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## Article

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## MARKETING | RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Consumer attitudes towards Instagram advertisements in Egypt: The role of the perceived advertising value and personalization

Hazem Rasheed Gaber<sup>1\*</sup>, Len Tiu Wright<sup>2</sup> and Kaouther Kooli<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** This article investigates the factors that affect consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertisements in Egypt. Furthermore, it studies the effect of consumers' attitudes towards these advertisements on the development of their attitudes towards brands. An online questionnaire was used to collect data from 412 Instagram users in Egypt. The results suggest that the level of consumers' perception of informativeness, entertainment, credibility and lack of irritation in the Instagram advertisements is strongly related to their attitudes. Moreover, the results confirm the positive effect of consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertisements on their attitudes towards the advertised brands. The current study contributes theoretically by presenting the factors that can make consumers hold favourable attitudes towards advertising on their Instagram accounts. This expands the focus of the theory of consumers' attitudes towards advertisements to social media which has largely replaced traditional advertising media. Additionally, this article contributes practically by providing some guidelines for marketers to follow when advertising on Instagram.



Hazem Rasheed Gaber

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Hazem Rasheed Gaber is a lecturer in marketing at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport in Egypt. He holds a PhD in marketing from the University of Huddersfield in the UK. Much of his research focuses on the impact of social media marketing on consumption behavior.

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Kaouther Kooli is a senior lecturer in marketing at Bournemouth University. Her research focuses on B2B marketing and its impact on brands and consumers. Much of her work appeared in international journals such as *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, *Journal of Business and Industrial Marketing* and *Journal of Customer Behavior*.

### PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The popularity of Instagram has increased among consumers where it is expected to replace the major social networking sites in the coming few years. Many companies across different industries have started to recognize the power of this social networking site in customer engagement. This article underscores the importance of the content type of Instagram advertisements in generating positive attitudes. Specifically, it recommends the usage of informative, entertaining and credible content by companies on Instagram to fully utilize its power in advertising. Thus, if conducted in a correct manner, Instagram advertising can provide a solution for the high advertising avoidance that many consumers have developed.

**Subjects:** Advertising; Brand Management; Consumer Behaviour; Internet / Digital Marketing / e-Marketing; Marketing Communications; Marketing Management

**Keywords:** Instagram; social media marketing; advertising; Egypt; brand attitude

## 1. Introduction

During this decade, the advertising field has been subjected to big changes due to the rapid development of social media (Dahl, 2018). In the past, most companies directed all of their advertising efforts towards traditional media such as the television and radio (Evans, 2010). Due to the numerous number of advertisements that consumers are exposed to every day, they have become more resistant to advertising (Fransen, Verlegh, Kirmani, & Smit, 2015; Speck & Elliott, 1997). Accordingly, marketers are continuously searching for more effective media for interacting and communicating with customers. Social media with its interactive nature has started to receive good portions of advertising budgets (Ashley & Tuten, 2015). Social media refers to “a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). Marketing through social media includes the utilization of social media technologies, channels, and software to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization’s stakeholders (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). Social media usage has expanded over the years to the extent that this increase shows no signs of stopping where millions of customers are joining various social networking websites every year. Table 1 shows the annual growth of social media network users worldwide from 2011 to 2018.

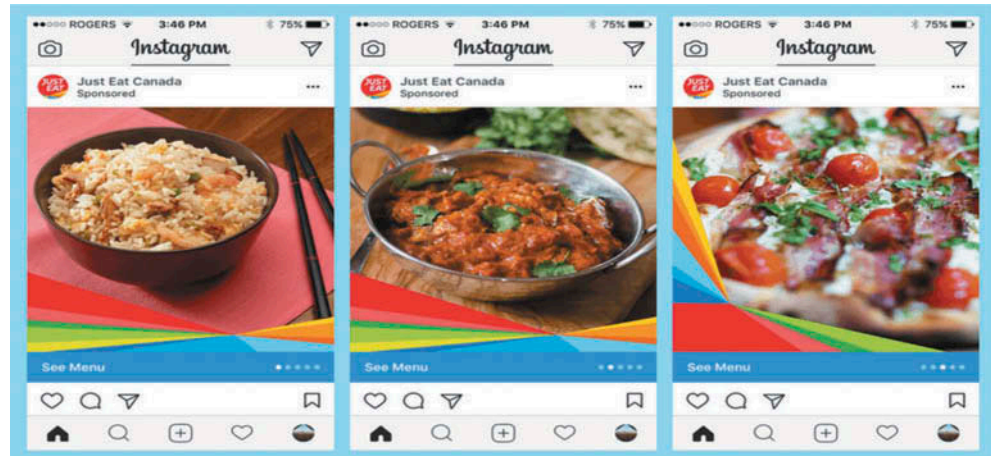
Social media marketing is usually performed through two main forms of practices. The first practice is the use of free tools like brand communities embedded in social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter, where companies create online communities for interacting with the followers of these communities (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). The second practice is the use of paid advertisements on social networks like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube (Nielsen, 2016). Since that social media marketing is considered a relatively new practice, many sides of it need further studying and investigation especially that the academic publications have not caught up with the rapid industry use (Barger, Peltier, & Schultz, 2016). For instance, there is little known considering the effectiveness of the social media advertising campaigns and the factors that affect its success (Gaber & Wright, 2014). In order to fully benefit from the potentials of the social media as an advertising channel, marketers must fully examine and understand the unique characteristics related to it and the ways that consumers interact with it.

Among the social media platforms that are gaining the attention of marketers is the social networking website Instagram. Instagram, with more than one billion users is being extensively used by many companies for advertising, marketing research as well as customer relationship management (Zhao, Yang, Xie, & Wang, 2017). Figure 1 shows an example of Instagram advertisements that are usually displayed on users’ accounts.

**Table 1. Growth in the number of users of social networking sites from 2011 to 2018**

Social Network	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Percentage increase between 2011–2018
NUMBER OF ACTIVE USERS IN MILLIONS									
Facebook	845	1056	1228	1393	1591	1790	2100	2230	163%
Instagram	10	30	150	300	400	500	700	1000	1000%
Twitter	117	185	241	288	305	320	326	335	186%

**Figure 1. An example of Instagram advertisements.**



Despite the rapid penetration of Instagram among consumers and the wide usage of this social network in marketing, there has been a scarcity in academic research that examines this unique advertising medium. Specifically, there is limited research that examines the factors that enhance consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertising and the effect of these attitudes on consumer behaviour (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). Since that consumers' attitudes towards advertisements differ with the advertising medium (Elliott & Speck, 1998), it would be useful to study the factors that affect consumers' attitudes towards this innovative form of marketing.

This paper has two objectives. The first objective is to determine the factors that affect consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertisements, while the second objective is to investigate the effect of Instagram advertisements on consumers' attitudes towards brands.

The paper is organized as follows. First, an overview of the concept of consumer attitudes is presented as well as its theoretical underpinnings. This is followed by a discussion on the research hypotheses and a presentation of the proposed conceptual model. Second, the methodology that was adopted is presented, followed by a presentation of the findings. Finally, a discussion of the theoretical and managerial implications will be provided together with the research limitations and directions for future research.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Consumers' attitudes towards advertisements**

The concept of 'consumers' attitudes towards advertisements' can be defined as "*a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion*" (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989, p. 49). This concept has been always an ongoing interest for marketers and on the top of the agenda of academics. The reason behind that interest is that attitudes are considered a predictor for consumers' behaviour (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989). For instance, it was found that consumers' attitudes towards advertising is one of the main predictors for advertising effectiveness (Mehta, 2000), as well as consumer behaviour (Tsang, Ho, & Liang, 2004). Mitchell and Olson (1981) and Shimp (1981) were among the first authors that highlighted the importance of the concept of consumers' attitudes towards advertising in the marketing literature. They argued that consumers' attitudes towards advertisements affected their attitudes towards brands by changing the ways consumers perceive the advertised brands. These studies were supported by some work that showed that consumers' negative attitudes towards advertisements can lead to an avoidance behaviour towards advertising and accordingly to a negative attitude towards the advertised brands (Speck & Elliott, 1997).

The current article focuses on the factors that affect consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertisements. A useful theory in explaining what factors affect these attitudes is the uses and gratifications theory. This theory has its roots in the needs and motivation theory. The latter argues that people aim to satisfy their hierarchy of needs through directed behaviour (Maslow, Frager, Fadiman, McReynolds, & Cox, 1970). In the mass communication field, Katz and Blumler (1974) developed the principles of Maslow Hierarchy to explain peoples' usage of different media to gratify their needs. This theory argues that people have different uses and gratifications from their usage of different media and they are goal-directed their behaviour (Katz & Blumler, 1974). Thus, the uses and gratifications approach is widely used in empirical mass communication research to explain peoples' motives for adopting mass media to satisfy their needs (Katz, 1959).

Our article argues that companies should provide certain characteristics in their advertisements on Instagram to generate positive attitudes from consumers. In other words, there are different uses and gratifications that consumers aim to find in advertisements that they are exposed to on that social network. The coming sections will discuss these factors in detail.

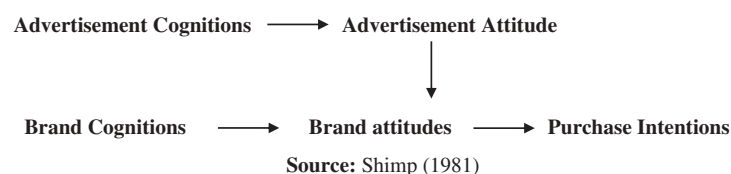
Another theory that is relevant to our study is the affect transfer hypothesis (ATH) that was suggested by Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch (1983). This theory is one of the most widely used theories in explaining the effect of consumers' attitudes of advertisement. It proposes a direct one-way causal flow from consumers' attitudes towards advertisements to their attitudes towards brands as shown in Figure 2. This hypothesis has gained some support in the advertising literature. For example, Mitchell and Olson (1981), explained that consumers' attitudes towards advertisements have an important role in determining their attitudes towards brands. The theory has gained wide acceptance across researches that studied advertisements in various advertising media (Muehling & McCann, 1993), for example, it was used to explain consumers' attitudes towards the advertised brands in the television, mobile phone as well as the internet (Kaushal & Kumar, 2016).

## 2.2. The conceptual model and research hypotheses

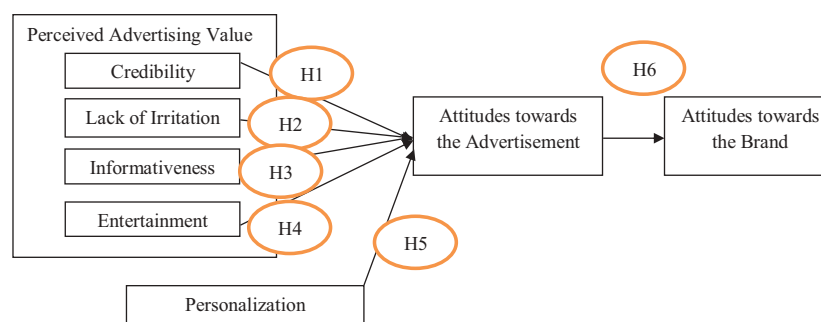
In the current article, the researchers are proposing a conceptual model (see Figure 3) that is based upon Brackett and Carr (2001) work that studied consumers' attitudes towards web advertising. Brackett and Carr (2001) developed a model that suggested that consumers'-perceived

**Figure 2. Affect transfer hypothesis.**

Source: Shimp (1981)



**Figure 3. Proposed conceptual model.**



entertainment, informativeness, lack of irritation, and credibility of web advertisements affect the way consumers evaluate them. In our study, we argue that these four factors are the main pillars for consumers'-perceived advertising value for Instagram advertisements. The concept of advertising value in the context of web advertisements was first introduced by Ducoffe (1996). He indicated that informativeness, irritation, and entertainment are the main factors that explain how consumers assess the value of advertising in online environments.

Due to the targeting capabilities of social media networks, we added the personalization factor to our model as one of the factors that is important in shaping consumers' attitudes towards advertisements (Mir, 2011; Xu, 2006). Since advertising evokes both positive and negative emotions that might influence consumers' overall attitudes (Ducoffe, 1996), our model also proposes a positive relationship between consumers' attitudes towards advertisements and their attitudes towards the advertised brands. Thus, our model is consistent with some earlier researches that found that the advertisements which are perceived to be pleasant and interesting will result in a general positive attitude towards advertisements and brands (Mitchell & Olson, 1981).

The proposed hypotheses are discussed in the following sections in much details.

### 2.3. Credibility of the advertisements

Advertisement credibility is defined as *"the extent to which the consumer perceives claims made about the brand in the advertisement to be truthful and believable"* (MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989, p. 51). Credibility of advertisements has been always one of the most widely studied concepts in the advertising literature. This might be attributed to the critical role it plays as one of the main predictors of advertisement effectiveness (Choi & Rifon, 2002) as well as the formation of attitude and behaviour (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 1999). Also, the concept of credibility of advertisements appeared in the advertising literature as one of the most important elements of the advertisement value (Saadeghvaziri & Hosseini, 2011; Tsang et al., 2004).

Due to the characteristics of the web that allows self-publishing in a largely unregulated environment, it was found that consumers perceive web advertising as less credible than other media (Prendergast, Liu, & Poon, 2009). Thus, convincing consumers with the credibility of web advertising can be very challenging to many companies (Aktan, Aydogan, Aysuna, & Cad, 2016). Ducoffe (1996) and Brackett and Carr (2001) were among the first authors that highlighted the role of credibility of advertisements as one of the main sources of advertising value in online environments. They indicated that credibility of advertisements positively influences consumers' attitudes. In the context of social media literature, Van-Tien Dao, Nhat Hanh Le, Ming-Sung Cheng, and Chao Chen (2014) indicated that credibility has positive effects on consumers' perceived value of social media advertising, which in turn positively influences their online purchase intention

Based on the previous literature, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis:

**H1** Consumers' perception of the credibility of Instagram advertisements affects their attitudes towards these advertisements positively.

### 2.4. Irritation of the advertisements

One of the main challenges that have been reported in the literature for advertising effectiveness is the concept of irritation (Tsang et al., 2004). Irritation of advertisements can be defined as: *"when advertising employs techniques that annoy, offend, insult, or are overly manipulative, consumers are likely to perceive it as an unwanted and irritating influence"* (Ducoffe, 1996, p. 23). Irritation of advertising was found to be one of the main reasons that make consumers criticize advertising (Greyser, 1973). Also, it can be a useful concept in explaining how negative feelings arise from some advertisements (Li, Edwards, & Lee, 2002).



Web advertisements might cause irritation of consumers for different reasons. For instance, Edwards, Li, and Lee (2002) indicated they can cause annoyance because of the nature of the advertised products, advertising intrusiveness as well as a perceived loss of control in one's behaviour. Also, the characteristics of advertising could cause irritation such as targeting the wrong audience, manipulative messages, misplacements, frequent and rather excessive advertising placements, and forced exposures. In social media, when users see advertising as interfering with their goal-oriented tasks for which they are present on Facebook, the ads are perceived as being annoying (Kornias & Halalau, 2012). Advertisements that annoy, offend and manipulate are perceived by recipient consumers as irritating and unwanted material; that is why all companies have to think in a way to make their advertisements neither irritating nor annoying.

The literature reports a negative relationship between consumers' perception of the irritation of the advertisements and their overall attitude towards the advertisements (Aktan et al., 2016; Saadeghvaziri & Hosseini, 2011; Tsang et al., 2004). Based on the previous literature, the researchers proposed the following hypothesis:

**H2** Consumers' perception of the lack of irritation of Instagram advertisements affects their attitudes towards these advertisements positively.

### **2.5. Informativeness of the advertisements**

The informativeness of an advertisement can be defined as "*the ability of the advertising message to inform the recipient by different product and services alternatives so that the consumer gets the most satisfaction he wants*" (Ducoffe, 1996, p. 22). Bauer, Reichardt, Barnes, and Neumann (2005) argued that the perceived accuracy, timeliness and usefulness of the information will have an effect on consumer attitudes towards advertising. Additionally, the informativeness of the ads can be regarded as an important predictor of its value and it is crucial to the effectiveness of advertising (Ducoffe, 1996), where consumers, themselves, report that advertising's ability to supply information is the primary reason for approving it (Bauer & Greyser, 1968; Saadeghvaziri & Hosseini, 2011).

The uses and gratifications theory can be useful in explaining the importance of the availability of informative content in social media advertisements in enhancing consumers' attitudes; where the extant literature highlights the importance of informative advertisements for engaging consumers with social media advertisements (Wright, Gaber, Robin, & Cai, 2017). Social media advertisements can include useful information about the brand (Luarn, Lin, & Chiu, 2015). They can also include information about product specifications and technical knowledge about the product attributes (Tafesse, 2015). Due to the numerous advertising that consumers are exposed to, consumers are always looking for informative advertisements that can help them choose the best product alternatives yielding the greatest satisfaction (Ducoffe, 1996). Due to the importance of informative content to consumers, we proposed the following hypothesis:

**H3** Consumers' perception of informativeness of Instagram advertisements affects their attitudes towards these advertisements positively.

### **2.6. Entertainment of the advertisements**

Entertainment in the context of advertising refers to the ability of the advertisement to fulfill an audience's needs for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional enjoyment (Ducoffe, 1996). The extant literature highlights the positive role of entertaining advertising on brand attitudes (Mitchell & Olson, 1981), where the ability of advertising to entertain can enhance the experience of advertising exchanges for consumers (Alwitt & Prabhaker, 1992).

Stern and Zaichowsky (1991) argued that web advertisements that are entertaining will lead to more loyalty to the advertised brand and to a better purchase intention. Similarly, entertaining content was found to be positively related to positive attitudes and curiosity for online advertisements (Ling, Piew, & Chai, 2010).

The uses and gratification theory is useful in explaining why people prefer entertaining content on social media, where most people have a natural playfulness (Ducoffe, 1996). Thus, providing games and prizes on social media can yield high participation and is a successful way to attract and keep customers (Gaber & Wright, 2014). Additionally, funny messages is helpful in attracting consumers' attention (Keshtgary & Khajepour, 2011).

Based on the previous literature, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis:

**H4** Consumers' perception of entertainment of Instagram advertisements affects their attitudes towards these advertisements positively.

### **2.7. Personalization of the advertisements**

Personalization of advertisements refers to sending advertising messages based on the customers' user demographics, user preference, context and content. This aims at making the advertisement more relevant so as not to disturb and annoy the recipient (Xu, 2006). Personalization can be defined as *"the ability of a company to recognize and treat its customers as individuals through personal messaging, targeted banner ads, special offers on bills, or other personal transactions"* (Imhoff, Loftis, Geiger, & Imhoff, 2001, p. 467). To avoid the advertising clutter that consumers are exposed to, many advertisers are starting to use customized messages for individual consumers based on their personal information (Jung, 2017). Customers prefer to receive a customized content that is relevant to them and matches their interests. If the advertisement can be somewhat personal, this will allow it to target customers in an individual manner and improve the relationship with them (Saadeghvaziri & Hosseini, 2011). In research that examined consumer responses to personalized advertisements in social media, it was found that perceived ad relevance influences advertising effectiveness such as increased attention to ads and decreased ad avoidance (Jung, 2017).

Based on the previous literature, the researchers formulated the following hypothesis:

**H5** Personalization of Instagram advertisements influences consumers' attitudes towards these advertisements positively.

### **2.8. Attitudes towards Instagram advertisements and brand attitudes**

In the current article, the researchers assume that if consumers develop positive attitudes towards Instagram advertisements, this will impact their attitudes towards the advertised brands positively. This assumption was developed based on the affect transfer hypothesis (ATH) that was suggested by Lutz et al. (1983). The relationship between consumer attitudes towards advertisements and their relationship with brands was supported in previous literature (Barwise & Strong, 2002; MacKenzie & Lutz, 1989; Mitchell & Olson, 1981). Attitudes towards advertisements can enhance brand attitudes through its positive effect on the consumer brand choice as well as its role in creating brand-related beliefs (Gardner, 1985).

Based on the affect transfer hypothesis theory and the support in the extant literature, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H6** Consumers' positive attitudes towards Instagram advertisements influence their attitudes towards the brands positively.

## **3. Empirical study and analysis**

### **3.1. Data collection**

The population of our study is Instagram users in Egypt. According to Crowd Analyzer (2018), the number of Instagram users in Egypt exceeded 11 million users. To test the research hypotheses, a link to an online questionnaire was posted on the social networking site Instagram. After two



months of multiple postings, the researchers were able to collect 412 complete questionnaires from Instagram users in Egypt. Following the recommendations of Stevens (2002), the sample size should be at least 15 respondents per variable, and the current study's model with 7 variables, will employ about 105 subjects. Accordingly, the current study's sample size of 412 Instagram users is considered adequate.

This study adopted self-selection sampling technique where the respondents voluntarily answered the online questionnaire. Data collection through a self-selection sampling has become very popular in many recent studies that examined consumer behaviour on social media, e.g. (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, & Pihlström, 2012; Kudeshia, Sikdar, & Mittal, 2016). Self-selection samples have several advantages over other types of samples including its ability to reduce the amount of time needed to search for participants and its ability to generate answers from participants who are eager and willing to provide useful information regarding the research topic (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2016).

Of the respondents, 63% were females and 37% were males. Of the respondents, 67% were between 15 and 28 years, 22% were between 29 and 35, while the rest were over 36.

### 3.2. Measures

The questions as well as the items were developed based on the literature and were measured based on the five-point likert scale. Consumers' perceptions of the credibility of advertisements were measured using three adapted items from Xu (2006). Lack of irritation in advertisements was measured by using three items adapted from Tsang et al. (2004). Informativeness of advertisements was measured by using two items adapted from Tsang et al. (2004) and Xu (2006). Entertainment of advertisements was measured using three items adapted from Tsang et al. (2004) and Xu (2006). Personalization of advertisements was measured using three items adapted from Xu (2006). On the other hand, consumers' attitudes towards advertisements were measured using three items adopted from Mehta (2000). Finally, consumers' attitudes towards the advertised brands were measured using three items adopted from Chattopadhyay and Basu (1990). For the complete wordings of the items that measured the research's variables, refer to Table 2.

### 3.3. Results

To help with the analysis, the researchers applied AMOS 22.0. First, the measurement model was checked for internal consistency and reliability of the variables. Table 2 shows the psychometric properties and the wording of the research items. The findings show that most indicators have good factor loading with reliability that exceeds the threshold of 0.6 that is required structural equation modelling (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). However, item three in the credibility scale and item three in the entertainment scale were dropped because it had poor item loading falling below the required threshold of 0.55 (Hair, 2010).

Additionally, the average variance extracted for all the constructs shows values over 0.5 which is considered adequate for confirming convergent validity according to Fornell and Larcker (1981). On the other hand, discriminant validity was checked by calculating the Fornell-Larcker-Ratio (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), which must not exceed 1. For the purpose of evaluating the overall causal model, the researchers examined the values of Chi-Square  $\chi^2$ ; Normed Fit Chi-Square ( $\chi^2/df$ ), CFI, TLI, GFI and RMSEA fit indices. The model showed an acceptable fit with  $\chi^2$  at 97.943, DF = 97,  $\chi^2/DF$  = 1.0097 ( $p$  = 0.233), RMSEA at 0.04, CFI at 0.941., GFI at 0.922 and TLI at 0.981 (Byrne, 2016).

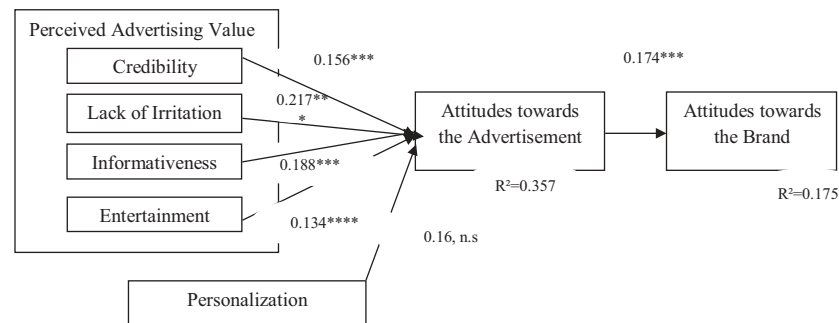
Concerning the path analysis of the model, Figure 4 shows the results of the analysis. Credibility is found to be positively and significantly impact attitudes towards Instagram advertisements (0.156\*\*\*), thus H1 was supported. Lack of Irritation is found to positively and significantly impact consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertisements (0.217\*\*\*), thus H2 was supported. Informativeness is found to positively and significantly impact

**Table 2. Psychometric properties of the applied scales**

Construct	Item	Loading	Mean	CR	AVE	FLR
<b>Credibility</b>	I trust Instagram advertisements.	0.71	2.91	0.75	0.58	0.76
	I use Instagram advertisements as a reference for purchasing.	0.65	3.12			
	The content provided by mobile advertising is credible.	0.31	2.23			
<b>Lack of Irritation</b>	I feel that Instagram advertisements are not irritating.	0.69	4.12	0.79	0.61	0.74
	I feel that Instagram advertisements are not everywhere.	0.71	3.82			
	Contents of Instagram advertisements are not annoying.	0.79	4.31			
<b>Informativeness</b>	I think that Instagram advertisements are a good source for timely information.	0.81	3.85	0.86	0.52	0.71
	Instagram advertisements provide the information I need.	0.80	3.62			
<b>Entertainment</b>	I feel that reading Instagram advertisements is enjoyable and entertaining.	0.72	3.43	0.78	0.63	0.72
	I feel that the exposure to Instagram advertisements is pleasant.	0.68	3.94			
	To me, it is amusing to view Instagram advertising.	0.25	2.21			
<b>Personalization</b>	I feel that Instagram advertisements display personalized message to me.	0.79	3.82	0.81	0.62	0.78
	I feel that Instagram advertisements are personalized for my usage.	0.78	4.11			
	Contents in Instagram advertisements are personalized.	0.68	4.02			
<b>Attitudes towards the Advertisement</b>	I like the idea of Instagram advertisements.	0.72	3.13	0.85	0.69	0.76
	Viewing Instagram advertisements is a good idea.	0.82	3.54			
	Viewing Instagram advertisements is a wise idea.	0.76	4.12			
<b>Attitudes towards the Brand</b>	The advertised brands on Instagram are good.	0.78	4.04	0.91	0.71	0.73
	I like the brands that are advertised on Instagram.	0.85	3.92			
	The advertised brands on Instagram are nice.	0.81	3.75			

attitudes towards Instagram advertisements (0.118\*\*\*), thus H3 was supported. Entertainment is found to positively and significantly impact attitudes towards Instagram advertisements (0.134\*\*\*), thus, H4 was supported. Personalization is found to have insignificant effect on consumers' attitudes towards Instagram advertising (0.16 non-significant), thus H5 was supported. Finally, consumers' attitudes towards advertisements was found to have a positive significant impact on consumers' attitudes towards the advertised brands (0.174\*\*\*), thus H6 was supported.

**Figure 4. Parameter estimates for final structural model.**



Finally, the  $R^2$  of “consumers” attitudes towards the advertisement’ was 0.357 which shows that 35.7% of the change in that variable is determined by consumers’ perception of the degree of credibility, entertainment, lack of irritation and informativeness. On the other hand, the  $R^2$  of “consumers” attitudes towards the brand’ was 0.175 which indicates that 17.5% of the change of that variable is determined by consumers’ attitudes towards the brand. Figure 4 shows a summary of the hypotheses testing.

#### 4. Discussion and implications

This study was conducted in response to several calls by marketing scholars and practitioners for a better understanding of the factors that affect consumers’ attitudes towards Instagram advertisements (Korotina & Jargalsaikhan, 2016). Specifically, the first objective of the study was to investigate the effect of the perceived advertising value as well as personalization of Instagram advertisements on consumers’ attitudes. The findings showed that consumers’ perception of credibility, informativeness, entertainment as well as lack of irritation are important factors in shaping their perception towards this innovative form of marketing. The findings are in line with some previous research that examined consumers’ attitudes towards web advertisements, e.g. (Aktan et al., 2016; Ducoffe, 1996). Surprisingly, the findings indicated that personalization is not an important factor in determining consumers’ attitudes. The unexpected lack of support for the relationship between personalization and consumers’ attitudes can be explained by the failure of companies to make consumers feel that the advertisements are personalized for their preferences. Additionally, this might be attributed to the fact that Instagram usage by companies in Egypt is still in its beginnings where many companies are not able to customize the advertisements to the consumers’ needs and preferences. The importance of personalization in affecting consumers’ attitudes has been reported in other studies that investigated other social networks such as Facebook (Lu, 2016).

The second objective of the study was to investigate the effect of consumers’ attitudes towards Instagram advertisements on their brand attitudes. The findings showed that Instagram advertisements can be effective in enhancing consumers’ relationships with brands. Since Instagram is becoming one of the most popular social media applications among consumers around the world and is becoming an addiction for them, it can be a useful tool in enhancing their relationships with brands (Huang & Su, 2018).

In addition to its theoretical contributions, this article provides some guidelines for marketers. Firstly, the article highlights the importance of Instagram advertisements in enhancing consumers’ relationships with brands. With the high levels of advertising avoidance that many consumers have developed towards traditional advertising media (Speck & Elliott, 1997), social networking websites like Instagram provide better ways for connecting with customers. Secondly, the findings provide some guidelines for marketers to follow when advertising on Instagram. For instance, they can make their advertising appealing by providing informative and entertaining content. Since consumers use the advertisements as a reference for purchasing (Xu, 2006), informative content that

is presented in an entertaining way can enhance their attitudes. Also, advertisers should be aware of the credibility of the messages they provide in Instagram advertisements. Without credibility, individuals wouldn't continue their relationships beyond a single transaction (Gefen, 2000). Finally, social media managers should be aware of the negative effect of irritation on consumers' attitudes. This can be done by avoiding advertising that is annoying, offensive or insulting (Ducoffe, 1996).

## 5. Limitations and directions for future research

Despite the contributions of the current study it is not without limitations. First, this article only examined consumer towards advertising in one country which is Egypt. Second, the paper didn't focus on one industry where it examined the attitudes of consumers towards Instagram advertisements in general. Third, it only focused on consumers' attitudes towards advertising in one social network which is Instagram which limits the generalizability of the findings on other social networks. Based on these limitations, future research can be expanded to include consumers from different countries other than Egypt. Also, future research can examine consumer attitudes towards advertisements in other social networks and across other industries. Moreover, future research can examine the effect of Instagram advertisements on other important variables such as purchase intention and word of mouth intentions. Finally, future work can compare between consumers' attitudes based on their demographic characteristics such as the age, gender and location.

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