as they are less established and there are lots of similar brands". However, P9 limited this outcome in reference to particular brands commenting "If I perceived Nike to be inauthentic, it wouldn't effect my loyalty as I would interact regardless". Certainly P8 supported this view stating "it doesn't really bother me, it's effective marketing" in reference to Sweaty Betty and the fitspiration trend. This draws on a dissimilarity between established brands and those possessing more infancy.

4.3.2. Consumer Well-Being

At the consumer level, Generation Z presented two vastly contrasting consequences.

4.3.2.1. Healthier Lifestyle

The positively-valenced CBE outcome identified at the consumer level was found to hold a strong relationship to emotional and cognitive CBE dimensions. Generation Z were found to lead a healthier lifestyle. Within this theme, feelings of motivation were identified, for example "in general, Lean in 15 pushes me to reach my goals and even if sometimes I feel a bit bad, the positives outweigh the negatives for me" (P9), while P6 suggested "it represents health and positivity; it

makes me want to be active". Interestingly, several participants extended this outcome to mention other members within the brand community. P10 commented "I look at others in a more positive light, it is a community; you want them to feel that sense of empowerment with you" [Grace Fit UK]. Indeed, P1 stated "it brings people together in the broader sense" [Sweat]. This demonstrates the co-created value on Instagram as extensive.

4.3.2.2. Negative Body Image

The above-mentioned comment in feeling "bad" offered by P9 adheres to the prominent sub-theme of negative body image. Certainly, P3 suggested "those exposed to Instagram are young and impressionable, with the fitspiration trend prominent, Nike need to be aware of this". Consistent with this view, P1, talking on H&F brand communities stated "put it this way, I wouldn't want my daughter exposed to this". Participants referenced issues of insecurity, asserting a key sub-theme. P1 offered insight into deleting the Instagram application stating "there have been times I have felt a loss of body confidence from the continuous ideal presented" while P2 highlighted "when I sometimes get invested, I feel a little insecure". In a similar generalised view of H&F brands, P3 commented "I think these brands have caused a lot of damage with things like mental health, there has been a massive link". This draws on the significance of H&F brands collectively on the platform.

5.0 Discussion

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will attach meaning to the findings presented, drawing on the reviewed literature to emphasise key understandings. The structure will remain in line with the two research questions around the study. Commencing with understanding the positively and negatively-valenced CBE characteristics with H&F brands on Instagram, discourse will draw on the key CBE dimensions identified within Generation Z, namely identification, enthusiasm,

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attention/absorption and interaction. Discussion will then move to examining the consequences of positive and negative CBE expressions, thus, understanding the relationship formed. This will begin with Generation Z's consequences at the brand level, understanding both favourable and unfavourable 'brand attitude'. Focus will then turn to the identified consumer-level consequence, particularly understanding 'consumer well-being'. The contributions from the social marketing and health psychology literature will be comprehended here. Throughout the chapter, the significance of the findings for current CBE literature will be presented along with implications for brand managers within this domain. Discussion will close considering the limitations of this research and recommendations for future research.

5.2. Research Question 1

What are the key characteristics of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?

5.2.1. Emotional CBE Characteristics

The design of this study has been valuable in understanding the characteristics of a modern generation's CBE with a largely relevant and contemporary area of study, H&F brands on Instagram. Identification arose largely within the cohort, demonstrating a generation keen to identify with H&F brands they perceived to be fashionable and desirable. Generation Z referenced the somewhat idyllic nature of the content presented by H&F brands as signalling further identification. This sees confidence in Bhattacharya and Sen's (2003) explanation referencing a self-defined need. Moreover, a significant finding arose in the stronger level of identification evident among several participants. Generation Z were found to extend their image to that of the brands', supporting Bagozzi and Dholakia (2006) reference to an image overlap. Additionally, Harrigan et al.'s (2017) conclusion stating a further connection exists with brands online sees significance here. This finding was strengthened by the nature of H&F brands. The sense of achievement cited once completing a H&F activity such as a workout was unmistakably attached

to further identification to the brand community, in line with the opportunity to encourage and support other community members and share achievements.

However, in identifying with this content, Generation Z felt unhappiness regarding the image that was continually presented. Undoubtedly, in identifying with H&F brands to the extent understood through the image overlap, comparisons arose. From the present study, H&F brands are perceived to induce unintended negative feelings for Generation Z such as guilt and jealousy. This reasons with Tiggemann and Zaccardo's (2016) findings. In practice, the above findings stipulate that brand managers need to understand the high degree of identification seen with Generation Z. H&F brand managers should present a unique and desirable identity however, given the nature of the content, understand the associated unintended negative feelings. An emphasis on encouragement and support would allow strong identification while minimising negative feelings. Thus, inducing greater positive CBE expressions.

5.2.2. Cognitive CBE Characteristics

Generation Z were found to exhibit a strong sense of enthusiasm, particularly harnessing a high level of intrinsic enjoyment. This supports the personal engagement cited by Calder et al. (2009). However, an unexpected finding was reflected in the majority of participants citing motivation and inspiration as pivotal to their enjoyment. This may be explained through the strong correlation found to exist within the health psychology literature between exercise and enjoyment (Ruby et al., 2011). Thus, it is not altogether implausible to stipulate that the relationship cited in practice may be seen in relation to content of this nature in a digital context. Moreover, this adheres to a strong situational factor found among Generation Z in their interest in H&F. Certainly, it was found that Generation Z enjoyed exercising in their spare time which undoubtedly arose their intrinsic enjoyment and thus enthusiasm towards H&F brands. As such, the context dependent nature of CBE is understood. Furthermore, this supports Brodie et al. (2013) and So et al.'s (2014) observations, drawing on the importance for brand

managers to understand the specific characteristics of CBE present in their industry.

Conversely, this dimension revealed a negatively-valenced CBE characteristic that must not go without consideration. This is in accordance with Generation Z perceiving the H&F brands as presenting a similar image and physique that may not be achievable for all, deeming the content unrealistic. Moreover, this supports findings in the health psychology literature, referencing the notion of ideals as created in terms of body image (Mabe et al., 2014; Fardouly and Vartanian, 2016). Empirically, in order to maximise enthusiasm, brand managers should seek to understand this perception, perhaps presenting more body image variation in campaigns and general content over Instagram. The positive brand image would enhance enthusiasm (Bhote, 1995), allowing the brand to better compete against competitors.

As previously mentioned, Generation Z embodied a strong willingness to engage with H&F brands, investing intensely, evident in the free exploration of such brands. This was seen in accordance with the little time constraint Generation Z placed on their interaction with SM. The frequency with which brands posted in addition to endorsements allowed Generation Z to become immersed. Thus, agreeing with So et al. (2014) and Patterson et al. (2006).

Moreover, this induced a prominent negative expression along the attention/absorption dimension. The invasiveness of H&F brands on Instagram when seen collectively saw significance with particular emphasis from several participants on the advertisements and explore page. This exemplifies support for previous research into the contentious relationship between SM and brands. Pittman and Reich (2016) concluded that SM holds further opportunity for negative expressions of CBE. Holding lesser connotation, Fournier and Avery (2011) reference brands as unwanted guests in SM settings. Focally, feelings of demotivation arose with H&F brands due to the tendency to present images

reflective of the fitspiration trend. Certainly, comprehending the interactive opportunity available to brands on Instagram, it needs to be understood that there may exist an optimal level for consumers to engage positively with such brands. This has implications for theory and practice. A clear conceptual model should be created to indicate an optimal level of engagement with H&F brands, understanding the intensity of interaction facilitated over Instagram that could lead to negative CBE manifestations. Accordingly, if brand managers can understand this invasive characteristic, consumers may be more responsive and owe a greater level of investment to the content they see, avoiding feelings of withdrawal. Particular attention from H&F brand managers needs to be seen where feelings of demotivation are involved from a similar image arising on repeated occasions.

Notably, drawing on the above anticipated negatively-valenced CBE characteristics, this development satisfies the requirement for CBE research to be broadened (Hollebeek and Chen, 2014; So et al., 2014; De Villiers, 2015).

5.2.3. Behavioural CBE Characteristics

Lastly, negatively-valenced CBE behaviour arose amongst Generation Z in the form of negative interactions. When related to a H&F brand community, managers should perceive to minimise this by managing comments and exchanges. Thus, ensuring content is not harmful to the brand, endorsing a positively-valenced interaction.

Furthermore, findings predominantly displayed interactions possessing contrasting characteristics. Focusing on social-interactive engagement, Calder et al. (2009) concluded CBE in this domain to include aspects such as community. This social characteristic was displayed in findings exemplifying strong participation within Instagram brand communities. Citations of common interests and shared thoughts were prominent in addition to references regarding positivity and encouragement, building on the focal domain of the study. Accordingly, the H&F brands principally on Instagram, offering workout and recipe content were particularly significant

within this dimension. This emphasises implications for practice. Brand managers of more established H&F brands such as Nike and Adidas should employ this understanding in offering content such as example workouts with the intent of creating an interaction possessing additional strength. Additionally, given Generation Z's willingness to engage, opportunities for further interaction may be achieved through incentives, namely recognition and reward schemes. Collectively, these actions allow managers to take advantage of the participative nature of the brands, allowing consumers to immerse themselves in the brand experience, engaging at an optimal level. It is of interest that participation on Instagram was found to extend to a social interaction found offline, thus, strengthening the CBE. Theoretically, a conceptual model may wish to understand the influence of online interactions on those interactions offline with H&F brands, exploring the relationship between the two interactions.

5.3. Research Question 2

What are the key consequences of positively and negatively valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram, focusing specifically on Generation Z?

5.3.1. Brand-level Consequences

An intense interaction existed with Generation Z owing to the strength across the identification, enthusiasm and attention/absorption dimensions, reflected in *Figure 1*, thus, supporting Dolan (2002). This emphasised a high degree of socialisation experienced within Generation Z. Thus, demonstrating a generation keen to participate and converse over Instagram. In accordance with Hollebeek and Chen's (2014) conclusion, this interrelationship was found to produce various brand-related outcomes.

Significantly, findings presented much support for previous research in CBE's superiority acting as a predictor of consumer understandings. This confirms Hollebeek's (2011a) original findings. Favourable brand attitude was demonstrated extensively within Generation Z, affording understandings of preference and trust.

The latter shows accordance to Malthouse and Hofacker (2010). Specifically, references to the sense of transparency and reliability were recognised as prominent within the theme. Further, an outcome was identified in brand loyalty supporting Phua et al. (2017) and Harrigan et al. (2017) in their recent contributions to the literature. Influencers and celebrities were found to increase investment with H&F brands and thus, intensify the interaction, leading to a stronger sense of brand loyalty. However, it should be ensured by managers that this brand loyalty transfers to purchase intent. Indeed, Generation Z engaged predominantly through pausing on images or videos allowing the interaction to stress little commitment. Moreover, findings unpredictably supported Schultz (2013) through the understanding that purchase intent was replaced by the nature of the CBE mechanism on Instagram. This outcome was further prominent with more infant brands possessing a presence primarily online. The interactive and participative nature of the H&F brands was found to further this trend, ensuing a significant implication for brand managers in this industry. Managers should seek to translate this loyalty to purchase intent. For example, by utilising the influence of popular individuals on Instagram, incorporating this into CBE strategy, CBE can be optimised, thus, invoking purchase intent.

Further, a contrasting outcome was evident through the relationship between the CBE dimensions. Emotions of unhappiness in combination with thoughts of invasiveness and the perception that images presented were unachievable formed unfavourable brand attitude. The fitspiration trend was referenced as benefitting the brand while imposing the contrasting effect on the consumer, resulting in this attitude. Generation Z highlighted negatively-valenced CBE as far-reaching, invoking consideration of competitor offerings, supporting Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004). Brand managers wanting to maintain strong CBE should strategise with the consumer's interest as a priority, reverting to a traditional marketing philosophy while employing the aforementioned tools to enhance CBE within each dimension. This will collectively contribute to a favourable outcome. Additionally, negative interaction arose in (electronic-)word-of-mouth, however, findings of the positively-

valenced counterpart remain further prominent, opposing Hollebeek and Chen (2014).

An unexpected finding was the difference in negatively-valenced CBE outcomes between established and infant H&F brands. Several participants identified negative CBE expressions to have little consequence on their interaction with established brands with particular examples cited in Nike and Sweaty Betty. This finding supports Hollebeek and Chen's (2014) relatively recent contribution to the CBE literature. The authors determined despite the anticipated dynamic, consumers experiencing negatively-valenced CBE expressions may remain interacting with the brand. This was referenced as resulting from brand lock-in which indeed relates to the established status of the H&F brands in the present study. In a general sense, with a developed understanding of negative CBE expressions and outcomes emerging in the literature, brand managers should seek to employ this understanding into their SM strategy. Indeed, the status of a brand was unexpectedly found to present a moderating factor in the relationship between negatively-valenced CBE and consequences alike. A manager of a more infant brand emerging on Instagram should be further concerned with minimising negative CBE expressions and the potential outcomes of these.

5.3.2. Consumer-level Consequences

In identifying consequences at the consumer-level, this study contributes to the literature by extending the work of Hollebeek and Chen (2014) in their presentation of consequences solely at the brand level. Thus, the multi-faceted nature of outcomes of positively and negatively-valenced CBE are recognised. This adheres to Van Doorn et al.'s (2010) three-fold outcome in addition to De Villiers (2015) conclusion stating consumer well-being to be a key consequence.

A defining feature of the setting studied was the ability to produce feelings of motivation and inspiration, found within the intrinsic enjoyment experienced by Generation Z. The outcome of H&F in practice was found to mirror this finding

(Ruby et al., 2011). This unexpected discovery within the cognitive dimension subsequently intensified the interaction within the brand community, drawing on the inter-relatedness of the dimensions (*Figure 1*). An interesting result arose where Generation Z were found to perceive H&F brands as impacting their lifestyle, specifically, making them healthier. This coincides with the referenced primary purpose of the fitspiration trend over Instagram (Tiggemann and Zaccardo, 2016). Accordingly, this highlights a generation influenced to a high degree. The community and co-created value witnessed on Instagram were pivotal to this finding. This demonstrates positively-valenced CBE as conducive to generating focal positive outcomes. By bridging the knowledge between the health psychology and CBE literature, an unexplored area is identified, thus a knowledge gap is filled.

However, much support was found for previous research into the moral imperative the H&F industry holds, represented within both the marketing and psychology literature. The aforementioned undesirable effects over the dimensions were found to subsequently produce negative body image within Generation Z. This serves to support a large quantity of research in the health psychology literature (Krane et al., 2001; Sabiston and Chandler, 2010; Mabe et al., 2014). Particularly, acknowledging Krane et al.'s (2001) finding that an inability to achieve the ideal presented would induce a negative outcome. Conclusively, a key finding was revealed in negative CBE expressions producing focal negative outcomes. Additionally, behaviours such as negative (electronic-)word-of-mouth were found among Generation Z, thus exemplifying the potential in the interactive atmosphere facilitated over Instagram to decrease consumer psychological well-being. This owes to Pittman and Reich's (2016) conclusions, while also evidencing Lup et al.'s (2015) understanding in the negative consequences consumers are exposed to over Instagram. Moreover, these developments further reveal the context-dependent nature of CBE research.

The above findings demonstrate the paradoxical effect of the fitspiration trend, supporting Robinson et al.'s (2017) recent contribution to the psychology literature.

Further, in understanding this negatively-valenced outcome, it can be understood that H&F brand's marketing efforts over Instagram are liable to the negative consequences of the fitspiration trend. This stands to support Goldstraw and Keegan's (2016) recent findings. As such, this arises implications for brand managers operating in the H&F industry. Managers need to consider the potential negative CBE outcomes that may arise by marketing brands over Instagram. While these outcomes, similar to the negative CBE characteristics, may result unintentionally, CBE with H&F brands has the ability to considerably induce negative body image. It should be noted that in line with the progressions in the health psychology literature, awareness of these outcomes has increased. Furthermore, this awareness may indeed contribute to consequences at the brand level such as unfavourable brand attitude, demonstrating the inter-relatedness between the outcomes. As such, managers should employ efforts to minimise negatively-valenced CBE within each dimension such as presenting body image variation.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

This study offers a unique contribution to the CBE literature by providing insights into an unexplored area, understanding CBE beyond the traditional consumption experience. However, upon evaluating findings, a number of limitations should be considered.

Firstly, word and time constraints were imposed on the study, thus limiting the scope of the data collected and the size of the sample interviewed. The opportunity to expand the sample would have presented richer data in acknowledging further brands, gaining additional insight into the H&F industry. This would have enabled a broader consideration of the CBE dimensions, both in positively and negatively-valenced forms.

Secondly, in order to understand the dimensions of CBE, the sample was constrained to consumers who had experience with the indicated brands across

Instagram, limiting the generalisation of the results. Within this line of thought, the purposeful sample based on one generation (Z) presents this study as non-generalisable beyond the sample due to too few subjects (Kvale, 1996).

Finally, in choosing students as participants, there are limitations to consider. A relationship exists between the interviewer and participants which may arise biased results. The participants chosen may collectively demonstrate limited representativeness which limits a holistic coverage of the group being studied (Alvesson, 2011). Accordingly, findings may not represent the positively and negatively-valenced CBE and consequences in other samples within Generation Z such as those individuals that did not go to university. The selected sample may be further aware of the negative outcomes of SM through their education or by conversing with fellow students.

5.5. Recommendations for Future Research

This thesis has emphasised CBE's nascent and complex status, presenting an area ripe for future research. Thus, several future directions are presented. Given that this study found positively and negatively-valenced characteristics distinct to a focal context, supporting Brodie et al. (2013) and So et al. (2014), further brand domains may wish to be explored alluding to the distinct positive and negative characteristics of CBE that exist. Further, understanding Instagram's unique technological affordances, it is encouraged that future CBE research explore additional brand communities on Instagram, gaining insight into the distinctive interactions that serve to broaden this latent concept. Future work pursuing generalisable results may seek to quantify this. This development would contribute to the technological shift evident among contemporary CBE research, demonstrating relevance to the literature.

Future work may wish to extend the contribution of this study, focusing solely on the consumer-level consequences associated with positive and negative CBE expressions with H&F brands. This development would further bridge

understandings between the CBE and health psychology literature, contributing rich and intelligent data through a multi-disciplinary approach. Further, this would fulfil the request evident in current CBE discourse for a comprehensive understanding of the latent concept. Alongside this, studies pursuing this initiative could explore CBE within different Generation Z samples, inclusive of those who have not attended university. Thus, increasing the representativeness of the sample as well as offering a richer dataset, evidencing further depth into the four CBE dimensions.

Finally, a key unexpected finding within this study was the distinction between established brands and those more infant. Established brands were found to minimise outcomes that may result from negatively-valenced CBE, while more infant brands possessing a primarily digital presence, were found to hold further interaction. Future research exploring positive and negative CBE manifestations and the outcomes may wish to compare these brand types broadly in understanding whether this acts as a significant moderating factor in the relationship, invoking further dissimilarities.

6.0 Conclusion

CBE is an area of vast theoretical and practical significance. As such, the question of how brands can use Instagram to further engage with consumers, namely Generation Z is at the forefront of research. However, literature around the concept remains ambivalent. The lack of coherence creates challenges for brand managers who seek to optimise CBE over Instagram. Despite the aforementioned limitations, this study has yielded important findings within a nascent concept, addressing the research aims and objectives.

Firstly, this study is unique in the exploration of CBE with H&F brands, providing insight into the increasingly competitive industry, while investigating this on Instagram, a contemporary SM setting that has been said to have recreated the

concept. Collectively, all four dimensions were found to significantly represent CBE. Thus, demonstrating an intense interaction with Generation Z in this focal domain. Additionally, the reference to psychological interpretations further assists in understanding CBE within this specific brand context. The proposed linkage between the CBE and health psychology literature is not known to have received previous attention within this domain. As such, a new perspective of CBE is witnessed, offering an expanded understanding.

Secondly, this study challenges the majority of thinking around CBE by acknowledging the often neglected negatively-valenced CBE. Feelings of unhappiness, thoughts of the brands as unrealistic and invasive in addition to negative interactions in the brand community emerged as characteristics of negatively-valenced CBE. It has been suggested that such expressions, however unintended should be considered by brand managers in optimising CBE.

Finally, this thesis identifies key CBE consequences which is expected to be useful to brand managers, particularly those in the H&F industry wishing to further understand their consumers over a relevant and prominent SM platform. Although the H&F industry is unique, findings may be applied to alternative settings. The consumer-level consequences represent an insight into the distinctive outcomes the interactive world facilitates. While it is commonly seen that this participative setting induces positive effect and ample opportunity, the impact on the consumer must be understood. The Royal Society for Public Health (2017) recently concluded that Instagram is the worst SM platform for impacting young people's mental health. Evidently, there is a great deal to be gained by deepening understandings of negatively-valenced CBE consequences at the consumer-level in this digital context. This thesis' contribution exists in the exploration of individual perceptions towards brands in this interactive context.

Overall, this research has advanced theoretical understandings of CBE in a contemporary and relevant setting, understanding how Generation Z engage with

brands over four critical dimensions. This has strong repercussions for brand managers within the H&F industry. Managers can use these findings as a valuable tool to successfully understand the effectiveness of marketing strategies established to engage with consumers, a key source of competitive advantage. Through acknowledging the resulting consumer-level consequences, this study opens up new lines of academic research. A move away from brand-level consequences to investigate the consequence at the the consumer level assists in understanding the complex relationship that exists between CBE manifestations and the subsequent consequences.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Engagement Definitions in the Marketing Literature

Author	Research Type	Concept	Definition
Calder et al. (2009)	Quantitative	Online engagement	A second-order construct manifested in various types of first-order 'experience' constructs.
Hollebeek (2011); Hollebeek et al. (2014); Hollebeek and Chen (2014)	Qualitative/ quantitative	Consumer brand engagement	The level of a customer's cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in specific brand interactions.
Brodie et al. (2013)	Qualitative	Consumer engagement	A context-dependent, psychological state characterised by fluctuating intensity levels that occur within dynamic, iterative engagement processes.
Patterson et al. (2006)	Conceptual	Customer engagement	The level of a customer's physical, cognitive and emotional presence in their relationship with a service organisation.

Vivek et al. (2012)	Qualitative	Customer engagement	The intensity of an individual's participation and connection with the organisation's offerings and activities initiated by either the customer or the organisation.
Bowden (2009)	Qualitative	Customer engagement	Psychological process comprising cognitive and emotional aspects.
Van Doorn et al. (2010)	Conceptual	Customer engagement behaviour	Relating to behavioural aspects of the relationship.

Appendix B: Interview Schedule

Introduction   - Brief and friendly   - Define key terms- consumer brand engagement and H&F brands   - Explanation of study purpose, referencing the research aim   - Relate to the broader context- what is the study's contribution?
Tell me a bit about yourself- what do you enjoy doing in your spare time?   Tell me about your social media use.   - How often do you use social media?   - How much time would you say you spend on Instagram?   How do you use social media and Instagram in particular?   - Can you give some situations of when you would use it?   Tell me more about the brands you view on Instagram.   - Do you look at H&F brands?
Theme: positively-valenced CBE dimensions   Could you identify for me a H&F brand you find particularly engaging?   - Which elements of this brand do you like?   What does this brand mean to you?

Could you provide an example of a time you felt excitement towards this brand?

Probe: Instagram engagement mechanism
How much do you find yourself 'liking' or 'hearting' this brands?

How do these brands effect your usage rate?
- Can you give me an example of this?

How would you describe your interaction with this brand?
- Time driven or more free?

To what extent do you comment and interact with this brands?
- Could you provide an example of this?

Theme: outcomes

How do you feel about this brand after viewing it on Instagram?
- How does this effect your preference for this brand?
- To what extent do you trust this brand?

Are there any specific elements that influence this brand attitude?

Could you give me an example of a positive action you took after viewing the brand on Instagram?

Could you provide an example of a time where you were inclined to purchase the brand's product/service, if at all?

Tell me a situation in which you felt a sense of loyalty to the brand.

Theme: negatively-valenced CBE dimensions

Could you identify for me a situation where you felt negativity towards a H&F brand you engage with?

Probe:
How does this make you feel?

What are the key elements behind this negativity?

To what extent do you comment and interact with this brands?
- Could you provide an example of this?

In your opinion, do you think this H&F brand or others create ideals?
- How do you think H&F brands do this?

- To what extent do you aspire to these ideals?

Theme: outcomes

In what way would these ideals effect your brand attitude?

How do you feel about this brand after viewing it on Instagram?

Are there any specific elements that influence your brand attitude?

Tell me a time you felt less inclined to buy certain products or services?
- To what extent would you consider competitor brands?

Probe: trend commonly cited by psychology literature
Are you aware of the 'fitspiration' trend?
- To what extent would you say you felt H&F brands related to this 'fitspiration' trend?

Closing
Is there anything you would like to add?

- Brief summary
- Thanks for taking part

Appendix C: Transcribed Interview Example

Participant code: P3
Time: 34 minutes, 56 seconds

Interviewer: How are you this afternoon?
Respondent: I'm good thank you, how are you?
I: Very well, thanks! Please can you begin by telling me a bit about yourself. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?
R: So I'd say I was quite an active person- I love sport! I probably exercise around six times a week. I do quite a variety of sport, I play hockey usually twice a week, maybe go running if I feel motivated enough (laughs). I like to work towards goals, for example I am working towards the Leeds half marathon. But I think mainly, I like doing group training classes like insanity, HIT.

I: Wow, it sounds like you are a very active person. So tell me a bit about your social media use.
R: Erm, I'd say I am mainly big on Instagram and maybe Snapchat, I don't really use Facebook anymore- more just to see what people are doing. I'd definitely say I'd use Instagram the most!
I: Nice. How often do you use Instagram?
R: I'd say I probably check it everyday which is quite bad (laughs). I think we are all guilty but probably in terms of uploads it depends on circumstance- so travelling, I would upload everyday but now I am back at university and revising, I don't really get a chance (laughs). So I guess I mainly look at other people's content!
I: Great, it is interesting to see your situation effects your usage rate.
R: Yes, oh and in bed at night- I am always guilty of scrolling at night! I look at the most random stuff that just isn't at all relevant to my life (laughs).

I: How do you use social media and Instagram in particular?
R: I like using Instagram as my own personal image diary and looking back and seeing where I was a year ago today! I like that aspect of it. Also, I guess looking at other people's content probably more than my own! As I said before, I don't actually upload that much normally. So yeah I guess just inspiration from particular people like fitness people, cooking people- I use that a lot actually for finding cool recipes. Also even clothing brands as well- they give me inspiration (laughs).
I: Could you give me a situation in particular of when you would use it?
R: When I was travelling lots, I had a mission in uploading a photo everyday so that could be my travel diary without having to go away and write it all down.
I: Tell me more about the brand content you view on Instagram.
R: In general, my social media use is quite varied but I guess on Instagram, you do have the search tab that pop ups things or brands you might like. I'd say my top things to look at are my friend's stuff, and then a lot of fitness people- I said this before but it just gives me inspiration for when I need to get some workouts to do. Then lastly, food recipes I quite often will look at, getting inspo (laughs).

I: You mention your interest in health and fitness, what do these brands mean to you?

R: I guess this is something that maybe inspires me, I know I've said that word a lot but it does! I guess these brands get you active and get you motivated in a way. The fitness brands I follow, I don't necessarily see a toned person or an influencer on their page that has their trainers on and then want to buy those trainers. I think it is more the lifestyle they present, I guess.

I: Could you identify for me, a health and fitness brand you find particularly engaging?

R: I'd say Lean in 15. Just because the guy, Joe Wicks, he does a little bit of cooking and also fitness- its quite varied and I think that's why I find it engaging! It is content that I look at primarily for enjoyment, it brings me happiness.

I: What particular elements of this brand do you like?

R: I think it helps that he's good looking, he is toned and fit and also very proactive- a lifestyle I aspire to. And also, it is inspiration, you can add it in to your everyday routine- it is very relatable to everyday life. For example, its not like following Jamie Oliver or whatever, this new generation of brands is what I identify with. They are quick and easy recipes that I know I can fit in with my busy lifestyle. I think it is more accessible. I feel brands like Lean in 15 are very relatable.

I: How often do you view health and fitness brands such as Lean in 15?

R: I think the health and fitness industry is a pretty large part of my life, so a lot! It is something that interests me largely, a passion I guess.

I: Could you provide an example of a time you felt excitement towards this brand?

R: It brings me happiness because for example, looking at Joe, he posts progress pictures and everyone seems to be posting positive comments and cheering everyone on. It is empowering I guess. You don't get trolls, there's no political element- it tends to be very, everyone's in it together vibes! I think this coincides with the belief that as a generation everyone needs to come together and be more active and healthy!

I: What do you mean by this 'belief'?

R: I think there is a definite movement towards health and wellness and this obviously draws on fitness and healthy eating. I think everyone knows we are all getting fat and obesity is a problem, so maybe it's a generational thing to combat this! But I guess as well, we are all using social media more, so I guess it's a way that they can not only show their brand off but we can also kinda take from their brand without having to actually buy anything!

I: How much do you find yourself 'liking' or 'hearting' these brands?

R: I am definitely a liker, I don't know what it is, I just like everything! I hate it when people are stingy with likes (laughs). When I'm on Instagram, I guess the stuff I see on my newsfeed, I choose to follow mostly so always find myself dropping likes! Its not like Facebook where it will pop up on other's newsfeeds that you have liked it!! You get more political stuff rather with Instagram, it's all catered for me so

even if I was to like something by accident, its harmless. I think that's why I am so engaged!

I: When you say catered for you, what do you mean by that?

R: I guess a lot of the content, for example the brands I follow, I am interested in, whether I followed them in the past or more recently. Also, I can search the 'things you may be interested in' tab which is all related to me so on mine they tend to be related to fitness, food- whether it be good or healthy food or clothing brands. The new adverts also are in line with my interests whether they appear as I'm scrolling or between stories!

I: How do these brands effect your usage rate?

R: Probably, subconsciously, a lot more than I think! Sometimes it is conscious, for example when I want something for dinner, I'll go on a healthy eating brand like Lean in 15 or Wicked Kitchen to give me some inspiration. I also use the hashtag sometimes because I'm quite experimental with my food. Similarly, if I want some fitness inspiration I'll like something or save it and then go back to it as and when I need it. So I always know how to refer back to something pretty quickly.

I: Could you give me a specific example of this?

R: Erm, I think last week I wanted a gentle workout I could do at home so I found Clean Eating Alice. I save her workouts for later use! Especially when I know they are individual workouts, I know I'll need motivation and then I'll just follow that workout.

I: How would you describe your interaction with this content?

R: I use it pretty freely. I don't really fit it in a schedule which I think shows how I use it recreationally.

I: Why do you think this is?

R: I really do enjoy it I think. For example, Kayla Itsines does these progression stages or pictures which for me shows how it is possible to achieve what her brand is advertising so this really motivates me. I feel like its possible to get my summer bod in like eight weeks! I also have found images of two pictures taken minutes apart where Kayla shows the difference between lighting and posing which helps make me attach some authenticity to the brand which I love. It motivates you in the sense that you can make progress but it doesn't need to be intense which is a positive message. Again, I think its all about positivity on Instagram, there's no politics like with Facebook.

I: Given this positivity, to what extent do you comment and interact with this brand?

R: I comment every now and then. I like to feel that I am contributing to the brand community and making people feel good about themselves.

I: To what extent do you feel inclined to eat better/exercise more?

R: I think a high extent, especially clean eating. When I first came to university, I thought having a nice clean meal would either be a really dull salad or would take ages. I think with these quick, easy 'do it yourself' promotions that some of these brands offer, naturally I make recipes that are really nice and healthy.

I: Why do you think there has been a change in what is viewed as a clean meal?

R: Instagram definitely has contributed this. It wasn't as big when I first joined uni and the rise of Insta teamed with the growing interest in health and fitness has really changed my perceptions in a positive way to what being healthy is!

I: You touched on this word earlier, so I am wondering in what way would you say you were empowered by these brands?
R: I think there is an underlying theme with a few of these brands that they want you to have the power. Or at least it comes across like that! Quite often I feel health and fitness brands, especially those that start on Instagram, don't have as much as an association to profit generation as others. I have more of a feeling of them wanting you to do well and feel empowered. There is the message that you have the power to control what you are eating like with Clean Eating Alice. This I think then makes people go back to Alice's brand because they like how the brand content makes them feel.

I: Could you give me an example of a positive action you took after viewing this content?
R: Erm, maybe as well looking at other people in a positive light. The videos and images are so empowering like giving others compliments so I guess it inspires you in life, looking at the deeper meaning, to be a better person (laughs). I know that's quite cringe but yeah I guess it's one of those things that you want other people to feel that sense of empowerment and satisfaction with you.
I: That's great to hear. To what extent do you feel this with health and fitness brands promoting a product?
R: I think a pretty high extent. Particularly with Nike.
I: Could you expand on this?
R: I loved viewing Nike's 'This Girl Can' campaign on Instagram, it was inspirational. I think the collaborative nature of Instagram really allowed me to get invested. This was really empowering and made me think in a collaborative sense, how women are a strong and powerful gender and we should support and promote that. I do think I feel less positive towards health and fitness products like Nike than to a health and fitness service like Kayla's 'Sweat' program. I know the brand already with Nike so I feel less desire to view their Instagram content whereas Kayla is new and exciting to me.

I: Could you provide an example of a time where you were inclined to purchase the brand's product/service, if at all?
R: Kayla Itsines', I definitely did that. I think it was a few years ago now and she did example exercises or snippets of the program which made me really go and want to buy it, along with many others I guess (laughs). The images on Instagram were very suited to me which led me to purchase the service.
I: How does this effect your preferences for particular brands?
R: I think subconsciously. The ads that pop up, now I think about it Kayla always pops up on my Instagram. Just before I came in here, an advert popped up while I was scanning through stories for Kayla Itsines' brand [Sweat]. I can't stress how much this content is everywhere! And I think because of this, with brands like Nike

or Reebok, I'm like 'ooh I love those gym leggings or her gym matt' which I think is something I may not have seen otherwise.

I: Could you identify for me a situation where you felt negativity towards a H&F brand you engage with?
R: I think it can all get very samey with health and fitness content, especially on Instagram. I think some of the brands don't really relate to me and I don't really identify with some of the content. Gymshark I think is an example. I feel like they are really concentrating on lifting weights etc which isn't really about fitness or health, it's taking it a bit too far!
I: What are are the elements behind this negativity?
R: Sometimes there are pictures on delicate subjects like eating disorders and sometimes it is motivating but sometimes, erm it's not that you don't want to see it but you don't want it to be promoted like that. People can look too skinny which isn't very motivating for other people. It's unrealistic and not a good thing as people do have different body types and different schedules. For example, if you have kids you can't exercise that much.

I: How often do you find yourself interacting with these brands?
R: Definitely not as often as the brands I previously mentioned.
I: In your opinion, do you think this health and fitness brand content creates ideals?
R: Yes, and no. Yes, in a way that I think collectively, these brands have caused a lot of damage with things like mental health, there has been a massive link. Especially as those exposed to Instagram are sometimes really young like young teenagers who are really impressionable. I think brands need to be aware of this and think of the broader picture, not just in relation to profits.
I: To what extent do you aspire to these ideals?
R: I think I am at a stage where I am comfortable with myself but if I was younger, I wouldn't want my daughter on Instagram for example. I think you do get these idealised images. But also, saying that, a lot of brands are very aware of this possible negative effect. For example, Clean Eating Alice and Eat Well Steph, she used to have an eating disorder but her message is great. She says whatever your body type, whatever your position, whatever your schedule, it's okay to be a bit different and sometimes put on weight. It is more how you feel on the inside which I guess is the actual whole point of fitness and health. Its actually so you can feel better on the inside. They are almost creating positive ideals in relation to a healthy happy life rather than getting as thin as possible. I think Nike uses people of different sizes and shapes which is good.
I: How does this make you feel?
R: In a way, at the time, I don't even think about it. Its just there in front of me which I guess is a bad thing. I see most brands who use images of toned and fit bodies and do aspire to those images but then I see campaigns like Nike's and think "wow that's great".

I: In what way would this effect your brand attitude?

R: I am a lot more loyal to the brands who are more relatable as they understand the differences in everyone's situations. I think it depends what the deeper message is like Joe Wicks is all about positivity, he is very much about ease and fun. He also shows images of a big juicy burgers for example and shows that sometimes you need to not be healthy. It's nice because it's not them going back on their brand mission or whatever but just showing a healthy balanced lifestyle. It's real- this is why I am loyal.

I: To what extent would you say you felt this content related to the 'fitspiration' trend?

R: Largely I guess but I think its normal. All my friends follow these brands. Yeah so I guess I think its just normalised in my head. All these brands really push their content on Instagram so it's become a part of everyday life.

I: Great, that concludes the interview. Is there anything you would like to add?

R: No, I don't think so. I am very interested to know what the results of the study are!

<u>Key notes</u>
- Confident individual- maintained eye contact and talked elaborately on each point
- Identifies health and fitness as large part of life
- Emphasis on intrinsic factors- enjoyment, inspiration, motivation
- Understands the influence Instagram as a marketing tool possesses
- Aware of fitspiration trend and potential negative outcome of health and fitness brands in this context

Appendix D: Respondent Information Sheet

A study exploring the perceptions of health and fitness brands across Instagram in relation to CBE

Introduction

This study is concerned with understanding the perceptions of individuals towards health and fitness brands marketed across Instagram. My interest lies in the exploration of your feelings towards such brands, understanding this in relation to the CBE experienced, whether this be positive or negative engagement.

Purpose of the study

This research is part of my BA Management degree at the University of Leeds. The aim of this study is to provide greater insight into how individuals engage with brands in the specific context of health and fitness, given its relevance in todays culture. Furthermore, the chosen domain, Instagram responds to the popular use of social media in many organisation's wider marketing strategy.

What participation will involve

The process will take around 30-60 minutes, having arranged a time and place at your convenience. The interview will be conducted in a one to one style, ensuring you feel comfortable and at ease throughout the process. Before commencement, you will be required to sign a consent form, however, it remains that you are able to withdraw from the process at any point, without reason. I will then ask you questions around an interview schedule previously prepared. Having completed the process, the information provided will remain confidential, respecting your anonymity.

How information provided will be used

In collecting your responses, I will be using an audio device. This will facilitate easy transcription. All recordings, notes and transcriptions will be stored on a password protected laptop. Additionally, signed consent forms will be safely locked in a cabinet. To ensure anonymity, you will later be assigned a respondent code during analysis. The results of my study will be presented in the form of a thesis.

Participant interest in taking part

In referring above, the present study possesses a clear aim. An advantage can be seen in a better understanding of how individuals most exposed to health and fitness brands over the selected domain perceive them. This has the potential to prove useful for brand managers in understanding the effectiveness of their marketing strategy in engaging their consumers. In turn, gaining knowledge on a key predictor of brand loyalty. In acknowledging both marketing and health psychology research, a broader understanding of CBE is facilitated. If you should find interest in my findings, I would be happy to share these upon completion of the study.

Appendix E: Ethics Form

Leeds University Business School

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Internal research ethics application form for taught student modules (where University ethical approval is in place for the module)

For modules LUBS3305 and LUBS3345 covered by University of Leeds ethical approval

Student ID	████████
Your name	
Degree Programme	BA Business Management (International)
Provisional title/ topic area	Social Media Marketing
Name of dissertation supervisor	

Are you planning to conduct fieldwork with (data on) human participants for your dissertation?	Please tick the relevant box
Yes (This includes online research methods and secondary data analysis of social media or internet data).	✓
No, I am conducting library based research.	

If you ticked 'no' you do not need to take further action in respect of ethical approval. Please proceed to the declarations on page 8 and 9.

If you ticked 'yes' you need to complete the rest of this form.

You MUST submit discuss your research design and the ethical issues it raises with your dissertation supervisor and receive their signed approval **before you approach any participants or collect any data**.

You MUST attach a copy of your research proposal to this form.

You MUST include a copy of your ethics form (signed by your supervisor), together with your research proposal, as an appendix to your final dissertation submission.

INTERNAL RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION
Part A: Compliance with the module's block ethical approval

Ethical review is required for all research involving human participants, including research undertaken by students within a taught student module. Further details of the University of Leeds ethical review requirements are provided in the *Research Ethics Policy* available at: http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchEthicsPolicies and at www.leeds.ac.uk/ethics.

1. Will your dissertation involve any of the following?	Yes	No
New data collected by administering questionnaires/interviews for quantitative analysis		✓
New data collected by qualitative methods	✓	
New data collected from observing individuals or populations		✓
Working with aggregated or population data		✓
Using already published data or data in the public domain	✓	
Any other research methodology, please specify: n/a		✓

2. Will any of the participants be from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)	Yes	No
Children under 16		✓
Adults with learning disabilities		✓
Adults with other forms of mental incapacity or mental illness		✓
Adults in emergency situations		✓
Prisoners or young offenders		✓
Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. members of staff, students		✓
Other vulnerable groups, please specify: n/a		✓

UG Management INTERNAL RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM V1

3. **Will the project/dissertation/fieldwork involve any of the following:** (You may select more than one)	Yes	No
Patients and users of the NHS (including NHS patients treated under contracts with private sector)		/
Individuals identified as potential participants because of their status as relatives or carers of patients and users of the NHS		/
The use of, or potential access to, NHS premises or facilities		/
NHS staff - recruited as potential research participants by virtue of their professional role		/
A prison or a young offender institution in England and Wales (and is health related)		/

If you have answered 'yes' to ANY of the above questions in 2 or 3 then you will need to apply for full ethical review, a faculty committee level process. This can take up to 6-8 weeks, so it is important that you consult further with your supervisor for guidance with this application as soon as possible. Please now complete and sign the final page of this document. The application form for full ethical review and further information about the process are available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/uolethicsapplication.

If you answered 'no' to ALL of the questions in sections 2 and 3 please continue to part B.

INTERNAL RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION
Part B: Ethical considerations within block ethical approval

4. Will the research touch on sensitive topics or raise other challenges?	Yes	No
Will the study require the cooperation of a gatekeeper for initial access to groups or individuals who are taking part in the study (eg students at school, members of self-help groups, residents of a nursing home)?		/
Will participants be taking part in the research without their knowledge and consent (eg covert observation of people in non-public places)?		/
Will the study involve discussion of sensitive topics (eg sexual activity, drug use)?		/
Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or have negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?		/
Are there any potential conflicts of interest?		/
Does any relationship exist between the researcher(s) and the participant(s), other than that required by the activities associated with the project (e.g., fellow students, staff, etc)?	/	
Does the research involve any risks to the researchers themselves, or individuals not directly involved in the research?		/

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions in (5), please describe the ethical issues raised and your plans to resolve them on a separate page. Agree this with your supervisor and submit it with this form. Again, you MAY be referred for light touch or full ethical review.

| 5. International Research
Does your research involve participants outside of the UK?	Yes	No
Are any of your research participants located outside of the UK, e.g., will you be gathering data through Skype interviews with participants located overseas?		/
Will any of the fieldwork or research require you to travel outside of the UK to collect data?		/

If you have answered 'yes' to either part of question (5), please describe the ethical issues raised with: gaining consent and gathering data from participants located overseas, securely storing and transferring data from the field back to the UK, any cultural issues that may be relevant. Please outline your plans to resolve this on a separate page and ensure that you have completed a risk assessment form. Agree this with your supervisor and submit it with this form.

You MAY be referred for light touch or full ethical review if you are unable to demonstrate that you have resolved the ethical issues relating to international research.

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6. Personal safety

	Yes	No
Where will any fieldwork/ interviews/ focus groups take place?		
At the university or other public place (please specify below).	✓	
At my home address		✓
At the research subject's home address		✓
Some other location (please specify below).		✓

If you conduct fieldwork anywhere except at the university or other public place you need to review security issues with your supervisor and have them confirmed by the Module Leader who may refer you for light touch or full ethical review. Write a brief statement indicating any security/personal safety issues arising for you and/or for your participants, explaining how these will be managed. Agree this with your supervisor and submit it with this form.

Please note that conducting fieldwork at the research subject's home address will require strong justification and is generally not encouraged.

A risk assessment is required before any data is gathered for any dissertation project, please view the Health and Safety advice on the module's VLE pages.

7. Anonymity

	Yes	No
Is there any potential for data to be traced back to individuals or organisations, for instance because it has been anonymised in such a way that there remains risk (eg highlighting people's positions within an organisation, which may reveal them).		✓

If you have answered 'yes' to question 7, please discuss this further with your supervisor. You need to provide a strong justification for this decision on a separate sheet. **This application will need to be reviewed by the dissertation Module Leader and may require a full ethical review.**

8. Data management issues

Will the research involve any of the following activities at any stage (including identification of potential research participants)?	Yes	No
a. Examination of personal records by those who would not normally have access		/
b. Sharing data with other organisations		/
c. Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers		/
d. Publication of direct quotations from respondents	/	
e. Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals to be identified		/
f. Use of audio/visual recording devices	/	
g. Storage of personal data on any of the following:		
FLASH memory or other portable storage devices		/
Home or other personal computers	/	
Private company computers		/
Laptop computers	/	

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions under 8, you must ensure that you follow the University of Leeds Information Protection Policy: http://www.leeds.ac.uk/informationsecurity and the Research Data Management Policy: http://library.leeds.ac.uk/research-data-policies#activate-tab1_university_research_data_policy.

You are obliged to provide a copy of your anonymised data to your supervisor for their records and to destroy other copies of your data when your degree has been confirmed.

Appendix F: Informed Consent Form

This research is subject to ethical guidelines set out by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee.

These guidelines include principles such as obtaining your informed consent before research starts, notifying you of your right to withdraw, and protection of your anonymity.

Have you had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the study to your satisfaction?

YES/NO

Do you understand that you are free to end the interview at any time or to choose not to answer a question without giving a reason why?

YES/NO

Do you agree to take part in this study?

YES/NO

Do you grant permission for extracts from the interview, and any other data produced during this interview to be used in reports of the research on the understanding that your anonymity will be maintained?

YES/NO

SIGNED   …………………………………………………………………...

NAME
(IN BLOCK LETTERS)   …………………………………………………

DATE   …………………………………………………………

Appendix G: Template Analyses

Template Analysis on the key characteristics of positively and negatively-valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram

Level 1 Theme	Level 2 CBE Dimension	Level 3 (RQ1) Positively and negatively-valenced CBE characteristics
Emotional	Identification	*Idealism*
		Unhappiness
Cognitive	Enthusiasm	*Intrinsic enjoyment*
		Unrealistic
	Attention/absorption	*Investment*
		Invasive
Behavioural	Interaction	*Brand community*

Template Analysis on the key consequences of positively and negatively-valenced CBE in H&F brands on Instagram

Level 1 Theme	Level 2 (RQ2) Positively and negatively-valenced CBE Consequences	Level 3
Brand attitude	*Favourable brand attitude*	Trust
		Brand loyalty
	Unfavourable brand attitude	Switch to competitors
Consumer well-being	*Healthier lifestyle*	Motivation
	Negative body image	Insecurity