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“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”

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Patras, June, 2026

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**“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in
Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure
signals and empathic attunement”**

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“I am especially grateful to my supervisor Dr. George Spais for the time he devoted to discussing ideas, clarifying theoretical directions, and helping me navigate methodological and practical challenges with calm reassurance. His meticulous comments and constructive critiques did not merely improve the dissertation’s structure and argumentation. He also taught me how to think more rigorously, write more clearly, and approach academic work with greater discipline and integrity.”

“To my beloved family—my children, Aggelos and Myrto; my parents; and especially my husband, Spyros—whose unconditional support made this journey possible.”

Abstract

The dissertation examines transparency paradoxes in Greek fashion influencer marketing through a dual-pathway Expectancy Violations Theory model that integrates a negative disclosure route and a positive empathic-attunement route. Data were collected with an online Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ) from a non-probability convenience sample of 343 Greek social media users who follow fashion influencers. The SAQ was structured in 12 sections and 24 questions (excluding Likert-scale statements), covering engagement and follower behavior, demographics, sponsorship cues, and the study constructs. Confirmatory Factor Analysis validated the model, followed by regression and bootstrapped mediation and moderated-mediation analyses. Thirteen of the eighteen hypotheses were not supported, while five were. Findings indicate that sponsorship disclosure does not directly increase influencer avoidance, influencer switching, or brand avoidance. Instead, effects arise indirectly through psychological contract violation, with non-disclosure linked to higher perceived violation. In parallel, perceived empathic attunement increases recommendation acceptance partly through social presence, underscoring the persuasive power of socio-emotive presence (social presence). The study advances explanation beyond “disclosure helps or harms” debates by demonstrating a mechanism-based, dual-process account in the digital marketing literature in which transparency operates primarily through relational breach (psychological contract violation), while persuasive effectiveness is achieved through socio-emotive presence.

Keywords

Transparency paradox, Fashion influencer marketing, Sponsorship disclosure, Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT), Psychological contract violation (PCV), Empathic attunement, Social presence

ΔΙΠΛΩΜΑΤΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ

«Παράδοξα διαφάνειας στο μάρκετινγκ επιρροής μόδας στην Ελλάδα: Ένα μοντέλο Θεωρίας Παραβίασης Προσδοκιών για τα σήματα αποκάλυψης και τον ενσυναισθητικό συντονισμό»

Θεοδώρα Δεμέκα

Περίληψη

Η παρούσα διπλωματική εργασία εξετάζει τα παράδοξα διαφάνειας στο ελληνικό μάρκετινγκ μόδας μέσω επιρροέων, αξιοποιώντας ένα μοντέλο διπλής διαδρομής της Θεωρίας Παραβίασης Προσδοκιών (Expectancy Violations Theory) που ενσωματώνει μία αρνητική διαδρομή αποκάλυψης και μία θετική διαδρομή ενσυναισθητικού συντονισμού. Τα δεδομένα συλλέχθηκαν μέσω διαδικτυακού Αυτοσυμπληρούμενου Ερωτηματολογίου (Self-Administered Questionnaire, SAQ) από ένα μη πιθανολογικό δείγμα ευκολίας 343 Ελλήνων χρηστών μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης που ακολουθούν επιρροείς μόδας. Το ερωτηματολόγιο δομήθηκε σε 12 ενότητες και 24 ερωτήσεις, καλύπτοντας την εμπλοκή και τη συμπεριφορά των ακολούθων, τα δημογραφικά στοιχεία, τα σήματα χορηγίας και τις βασικές μεταβλητές της μελέτης. Η Επιβεβαιωτική Παραγοντική Ανάλυση (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) επικύρωσε το μοντέλο, ενώ ακολούθησαν αναλύσεις παλινδρόμησης και αναλύσεις διαμεσολάβησης και μετριαζόμενης διαμεσολάβησης με bootstrap. Δεκατρείς από τις δεκαοκτώ υποθέσεις δεν υποστηρίχθηκαν, ενώ πέντε υποστηρίχθηκαν. Τα ευρήματα δείχνουν ότι η αποκάλυψη χορηγίας δεν αυξάνει άμεσα την αποφυγή του επιρροέα, την αλλαγή επιρροέα ή την αποφυγή της μάρκας. Αντίθετα, οι επιδράσεις προκύπτουν έμμεσα μέσω της παραβίασης ψυχολογικού συμβολαίου, με τη μη αποκάλυψη να συνδέεται με υψηλότερη αντιλαμβανόμενη παραβίαση. Παράλληλα, ο αντιλαμβανόμενος ενσυναισθητικός συντονισμός αυξάνει την αποδοχή συστάσεων εν μέρει μέσω της κοινωνικής παρουσίας, αναδεικνύοντας την πειστική ισχύ της κοινωνικο-συναισθηματικής παρουσίας. Η μελέτη προχωρά πέρα από τη συζήτηση «η αποκάλυψη βοηθά ή βλάπτει», τεκμηριώνοντας, στη βιβλιογραφία του ψηφιακού μάρκετινγκ, μια εξήγηση μηχανισμού, διπλής διεργασίας εξήγησης, όπου η διαφάνεια λειτουργεί κυρίως μέσω σχεσιακής ρήξης (παραβίαση ψυχολογικού συμβολαίου), ενώ η πειστική αποτελεσματικότητα επιτυγχάνεται μέσω κοινωνικο-συναισθηματικής παρουσίας.

Λέξεις – Κλειδιά

Παράδοξο διαφάνειας, Μάρκετινγκ μόδας μέσω επιρροέων, Αποκάλυψη χορηγίας, Θεωρία Παραβίασης Προσδοκιών (EVT), Παραβίαση ψυχολογικού συμβολαίου (PCV), Ενσυναισθητικός συντονισμός, Κοινωνική παρουσία

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List of Abbreviations & Acronyms

- ANOVA: Analysis of Variance
- BA: Brand Avoidance
- CAGR: Compound Annual Growth Rate
- CFA: Confirmatory Factor Analysis
- df: Degrees of Freedom
- EVT: Expectancy Violation Theory
- FC: Follower Cynicism
- FIPEA : Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement
- HD: Honesty Declaration
- IA: Influencer Avoidance
- IS: Influencer Switching
- PCV: Psychological Contract Violation
- PF: Product Frame
- RAE: Recommendation Acceptance / Engagement
- SAQ: Self-Administered Questionnaire
- SD: Sponsorship Disclosure
- SE: Standard Error
- SEM: Structural Equation Modeling
- SP: Social Presence
- SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Research aim and research problem

Followers of fashion expect influencers to offer sincere, objective advice while demonstrating a genuine understanding of their wants and needs. When business partnerships are revealed, these expectations often lead to conflict. Sponsorship disclosures (e.g., 'ad', '#sponsored') can negatively violate expectations by revealing commercial intent, triggering psychological contract violation (PCV) and avoidance behaviors. Conversely, influencers' empathic attunement cues—signals that they understand followers' mental states, concerns, and contexts (operationalized as perceived mentalizing ability)—can positively violate expectations by demonstrating human-like social intelligence that enhances perceived social presence and acceptance of recommendations.

Sponsorship disclosure leads to PCV and subsequent avoidance behaviors, according to recent research; sincere disclosures mitigate these effects, while consumer cynicism exacerbates them (Jhavar et al., 2025). Parallel studies show that the theory of mind capabilities of AI agents improve social presence and acceptance of recommendations, with product type (virtue vs. vice) moderating effectiveness (Liu et al., 2025). However, most of the time, these theoretical mechanisms have been studied separately and in the contexts of Asian and Anglo-Saxon consumers.

We aim to validate a thorough model based on Expectancy Violation Theory that explains how sponsorship disclosure and influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues jointly shape fashion followers' behavioral responses in the Greek consumer context through psychological contract violation and social presence, under the boundary conditions of honesty declaration, follower cynicism, and virtue (sustainable fashion) versus vice (fast-fashion) product frames.

1.2 Research objectives

The research objectives of this dissertation have been determined based on critical works by Jhavar et al. (2025) and Liu et al. (2025).

1) We will investigate the impact and the nature of the relationships (strength and direction) between sponsorship disclosure and follower behavioral outcomes (influencer avoidance, influencer switching, and brand avoidance), and we will investigate the mediating effect of psychological contract violation in these relationships.

2) We will investigate the impact and the nature of the relationships (strength and direction) between influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and recommendation acceptance in fashion contexts, and we will investigate the mediating effect of social presence in this relationship.

3) We will investigate the moderating role of honesty declarations and follower cynicism on the relationships between sponsorship disclosure, psychological contract violation, and follower behavioral outcomes (influencer avoidance, influencer switching, and brand avoidance).

4) We will investigate the moderating role of product frame (sustainable/ethical fashion versus fast fashion/impulse purchases) on the relationship between influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues, social presence, and recommendation acceptance.

Below, we set the initial assumptions of the study, which provide the theoretical foundation for the research and establish the framework within which the results should be interpreted.

(1) Two pathways violate expectations at the same time. While empathic attunement cues cause positive expectancy violations by exhibiting unexpected social intelligence, sponsorship disclosure causes negative expectancy violations by defying authenticity expectations. These two different pathways are processed concurrently by the followers. Both pathways operate concurrently within the same influencer-follower interaction.

(2) Psychological contract violation mediates commercial disclosure effects. Sponsorship disclosure breaches the psychological contract, which has an indirect impact on follower behaviors (avoidance, switching, and brand rejection). Disclosures are not viewed by followers as neutral information, but rather as relational betrayals, and this perceived violation mediates the subsequent behavioral withdrawal.

(3) Boundary conditions systematically moderate pathway strength. The directional effects of moderators are predictable: honesty declarations lessen negative disclosure impacts by redefining commercial intent as transparency; follower cynicism increases adverse effects among skeptical people. The empathic pathway is moderated by

the product frame, which may strengthen it for virtue products and reverse it for vice products because of psychological reactance.

(4) Cultural context intensifies parasocial dynamics. Consumers' collectivist orientation increases expectations for psychological contracts and strengthens parasocial ties (in contrast to Western contexts that value individualism). This cultural factor increases sensitivity to both transparency violations and empathic signals, potentially producing stronger effect sizes than in Anglo-Saxon or Northern European markets

1.3 Research approach

The dissertation emphasizes systematic measurement and statistical validation of relationships between variables through a deductive, theory-testing methodology. Self-administered online questionnaires will be used to gather data at a single point in time from Greek social media users who follow fashion influencers. Convenience sampling will be used, and participants will be asked to base their answers on a particular influencer they currently follow to investigate naturally occurring relationships between variables rather than experimentally changing variables.

To ensure linguistic and cultural appropriateness, the measurement approach uses validated multi-item scales that were modified from earlier studies and back-translated into Greek. These established metrics will be used to operationalize each theoretical model construct, keeping them consistent with earlier research while tailoring them to the unique circumstances of Greek fashion influencer marketing. The 18 research hypotheses that make up the model can be precisely tested thanks to this quantitative operationalization.

The analytical method begins with Confirmatory Factor Analysis to validate the measurement model and investigate the nature of the relationships. During this validation process, three important psychometric properties—reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity—will be assessed. We will test direct, mediating, and moderating effects to investigate how sponsorship disclosure and empathic attunement cues interact to influence follower responses through social presence and psychological contract violation.

1.4 Importance of the topic, expected contributions and justification for the focus of the study

A key theoretical gap remains, as no integrated model explains how the two expectancy-violation pathways operate simultaneously in fashion influencer contexts, or how transparency mechanisms, follower dispositions, and product frames shape their effects (Perfetti et al., 2025; Schumacher et al., 2025; Cluley & Green, 2024).

This dissertation addresses that gap in five ways. First, it integrates two EVT pathways previously examined separately into a single dual-pathway model, capturing both the “bright side” of influencer marketing and the “dark side”. Second, it adapts AI theory-of-mind capabilities to human influencer empathic-attunement cues, extending Liu et al.’s (2025) AI-focused framework to human influencer settings. Third, it examines these mechanisms in Greece, an under-researched but rapidly evolving market where Instagram influencer penetration has risen sharply, sustainability awareness is growing among younger consumers, and collectivist cultural tendencies may intensify parasocial relationships and psychological contract expectations.

Fourth, the study operationalizes the virtue–vice distinction within fashion by contrasting sustainable/ethical fashion with fast fashion/impulse purchases, showing how product framing interacts with influencer communication strategies. Fifth, it advances EVT precision in digital marketing by testing all boundary conditions, honesty declarations, cynicism, and product frames within one integrated model, enabling comparison of their relative effects and interactions.

The Greek context adds strong empirical value because it differs from the US, UK, and China in fashion consumption patterns, influencer–follower dynamics, and advertising regulation. Greece’s recent economic pressures may also heighten resistance to commercial content while increasing the appeal of aspirational fashion content. Findings should therefore improve the cross-cultural generalizability of EVT in influencer marketing and offer insights relevant to Southern European and Mediterranean markets.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation

There are eight chapters in the dissertation. The research background and the necessity of the study are presented in the first chapter. This comprises the objectives, the theoretical research problem, the research aim, and the study’s uniqueness and anticipated

contribution. The dissertation's structure is presented at the end of the chapter to give the reader clear guidance.

The second chapter presents and defines key concepts related to the research, including fashion influencer marketing, transparency paradoxes in influencer marketing, sponsorship disclosure, psychological contract violation, empathic attunement cues, social presence and product frame: virtue vs. vice fashion products. At the same time, the chapter includes a review of the existing literature and the theoretical framework used to analyze the findings.

In the third chapter, a situation analysis is conducted to examine the current state of influencer marketing in the Greek fashion sector and to highlight the main trends, strategies, and paradoxes of transparency. The challenges, opportunities, and areas requiring further investigation are presented, laying the foundations for the theoretical framework and empirical analysis.

The theoretical framework of the study, chapter four, is based on Expectancy Violation Theory and explores how fashion influencers can disrupt follower expectations in two ways. This framework integrates research on disclosure effects with AI theory-of-mind tailored to influencer contexts. The chapter presents the research hypotheses and the research model derived from the literature review.

The fifth chapter examines the methodological choices and analyzes the research design, methodological approach, sampling, data collection, and measurement tools. It presents the data analysis process, the questionnaire structure, and the statistical analyses applied to the results.

Finally, the sixth chapter presents the research results. It includes descriptive statistics of the sample, the interpretation of the questionnaire results, and a confirmatory factor analysis evaluating the suitability of the model, the factor loadings, significance, and the reliability and internal consistency of the variables.

The seventh chapter compares the research results with previous similar studies and provides deeper insights into the literature, discussing theoretical and practical implications and future research directions.

The eighth and last chapter concludes by presenting conclusions organized around each research objective and a concise summary of the Discussion.

This structure allows the reader to clearly follow the research, from the theoretical background to the empirical findings and conclusions, ensuring coherence and completeness.

Chapter 2 - Definition of the concepts

This chapter critically discusses the fundamental concepts related to this dissertation. These are considered vital for comprehension. The chapter structure follows and presents the definitions of the dissertation's main concepts, which are: 2.1 Fashion influencer marketing, 2.2 Transparency paradoxes in influencer marketing, 2.3 Sponsorship disclosure, 2.4 Psychological contract violation (PCV), 2.5 Empathic attunement cues, 2.6 Empathic attunement cues, and 2.7 Product frame: virtue vs. vice fashion products.

2.1 Fashion influencer marketing

To build their brand and increase sales, fashion firms are increasingly relying on influencers, both human and artificial intelligence (Escourido-Calvo et al., 2025). This tactic creates parasocial connections—where followers feel a personal connection to influencers, and increases trust by using relatable individuals (Luarn et al., 2025; Shamim

et al., 2024). To keep audiences interested, content frequently needs to be customized for them (Kumar et al., 2024). However, how effectively this works may depend on how buyers interact with the product and on their level of skepticism toward virtual influencers (Cheng & Wang, 2025).

While micro-influencers encourage interaction and influence purchases, macro-influencers in fashion marketing increase awareness (Escourido-Calvo et al. 2025). A study by Kumar et al. (2025) shows that, for generating sales, influencer-led activities typically outperform brand-led initiatives.

Parasocial interactions—one-sided but close relationships—are a common way for influencers and their followers to bond (Bu et al., 2022; Masuda et al., 2022). Influencers' personal narratives and beliefs influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. Many followers see them as reliable role models, and this relationship transcends marketing (Belanche et al. 2021). Engagement through likes and comments strengthens relationships and increases a sense of authenticity (Masuda et al., 2022).

Influencer marketing works because it combines personal narratives with promotional messaging. Because it radiates authenticity, this combination may be more convincing than conventional celebrity endorsements (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Additionally, it is frequently more targeted and less expensive; however, credibility is crucial. According to Martínez-López et al. (2020) followers' trust may be damaged, if they perceive an excessive amount of commercial motivation. Therefore, brands and influencers must therefore strike a balance between authenticity and transparency.

There are three main drivers of the efficacy of healthy influencer marketing: psychological elements (visual appeal, parasocial connections, and credibility), and informativeness, dependability, and approachability, which define influencer credibility (e.g., Luarn et al., 2025; Shamim et al., 2024). While aesthetic drives engagement, parasocial ties foster a sense of intimacy with brands. When combined, these components convey trust and might even promote hasty purchases (Shamim et al., 2024).

2.2 Transparency paradoxes in influencer marketing

Influencer marketing faces the transparency dilemma of keeping audience engagement, authenticity and fully disclosing brand connections (Steils et al., 2022). The sponsorship disclosures that comply with regulations increase consumer confidence in endorsements.

The secret to purchase intention lies in transparency and reliability, particularly when influencers align with the audience's values (e.g., Kothari et al., 2025).

The Expectancy Violation Theory explores how influencer communication shapes follower expectations. Sponsorship disclaimers can create a distance between influencers and brands, suggesting a commercial motive during adverse events. Exceeding expectations fosters warmth and engagement (Zourrig et al., 2025). Genuine empathy influences authentic influencers, and warmth encourages purchases from virtual ones. Integrity can ease negative reactions to financial disclosures, while familiarity helps lower unfavorable expectations (Jhawar et al., 2025).

Sustainable fashion is an example of a virtue product where emotional intelligence can help confirm ethical behavior. Products that challenge typical buying habits may face consumer resistance, especially if they are associated with vice or contradict flashy consumption (Liu et al., 2025). This highlights the importance of adaptable communication strategies. The proposed dual-pathway model combines negative disclosure and positive empathy (Wang et al., 2025), exploring their interaction rather than treating them separately.

2.3 Sponsorship disclosure

The primary focus of the concept highlight communication strategies for complex social relationships. Influencer statements are frequently less effective than third-party notifications and hashtags. The way disclosures are presented has a significant impact on audience perceptions and can lessen adverse reactions. Lee and Chung (2023) suggest that achieving sufficient transparency requires balancing disclosure with empathetic, audience-specific communication. The reason is that poorly executed transparency can erode trust, and a measured approach is necessary.

Stakeholder engagement, customized communication, operational accountability, and ethical protection are the four essential components of comprehensive transparency. Information can be easily accessed and comprehended through personalized messaging in a variety of formats, and regular reporting and prompt disclosure of infractions are two examples of operational accountability. Ethical safeguards balance transparency, privacy, security, and justice to uphold core values (e.g., Jia et al., 2025).

Ineffective disclosures can erode an influencer's relationship with followers and raise suspicions, especially among astute social media users who spot unreported sponsorships (Jhawar et al. 2025; Yahya et al., 2024). Although the goal of these disclosures is to increase transparency, there may be a trade-off between increasing brand visibility and decreasing an influencer's authenticity. Required disclosures can undermine a brand's credibility (e.g., Jhawar et al., 2025; Shen et al., 2025; Yahya et al., 2024). While secret collaborations might boost short-term engagement, they can harm credibility in the long run (e.g., Waltenrath, 2024).

The analysis emphasizes "comprehensive transparency" as an ideal, advocating careful disclosures that balance compassion and honesty. Ethical communication is morally necessary but must be strategic and sensitive to avoid undermining credibility and emotional connections.

2.4 Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)

Brand authenticity in influencer marketing significantly influences consumer behavior (Afef, 2024), yet the personal authenticity of influencers has received less attention (Shehzala et al., 2023). Aligning with values, credibility, and emotional ties is the primary goal of this component. Because they are seen as trustworthy and genuine, influencers increase engagement and purchase intent. The study emphasizes the challenges of industry transparency and the role of authenticity in distinguishing authentic influencers from commercial promoters.

The effectiveness of fashion influencer marketing depends on a relational psychological contract where followers expect authenticity, honesty, and unbiased recommendations from influencers (Pavlou & Gefen, 2005). In these contracts, followers have high expectations for authenticity, honesty, and unbiased recommendations. According to Jhawar et al. (2025), PCV arises when expectations are unmet due to required disclosures that ensure compliance, but harm perceived relational integrity. In influencer marketing, authenticity is crucial for understanding strong emotional responses to perceived betrayal.

Empirical evidence suggests that sponsorship disclosure is a negative signal of expectation violation (Jhawar et al. 2025). Followers see financial incentives as outside factors that compromise an influencer's true motivation and diminish their perceived authenticity. PCV mediates an emotional process that can lead to negative responses, such

as distancing from, abandoning, or avoiding the influencer and the promoted brands (Jhawar et al., 2025).

2.5 Empathic attunement cues

Empathic attunement cues are signals—both verbal and nonverbal—that demonstrate a communicator's awareness and understanding of another person's emotions (e.g., Burgoon et al., 2021). Supportive feedback, appropriate facial expressions, emotional mirroring, and attentive listening influence interaction expectations. Negative cues, such as dismissive answers, foster distance; positive cues, such as a warm tone and intense eye contact, foster trust. Signals in influencer marketing help consumers assess if an influencer's actions align with their brand values.

In Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT), "empathic attunement cues" are crucial for effective communication (Burgoon, 1993). According to EVT, people develop behavioral expectations based on social norms and prior interactions, which help determine sincerity. When these expectations are not met, the recipient experiences emotional and cognitive reactions that affect how they perceive the sender and the message (Park et al., 2019; Rice and Nicholls, 2017). Expectancy formation, violation valence, communicative modality, and relational/contextual impact are the conceptual aspects of empathic attunement cues within EVT. These factors influence how empathic actions are perceived and how they impact relationships with others (Gabriel, 2017).

Purchase intentions, emotional ties, and trust can all be impacted by inconsistent or covert business relationships. To assess influencer communication and improve marketing strategies, it is essential to analyze these signals (Park et al., 2019; Nicholls & Rice, 2017).

2.6 Social presence

Social presence is central to the effectiveness of fashion influencer marketing, but transparency about non-human or AI origins can paradoxically reduce its benefits. Marketers must navigate these tensions to optimize authenticity, trust, and consumer engagement. The concept of social presence, the sense of being "with" another in mediated environments, plays a pivotal role in fashion influencer marketing, especially as transparency paradoxes emerge with the rise of virtual and AI-driven influencers. The concept describes an influencer's ability to be perceived as authentic and socially connected by the audience, fostering a sense of closeness and participation (Davis, 1983).

Social presence enhances perceived authenticity and consumer engagement in influencer marketing. Anthropomorphic traits (human-like appearance and behavior) in both virtual and AI influencers increase social presence, which in turn boosts perceived authenticity and purchase intentions. Notably, anthropomorphic behavior has a more substantial effect on authenticity via social presence than appearance alone, and these effects vary by influencer type (e.g., human-like vs. animal-like) (Yin et al., 2025; Zourrig et al., 2025). In branded virtual worlds, higher social presence and narrative engagement lead to greater brand immersion and loyalty, further mediating positive consumer responses (Romero et al., 2025).

Social presence is greatly enhanced by empathy, which allows influencers to understand and respond to their followers' emotions and needs (Lee & Watkins, 2016). When influencers demonstrate emotional honesty and align their actions with their values, they appear more authentic, increasing trust and loyalty among followers (Audrezet et al., 2018). This social presence serves as a key mechanism, enabling even commercial partnerships to foster emotional connections and boost engagement with content.

In conclusion, we can say that it is a fundamental parameter for an effective influencer marketing strategy, as it enables influencers to build strong relationships with their audience, strengthen trust, and promote long-term engagement, connecting the concepts of empathy and authenticity with followers' experiences.

2.7 Product frame: virtue vs. vice fashion products

The virtue-vice product framework emphasizes the distinction between ethical and hedonistic fashion consumption, with moral principles represented in virtue-fashion products (e.g., Grappi et al., 2024). This framework encompasses product attributes, consumer psychology, and entrepreneurial philosophy. Understanding these distinctions is essential for developing fashion systems that balance aesthetics with social responsibility and sustainability.

Vice fashion focuses on indulgence and instant gratification, prioritizing short-term pleasure over long-term ethical considerations. It attracts customers by appealing to their moral self-concept and aligning with their ethical values (e.g., Spielmann, 2021). Additionally, it highlights different business philosophies: virtue-ethics-driven fashion entrepreneurs value authenticity, humility, and responsibility, while the broader industry often emphasizes constant growth and rapid trends (Werner et al., 2024).

Conversely, vice-framed fashion products can adversely affect consumer well-being and hinder industry progress by promoting (i) overconsumption and compulsive buying; (ii) diminished psychological health; and (iii) fragmented identities. This results in impulsive purchases and only temporary satisfaction (Koul & Jasrotia, 2025).

Ultimately, there is a pressing need for cultural shifts toward mindful consumption that prioritize quality, longevity, and authentic self-expression over disposability and status-seeking.

Chapter 3 – Situation Analysis

Chapter 3 presents a situation analysis of the transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing. The chapter is structured as follows: 3.1 The Greek and global fashion influencer marketing landscape; 3.2 The transparency paradox in fashion sponsorship disclosure: Greece and globally; 3.3 Empathic attunement and social presence in influencer communication in Greece and globally; and 3.4 Fashion product frames: the sustainability-consumption paradox in Greece and globally; and 3.5 Concluding remarks.

3.1 The Greek and global fashion influencer marketing landscape

Influencer marketing is expanding rapidly worldwide, driven by consumer trust, short-form visual content, and e-commerce integration. Fashion is central to this growth because brands use creators to diffuse trends and drive conversions, while Greece follows a similar path, though with distinct platform preferences and ROI dynamics that shape local strategy (Migkos et al., 2025). The global influencer marketing industry is projected to reach ~\$32.55 billion by 2025. Within fashion, estimates forecast growth from \$6.82 billion in

2024 to \$39.72 billion by 2030 (CAGR 33.8%), while another projection values the market at \$16.78 billion by 2025 with CAGR 25.45% through 2030 (Grand View Research, 2024; Spherical Insights, 2024). Notably, nano-influencers (<10,000 followers) generated 39.0% of the segment's 2024 revenue, reflecting the value of authenticity and close audience ties (Grand View Research, 2024).

Platform and format choices strongly affect performance. Instagram remains the dominant influencer channel, used by 93% of marketers, while short-form video is now the preferred collaboration format (Amra & Elma, 2025; Sprout Social, 2025). Although TikTok continues to grow, marketers' investment intentions fell 17.2% in 2025, reinforcing a cautious multi-platform strategy (AdIndex, 2025). Globally, influencer campaigns generate an average ROI of \$5.78 per \$1 spent, and 66% of marketers report better outcomes when using AI for influencer discovery and performance tracking (Amra & Elma, 2025; Digital Marketing Institute, 2025).

In Greece, influencer marketing spend is expected to reach \$63.29 million in 2025 and grow at 10.8% CAGR through 2030, supported by 86.2% internet penetration, 71.7% social media use, and a fashion e-commerce market exceeding €1 billion annually (Kemp, 2024; Lighthouse, 2025). Greece's platform mix is more Facebook/Instagram-heavy (7.17 million and 4.25 million users respectively), while TikTok is rising, especially among younger audiences (Kemp, 2024). Mobile drives 89% of social interactions, amplifying immediacy in purchase effects (Migkos et al., 2025). However, Greece's average campaign return is only 1.7x ROI, below the global benchmark, despite relatively low influencer fees (€100–250 for nano; ~€1,000 for macro), suggesting that improved measurement, trust, and AI-enabled analytics are needed to close the maturity gap (Statista, 2025b; Avlonitou et al., 2025; Archive.com, 2025).

3.2 The transparency paradox in fashion sponsorship disclosure: Greece and globally

The global influencer market faces a “transparency paradox”. The sponsorship disclosures, designed to protect consumers, can also trigger persuasion knowledge, increasing skepticism and resistance (Jhawar et al., 2025; Giuffredi-Kähr et al., 2022). This is particularly important in fashion, a sector valued at \$6.17–\$6.82 billion, where influencer effectiveness relies heavily on creator–audience trust (Steils et al., 2022).

In Greece, regulation is clear. The Hellenic Advertising Communications Code, aligned with the EU Unfair Commercial Practices Directive, requires explicit disclosure of commercial partnerships (Metaxopoulos & Partners Law Firm, 2024). Yet compliance remains weak globally, as 97% of influencers reportedly fail to disclose properly, often out of fear of lower engagement (Steils et al., 2022). This creates a tension between legal compliance and perceived authenticity, especially as fashion and beauty represent 21.6% of influencer marketing and global online fashion sales are projected to reach \$920 billion by 2025 (Santora, 2024; Statista, 2025a). Even in advanced markets, mislabeling persists; in the UK, only 57% of influencer ads on Instagram and TikTok are correctly labeled.

Greece's digital landscape intensifies the issue, with 7.32 million social media users, 87% internet penetration, 3.87 million TikTok adult users, and 4.82 million Instagram users (Kemp, 2025; NapoleonCat, 2025). Greek online fashion sales are expected to reach \$1.52 billion in 2024–2025 (Statista, 2025b, 2025c). Enforcement is tightening, with penalties from €5,000 to €1.5 million and added obligations under the EU Digital Services Act (2024). As scrutiny rises across Europe, where 60% of influencers fail to identify ads (European Commission, 2024), clear labels such as “Διαφήμιση” or #ad and systematic audits are becoming legal necessities (European Commission, 2024; Syssilas, 2024).

3.3 Empathic attunement and social presence in influencer communication in Greece and globally

Empathy and social presence are central to contemporary fashion marketing because they foster trust, intimacy, and emotional connection between influencers and audiences. In the 2025 digital environment, users seek not only style guidance but also emotionally “human” contact (Amra & Elma, 2025; Sprout Social, 2025). This is evident in global attitudes, since 74% follow influencers who convey emotional intimacy and a personal tone, while 68% trust creators seen as authentic and accessible (Digital Marketing Institute, 2025). Social presence is reinforced through live streams, short-form video, comments, and DMs, which make influencers feel emotionally available to their followers.

Empathy also strengthens persuasion and reduces disclosure-related resistance. High empathy can increase acceptance of sponsored messages by 19–24% and lessen the negative impact of disclosures (Hudders et al., 2021). In EVT terms, empathy acts as a

compensatory mechanism, offsetting adverse reactions to perceived commercialization. Similarly, social presence is a strong predictor of consumer response: greater presence increases trust by 22–31% and purchase intention by 18–27%, especially in fashion contexts where authenticity and aesthetic guidance coexist (Sprout Social, 2025). Platform affordances support this dynamic: Instagram, used by 93% of marketers for collaborations, prioritizes presence-enhancing formats such as Reels and broadcast channels, while TikTok, despite a 17.2% decline in investment intentions due to geopolitical factors, remains important for authentic emotional storytelling (AdIndex, 2025; Amra & Elma, 2025).

Users also reward vulnerability, as 61% interact more with influencers who reveal their personalities and human dimension, and 59% consider empathy a key indicator of credibility (Digital Marketing Institute, 2025). In Greece, these dynamics may be even stronger due to norms of social intimacy and immediacy; with 71.7% of users active, empathetic lifestyle and fashion content generates 15–28% higher interaction rates, positioning the influencer as both aesthetic model and “digital companion” (Avlonitou et al., 2025; Migkos et al., 2025).

3.4 Fashion product frames: The sustainability-consumption paradox in Greece and globally

The global fashion industry faces a clear sustainability–consumption paradox. Although consumers increasingly value sustainability, they continue to support fast fashion and overconsumption. Sustainable fashion is projected to surpass \$12.9 billion by 2025 and grow at a 9–11% CAGR through 2030 (Grand View Research, 2024), yet fast fashion is also expected to reach \$185 billion by 2025, highlighting the contradiction in consumer behavior (Spherical Insights, 2024).

Influencers deepen this tension by shaping style norms while promoting sustainability. In 2025, only 34% of consumers reported adopting sustainable practices, although 69% said influencers affected their “green” purchases (Digital Marketing Institute, 2025). However, sustainability messages are often weakened by fast-fashion content and greenwashing concerns: 57% of users are skeptical of influencers’ sustainability claims, and 48% believe frequent brand collaborations undermine such messages. Still, sustainable partnerships can generate up to 21% higher engagement when

presented through authentic personal narratives rather than standard sponsorship formats (Amra & Elma, 2025).

The success of these collaborations depends on message–identity coherence and perceived creator commitment (Ki et al., 2020). In Greece, 62% express interest in sustainable fashion, but only 20–25% regularly buy lowfootprint products, while fast-fashion e-commerce exceeds €1 billion annually (Lighthouse, 2025; Kemp, 2024). Given the strong connectedness of Greek fashion influencers (Avlonitou et al., 2025), inconsistent behavior can trigger criticism, whereas consistent low-consumption habits and responsible fashion tips can increase comments and saves by 18–26% (Migkos et al., 2025).

3.5 Concluding remarks.

Greek fashion influencer marketing showcases global trends while emphasizing unique regional traits. The industry is projected to reach \$39.72 billion by 2030, presenting both opportunities and challenges for Greek brands. In Greece's digital community, empathy and social presence are vital for building trust. Transparency requires compliance and authentic communication. Influencers are essential in bridging the gap between consumer behavior and sustainability, as their good deeds increase credibility. Greek fashion brands should use AI analytics to increase return on investment while meeting local demands for authenticity and emotional connection to succeed.

Chapter 4 Theoretical framework, literature review and research model

Chapter 4 presents the theoretical framework, literature and the research model of the dissertation. The chapter is structured as follows: 4.1 Frame of reference; 4.2 Expectancy Violation Theory; 4.3 Theoretical integration of models by Jhawar et al. (2025) and Liu et al. (2025); 4.4 Conceptual Assumptions and Theoretical Foundation of the Research Hypotheses; 4.5 Research model and research hypotheses development; and 4.6 Concluding remarks

4.1 Frame of reference

The “transparency paradox” in fashion influencer marketing refers to the tension whereby sponsorship disclosure is both an ethical requirement and a possible trigger of reduced authenticity and trust (De Veirman, Hudders, & Nelson, 2019; Evans, Phua, Lim, & Jun, 2017; Boerman, Willemsen, & Van Der Aa, 2017). The Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) explains this effect by activating advertising awareness, which increases critical processing and may reduce persuasion (Friestad & Wright, 1994; Boerman et al., 2017). However, PKM focuses mainly on cognition and does not fully capture the emotional and relational dynamics of parasocial bonds between influencers and followers, especially in fashion (Audrezet, De Kerviler, & Moulard, 2020; Tukachinsky, 2011; Horton & Wohl, 1956).

Similarly, Attribution Theory and Signaling Theory interpret disclosure as a cue to motive or credibility but overlook the dynamics of expectations and emotional involvement (Connelly et al., 2011; Weiner, 1985; Kelley, 1973; Spence, 1973). Information-processing approaches, such as the Elaboration Likelihood Model, explain cognitive persuasion routes, yet they do not adequately address the contradictory emotional responses observed in contexts of strong parasocial proximity (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

By contrast, Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) focuses on socially and relationally formed expectations and on how their confirmation or violation is evaluated (Burgoon, 1993; Burgoon & Hale, 1988). EVT explains disclosure as a potential negative violation that may signal a breach of informal trust and psychological contracts (Jhavar et al., 2025; Rousseau, 1995), while also accounting for empathetic communication as a positive violation that can strengthen social presence and recommendation acceptance (Liu et al., 2025; Biocca et al., 2003; Short et al., 1976).

EVT is especially valuable because it integrates cognitive recognition of commercial intent with emotional and relational evaluation, capturing both avoidance and acceptance pathways (Jhavar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025). Although expectations are culturally dynamic and difficult to operationalize, EVT remains the most comprehensive framework for explaining the transparency paradox in fashion influencer marketing, particularly in contexts with strong parasocial expectations such as the Greek fashion market (Audrezet et al., 2020; Burgoon, 2015; Burgoon et al., 2015; Tukachinsky, 2011; Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993).

4.2 Expectancy Violation Theory

Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) explains that people form expectations about others' behavior based on social norms, prior experience, and relationship type. When these expectations are confirmed or violated, individuals make cognitive and emotional evaluations that shape attitudes and behaviors, depending on context and the communicator's perceived value (Burgoon, 1993; Burgoon & Hale, 1988). Importantly, violations are not always negative; unexpected behavior may be evaluated positively if perceived as sincere, useful, or socially desirable (Burgoon & Le Poire, 1993).

EVT is especially relevant to parasocial digital contexts, where influencers are perceived as socially present figures with whom audiences develop intimacy and identification (Tukachinsky, 2011; Horton & Wohl, 1956). In fashion influencer marketing, followers often expect authenticity, sincerity, and emotionally close, personal recommendations. Sponsorship disclosures (e.g., #ad, paid partnership) may violate these expectations, trigger psychological contract violation (PCV), and lead to distancing, influencer switching, and brand avoidance (Jhavar et al., 2025). Conversely, empathic attunement can enhance social presence, trust, and acceptance of recommendations Liu et

al., 2025 ; Biocca et al., 2003; Short et al., 1976). Thus, this study adopts a dual-pathway EVT model with both negative and positive expectation-violation effects.

4.3 Theoretical integration of Jhawar et al. and Liu et al. models

The study integrates two complementary EVT-based research streams in the study area of digital influence communication. The first, advanced by Jhawar et al., (2025), emphasizes the negative consequences of sponsorship disclosure, whereas the second, represented by Liu and colleagues (Liu et al., 2025), highlights the positive effects of empathic understanding and social presence on recommendation acceptance.

From the first stream, sponsorship disclosure is not merely an informational transparency cue but a communicative event that can violate implicit expectations of authenticity and non-selfish intent. Under EVT, this violation is framed as a breach of an informal psychological contract, resulting in a psychological contract violation (PCV) (Rousseau, 1995; Jhawar et al., 2025). PCV elicits negative emotions (e.g., disappointment, distrust) and can lead to avoidance behaviors, such as distancing from the influencer, switching influencers, and avoiding the associated brand (Jhawar et al., 2025; Martínez-López et al., 2021).

By contrast, the second stream proposes a “bright” pathway in which empathic understanding (mentalizing/theory-of-mind ability) enhances social presence (Biocca et al., 2003; Ratan & Taylor, 2020). This heightened presence functions as a positive violation of impersonal communication expectations, thereby increasing trust and acceptance of recommendations (Liu et al., 2025; Schouten et al., 2020).

Building on this, the present study unifies the two approaches by transferring Liu et al.’s logic to human influencers and introducing empathic attunement cues drawn from parasocial interaction and perceived authenticity research (Audrezet et al., 2020; Tukachinsky, 2011). These cues are treated as indicators of social/emotional intelligence and as antecedents of social presence. The resulting dual-path model posits that sponsorship disclosure activates a negative route via PCV, leading to avoidance (Jhawar et al., 2025), while empathic attunement activates a positive route via social presence, leading to stronger trust and acceptance of recommendations (Biocca et al., 2003; Liu et al., 2025).

4.4 Assumptions

According to Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT), sponsorship disclosures act as salient cues that activate persuasion knowledge and may violate expectations of non-commercial authenticity, weakening perceived authenticity and trust (Liu et al., 2025). In fashion influencer contexts defined by narrative intimacy and aesthetic identification, such disclosures can be seen as over-commercialization, leading to unfavorable evaluations and audience distancing (Jhawar et al., 2025). However, empathy moderates these effects: reframing disclosure as accountable through sympathetic, truthful, audience-focused cues mitigates perceived severity, reduces avoidance or disengagement, and enhances social presence by shifting negative assessments toward neutral or positive ones (Liu et al., 2025; Migkos et al., 2025). Overall, the pattern is nonlinear: disclosure directly heightens persuasion awareness and indirectly diminishes trust and authenticity, while empathy attenuates these outcomes, preserving relationship quality and communication effectiveness (Jhawar et al., 2025; Migkos et al., 2025).

Based on the theoretical assumptions of the EVT and the assumptions of the theoretical models of Liu et al. (2025) Jhawar et al. (2025), our research model relies on following main assumptions:

(1) Sponsorship tags reframe interpretation, activate persuasion knowledge, and can violate expectations of non-commercial authenticity (Jhawar et al., 2025; Burgoon, 1993).

(2) When disclosure clashes with an influencer's authenticity image, followers tend to reduce trust and distance themselves (Jhawar et al., 2025).

(3) Outcomes vary with relationship quality and influencer characteristics; social/relational signals can reframe a potential violation (Liu et al., 2025).

(4) Disclosure elevates psychological contract violation (PCV), which drives avoidance, switching, and brand avoidance (Jhawar et al., 2025).

(5) Perceived empathic attunement (accurate reading and responsive alignment with followers' feelings, needs, and goals) increases social presence; elevated social presence reframes the interaction as human-like and considerate, buffering punitive outcomes (lower avoidance/switching/brand avoidance) and supporting engagement (Liu et al., 2025).

(6) *Behavioral responses result from two concurrent routes: a cognitive breach route (disclosure leads to PCV leads to punitive outcomes) and a socio-emotive route (empathic cues leads to social presence leads to mitigated outcomes); net effects reflect the joint, opposing influence of these routes (Jhawar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025).*

(7) *Adding an honesty declaration reduces PCV-driven reactions, most reliably lowering influencer switching and brand avoidance; its mitigating effect on influencer avoidance is weaker/less consistent (Jhawar et al., 2025).*

(8) *Higher cynicism amplifies disclosure's direct negative impact on avoidance/switching/brand avoidance; it typically does not strengthen the PCV mediation (Jhawar et al., 2025).*

(9) *Empathic guidance helps in virtue contexts (partner-like support expected) but can backfire in vice contexts (reactance to guidance), where low-empathy, non-judgmental cues align better (Liu et al., 2025).*

4.5 Research model and research hypotheses development

Jhawar et al. (2025) demonstrate that disclosures can lead to psychological contract violations, as followers may feel betrayed by commercial motives, resulting in increased influencer switching and brand avoidance. Liu et al. (2025) corroborate these findings, reporting that although disclosure enhances brand recall, it concurrently diminishes influencer credibility, which may contribute to follower distancing.

However, this relationship is influenced by user expertise and the framing of transparency. Yahya et al. (2024) report that heavy Instagram users may exhibit greater avoidance when disclosure is absent, penalizing influencers for perceived concealment. Additionally, honest declarations that emphasize genuine opinions, regardless of compensation, can mitigate these negative effects (Jhawar et al., 2025). The strength of parasocial relationships also moderates avoidance outcomes (Waltenrath, 2024). Therefore, while disclosure tends to increase avoidance by signaling commercial intent, the magnitude of this effect depends on perceived authenticity, platform literacy, and the quality of the influencer-follower relationship. Therefore, we can state that:

H1a: Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences influencer avoidance by followers.

Psychological contract violation and credibility erosion are key processes by which fashion influencers' sponsorship disclosures significantly increase follower switching behavior (Jhawar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025). There is evidence that explicit sponsorship disclosures increase influencer switching, avoidance, and brand rejection by triggering perceived authenticity breaches (Jhawar et al., 2025). Although statements of honesty can lessen these negative outcomes, the effect is intensified among highly cynical followers who view disclosures as violations of implicit trust. This mechanism indicates that disclosures 1) improve transparency and brand recall, 2) activate persuasion knowledge, and 3) reduce influencer credibility Liu et al. (2025). Yahya et al. (2024) add that heavy Instagram users are more skilled at recognizing commercial intent, which increases influencer avoidance when sponsorship is recognized. Therefore, we can state that:

H1b: Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences influencer switching by followers.

The psychological contract between influencers and followers is frequently perceived as broken by sponsorship disclosure, though the impact varies based on the group and theory under consideration. Clear disclosure, for instance, increases the likelihood that Gen Z consumers will perceive brand control and steer clear of both the influencer and the brand (Pradhan et al., 2023). Expectancy Violation Theory views disclosure as a negative event that increases the sense of breach and leads to more avoidance of the influencer, switching, and brand avoidance. It is still unclear if these effects are unique to certain groups or more general, and whether transparency or strong authenticity can reduce the sense of violation (Jhawar et al., 2025; Pradhan et al., 2023).

Factors such as how disclosure is designed, the fit between the influencer and the brand, the strength of the follower relationship, and platform norms can all play a role (Liu et al., 2025). Although revealing image manipulation lowers attitudes and trust toward the influencer and the brand, it may not have the same impact as disclosing sponsorship, as it focuses on the authenticity of the content rather than its commercial intent (Pfeuffer et al., 2025). According to field research, engagement may initially be lower, but over time, credibility and future engagement may increase (Waltenrath, 2024). Depending on the circumstances, followers may steer clear of a fashion brand to reclaim their sense of

autonomy when disclosure undermines authenticity (Advertising Standards Authority, 2025; Cho et al., 2025). The evidence depends on context and timing, with unanswered questions about harm and effect on brands, and whether effects are caused by generational differences or broader trends (Advertising Standards Authority, 2025; Cho et al., 2025; Jhawar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025; Pfeufer et al., 2025; Waltenrath, 2024; Pradhan et al., 2023). Therefore, we can state that:

H1c: Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences brand avoidance by followers.

Meta-analytic and review work (Alim et al., 2026; Pan et al., 2025) indicates that affective and relational mechanisms reduce psychological distance and recast advice as supportive, while in fashion and social commerce, contingent, sympathetic feedback enhances communicator evaluations, recommendation acceptance, and emotional validation (Rheu et al., 2024). Community discussions increase participation even more and provide a direct route to the acceptance of recommendations (Cruz et al., 2024; Xiang et al., 2024). Additionally, a dyadic parasocial interaction study in beauty and fashion contexts links homophily and relevance to the development of “parasocial trust/friendship”, which is associated with increased acceptance of recommendations (Chen, 2025).

Sponsorship disclosures may result in psychological contract violations through mechanisms described by Expectancy Violation Theory if there are no explicit declarations of honesty. Several boundary conditions are suggested to mitigate this impact. The “transparency paradox” in the fashion industry exemplifies this phenomenon (ASA, 2025; Jhawar et al., 2025). Further, digital environments can attenuate empathic processing, as articulated by the “Virtual Disengagement Hypothesis”. It posits that empathic cues must be especially prominent to offset diminished nonverbal communication (Mossner & Walter, 2024; Tavares & Rein, 2024). Recommendations may still occur through expectancy-violation, emotional, and cognitive-effort pathways when empathic signals are clear, even though trust does not always lead to purchase behavior (Adaba et al., 2025; Nissen et al., 2025). Therefore, we can state that:

H2: Fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues positively influence followers' recommendation acceptance.

Sponsorship disclosures often fail to align with followers' expectations in parasocial relationships, making the influencer-follower connection seem more transactional. This change can lead followers to use defensive coping strategies, thereby increasing the risk of psychological contract violations (Jhawar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025; Chen & Li, 2024; Waltenrath, 2024). Multiple studies show that disclosure regularly leads to greater influencer avoidance, mainly due to psychological contract violation, though statements about honesty can help reduce this effect (Jhawar et al., 2025). Research on travel influencers also finds that expectancy violations drive this avoidance (Jhawar et al., 2025), and disclosures tend to lower both credibility and immediate ad engagement on platforms (Jhawar et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025; Waltenrath, 2024).

Disclosure can prompt followers to switch influencers if they feel the relationship's norms have been broken, as they seek more authentic sources. How strong these effects are depends on the closeness of the parasocial relationship and the audience's traits; clear commercialization continues to weaken these bonds (Jhawar et al., 2025; Uysal et al., 2026; Lim et al., 2025). Psychological contract violation can also affect the endorsed brand, as disclosure increases PCV, which in turn leads to brand avoidance (Hsu, 2025; Jhawar et al., 2025; Jhawar et al., 2024). Meta-analyses show that disclosure lowers credibility, which can cause defensive reactions toward brands (Liu et al., 2025). However, some research finds that clear disclosure can boost transparency and help long-term favorability, even if engagement drops in the short term. These results depend on how disclosure is presented, such as using impartial or honest statements, and whether the influencer is human or virtual, in line with Expectancy Violation Theory (Cao & Belo, 2024; Waltenrath, 2024; Saternus et al., 2024; Jhawar et al., 2025; Lim et al., 2025). Reviews suggest moving away from short-term studies and focusing more on cross-cultural and platform-specific research, including examining empathy to reduce psychological contract violation in fashion (Uysal et al., 2026).

Research shows that sponsorship disclosure increases perceptions of psychological contract violation, which in turn leads to greater influencer avoidance, switching, and brand avoidance. Jhawar et al. (2025) find that these effects depend on audience traits, the type of influencer, and the framing of the disclosure (Lim et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025). Therefore, we can state that:

H3a: *Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer avoidance, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases influencer avoidance.*

H3b: *Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases influencer switching.*

H3c: *Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases brand avoidance.*

In addition to the cognitive mechanisms outlined by Expectancy Violations Theory, empathic attunement cues such as care and responsiveness operate through perceived social presence, thereby increasing openness to recommendations (Liu et al., 2025; Liao et al., 2024). Recent literature reviews and empirical studies in influencer and social commerce contexts indicate that human warmth, authenticity, and interaction strengthen persuasion and purchase-oriented outcomes by enhancing social presence and related socio-emotional states (Ahmad et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2025; Tao et al., 2024).

Within live-stream environments, social presence serves as the intervening affective state that connects empathic and interactive signals to conative responses. It works in tandem with parasocial ties to promote impulsive acceptance (Huang & Mohamad, 2025), mediates the relationship between immersive, emotionally charged interactions and purchasing intentions and acceptance (Huang, 2024), and works in tandem with trust as a proximal socio-emotional driver of purchase intention (Li et al., 2025). Consistent with Expectancy Violations Theory, caring and empathetic signals function as positive relational indicators that reduce psychological distance and increase trust, thereby enhancing the perceived persuasiveness and credibility of recommendations (Liu et al., 2025). Socio-emotional mechanisms are the main ways influencer communication boosts acceptance, according to recent meta-analytic and domain-specific evidence in influencer marketing (George et al., 2025; Pan et al., 2025).

Consequently, empathic attunement cues increase social presence, thereby enhancing recommendation acceptance. The indirect effect has been repeatedly

documented across live social commerce and influencer contexts (Huang & Mohamad, 2025; Li et al., 2025; Tao et al., 2024). Therefore, we can state that:

H4: *Social presence mediates the relationship between fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and recommendation acceptance, such that empathic attunement cues increase social presence, which in turn increases recommendation acceptance.*

According to Expectation Violation Theory and Psychological Contract Theory, the intensity of followers' negative reaction to a violation depends not only on the fact of the violation itself, but also on the way in which it is communicatively framed. The honesty declaration, i.e. the influencer's explicit statements that he or she expresses a genuine and unbiased opinion despite the existence of sponsorship, functions as a sign of responsibility, transparency and ethical commitment towards the public.

Such statements can reframe sponsorship disclosure from a simple disclosure of commercial motivation to an act of accountability and respect for the relationship with followers. In this way, the sense of deception is reduced and the perceived violation of the psychological contract is limited, as followers interpret the communication as more consistent with expectations of authenticity and care (Jhavar et al., 2025; Stubb & Colliander, 2019). The statement of sincerity therefore functions as a trust-restoration mechanism, which attenuates the negative cognitive and emotional evaluation caused by the activation of persuasion knowledge.

At the mediation level, the presence of a statement of sincerity is expected not only to directly reduce psychological contract violation, but also to weaken the indirect negative effects of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching and brand avoidance behaviors through the mechanism of violation. When followers are convinced that the influencer remains authentic and honest, even in the context of commercial collaboration, the need for "punitive" reactions and restoration of their autonomy is reduced.

Based on the above, the statement of honesty is expected to function as a moderating factor that weakens both the direct effect of disclosure on psychological contract violation and the indirect negative behavioral consequences. Therefore, we can state that:

H5a: *Honesty declaration moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation, such that the positive effect of*

sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.

H5b: *Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.*

H5c: *Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.*

The effectiveness of fashion influencers' empathetic response and the role of social presence are not independent of the type of product and the context of consumption. The literature distinguishes between “virtue products”, such as sustainable and ethical fashion, which are associated with long-term benefits, self-control and social values, and “vice products”, such as fast fashion and impulse purchases, which are associated with immediate gratification, emotional arousal, and lower cognitive control (Ketron et al., 2021; Verma et al., 2016). Within the context of virtue, consumers tend to seek guidance, moral affirmation and supportive relationships, more easily accepting the influencer as a “partner” in making rational and value-consistent decisions. In this context, empathetic signals enhance social presence and the feeling that the influencer understands the concerns, values, and goals of the audience, which is expected to further strengthen communication effectiveness and receptivity to suggestions (Liu et al., 2025). Thus, the positive effect of empathic attunement on social presence is expected to be stronger when the product is framed as a virtue product.

In contrast, in the context of pleasure, consumers primarily seek autonomy, freedom of choice, and the absence of moral or guiding pressure. Strong empathic guidance in such cases can be perceived as intrusive or normative, activating psychological reactance mechanisms. According to the reaction theory, when individuals feel that their freedom is being restricted or that someone is attempting to direct their hedonic choices, they tend to resist and reduce compliance, even if the proposal is well-intentioned. In this context, more neutral, non-judgmental, and low-empathic intensity messages may align better with autonomy expectations and lead to higher acceptance of recommendations (Liu et al., 2025).

Based on the above, the product context is expected to moderate both the relationship between empathic attunement and social presence and the indirect effect of empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence. Further, especially for pleasure products, high levels of empathic guidance may be less effective compared to lower levels of empathic intervention. Therefore, we can state that:

H6a: *Follower cynicism moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation, such that the positive effect of sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

H6b: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

H6c: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

H6d: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

Product type and consumption context determine the impact of social presence and the efficacy of fashion influencers' sympathetic reactions. Product framing is a crucial moderating factor, as meta-analyses show that influencer impact varies across category characteristics and platform dynamics (Pan et al., 2025; Han & Balabanis, 2024). The literature currently available distinguishes between virtue and vice products, each of which elicits different consumer motivations and evaluation criteria (Faludi, 2025; Ketron et al., 2021).

Empirical studies in sustainable fashion indicate that value-aligned brands and user-generated content enhance Gen Z engagement and purchase intentions (El-Shihy & Awaad, 2025). Additionally, social cues that increase social presence and trust further amplify receptivity to influencer recommendations (Wan et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2025;

Huang & Mohamad, 2025; Liu & Zhang, 2024; Xiang Xia et al., 2024). Therefore, we expect the relationship between social presence and empathic attunement to be stronger under virtue framing, consistent with findings that the influence of antecedents varies by product type (Pan et al. 2025).

In hedonic or vice product contexts, consumers prioritize autonomy and freedom of choice; thus, strong empathic guidance can feel intrusive and trigger psychological reactance. Meta-analytic evidence shows that controlling freedom-threatening language heightens anger and counterarguing, thereby undermining persuasion (Li & Shi, 2025). We find consistency with this, since research on digital hedonic consumption highlights heightened sensitivity to controlling cues (James et al., 2025), suggesting that neutral, non-judgmental, lower-intensity empathy better aligns with autonomy expectations (Liu et al., 2025). Supporting evidence from sustainability research indicates that assertive framing elevates perceived threats to freedom and reactance, whereas non-assertive framing mitigates these effects (e.g., Freudenreich & Penz, 2025).

In summary, product context can influence both how empathic attunement affects social presence and how it indirectly affects recommendation acceptance through social presence. Research, including meta-analyses and live-commerce studies, shows that influencer cues can lead to acceptance or purchase, and product type plays a key role in this process (Pan et al., 2025; Huang & Mohamad, 2025; Liu & Zhang, 2024). For products focused on pleasure, using less intense empathic guidance is usually more effective than high-intensity approaches (Li & Shi, 2025). However, when hedonic goals are important, an influencer's expertise and argument style can reduce these effects (Mettenheim & Wiedmann, 2025). Therefore, we can state that:

H7a: Product frame moderates the relationship between fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and social presence, such that the positive effect of empathic attunement cues on social presence is stronger for virtue fashion products (sustainable/ethical fashion) than for vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases).

H7b: Product frame moderates the indirect effect of fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues on recommendation acceptance through social presence, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for virtue fashion products (sustainable/ethical fashion) than for vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases).

H7c: For vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases), low empathic attunement cues generate higher recommendation acceptance than high empathic attunement cues, due to followers' preference for autonomy and psychological reactance to guidance in hedonic consumption contexts.

The operational definitions of the key constructs are presented in Table 4-1.

Constructs	Operational Definitions	References
<i>Sponsorship Disclosure (SD)</i>	Presence of explicit disclosure of commercial intent/material connection in influencer posts via tags or statements; operationalized as a manipulation with ad recognition checks.	Jhawar et al. (2025); De Veirman & Hudders (2020); Boerman et al. (2017)
<i>Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)</i>	Followers' felt breach/violation of the (trans-) parasocial psychological contract with the influencer.	Jhawar et al. (2025) adapted from: Robinson & Morrison (2000)
<i>Influencer Avoidance (IA)</i>	Shunning/unfollowing the influencer's social content for the social media context.	Jhawar et al. (2025); Youn & Kim (2019) adapted from: Grégoire et al. (2009)
<i>Influencer Switching (IS)</i>	Disengagement from a current influencer and re-engagement with another who offers uninterrupted, relevant (non-sponsored) content.	Jhawar et al. (2025); Vrontis et al. (2021); Wong et al., (2019)
<i>Brand Avoidance (BA)</i>	Deliberate rejection/shunning of a brand associated with sponsored influencer content.	Jhawar et al. (2025); Pradhan et al. (2023); Grégoire et al. (2009)
<i>Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA)</i>	Based on the BLRI concept for empathic understanding is about how much a respondent feels an influencer understands and responds to	Liu et al. (2025); Jiang et al. (2022); Barrett-Lennard (2015)

	him/her.	
<i>Social Presence (SP)</i>	Degree to which the agent/influencer is experienced as a social entity that captures perceived socialness during interaction.	Liu et al. (2025); Hassanein & Head (2007); Gefen & Straub (2004)
<i>Recommendation Acceptance / Engagement (RAE)</i>	Acceptance of recommendations (willingness to consider/buy the recommended item or order the suggested bundle).	Liu et al. (2025); Yang et al. (2024); Song et al. (2023); Wang et al. (2023); Grewal et al. (2022)
<i>Honesty Declaration (HD)</i>	Explicit statements/tags signaling honesty/impartiality, often paired with SD; operationalized as present vs. absent to test mitigation of adverse outcomes.	Jhawar et al. (2025); Lee et al. (2021); Stubb & Colliander (2019)
<i>Follower Cynicism (FC)</i>	A generalized distrust/doubt toward influencers/companies used as a moderator (high vs. low).	Jhawar et al. (2025); Helm et al. (2015)
<i>Product Frame (PF)</i>	Framing of product benefits and message type: <i>virtue</i> vs. <i>vice</i> operationalized via ad message frames for the same product, or via product bundles; used as a moderator (Virtue vs. Vice)	Liu et al. (2025); Ketron et al. (2021); Verma et al. (2016)

Table 4-1: The operational definitions of the key-constructs

The research hypotheses derived from the literature review that inform the research model are presented in Figure 4.1.

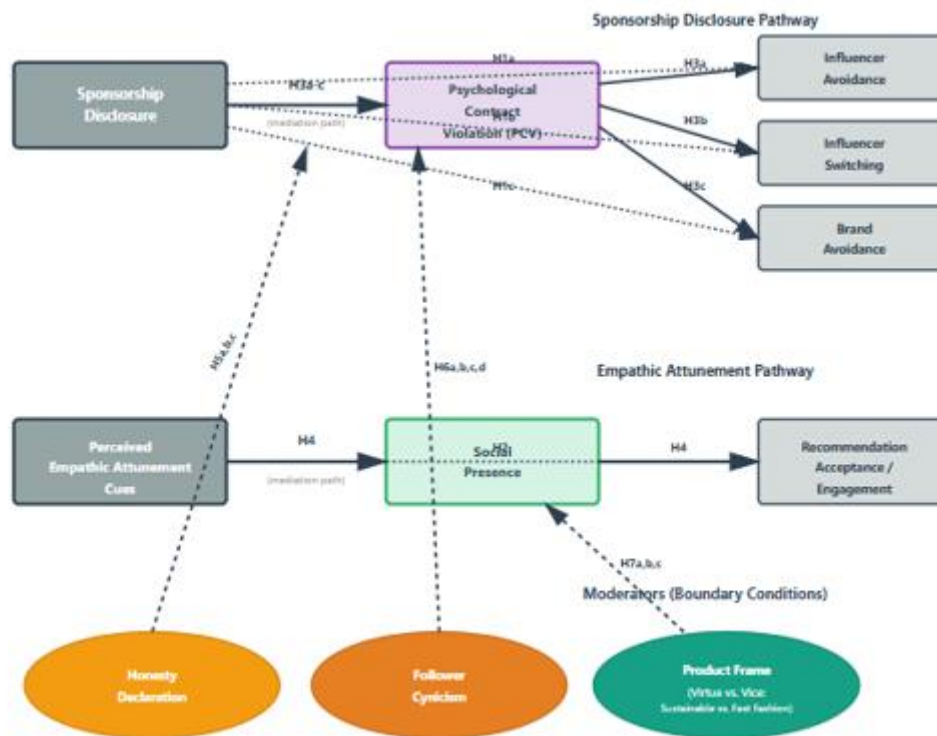


Figure 4.1: Research model.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”

4.6 Concluding remarks

This chapter introduces a two-part model based on Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT) to explain transparency issues in fashion influencer marketing. It treats sponsorship disclosures as negative expectancy violations, which can increase feelings of broken trust and lead people to avoid influencers, switch to others, or avoid brands. In contrast, empathic attunement cues are seen as positive violations that help influencers feel more present and make their recommendations more acceptable. The framework also considers factors that might change these effects. This summary sets up the study’s main ideas and guides the research process for testing in the Greek fashion industry.

Chapter 5: Research Methodology

The chapter presents the methodology followed for the empirical investigation of the paradoxes of transparency in fashion influencer marketing in Greece, within the framework of Expectation Violation Theory and the role of disclosure signals and empathy. The chapter is structured in five sections. Section 5.1 analyzes the research motivation, the research approach and the methodological strategy adopted. Section 5.2 presents the sample, the sampling strategy, the procedure and the data collection. Section 5.3 describes the research variables, the tools and their measurement levels. Section 5.4 analyzes the structure of the research tool, while section 5.5 presents the statistical techniques used to analyze the primary data and test the hypotheses of the research model.

5.1 Research motive, research approach, and research method

This study examines how transparency in fashion influencers' advertising, via sponsored-content disclosure signals, shapes consumers' cognitive and emotional responses, focusing on expectation violation, perceived empathy, trust, and purchase intention. The topic reflects rising institutional and societal demands for transparency on social media, along with mixed evidence suggesting that disclosures can either enhance credibility or trigger distrust and cognitive resistance, thereby reducing persuasive effectiveness (Audrezet et al., 2020; Boerman et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2017).

The fashion context is particularly salient because influence relies on identification, emotional closeness, and authenticity. Followers often perceive influencers as "familiar figures," expecting honest, non-instrumental communication; disclosure cues can disrupt these expectations, reframing the relationship as commercial and affecting trust and product acceptance (Schouten et al., 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019).

The study draws on Expectation Violation Theory, which posits that deviations from communication norms trigger cognitive and emotional evaluations influencing attitudes, source credibility, and behavior (Burgoon, 2015). In this context, disclosure serves as a key signal, interpreted either as ethical transparency or as commercialization, depending on expectations and emotional bonds.

It also incorporates the Persuasion Knowledge Model, which holds that recognizing persuasive intent activates skepticism and critical processing, shaping responses to both the message and the sender (Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; Friestad &

Wright, 1994). Perceived influencer empathy is tested as a moderator that may buffer negative effects by strengthening perceived benevolence and emotional closeness.

Using a deductive approach, the study formulates and tests hypotheses on the relationships among transparency, expectation violation, empathy, trust, attitude, and purchase intention (Chapter 4), enabling systematic validation of a theory-driven model (Hair et al., 2022; De Veirman et al., 2019).

Methodologically, it employs a quantitative, cross-sectional design and collects primary data from Greek social media users who follow fashion influencers. This allows statistical analysis of latent constructs and mediating/moderating mechanisms central to understanding how transparency and empathy shape trust and purchase intention (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

Data are analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling to assess measurement validity and structural relationships simultaneously. Established scales ensure conceptual consistency and comparability, while data collection complies with ethical standards of voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality under the European data protection framework.

5.2 Sample, Sampling Strategy, Process and Data Collection

A structured, self-administered questionnaire (SAQ) was used to collect primary data, as it is a widely applied and reliable instrument in empirical marketing and consumer-behavior research. Questionnaires comprise systematically organized items with standardized wording and clear instructions, enabling comparable, statistically analyzable responses across many participants (Kuphanga, 2024). A structured format was therefore suitable for measuring latent constructs (expectation violation, empathy, trust, and purchase intention) requiring standardized scales and strong internal reliability.

The questionnaire was administered online via Google Forms, facilitating broad access, automatic response capture, and reduced data-entry error. This mode was appropriate because the target population consists of active social media users who operate in the same digital environments where influencer marketing occurs.

Before participation, respondents received detailed information about the study's purpose, question content, estimated completion time, and their rights. Consent was obtained electronically, participation was voluntary, and withdrawal was permitted at any time without consequences. No personally identifiable data were collected, and responses

were kept anonymous and confidential in line with GDPR and core research-ethics principles.

A non-probability convenience sampling strategy was employed to reach individuals meeting the operational criteria: social media users regularly exposed to fashion-influencer content. Although this approach limits strict population generalization, it is suitable for digital marketing research focused on testing theoretical relationships rather than estimating population parameters.

Participants were recruited mainly from the Hellenic Open University student population and from professional/social networks where the survey link was shared. Eligibility required being over 18 and reporting that they follow at least one fashion influencer on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, with exposure to posts with or without sponsored-content labeling.

Sample size followed Roscoe's (1975) guideline that multivariate analyses should include at least ten cases per model variable to ensure adequate power and stable estimates. The final sample was considered sufficient for confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling used in subsequent analyses.

The description of the sample is summarized as follows:

-Element: Adult Greek consumers (≥ 18 years old) who actively use social media and follow fashion influencers.

-Sampling unit: Men and women of different age groups with experience of exposure to sponsored and non-sponsored fashion influencer posts.

-Sampling area: Athens, Piraeus, Thessaloniki, Patras, Larisa, Volos, Heraklion, Chania, and Pyrgos

-Period of Data collection: February 9th– April 1st, 2026.

The above procedure ensures that the sample is appropriate and relevant to the research objectives, allowing for the empirical investigation of the effects of transparency, breach of expectations and empathy in shaping trust and purchase intention in the context of fashion influencer marketing in Greece.

5.3 Measures, measurement of variables and variables' level of measurement

Guided by Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT) and social presence research, our model examines how disclosure and message framing around influencer content shape audience cognitions and behaviors through breach-related appraisals and perceived socialness, while accounting for dispositional cynicism and message-level honesty cues. We adopt/adapt validated scales from consumer behavior and services/AI–human interaction studies and confirm reliability/validity during analysis. Unless noted otherwise, items use a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree; 7 = strongly disagree); Likert responses are ordinal but, following common practice in the cited studies, composite indices are analyzed as continuous.

(1) *Sponsorship Disclosure (SD)* denotes whether a post explicitly discloses a material connection using cues such as “paid partnership”, “#ad”, “#sponsored”, and a brand @tag. We manipulate it as “present vs. absent” in the post stimulus following Jhawar et al. (2025). The level of measurement is nominal.

(2) *Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)* denotes the follower’s subjective sense that the influencer breached expectations of authenticity, honesty, and unbiased opinion, accompanied by negative effects with a mediating role, using four (4) questionnaire items adapted from Robinson and Morrison (2000) as implemented by Jhawar et al. (2025); for example: “I feel a great deal of anger toward the influencer” and “I feel that the influencer has violated the contract between us”. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(3) *Influencer Avoidance (IA)* denotes the intention to shun/unfollow the influencer’s content (posts, photos, videos), using four (4) questionnaire items adapted from Grégoire et al. (2009) as in Jhawar et al. (2025); e.g., “I would keep as much distance as possible between influencer and myself”. “I would avoid following the Instagram page of influencer”. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(4) *Influencer Switching (IS)*. Disengaging from the focal influencer and engaging with another influencer offering less commercialized, more relevant content, using four (4) items adapted from Wong et al. (2019) and reworded to the influencer context as in Jhawar et al. (2025), e.g., “I do not expect to keep following influencer for long”, “I consider following other influencers with similar content”. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(5) *Brand Avoidance (BA)* denotes deliberate rejection/shunning of the sponsoring brand associated with the post. Role: outcome. Scale. 3 items from Grégoire et al. (2009) adapted to the brand context, as used in Jhawar et al. (2025), e.g., “I would not want to buy the brand”, “I would rather buy any other brand”. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(6) *Fashion Influencers’ Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA)* denotes the extent to which followers perceive a fashion influencer understands their preferences/emotions and responds from the follower’s perspective (i.e., attuned empathy), a new proposed concept, included as an alternative mechanism in Study 4, with item wordings placed in Supplementary Appendix 2 (Liu et al., 2025). Considering also Barrett-Lennard’s concept (2015) the BLRI concept for empathic understanding it includes items such as “The influencer understands how I feel”, “The influencer’s content reflects my needs”, “Can view things from my perspective” (see things as I see them) adapted from BLRI, and “The influencer’s content reflects what matters to me” adapted from Perceived Message Relevance items (relevance to my situation/personalization), supported by PETS (Jensen et al., 2023). This concept adapts the perceived empathy mechanism highlighted by Liu et al. (2025) to the fashion-influencer context. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(7) *Social Presence (SP)* denotes the degree to which the source is experienced as a socially present, human-like entity rather than a mere information feed, mediating especially in recommendation acceptance models; robustness/control in influencer models. The concept is measured with items adapted from Gefen & Straub (2004) and Hassanein and Head (2007, 2005), reworded to the influencer context, including three questionnaire items (e.g., ‘I feel a sense of human contact with the influencer’; ‘The influencer felt like a real, socially present person’; ‘The interaction with the influencer felt personal’). The level of measurement is ordinal.

(8) *Recommendation Acceptance / Engagement (RAE)* denotes the willingness to consider, accept, and act on the source’s recommendation and attitudinal receptivity to the recommended option. Based on Liu et al. (2025) definition, we adopted three items and the advice-taking literature Bonaccio & Dalal, (2006), reworded to the influencer context (‘I would consider the influencer’s recommendation’). The willingness to act / accept a recommendation “I am willing to act on the influencer’s recommendation” was adapted from willingness-to-accept recommendation constructs in HRI/HCI (Kharub et al., 2024) and framed to the influencer context. The ‘engage positively with the recommended product’ item was adapted from recommended-product acceptance and engagement

intentions used in recommender-systems research (Yin et al., 2025) and reworded for influencer-recommended products. The level of measurement is ordinal.

(9) *Follower Cynicism (FC)* denotes a generalized, dispositional distrust/skepticism toward influencers/companies (attributing self-serving motives, manipulation), moderating disclosure effects and downstream outcomes. Based on eight questionnaire items adapted from Helm et al. (2015) as used in Jhawar et al. (2025), (e.g., “Most influencers don’t mind breaking the law”, “Influencers see consumers as puppets to manipulate”). The response format is a 7-point Likert and then items averaged; for some analyses, a median split yields low vs. high cynicism groups. optionally dichotomized (nominal) for group comparisons. The levels of measurement are ordinal and nominal.

(10) *Honesty Declaration (HD)* denotes an explicit honesty/impartiality statement in the caption (e.g., “this post is sponsored, but all opinions are my own”) often accompanied by #honestopinions moderating reactions to SD. Regarding the operationalization, we manipulate (present vs. absent) in the stimulus; manipulation check asked whether participants perceived a post as an “honest opinion” following Jhawar et al. (2025). The level of measurement is nominal.

(11) *Product Frame (PF)* denotes the virtue vs. vice framing of the recommended product/message (e.g., long-term benefits vs. short-term pleasure), moderating the relationship between social presence/empathic guidance and acceptance (expectancy-consistent partner vs. servant roles). Regarding the operationalization, we manipulate either by presenting virtue-focused vs. indulgence-focused ad messages of the product following the manipulations in Liu et al. (2025). The level of measurement is nominal.

Constructs	Variables	Questionnaire Items	Scale	Level of measurement	References
<i>Sponsorship Disclosure</i>	SD	SD1: Based on the post you just saw, did it include a sponsorship disclosure (for example: 'Paid partnership', '#ad', '#sponsored' or a brand tag indicating a partnership)?	1= present 2= absent	Nominal	Jhawar et al. (2025)
<i>Psychological Contract Violation</i>	PCV	PCV1: I feel a great deal of anger towards the influencer. PCV2: I feel that the influencer has violated the contract between us. PCV3: I feel let down by the influencer. PCV4: The influencer has failed to meet the obligations I expected from them.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree	Ordinal	Jhawar et al. (2025); Robinson & Morrison (2000)
<i>Influencer Avoidance</i>	IA	IA1: I would keep as much distance as possible between the influencer and myself. IA2: I would avoid following the Instagram page of the influencer. IA3: I would avoid the influencer's posts in the future. IA4: I would limit my exposure to the influencer's content.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree	Ordinal	Jhawar et al. (2025); Grégoire et al. (2009)

			7 = Strongly disagree		
<i>Influencer Switching</i>	IS	IS1:I do not expect to keep following the influencer for long. IS2: I consider following other influencers with similar content. IS3: I plan to shift my attention to alternative influencers. IS4: I plan to replace that influencer with someone else.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree	Ordinal	Jhawar et al. (2025); Wong et al. (2019)
<i>Brand Avoidance</i>	BA	BA1: I would not want to buy the brand featured in the post. BA2: I would cut off my relationship with the brand featured in the post. BA3:I would rather buy any other brand than the brand featured in the post.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree	Ordinal	Jhawar et al. (2025); Grégoire et al. (2009)
<i>Fashion Influencers’ Perceived Empathic</i>	FIPEA	FIPEA1: The influencer understands how I feel. FIPEA2: The influencer understands my needs and preferences. FIPEA3: The influencer responds from my perspective.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree	Ordinal	Liu et al. (2025); Jensen et al. (2023); Barrett-Lennard (2015)

<i>Attunement</i>		FIPEA4: The influencer's content reflects what matters to me.	4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree		
<i>Social Presence</i>	SP	SP1: I feel a sense of human contact with the influencer. SP2: The influencer felt like a real, socially present person. SP3: The interaction with the influencer felt personal.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree	Ordinal	Liu et al. (2025); Hassanein & Head (2007); Hassanein & Head (2005); Gefen & Straub (2004)
<i>Recommendation Acceptance / Engagement</i>	RAE	RAE1: I would consider the influencer's recommendation. RAE2: I am willing to act on the influencer's recommendation. RAE3: I would engage positively with the recommended product.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree	Ordinal	Yin et al., 2025; Kharub et al.(2024); Bonaccio & Dalal (2006)

<i>Follower Cynicism</i>	FC	FC1: Most influencers do not mind manipulating consumers. FC2: Influencers mainly act in their own self-interest. FC3: Influencers see followers as means to an end. FC4: Influencers exaggerate claims to persuade audiences. FC5: Influencers are generally dishonest about commercial motives. FC6: Influencers would break rules if it benefited them. FC7: Influencers cannot be trusted. FC8: Influencers exploit followers for profit.	1 =Strongly agree 2 =Agree 3 =Somewhat agree 4 = Neither agree nor disagree 5 = Somewhat disagree 6 = Disagree 7 = Strongly disagree 1=high 2=low	Ordinal and nominal	Jhawar et al. (2025); Helm et al. (2015)
<i>Honesty Declaration</i>	HD	HD1: The post explicitly stated that, despite being sponsored, the opinions expressed were honest and unbiased.	1= absent 2= present	Nominal	Jhawar et al. (2025)
<i>Product Frame</i>	PF	PF1: The product was presented by emphasizing long-term benefits (virtue). PF2: The product was presented by emphasizing immediate pleasure or indulgence (vice).	1=virtue 2= vice	Nominal	Liu et al. (2025)

Table 5-1: Operationalization of variables, measurement and questionnaire items of variables.

5.4 Structure of the research instrument

The research instrument used in this study consists of a structured self-administered questionnaire designed to measure users' perceptual, emotional, and behavioral reactions to fashion influencer content. The questionnaire was developed in accordance with the study's research objectives.

Our survey used a structured questionnaire with 24 questions organized into 12 sections. We delivered the questionnaire in Greek. The questionnaires in both languages are included in Appendix A.

Section A consists of four questions (no. 1-4) relating to fashion influencer engagement.

Section B consists of five questions (no. 5-9) relating to behavior as a follower.

Section C consists of four questions (no.10-13) relating to demographic profile.

Section D consists of three questions (no.14-16) relating to sponsored post observation.

Section E consists of one question (no.17) relating to psychological contract violation and is based on Jhawar et al. (2025) and Robinson and Morrison (2000).

Section F consists of one question (no.18) relating to influencer avoidance and is based on Jhawar et al. (2025) and Grégoire et al. (2009).

Section G consists of one question (no.19) relating to influencer switching and is based on Jhawar et al. (2025) and Wong et al. (2019).

Section H consists of one question (no.20) relating to brand avoidance and is based on Jhawar et al. (2025) and Grégoire et al. (2009).

Section I consists of one question (no.21) relating to perceived empathic attunement and is based on Liu et al. (2025), Jensen et al. (2023) and Barrett-Lennard (2015).

Section J consists of one question (no.22) relating to social presence and is based on Liu et al. (2025), Hassanein and Head (2007), Hassanein and Head (2005) and Gefen and Straub (2004).

Section K consists of one question (no.23) relating to recommendation acceptance and is based on Yin et al. (2025), Kharub et al. (2024) and Bonaccio & Dalal (2006).

Section L consists of one question (no.24) relating to follower cynicism and is based on Jhawar et al. (2025) and Helm et al. (2015).

5.5 Tools and Statistical Analyses

We use SPSS 29 for Windows (IBM Inc.) in this study. Chicago, Illinois, USA) for a range of statistical analyses, such as regression analysis, reliability analysis, mediation analysis, moderation analysis, Spearman's rank correlation and Mann-Whitney-U tests. We also make use of JASP (version 0.18). 3) for the analysis of confirmatory factors (CFA).

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Initially, descriptive statistical analysis will be applied to present the demographic characteristics of the sample and to summarize the participants' responses to the study variables. Specifically, measures of central tendency and dispersion will be calculated for each variable, to capture the general trend of the users' perceptions and behavioral intentions.

Subsequently, inferential statistical methods will be applied, with the aim of investigating the relationships between the variables and testing the formulated research hypotheses.

Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient

Given that the responses to the Likert-type scales are of an ordered nature, the non-parametric Spearman's rank correlation coefficient will be used to investigate the strength and direction of the correlations between the study variables. This specific method is considered appropriate for investigating monotonic relationships between the constructs of the research model.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Before any hypothesis testing, we use CFA to validate the reflective measurement model. The multi-item Likert scales will be reliably captured by the CFA in JASP (v.0.18.3), which will be used to verify that the intended latent constructs are accurately captured in our research model. This step guarantees that observed scores provide a sound basis for subsequent mediation and moderation, and that item–construct relationships conform to the theorized structure of our EVT-based model.

JASP's standard goodness-of-fit indices will be used to assess global model adequacy, while reliability analysis will be used to examine internal consistency. Convergent and discriminant validity will be evaluated based on the pattern and magnitude of standardized factor loadings, along with related validity checks, to guarantee that indicators appropriately reflect their constructs and preserve their uniqueness. These CFA outputs show the psychometric soundness of the measurement model before proceeding to structural tests.

Sponsorship disclosure, honesty declaration, and product frame are categorical design variables used as cues or moderators and are not included in the CFA. Follower cynicism is measured as a multi-item scale and will be included in the CFA to establish reliability and validity; for moderation or subgroup comparisons it may be used either as a continuous centered score or via a median split. The finalized, well-fitting measurement model is then carried forward to Chapter 6, where we report loadings, reliability, and validity and proceed with correlation, mediation, and moderation.

Validity and Reliability analysis

The reliability of the multivariate scales will be assessed through the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, to assess the internal consistency of the individual constructs. At the same time, the convergent and discriminant validity of the variables will be examined based on the factor loadings and the relevant reliability indices, in order to ensure the conceptual validity of the measurements.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis in the research model enables hypothesis testing and prediction by examining the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Berenson et al., 2020). According to the hypotheses, this study uses multiple regression analysis to test the factors influencing influencer avoidance, influencer switching, and brand avoidance in the sponsorship disclosure pathway, and recommendation acceptance and follower engagement in the empathic attunement pathway. In the sponsorship disclosure pathway, Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness and Psychological Contract Violation are specified as predictor variables, while Influencer Avoidance, Influencer Switching, and Brand Avoidance are specified as outcome variables. Separate multiple regression models are estimated for each outcome variable in order to determine the unique contribution of each

predictor to the explained variance. The models are interpreted using standardized regression coefficients (β), statistical significance, and overall explanatory power (R^2). Using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor diagnostics, the analysis further investigates the linear regression assumptions, such as normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, independence of errors, and the absence of problematic multicollinearity, to ensure robust estimates. Perceived Empathic Attunement and Social Presence are designated as predictors in the empathic attunement pathway, while Recommendation Acceptance and Follower Engagement are designated as outcomes. The proposed positive relationships are tested using the same regression technique.

Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis examines whether the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable is transmitted through an intervening variable (MacKinnon et al., 2012). In this study, the mediating mechanism between Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness and the behavioral outcomes of Influencer Avoidance, Influencer Switching, and Brand Avoidance is examined: psychological contract violation. Three main paths are used to estimate the indirect effect and examine the mediation process. First, Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness is regressed on Psychological Contract Violation to estimate Path a. Second, each behavioral outcome is regressed on Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness to estimate the total effect (Path c). Third, Path b and the direct effect (Path c') are estimated by simultaneously regressing each behavioral outcome on Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness and Psychological Contract Violation. When the direct effect diminishes after the mediator is included and the indirect effect ($a \times b$) is statistically significant, there is evidence of mediation. The statistical significance of the indirect effect is assessed via bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples and bias-corrected confidence intervals (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), given that the sampling distribution of indirect effects is frequently non-normal. Mediation is considered significant when the confidence interval for the indirect effect does not include zero.

Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis tests whether a moderator changes the strength or direction of the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable (Dawson, 2014). Here,

follower cynicism is modeled as a moderator in the sponsorship-disclosure pathway, assessing (a) whether it moderates the effect of Sponsorship Disclosure Awareness on Psychological Contract Violation, and (b) whether it moderates the effect of Psychological Contract Violation on Influencer Avoidance, Influencer Switching, and Brand Avoidance.

Because Sponsorship Disclosure was originally coded (1 = present, 2 = absent), regression coefficients could appear sign-reversed and hinder interpretation. The variable was therefore recoded as a binary dummy SDd (0 = absent, 1 = present) so that a positive coefficient indicates higher levels of the dependent variable when disclosure is present. Moderation was tested using multiple regression including the independent variable, the mean-centered moderator, and their interaction term. Dichotomous indicators (e.g., Sponsorship Disclosure, Honesty Declaration, Product Frame) were not mean-centered, since centering is unnecessary for binary variables and does not change the interpretation of interaction effects.

To interpret significant interactions, a simple slopes approach was used to estimate conditional effects at low and high cynicism. Conditional values were evaluated at mean-1SD, mean, and mean+1SD on the raw cynicism scale; for centered cynicism (FC^c), these correspond to -1SD, 0, and +1SD. A statistically significant interaction coefficient indicates moderation (Dawson, 2014). The moderation models are operationalized as follows:

- *H5a: $X = \text{Sponsorship Disclosure (SDd)}$, $W = \text{Honesty Declaration (HDd)}$, $Y = \text{Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)}$, interaction term = $\text{SDd} \times \text{HDd}$*
- *H6a: $X = \text{Sponsorship Disclosure (SDd)}$, $W = \text{Follower Cynicism (FC}^c\text{)}$, $Y = \text{Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)}$, interaction term = $\text{SDd} \times \text{FC}^c$*
- *H6b: $X = \text{Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)}$, $W = \text{Follower Cynicism (FC}^c\text{)}$, $Y = \text{Influencer Avoidance (IA)}$, interaction term = $\text{PCV} \times \text{FC}^c$*
- *H6c: $X = \text{Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)}$, $W = \text{Follower Cynicism (FC}^c\text{)}$, $Y = \text{Influencer Switching (IS)}$, interaction term = $\text{PCV} \times \text{FC}^c$*
- *H6d: $X = \text{Psychological Contract Violation (PCV)}$, $W = \text{Follower Cynicism (FC}^c\text{)}$, $Y = \text{Brand Avoidance (BA)}$, interaction term = $\text{PCV} \times \text{FC}^c$*
- *H7a: $X = \text{Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA}^c\text{)}$, $W = \text{Product Frame (PFd)}$, $Y = \text{Social Presence (SP)}$, interaction term = $\text{FIPEA}^c \times \text{PFd}$*

Continuous predictors and moderators were mean-centered prior to interaction estimation, whereas binary dummy variables were not centered.

Chapter 6: Research results

Chapter 6 outlines the research findings derived from the questionnaire responses. The chapter is organized as follows: Section 6.1 presents the sample characteristics and descriptive statistics; Section 6.2 analyzes the interpretation of the questionnaire responses; Section 6.3 focuses on the confirmatory factor analysis; Section 6.4 details the hypothesis testing process. Section 6.5 summarizes the hypothesis testing outcomes; Section 6.6 presents the empirically validated research model.

6.1 Sample characteristics and descriptive statistics

The sample consists entirely of Instagram users, as well as individuals who follow fashion influencers and have been exposed to product promotions through them, with all three variables reaching 100.0%. Regarding the duration of following influencers, the highest proportion is observed for 1-2 years (24.2%), followed closely by 3+ years (23.6%), while 21.9% report following for less than 6 months. Lower percentages are noted for 6-12 months (16.0%) and 2-3 years (14.3%).

In terms of content exposure frequency, the largest proportion of participants report daily engagement (31.2%), followed by those who view content 3-5 times per week (27.7%) and once per week (23.9%). Smaller proportions indicate several times per day (7.9%), once per month (6.1%), and 3-5 times per month (3.2%).

As for the platforms used, Instagram dominates with 80.8%, followed by TikTok (14.0%) and YouTube (3.2%), while blog or website usage reaches 1.5%, and both Pinterest and Viber present minimal usage at 0.3%.

Regarding gender, females represent the majority with 63.8%, followed by males at 35.3%, while 0.9% preferred not to disclose their gender. Concerning age distribution, the largest group falls within the 35-44 category (34.1%), followed by 25-34 (26.8%) and 18-24 (24.8%), while smaller proportions are observed for 45-54 (12.2%), 55-64 (1.7%), and 65+ (0.3%).

In relation to educational level, most participants have higher education (37.3%), followed closely by postgraduate studies (35.3%), while secondary education accounts for 23.6%. Minimal proportions are observed for other education levels (2.9%) and basic education (0.9%).

Finally, regarding city of residence, the majority of participants belong to other locations (59.8%), followed by Athens (23.9%) and Patras (9.0%), while Thessaloniki accounts for 4.1%. Smaller proportions are observed for Larisa (1.7%), Piraeus (1.2%), and Heraklion (0.3%).

6.2 Interpretation of questionnaire results

Continuing, the group of variables was investigated by calculating the average score of each respondent's answers to the statements referring to each construct included in the questionnaire. All statements were originally measured on a 7-point scale, where 1 corresponds to strongly agree and 7 to strongly disagree. However, for interpretation purposes, the construct scores were reverse-coded, meaning that higher mean values indicate higher levels of the corresponding construct. A total of 343 participants were included in the analysis.

Based on the results, psychological contract violation presents one of the highest mean values ($M = 5.62$), followed by influencer avoidance ($M = 5.09$) and brand avoidance ($M = 4.94$). Influencer switching also appears at a relatively high level ($M = 4.76$), while perceived empathic attunement ($M = 4.69$), social presence ($M = 4.55$), and recommendation acceptance ($M = 4.44$) present moderate to relatively high values. Lastly, follower cynicism presents the lowest mean among the examined constructs ($M = 2.74$). It should also be noted that sponsorship disclosure ($M = 1.29$), honesty declaration ($M = 1.70$), and product framing ($M = 1.65$) refer to nominal variables.

Analytically, psychological contract violation presents a relatively high mean ($M = 5.62$, $SD = 1.43$), indicating that participants tend to experience moderate to relatively strong feelings of disappointment, unmet expectations, and perceived violation toward influencers. Influencer avoidance also presents a high mean value ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 1.71$), suggesting that participants demonstrate a relatively strong tendency to distance themselves from influencers and avoid their content.

Continuing with influencer switching, it appears at a moderately high level ($M = 4.76$, $SD = 1.37$), indicating that participants moderately consider shifting their attention toward alternative influencers. Similarly, brand avoidance presents a comparable level ($M = 4.94$, $SD = 1.47$), suggesting a moderate tendency to reject or avoid promoted brands.

Regarding the relational constructs, perceived empathic attunement ($M = 4.69$, $SD = 1.40$) and social presence ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.50$) indicate moderate to relatively high perceptions of connection, understanding, and interpersonal interaction between participants and influencers. Recommendation acceptance presents a similar level ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.31$), suggesting that participants demonstrate a moderate willingness to consider and act upon influencer recommendations.

Finally, follower cynicism presents the lowest mean value ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 1.32$), indicating that participants demonstrate relatively lower levels of cynical perceptions toward influencers compared to the remaining examined constructs. The standard deviations across the constructs range at similar levels, indicating a relatively consistent distribution of responses among participants.

6.3 Confirmatory factor analysis

6.3.1. Model Specification

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted using the DWLS estimator, which is the most appropriate when it comes to ordinal data. Also, the measurement model included all latent constructs of the study, such as Psychological Contract Violation (PCV), Influencer Avoidance (IA), Influencer Switching (IS), Brand Avoidance (BA), Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA), Social Presence (SP), Recommendation Acceptance (RAE), and Follower Cynicism (FC). Each one of them was measured using the observed indicators. All the constructs were reflective, aligning with the theories of the research model. Also, the estimation method incorporated robust standard errors, and the test statistics were scaled in order to properly use the categorical type of the data.

6.3.2. Model fit Assessment

The total model fit was rather good. More specifically, the chi-square test revealed a statistically significant result ($\chi^2 = 1347.243$, $df = 467$, $p < .001$), which is expected because of the sensitivity of the statistic to the sample size. As for the remaining fit indices, they indicate a very satisfactory model fit. Analytically, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.968), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI = 0.964), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI = 0.968) were all beyond the threshold of 0.90, which means that there is a really good fit of the

measurement model. Also, the Normed Fit Index (NFI = 0.952) and Relative Fit Index (RFI = 0.945) revealed the adequacy of the model. Continuing, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.074, 90% CI [0.070, 0.079]) is placed within acceptable limits, indicating that there is a reasonable approximation error, and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR = 0.063) is also within acceptable thresholds. As for the diagnostics, they confirmed that the data is suitable to conduct a factor analysis, since the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was extremely high (overall KMO = 0.878), and Bartlett's test of sphericity is also statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 11693.016$, $df = 528$, $p < .001$). These results reveal that the correlation matrix is appropriate to conduct a factor analysis. The above are presented in Appendix A (Tables A1-A9).

6.3.3. Factor loadings and significance

Most of the observed variables loaded strongly and significantly on their respective constructs ($p < .001$), indicating that there is validity in the measurements of the model. Also, the majority of the indicators presented high explanatory power based on their R^2 values, which indicates that they were well represented by their corresponding latent factors. However, one item in the Influencer Switching construct (IS2) presented a low factor loading (Estimate = 0.383), along with a low level of explained variance ($R^2 = 0.133$) and a high residual variance. This suggests that the item contributes at a lower level to the construct compared to the other indicators. Nevertheless, the item is still statistically significant ($p < .001$), while the other factors of the construct demonstrate a high level of loading. All the other factors also presented statistically significant variance ($p < .001$), indicating that there are meaningful relationships across the constructs. Additionally, most of the covariances between the factors were also statistically significant and in the expected directions. Through the analysis, positive associations were observed between the avoidance-related constructs, while negative relationships were identified between avoidant constructs and relational variables such as empathic attunement and social presence. Finally, positive relationships were observed between empathic attunement, social presence, and recommendation acceptance.

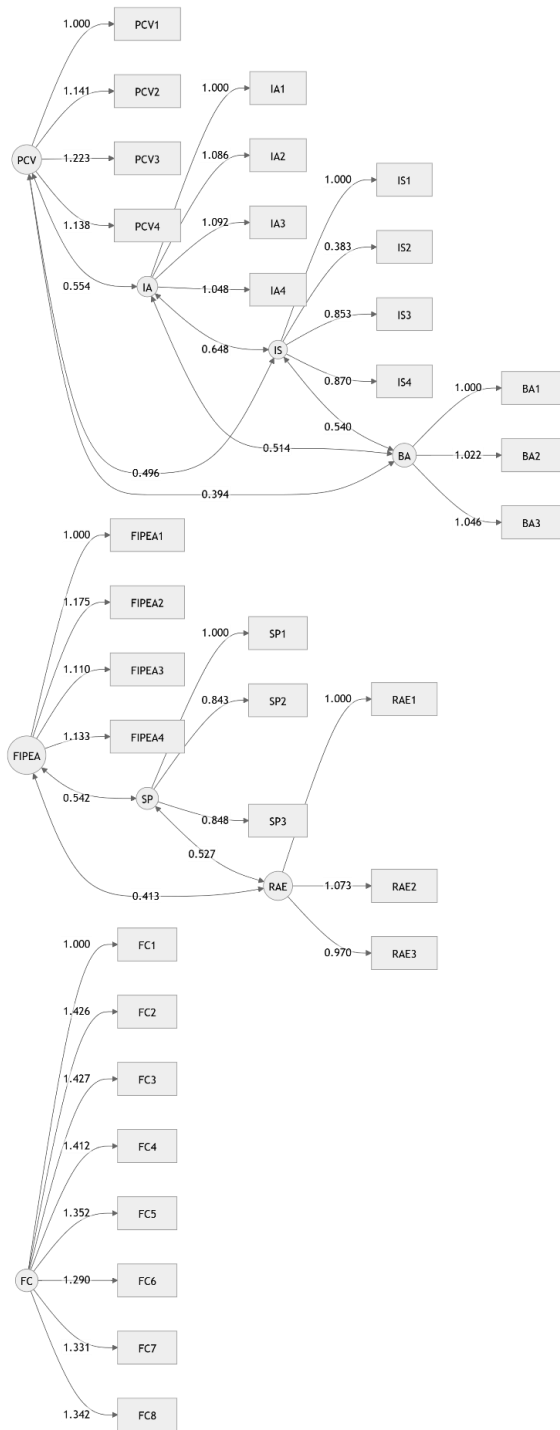


Figure 6.1: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Path Diagram of the Measurement Model with Standardized Factor Loadings.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

6.3.4. Reliability and internal consistency

The results of the CFA presented strong support for the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement model. There were high factor loadings, and the relationships between indicators were also statistically significant, with each construct presenting satisfactory internal coherence. Continuing, relatively high levels of R^2 values were observed across most of the indicators, indicating that a substantial proportion of variance is explained by the latent constructs, which supports the consistency and stability of the measurement structure. Additionally, the results of the KMO confirmed the adequacy of the sample and the intercorrelations between the studied variables. Overall, the measurement model demonstrated strong reliability and satisfactory internal consistency, indicating that the constructs are measured in a stable and coherent manner.

6.4 Hypothesis testing

6.4.1 Correlation analysis

The findings regarding the direct relationships among the study variables are presented in the following section. Due to the dichotomous nature of sponsorship disclosure (disclosure vs. no disclosure) and the ordinal structure of the Likert-based outcome variables, the differences between the groups were investigated using Mann-Whitney U tests, while rank-biserial correlation coefficients (rrb) were reported as effect size indicators. In addition, the relationship between perceived empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance was investigated using Spearman's correlation coefficients and linear regression analysis. The results are presented in Appendix Table A1 and Table A2.

H1a: Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences influencer avoidance by followers.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U analysis revealed that there is no statistically significant difference regarding influencer avoidance between the participants who were exposed to sponsorship disclosure and those who were not ($U = 11240$, $p = .237$, $rrb = -.080$). More specifically, participants exposed to sponsorship disclosure presented slightly lower levels of influencer avoidance ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.75$, $Median = 5.25$, $IQR = 2.50$) compared to those who were not exposed to disclosure ($M = 5.27$, $SD = 1.60$, $Median = 5.50$, $IQR = 3.00$). The effect size was negligible, indicating that sponsorship disclosure was not meaningfully associated with influencer avoidance. Therefore, H1a is rejected.

The relationship may also be expressed through the following equation form:

$$IA = \alpha_{IA} + \beta_{IA} \cdot SD \quad [6.1]$$

where SD = 0 indicates no disclosure and SD = 1 indicates disclosure presence. A negative β coefficient indicates lower influencer avoidance under sponsorship disclosure conditions.

H1b: *Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences influencer switching by followers.*

The results revealed a marginally statistically significant difference regarding influencer switching between the two groups ($U = 10582$, $p = .050$, $rrb = -.134$). Participants who were exposed to sponsorship disclosure presented lower levels of influencer switching ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.44$, $Median = 4.75$, $IQR = 1.75$) compared to participants who were not exposed to disclosure ($M = 5.01$, $SD = 1.17$, $Median = 5.00$, $IQR = 1.75$). Although the relationship reached the threshold of statistical significance, the direction of the relationship was opposite to the hypothesized positive effect. The effect size was small, suggesting a weak negative association between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching. Therefore, H1b is rejected.

The relationship may also be expressed through the following equation form:

$$IS = \alpha_{IS} + \beta_{IS} \cdot SD \quad [6.2]$$

where SD = 0 indicates no disclosure and SD = 1 indicates disclosure presence. A negative β coefficient indicates lower influencer switching under sponsorship disclosure conditions.

H1c: *Sponsorship disclosure by fashion influencers positively influences brand avoidance by followers.*

Through the analysis, it was revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in the level of brand avoidance between those who were exposed to sponsorship disclosure and those who were not ($U = 11659$, $p = .499$, $rrb = -.046$). Participants who were exposed to disclosure presented slightly lower levels of brand avoidance ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.49$, $Median = 5.00$, $IQR = 2.00$) compared to those who were not exposed ($M =$

5.04, SD = 1.42, Median = 5.00, IQR = 2.00), although this difference was not statistically significant. The effect size was negligible, indicating no meaningful relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance. Therefore, H1c is rejected.

The relationship may also be expressed through the following equation form:

$$BA = \alpha_{BA} + \beta_{BA} \cdot SD \quad [6.3]$$

where SD = 0 indicates no disclosure and SD = 1 indicates disclosure presence. A negative β coefficient indicates lower brand avoidance under sponsorship disclosure conditions.

H2: *Fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues positively influence followers' recommendation acceptance.*

Based on Spearman's correlation analysis, a statistically significant positive correlation was revealed between perceived empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance ($\rho = .516$, $p < .001$). This result indicates that higher levels of perceived empathic attunement are associated with higher levels of willingness to accept and act upon the influencer's recommendations. This relationship was further confirmed through regression analysis, which showed that empathic attunement significantly predicts recommendation acceptance ($\beta = .554$, $p < .001$), explaining 30.7% of the variance ($R^2 = .307$, $F = 150.865$). Therefore, H2 is confirmed.

The relationship may also be expressed through the following equation form:

$$RAE = \alpha_{RAE} + \beta_{RAE} \cdot FIPEA \quad [6.4]$$

where a positive β coefficient indicates that higher levels of perceived empathic attunement are associated with higher levels of recommendation acceptance.

6.4.2 Mediation analysis

To investigate the mechanisms that underlie the relationships between the study variables, the mediating role of psychological contract violation and social presence was also examined. Overall, the findings revealed two different patterns: a fully mediated pathway regarding negative behavioural responses, and a partially mediated pathway for positive engagement outcomes.

H3a: *Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer avoidance, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases influencer avoidance.*

Investigating first influencer avoidance, sponsorship disclosure was revealed to present a statistically significant and negative effect on psychological contract violation ($\beta = -0.467$, $p = .006$). This suggests that the absence of disclosure is related to higher levels of perceived violation. Also, psychological contract violation presented a strong and positive effect on influencer avoidance ($\beta = 0.821$, $p < .001$), which means that higher levels of perceived violation lead to higher levels of avoidance behaviors. Although the direct effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.120$, $p = .423$), the indirect effect appears to be statistically significant ($\beta = -0.383$, 95% CI [-0.649, -0.125]), indicating that the effect of sponsorship disclosure on avoidance operates indirectly through psychological contract violation, thus supporting the H3a research hypothesis.

H3a: Indirect = -0.383 [CI: -0.649, -0.125]

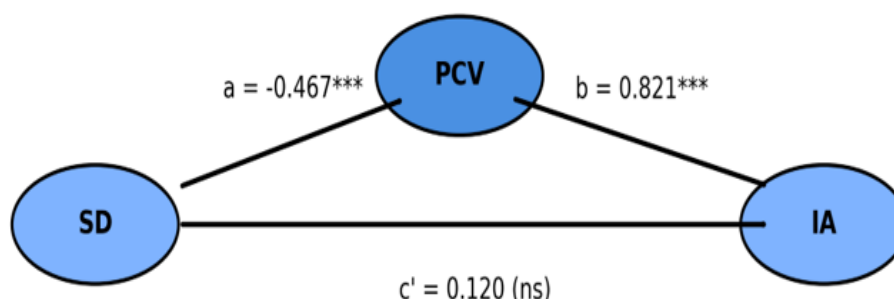


Figure 6.2: Mediating role of psychological contract violation in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer avoidance.

Note. *SDd was coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.*

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H3b: *Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases influencer switching.*

A similar pattern is also revealed regarding switching influence. Sponsorship disclosure presented a statistically significant negative effect on psychological contract

violation ($\beta = -0.467$, $p = .006$), while psychological contract violation showed a statistically significant positive effect on switching intentions ($\beta = 0.467$, $p < .001$). Additionally, the direct effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching is not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.135$, $p = .347$), although the indirect effect is statistically significant ($\beta = -0.218$, 95% CI [-0.370, -0.067]). These results indicate that followers' intention to switch influencers is more strongly affected by their perceived violation rather than the disclosure itself, thus supporting the H3b hypothesis.

H3b: Indirect = -0.218 [CI: -0.370, -0.067]

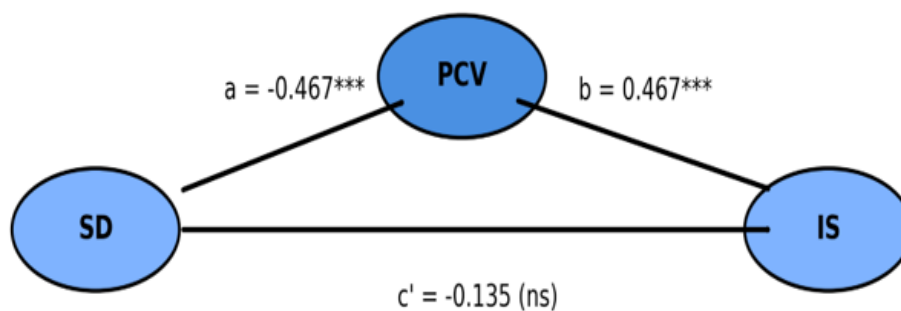


Figure 6.3: Mediating role of psychological contract violation in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching.

Note: SDd was coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) "Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement".

H3c: Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance, such that sponsorship disclosure increases psychological contract violation, which in turn increases brand avoidance.

The same results were also revealed when it comes to brand avoidance. Analytically, sponsorship disclosure can statistically significantly predict psychological contract violation ($\beta = -0.467$, $p = .006$), while psychological contract violation presents a positive effect on brand avoidance ($\beta = 0.506$, $p < .001$). The direct effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance is not statistically significant ($\beta = 0.087$, $p = .570$). However, the indirect effect is statistically significant ($\beta = -0.236$, 95% CI [-0.407, -0.075]). These results indicate that psychological contract violation fully mediates the

relationship between sponsorship disclosure and negative brand-related responses, thus confirming the H3c research hypothesis.

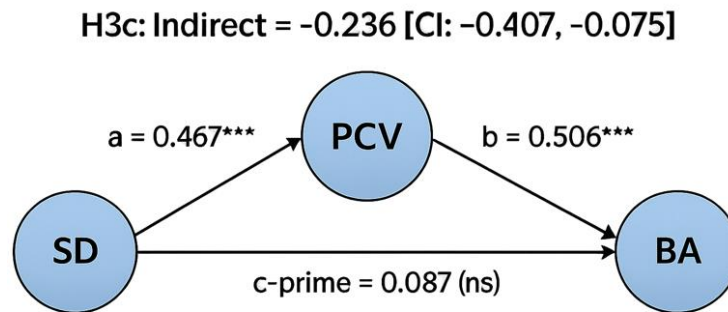


Figure 6.4: Mediating role of psychological contract violation in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance.

Note. SDd was coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H4: *Social presence mediates the relationship between fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and recommendation acceptance, such that empathic attunement cues increase social presence, which in turn increases recommendation acceptance.*

Continuing, the empathic attunement pathway was investigated, which presented different results compared to the previous ones. Analytically, empathic attunement presented a strong positive effect on social presence ($\beta = 0.696$, $p < .001$), suggesting that when the influencer is viewed as understanding and aligned with the followers' perspectives, there is a stronger sense of interpersonal connection. Also, social presence positively influences the level of recommendation acceptance ($\beta = 0.338$, $p < .001$). At the same time, perceived empathic attunement presented a statistically significant effect on the level of recommendation acceptance, which means that the influence is not fully explained only by social presence ($\beta = 0.283$, $p < .001$). As for the indirect effect, it is also statistically significant ($\beta = 0.235$, 95% CI [0.147, 0.322]), which reveals that social presence partially mediates this relationship, and therefore H4 is confirmed.

H4: Indirect = 0.235 [CI: 0.147, 0.322]

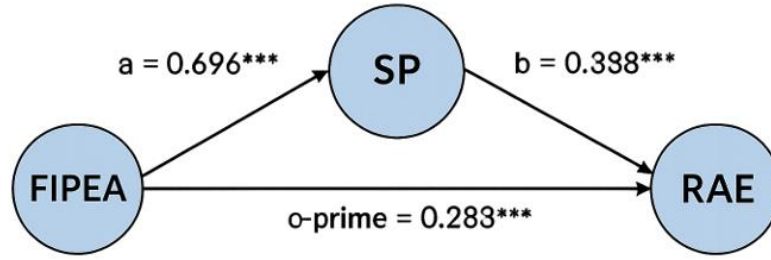


Figure 6.5: Mediating role of social presence in the relationship between perceived empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

6.4.3 Moderation analysis

The following chapter investigates and presents the moderation analyses that were conducted. Sponsorship disclosure was recoded from 1 = present and 2 = absent to SD^d (0 = absent, 1 = present), while honesty declaration was recoded from 1 = absent and 2 = present to HD^d (0 = absent, 1 = present). Continuous predictors and moderators were mean-centered prior to the construction of interaction terms in order to reduce multicollinearity and improve the interpretability of the regression coefficients. Moderation effects were tested using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models of the following form: $Y = b_0 + b_1X + b_2W + b_3(X \times W) + \varepsilon$ where b_3 represents the interaction effect and therefore tests moderation. When interactions were non-significant, conditional effects were still estimated across moderator conditions in order to evaluate the pattern and direction of the relationships. The detailed statistical results are presented in Appendix Tables A3-A8.

H5a: *Honesty declaration moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation, such that the positive effect of sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.*

The moderating role of honesty declaration in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation was examined by including the interaction term in the regression model. The relationship can be represented as follows:

$$PCV_i = b_0 + b_1SD_i^d + b_2HD_i^d + b_3(SD_i^d \times HD_i^d) + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.5]$$

where $SD^d = 0$ indicates absence of sponsorship disclosure and $SD^d = 1$ indicates disclosure presence, while $HD^d = 0$ indicates absence of honesty declaration and $HD^d = 1$ indicates honesty declaration presence. The coefficient b_3 represents the moderation effect.

As presented in the results, the interaction between sponsorship disclosure and honesty declaration was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.155$, $p = .666$), indicating that honesty declaration does not significantly alter the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation. Additionally, the inclusion of the interaction term did not lead to a meaningful increase in the explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, $p = .666$), further supporting the absence of a moderating effect. The conditional effect of sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation was negative both when honesty declaration was absent ($b = -0.391$) and when honesty declaration was present ($b = -0.546$), suggesting slightly lower levels of psychological contract violation under sponsorship disclosure conditions regardless of honesty declaration presence. Therefore, H5a is not supported.

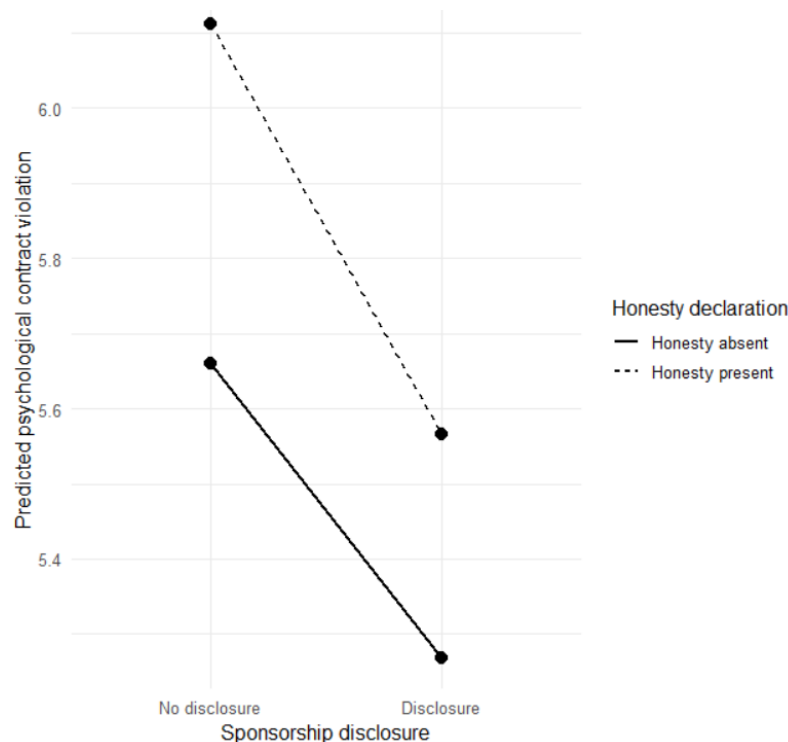


Figure 6.6: Interaction effect of sponsorship disclosure and honesty declaration on psychological contract violation.

Note. SD^d and HD^d were coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

H5b: *Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.*

Furthermore, the moderating role of honesty declaration in the indirect relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching through psychological contract violation was investigated using a first-stage moderated mediation model. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$PCV_i = a_0 + a_1SD_i^d + a_2HD_i^d + a_3(SD_i^d \times HD_i^d) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.6]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$IS_i = c_0 + c_1SD_i^d + c_2PCV_i + c_3HD_i^d + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.7]$$

The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and honesty declaration on psychological contract violation was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.155$, $p = .666$), suggesting that honesty declaration does not significantly influence the first stage of the mediation process.

Additionally, the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation was not statistically significant when honesty declaration was absent ($\beta = -0.179$, 95% CI [-0.466, 0.081]). However, when honesty declaration was present, the indirect effect became statistically significant ($\beta = -0.250$, 95% CI [-0.429, -0.065]). Despite this difference, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = -0.071, 95% CI [-0.371, 0.248]), indicating that the indirect effect did not significantly differ across the two honesty declaration conditions. Therefore, H5b is rejected.

Figure 6.7 presents the moderated mediation model predicting influencer switching. As shown, psychological contract violation significantly predicts influencer switching ($\beta = 0.457$, $p < .001$), whereas the effects of honesty declaration, sponsorship disclosure, and their interaction are non-significant.

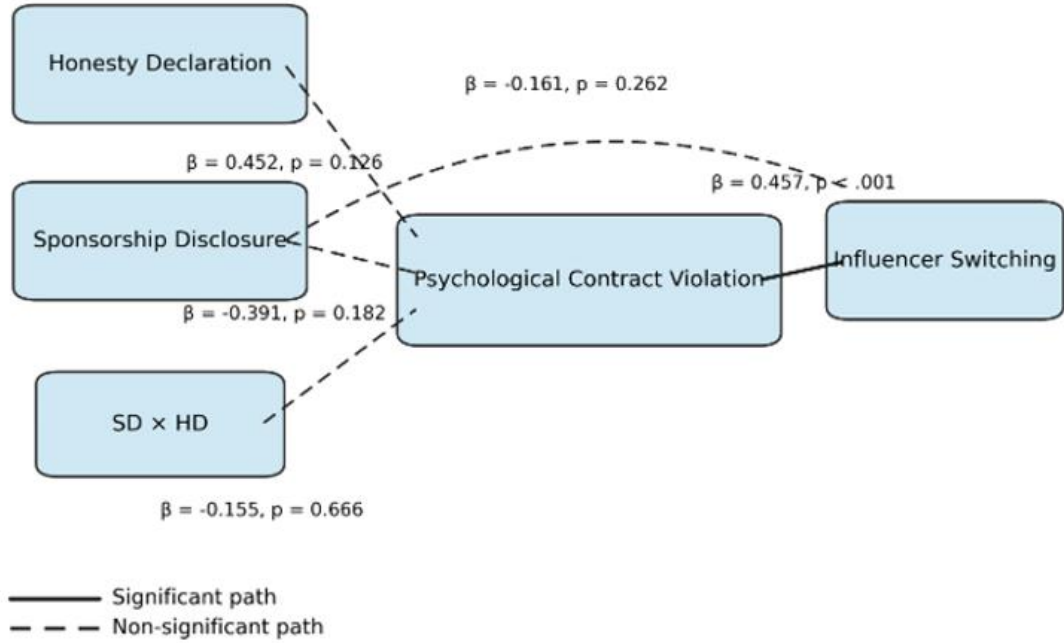


Figure 6.7: Conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration.

Note. SDd and HDd were coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

H5c: Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is weaker when honesty declaration is present than when it is absent.

Additionally, the potential moderating role of honesty declaration in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance through psychological contract violation was analysed through a first-stage moderated mediation framework. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$PCV_i = a_0 + a_1SD_i^d + a_2HD_i^d + a_3(SD_i^d \times HD_i^d) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.8]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$BA_i = c_0 + c_1SD_i^d + c_2PCV_i + c_3HD_i^d + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.9]$$

The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and honesty declaration on psychological contract violation was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.155, p = .666$), indicating that honesty declaration does not significantly affect the initial stage of the mediation process.

Furthermore, the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation was not statistically significant when honesty declaration was absent ($\beta = -0.194$, 95% CI [-0.489, 0.075]). However, when honesty declaration was present, the indirect effect became statistically significant ($\beta = -0.271$, 95% CI [-0.466, -0.082]). Despite this pattern, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = -0.077, 95% CI [-0.398, 0.260]), suggesting that the strength of the indirect effect does not significantly differ depending on honesty declaration presence. Therefore, H5c is rejected.

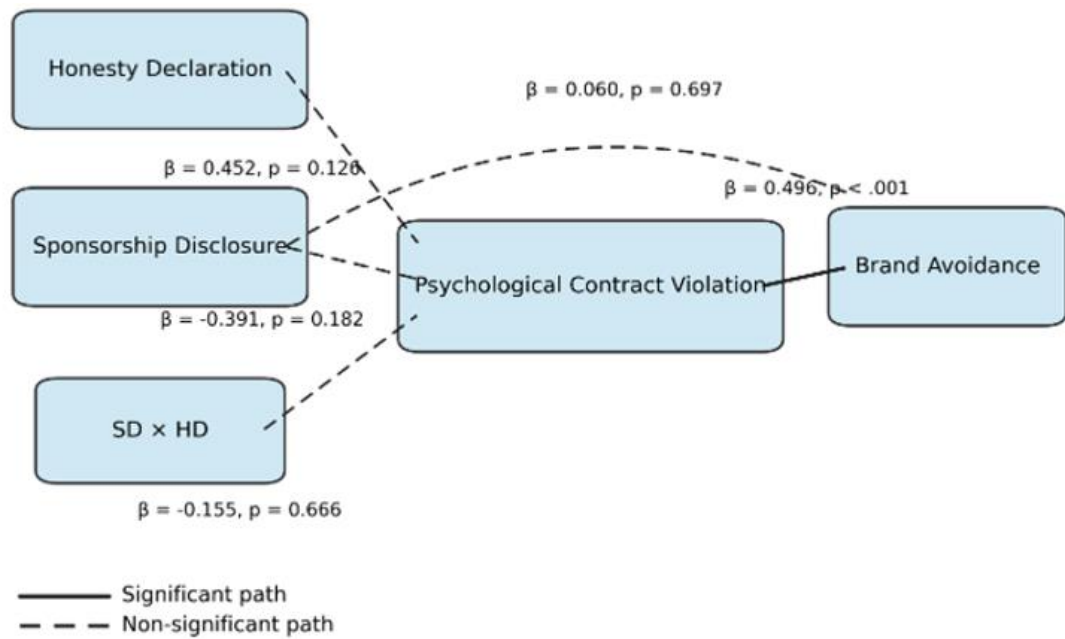


Figure 6.8: Conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration.

Note. SDd and HDd were coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H6a: *Follower cynicism moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation, such that the positive effect of sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

As for the moderating role of follower cynicism in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation, it was investigated through an

OLS regression model including the interaction term between sponsorship disclosure and mean-centered follower cynicism. The model can be represented as follows:

$$PCV_i = b_0 + b_1SD_i^d + b_2FC_i^c + b_3(SD_i^d \times FC_i^c) + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.10]$$

where $SD^d = 0$ indicates absence of sponsorship disclosure and $SD^d = 1$ indicates disclosure presence, while FC^c represents mean-centered follower cynicism. The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism was not statistically significant ($\beta = .114$, $p = .215$), indicating that the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation does not significantly differ depending on the level of follower cynicism. Additionally, the inclusion of the interaction term did not result in a statistically significant improvement in model fit ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, $p = .215$). Therefore, H6a is rejected.

Figure 6.9 presents the interaction effect of sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism on psychological contract violation.

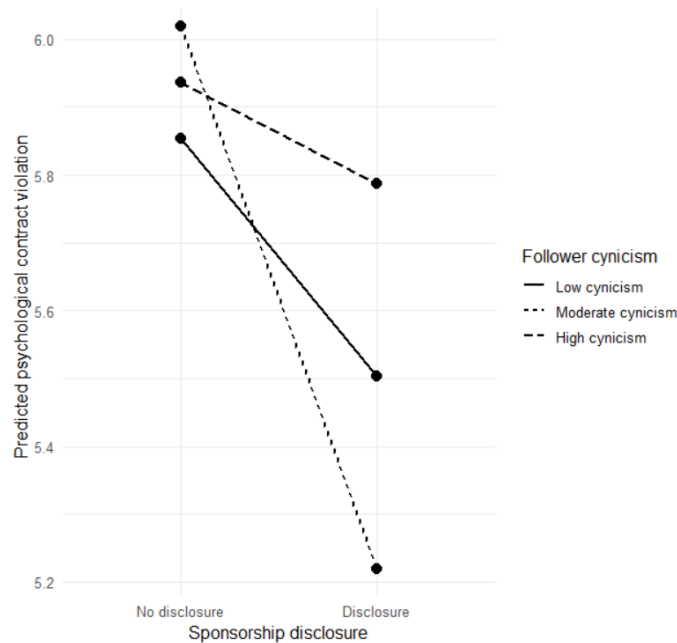


Figure 6.9: Interaction effect of sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism on psychological contract violation.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H6b: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect*

positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.

Furthermore, the moderating role of follower cynicism in the indirect relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation was investigated using a first-stage moderated mediation model. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$PCV_i = a_0 + a_1SD_i^d + a_2FC_i^c + a_3(SD_i^d \times FC_i^c) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.11]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$IA_i = c_0 + c_1SD_i^d + c_2PCV_i + c_3FC_i^c + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.12]$$

The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism on psychological contract violation was not statistically significant ($\beta = .153$, $p = .215$), suggesting that follower cynicism does not significantly influence the first stage of the mediation process. However, psychological contract violation significantly predicted influencer avoidance ($\beta = .800$, $p < .001$), while follower cynicism also demonstrated a statistically significant direct positive effect on influencer avoidance ($\beta = .149$, $p = .004$).

Additionally, the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation was statistically significant under low follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.507$, 95% CI [-0.897, -0.121]) and moderate follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.346$, 95% CI [-0.607, -0.075]). However, the indirect effect was not statistically significant under high follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.185$, 95% CI [-0.520, 0.162]). Despite these differences, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = 0.122, 95% CI [-0.065, 0.321]), indicating that the indirect effect did not significantly vary across levels of follower cynicism. Therefore, H6b is rejected.

Figure 6.10 presents the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

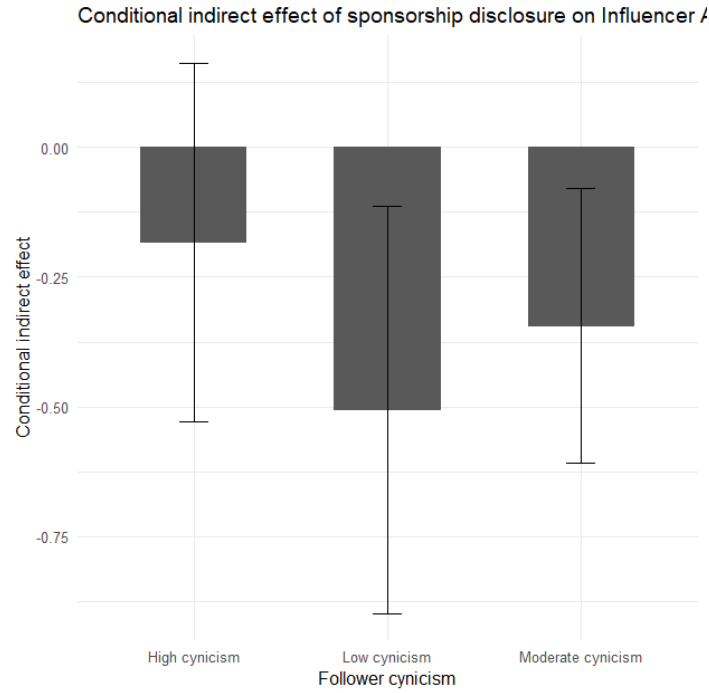


Figure 6.10: Conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

Note. SDd was coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

H6c: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

Additionally, the moderating role of follower cynicism in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching through psychological contract violation was analysed using a first-stage moderated mediation framework. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$PCV_i = a_0 + a_1SD_i^d + a_2FC_i^c + a_3(SD_i^d \times FC_i^c) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.13]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$IS_i = c_0 + c_1SD_i^d + c_2PCV_i + c_3FC_i^c + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.14]$$

The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism on psychological contract violation was not statistically significant ($\beta = .153$, $p = .215$), indicating that follower cynicism does not significantly affect the first stage of the mediation process. Psychological contract violation significantly predicted influencer switching ($\beta = .427$, $p < .001$), while follower cynicism also had a statistically significant direct positive effect on influencer switching ($\beta = .287$, $p < .001$).

Furthermore, the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation was statistically significant under low follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.271$, 95% CI [-0.511, -0.056]) and moderate follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.185$, 95% CI [-0.328, -0.048]). However, the indirect effect was not statistically significant under high follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.099$, 95% CI [-0.264, 0.086]). Nevertheless, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = 0.065, 95% CI [-0.034, 0.186]), suggesting that the strength of the indirect effect does not significantly differ across levels of follower cynicism. Therefore, H6c is rejected.

Figure 6.11 presents the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

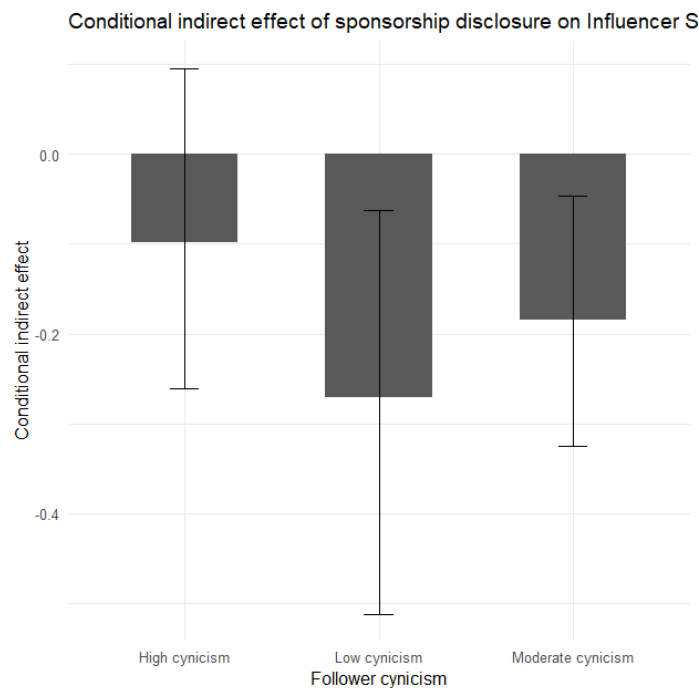


Figure 6.11: Conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

Note. SDd was coded as 0 = absent and 1 = present.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H6d: *Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for followers with high cynicism than for followers with low cynicism.*

Moreover, the moderating role of follower cynicism in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance through psychological contract violation was examined through a first-stage moderated mediation framework. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$PCV_i = a_0 + a_1SD_i^d + a_2FC_i^c + a_3(SD_i^d \times FC_i^c) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.15]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$BA_i = c_0 + c_1SD_i^d + c_2PCV_i + c_3FC_i^c + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.16]$$

The interaction between sponsorship disclosure and follower cynicism on psychological contract violation was not statistically significant ($\beta = .153$, $p = .215$), indicating that follower cynicism does not significantly influence the first stage of the mediation process. Psychological contract violation significantly predicted brand avoidance ($\beta = .474$, $p < .001$), while follower cynicism also had a statistically significant direct positive effect on brand avoidance ($\beta = .228$, $p < .001$).

Additionally, the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation was statistically significant under low follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.301$, 95% CI [-0.574, -0.067]) and moderate follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.205$, 95% CI [-0.370, -0.051]). However, the indirect effect was not statistically significant under high follower cynicism conditions ($\beta = -0.110$, 95% CI [-0.301, 0.094]). Despite these variations, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = 0.072, 95% CI [-0.037, 0.205]), suggesting that the conditional indirect effects do not significantly differ across follower cynicism conditions. Therefore, H6d is rejected.

Figure 6.12 presents the conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

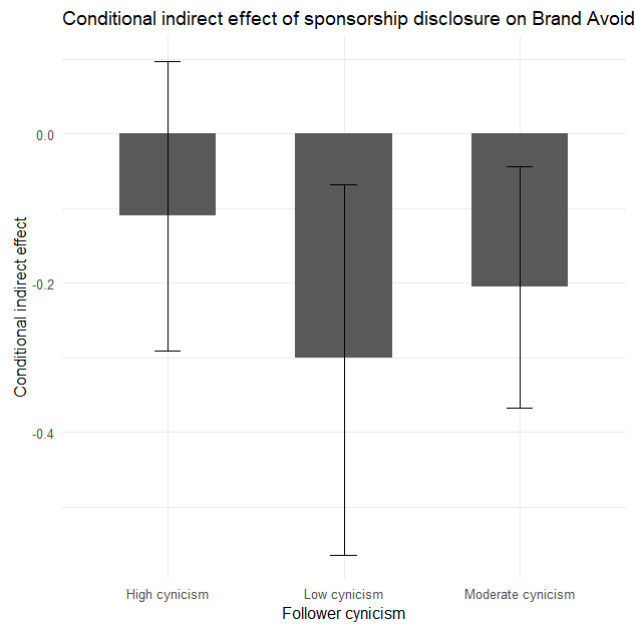


Figure 6.12: Conditional indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

H7a: *Product frame moderates the relationship between fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and social presence, such that the positive effect of empathic attunement cues on social presence is stronger for virtue fashion products (sustainable/ethical fashion) than for vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases).*

The moderating role of product frame in the relationship between perceived empathic attunement and social presence was examined by including the interaction term in the regression model. The model can be represented as follows:

$$SP_i = b_0 + b_1 FIPEA_i^c + b_2 PF_i^d + b_3 (FIPEA_i^c \times PF_i^d) + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.17]$$

where $FIPEA_i^c$ represents mean-centered perceived empathic attunement and PF_i^d represents the product frame condition (0 = virtue products, 1 = vice products). The interaction between perceived empathic attunement and product frame was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.103$, $p = .134$), indicating that product framing does not significantly alter the strength of the relationship between empathic attunement and social presence. Consistent with this finding, the inclusion of the interaction term did not result in a

significant increase in explained variance ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, $p = .134$), further supporting the absence of a moderating effect.

At the same time, perceived empathic attunement had a strong and statistically significant positive effect on social presence ($\beta = .728$, $p < .001$), suggesting that higher levels of empathic attunement are associated with stronger perceptions of social presence regardless of whether the product is framed as virtue or vice. Therefore, H7a is not supported.

Figure 6.13 presents the interaction effect of perceived empathic attunement and product frame on social presence.

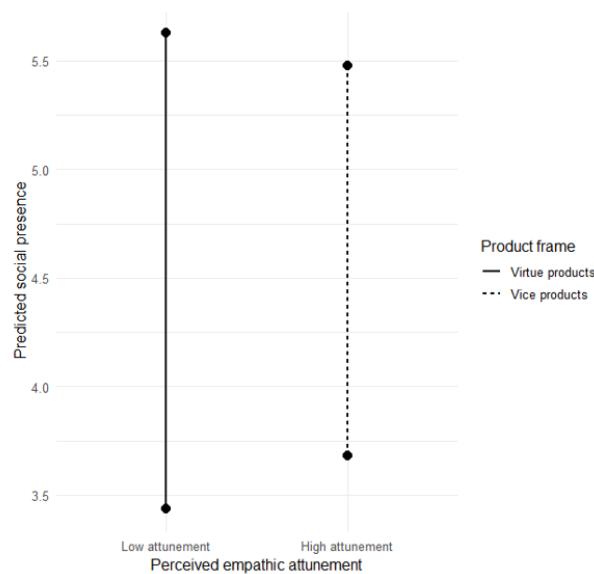


Figure 6.13: Interaction effect of perceived empathic attunement and product frame on social presence.

Note. PFd was coded as 0 = virtue and 1 = vice.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

H7b: *Product frame moderates the indirect effect of fashion influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues on recommendation acceptance through social presence, such that this indirect positive effect is stronger for virtue fashion products (sustainable/ethical fashion) than for vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases).*

The potential moderating role of product frame in the indirect relationship between perceived empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance through social presence

was examined using a first-stage moderated mediation model. The mediator model can be represented as:

$$SP_i = a_0 + a_1 FIPEA_i^c + a_2 PF_i^d + a_3 (FIPEA_i^c \times PF_i^d) + e_{Mi} \quad [6.18]$$

while the outcome model can be represented as:

$$RAE_i = c_0 + c_1 FIPEA_i^c + c_2 SP_i + c_3 PF_i^d + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.19]$$

Perceived empathic attunement was found to positively predict social presence ($\beta = .780, p < .001$), while social presence was also positively associated with recommendation acceptance ($\beta = .338, p < .001$), confirming the existence of a significant indirect mechanism. Furthermore, perceived empathic attunement also directly predicted recommendation acceptance ($\beta = .287, p < .001$).

However, the interaction between empathic attunement and product frame was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.140, p = .134$), indicating that product framing does not significantly influence the first stage of the mediation process.

Regarding the conditional indirect effects, the indirect effect was statistically significant under both conditions. Specifically, for virtue products, the effect was $\beta = 0.264$ (95% CI [0.159, 0.374]), while for vice products, the effect was $\beta = 0.217$ (95% CI [0.133, 0.302]). This suggests that empathic attunement enhances recommendation acceptance through social presence regardless of the product framing condition.

Nevertheless, the index of moderated mediation was not statistically significant (Index = -0.047, 95% CI [-0.126, 0.017]), indicating that the strength of the indirect effect does not significantly differ between virtue and vice product framing conditions. Therefore, H7b is not supported.

Figure 6.14 presents the conditional indirect effect of perceived empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence across product frame conditions.

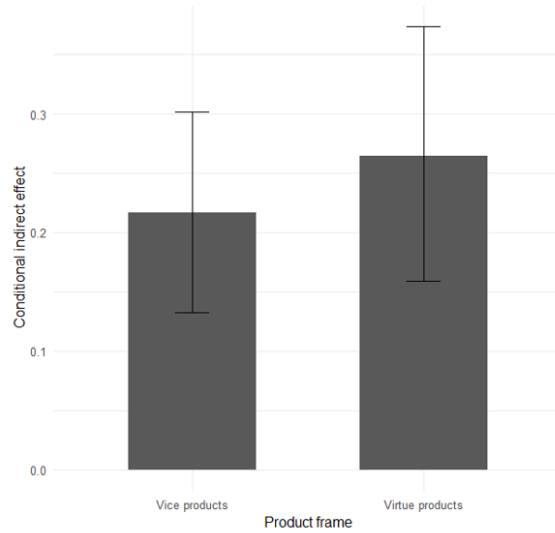


Figure 6.14: Conditional indirect effect of perceived empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence across product frame conditions.

Note. PFd was coded as 0 = virtue and 1 = vice.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

H7c: For vice fashion products (fast fashion/impulse purchases), low empathic attunement cues generate higher recommendation acceptance than high empathic attunement cues, due to followers' preference for autonomy and psychological reactance to guidance in hedonic consumption contexts.

The hypothesis that product frame alters the relationship between empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance was examined using a two-way ANOVA. The statistical model can be represented as follows:

$$RAE_i = b_0 + b_1EAd_i + b_2PFd_i + b_3(EAd_i \times PFd_i) + \varepsilon_i \quad [6.20]$$

where EAd represents empathic attunement condition (0 = low empathic attunement, 1 = high empathic attunement) and PFd represents product frame condition (0 = virtue products, 1 = vice products).

The results demonstrated a strong and statistically significant main effect of empathic attunement, $F(1, 339) = 25.568$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .070$. More specifically, participants exposed to high levels of empathic attunement reported substantially higher recommendation acceptance ($M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.13$) compared to participants exposed to low empathic attunement ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.24$).

In contrast, product frame did not have a statistically significant main effect on recommendation acceptance, $F(1, 339) = 0.009$, $p = .923$, $\eta^2_p < .001$, indicating that framing the product as virtue or vice does not directly influence recommendation acceptance.

Most importantly, the interaction between empathic attunement and product frame was not statistically significant, $F(1, 339) = 0.025$, $p = .874$, $\eta^2_p < .001$. This finding suggests that the positive effect of empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance remains stable across both product framing conditions.

More specifically, recommendation acceptance remained almost identical across virtue and vice conditions within each empathic attunement level. Under low empathic attunement conditions, participants exposed to virtue products reported a mean recommendation acceptance score of $M = 3.84$ ($SD = 1.31$), while participants exposed to vice products reported $M = 3.82$ ($SD = 1.19$). Similarly, under high empathic attunement conditions, recommendation acceptance was $M = 4.96$ ($SD = 1.12$) for virtue products and $M = 4.98$ ($SD = 1.14$) for vice products.

Therefore, there is no evidence that low empathic attunement generates higher recommendation acceptance in vice product contexts, as initially hypothesized. Consequently, H7c is not supported.

Figure 6.15 presents the interaction effect of perceived empathic attunement and product frame on recommendation acceptance.

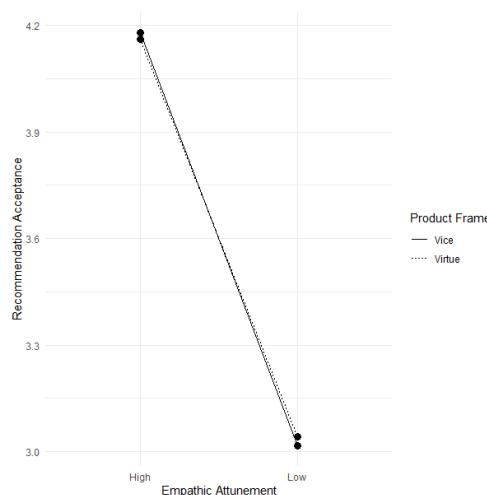


Figure 6.15: Interaction effect of perceived empathic attunement and product frame on recommendation acceptance.

Note. PFd was coded as 0 = virtue and 1 = vice.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

6.5 Summary of hypotheses testing

Figure 6.16 summarizes the research results.

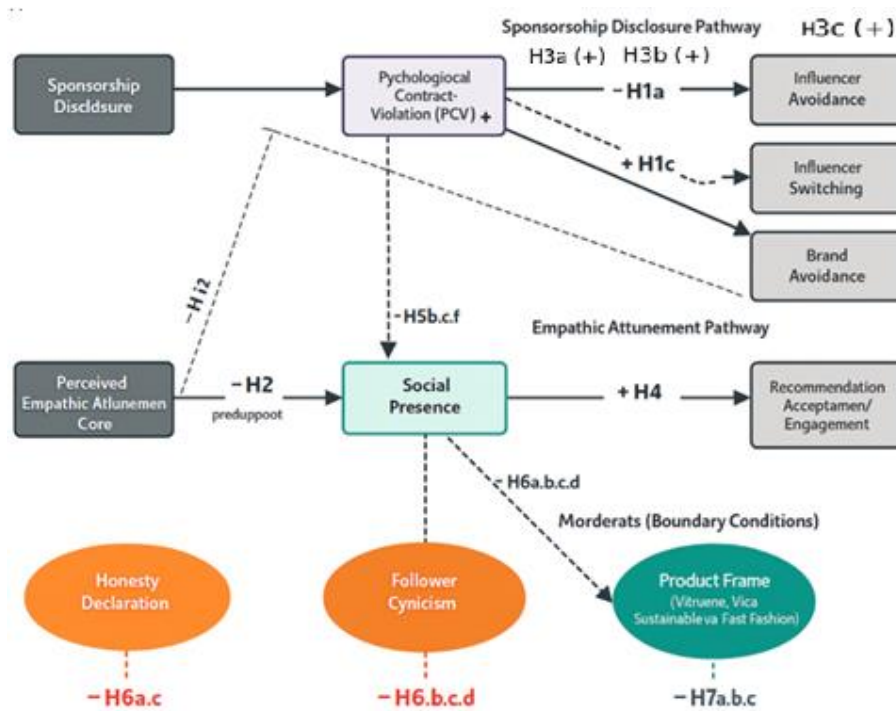


Figure 6.1: Research model including the research hypotheses results.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

In the following table (**Error! Reference source not found.**) we summarize the support of the research hypotheses and the significance level.

Hypothesis		Support	Significance level (α)
H1a	Sponsorship disclosure positively influences influencer avoidance	Not supported	0.05
H1b	Sponsorship disclosure positively influences influencer switching	Not supported*	0.05
H1c	Sponsorship disclosure positively influences brand avoidance	Not supported	0.05

H2	Perceived empathic attunement positively influences recommendation acceptance	Supported	0.05
H3a	Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer avoidance	Supported	0.05
H3b	Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and influencer switching	Supported	0.05
H3c	Psychological contract violation mediates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and brand avoidance	Supported	0.05
H4	Social presence mediates the relationship between empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance	Supported	0.05
H5a	Honesty declaration moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H5b	Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H5c	Honesty declaration moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H6a	Follower cynicism moderates the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H6b	Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H6c	Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05
H6d	Follower cynicism moderates the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation	Not supported	0.05

H7a	Product frame moderates the relationship between empathic attunement and social presence	Not supported	0.05
H7b	Product frame moderates the indirect effect of empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence	Not supported	0.05
H7c	Product frame moderates the relationship between empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance	Not supported	0.05
Supported = significant and in hypothesized direction; mediation/moderation supported when 95% bootstrap CI excludes 0. * marginal $p \approx .050$ but opposite direction			

Table 6-1: Hypotheses' results.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) "*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*".

Based on the assumptions of the adopted theoretical model we can interpret the above research results as follows.

- Contrary to the "dark" EVT pathway suggested in Chapter 4, sponsorship disclosure did not directly increase influencer avoidance (see H1a). There was no discernible difference in avoidance between disclosure and non-disclosure. This implies that followers are more likely to withdraw when they perceive a psychological contract violation (PCV); disclosure alone is not enough to cause a negative expectancy violation.
- A "transparency paradox" surfaced (see H1b) as influencer switching was only marginally affected by disclosure, suggesting somewhat lower switching intentions. The data suggest that disclosure may serve as a norm-consistent transparency cue, lowering suspicion unless there is a strong breach appraisal, even though EVT would predict switching when disclosure compromises authenticity.
- Further, disclosure did not directly increase brand avoidance (see H1c). Disclosure by itself did not cause brand punishment or reframe the post as overly commercialized. This validates the EVT-based hypothesis that adverse consequences are contingent on followers' interpretation of the cue

within the parasocial relationship, rather than merely on the existence of disclosure.

- Recommendation acceptance was significantly predicted by empathic attunement, which supports the "bright" EVT pathway (see H2). The willingness of followers to accept recommendations increased when they felt understood. Empathic attunement was a positive expectation violation that raised relational value and receptivity.
- The disclosure–avoidance relationship was substantially mediated by PCV (see H3a). Higher PCV was a strong predictor of avoidance, even though disclosure was linked to lower PCV than non-disclosure. Distancing was therefore motivated by perceived betrayal of honesty/authenticity expectations rather than disclosure per se.
- The disclosure–switching relationship was also mediated by PCV (see H3b). Greater switching was predicted by higher PCV, but disclosure had no direct impact. Instead of switching because a post was sponsored, followers did so because the interaction seemed to violate the psychological contract.
- The disclosure–brand avoidance relationship was fully mediated by PCV (see H3c). Although PCV was a strong predictor of brand avoidance, disclosure had no direct impact. According to EVT, followers penalize brands when they believe the influencer "broke the deal", and brand rejection is spillover punishment after relational disappointment.
- Social presence partially mediated the association between recommendation acceptance and empathic attunement (see H4). While there was still a significant direct effect, empathy increased social presence, which in turn increased acceptance. This suggests that empathic cues function both directly and through increased interpersonal bonding.
- The relationship between disclosure and PCV (see H5a) and the indirect effects of disclosure on switching (see H5b) or brand avoidance (see H5c) through PCV were not moderated by the honesty declaration. Disclaimers like "honest opinion" did not significantly reduce perceptions of the breach or its repercussions, suggesting they may be seen as clichéd, calculated, or inadequate to rebuild trust.

- Follower cynicism also did not moderate the effect of disclosure on PCV (see H6a) or the indirect effects on avoidance (see H6b), switching (see H6c), and brand avoidance (see H6d). Although cynicism was directly associated with negativity, it did not strengthen the disclosure → PCV pathway. Thus, managing psychological contract expectations appears more important than segmenting audiences by cynicism.
- Finally, product frame (virtue vs. vice) did not moderate the effect of empathic attunement on social presence (see H7a) or its indirect effect on recommendation acceptance (see H7b). There was also no support for the prediction that low empathic attunement would outperform high attunement for vice products (see H7c). Empathic attunement remained persuasive across frames, suggesting that its positive EVT effect is robust rather than context-bound.

6.6 Empirical Tested Model

The section presents the empirically tested model in regression-equation form, separating the analysis into the two core Expectancy Violation Theory pathways examined in this dissertation: (1) the Sponsorship Disclosure pathway and (2) the Empathic Attunement pathway. In the disclosure pathway, the outcomes are Influencer Avoidance (IA), Influencer Switching (IS), and Brand Avoidance (BA), with Psychological Contract Violation (PCV) functioning as the mediating mechanism. In the empathic pathway, Recommendation Acceptance/Engagement (RAE) is modeled as a function of Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA) and the mediator Social Presence (SP).

Sponsorship Disclosure Pathway

Sponsorship disclosure was operationalized as a binary indicator (SDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present). The negative pathway posits that disclosure cues shape behavioral withdrawal primarily through the perceived breach of the parasocial psychological contract (PCV). Accordingly, three outcome regressions were estimated—one for each behavioral outcome, each including SDd and PCV as predictors.

For the Influencer Avoidance (IA) model:

$$IA_i = 1.045 - 0.120 SDd_i + 0.821 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

$$IA_i = 1.045 - 0.120 SDd_i + 0.821 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

The model explains a substantial proportion of variance in IA ($R^2 = .468$). PCV is a strong, statistically significant positive predictor of avoidance, indicating that greater perceived contract violation is associated with higher IA. In contrast, the direct SDd coefficient is small and non-significant, implying that the presence of disclosure does not directly predict IA once PCV is accounted for.

For the Influencer Switching (IS) model:

$$IS_i = 2.033 + 0.135 SDd_i + 0.467 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

$$IS_i = 2.033 + 0.135 SDd_i + 0.467 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

The brand avoidance (BA) model accounts for a moderate share of variance in switching ($R^2 = .247$). PCV is again a statistically significant positive predictor, indicating that stronger feelings of violation are associated with greater switching intentions. The direct effect of SDd remains non-significant, reinforcing that the disclosure cue does not exert a reliable direct effect on switching when PCV is included.

$$BA_i = 1.920 - 0.087 SDd_i + 0.506 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

$$BA_i = 1.920 - 0.087 SDd_i + 0.506 PCV_i + \epsilon_i$$

The model explains a comparable share of variance in BA ($R^2 = .241$). PCV is a statistically significant positive predictor, showing that as psychological contract violation rises, brand avoidance increases. The SDd coefficient is again non-significant, suggesting that disclosure does not directly increase BA once the mediating appraisal (PCV) is incorporated.

Across all three disclosure-path regressions, the empirical pattern is consistent. PCV is the dominant explanatory mechanism, whereas the direct contribution of sponsorship disclosure (SDd) is weak and statistically unreliable once PCV is controlled. This configuration is consistent with the broader inference in your results chapter that negative behavioral outcomes are better explained by the relational breach appraisal (PCV) than by disclosure presence alone.

Empathic Attunement Pathway

In the positive pathway, FIPEA is expected to increase RAE both directly and indirectly through enhanced social presence (SP). The empirically tested model specifies RAE as a function of FIPEA and SP, capturing the partial mediation structure described in the mediation results.

For the last model, for Recommendation Acceptance/Engagement (RAE):

$$RAE_i = 1.451 + 0.283 FIPEA_i + 0.338 SP_i + \epsilon_i$$

$$RAE_i = 1.451 + 0.283 FIPEA_i + 0.338 SP_i + \epsilon_i$$

The model explains a meaningful portion of variance in recommendation acceptance/engagement ($R^2 = .393$). Both FIPEA and SP contribute positively to RAE, indicating that (i) stronger perceived empathic attunement is associated with higher acceptance/engagement and (ii) higher social presence further elevates RAE. The significance pattern reported in your draft supports the interpretation of a partially mediated positive pathway: FIPEA remains relevant to RAE even after accounting for SP, while SP simultaneously carries an indirect component of FIPEA's effect.

The fitted-line plots below visualize the four regressions using the estimated equations. For the SDd models, fitted values are shown for SDd = 0 vs. SDd = 1 while holding the mediator (PCV) at its sample mean (PCV = 5.62). For the RAE model, the fitted line illustrates how RAE changes across the FIPEA range while holding SP at its sample mean (SP = 4.55).

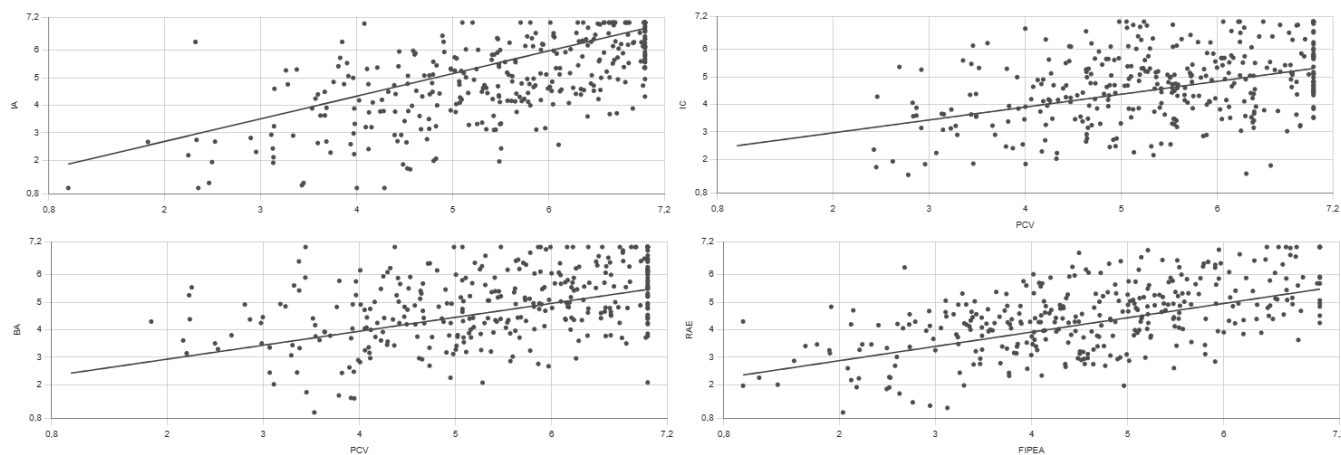


Figure 6.1: The four individual regression fitted line plots

Therefore, based on the research results, the final model of our study is depicted in **Error! Reference source not found.8.**

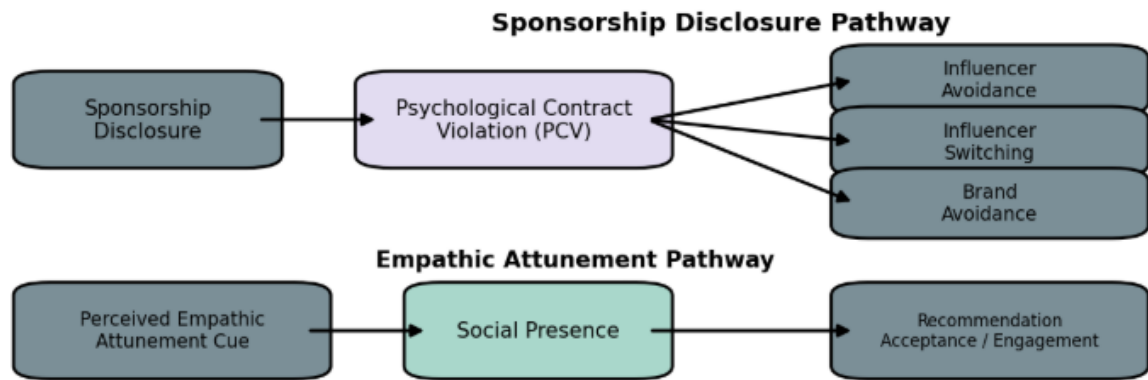


Figure 6.2: Empirical Tested Model.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) "Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement".

Chapter 7 – Discussion

Chapter 7 provides a comprehensive discussion of the key findings derived from the research results. It is organized into five sections as follows: Section 7.1 evaluates the extent to which the research objectives were achieved, and the initial assumptions were supported. Section 7.2 compares the findings with those of previous studies and Section 7.3 explores the theoretical and research implications. Section 7.4 outlines the practical Implications, and Section 7.5 presents suggested directions for future research along with the study's limitations.

7.1 The degree of answering the research objectives and the support of the initial assumptions

The dissertation addresses four research objectives. First, it examines the relationships between sponsorship disclosure and follower behavioral outcomes and the mediating effect of psychological contract violation in these relationships. Second, it examines the relationships between influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues and recommendation acceptance in fashion contexts, and the mediating effect of social presence in this relationship. Third, it investigates whether the moderating role of honesty declarations and follower cynicism on the relationships between sponsorship disclosure, psychological contract violation, and follower behavioral outcomes. Fourth it investigates the moderating role of product frame on the relationship between influencers' perceived empathic attunement cues, social presence, and recommendation acceptance.

The study meets its objectives by empirically validating a dual-path EVT model for Greek fashion influencers. For research objective 1, it tests whether sponsorship disclosure directly affects Influencer Avoidance (IA), Influencer Switching (IC/IS, switching to new influencers), and Brand Avoidance (BA). Contrary to expectations (H1a–H1c), disclosure did not significantly increase these outcomes. Group differences were small, non-significant, or marginal, and switching was lower under disclosure.

Research objective 2 is strongly supported, as perceived empathic attunement, measured by the Feelings of Interpersonal Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA) scale, is positively associated with recommendation acceptance/engagement (RAE), accounting for 30.7% of the variance. Research objectives 3 and 4 are only partially addressed in

terms of outcomes. The proposed boundary conditions did not significantly alter the focal relationships; interaction terms and indices of moderated mediation (where the strength or direction of mediation depends on another variable) were generally non-significant.

Regarding the initial assumptions, the “two concurrent pathways” assumption is partly supported. A negative breach route and a positive socio-emotive route are both empirically identifiable but do not operate as initially expected through direct effects. The “PCV mediates commercial disclosure effects” assumption is supported, as disclosure relates to perceived contract violation (PCV) and Brand Avoidance, and the indirect effects via PCV are significant for all three outcomes (H3a–H3c). The “social presence mediates empathic effects” assumption is also supported by partial mediation, indicating that social presence only partly explains the relationship between empathy and recommendation outcomes.

7.2 Relating the findings to earlier work

Grounded in Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT), the findings largely uphold the dissertation’s dual-path logic, but they also nuance how “transparency paradoxes” unfold in this Greek fashion-influencer context. Sponsorship disclosure did not directly increase influencer avoidance, switching, or brand avoidance (H1a–H1c not supported), suggesting that audiences do not respond mechanically to the mere presence of #ad-style cues. Instead, followers’ negative reactions were best understood as expectancy-based relational appraisals (Burgoon, 1993). What matters is whether the interaction is interpreted as a breach of implicit relational obligations, not disclosure per se.

Consistent with psychological contract theory (Rousseau, 1995) and its use in influencer settings (Jhawar et al., 2025; Robinson & Morrison, 2000), psychological contract violation (PCV) was the central mechanism explaining avoidance-related outcomes. Specifically, the study found that PCV fully mediated all three negative behavioral endpoints (H3a–H3c), indicating that the effect of contract violation accounted for these outcomes entirely. This aligns with prior work linking perceived relational breach to withdrawal and punitive responses (Wong et al., 2019; Grégoire et al., 2009).

Importantly, the empirical results indicate that non-disclosure is more violation-inducing than disclosure in our sample. Disclosure leads to lower PCV, which suggests that concealment may be a stronger expectancy violation. This interpretation is compatible

with EVT's focus on contextually formed expectations and with the PKM argument. Persuasion inferences depend on how norms of transparency are learned and enacted (Boerman et al., 2017; Evans et al., 2017; Friestad & Wright, 1994).

On the “bright side” pathway, results strongly support Liu et al. (2025). Perceived empathic attunement robustly increased recommendation acceptance (H2 supported). Social presence partially mediated this effect (H4 supported), consistent with social presence foundations (Biocca et al., 2003) and measurement tradition (Hassanein & Head, 2005; Gefen & Straub, 2004). The partial mediation suggests that empathic attunement likely provides extral relational value beyond “feeling human contact”, which resonates with parasocial-authenticity accounts (Audrezet et al., 2020; Tukachinsky, 2011).

Finally, moderation tests for honesty declaration, follower cynicism, and virtue/vice framing were not significant (H5–H7 not supported). This suggests these variables did not alter the main effects observed, and that the fundamental relational factors of PCV and social presence are more influential in this context than written assurances or product framing.

These results speak directly to recent calls to move beyond “disclosure-as-a-cue” models by explaining influencer outcomes through relational and interactional mechanisms (e.g., parasocial/relational processes and platform affordances) and by expanding evidence outside heavily studied Anglo-American settings, gaps highlighted in 2026 syntheses of influencer relationship and sponsorship-disclosure research (Aw et al., 2026; Ha et al., 2026).

7.3 Theoretical and research implications

According to modern explanations of Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT) and its appraisal-based logic, influencer-follower exchange is a relational reality shaped by assessments of trust, obligation, and social connectedness rather than a fixed “message-and-effect” system (Burgoon, 2016). The results support this. This viewpoint holds that disclosure is not always harmful because followers' perceptions of the relationship determine its meaning. According to empirical research, sponsorship disclosure had an indirect impact through Psychological Contract Violation (PCV) rather than a direct impact on influencer avoidance, switching, or brand avoidance. In line with recent expectancy-violation research that views PCV as a crucial mediating mechanism linking

sponsorship disclosure to avoidance-related outcomes, the data indicated that non-disclosure was associated with higher PCV, suggesting that PCV is the primary breach mechanism that transforms transparency cues into withdrawal reactions (Jhawar et al. 2025).

The findings are consistent with a mechanism-based explanation from an epistemological perspective. Finding latent mediators (PCV and social presence) is a better way to explain transparency paradoxes than depending only on distinct, observable cues. Additionally, the "bright side" EVP approach is validated. Consumer empathy and immersive experience mediate the effects of influencer attributes on evaluative responses under sponsorship conditions, according to recent influencer-marketing research (Jung & Im, 2021). Recommendation acceptance is greatly increased by perceived empathic attunement, partly through social presence, indicating that socio-emotive inference and experienced "human contact" are still important in persuading followers.

These results suggest that relational breach and socio-emotive presence should be given top priority as fundamental explanatory constructs in EVT applications in influencer marketing. The study demonstrates the importance of defining and evaluating dual, concurrent pathways (breach vs. presence) with validated measurement and mediation logic. Boundary cues were treated as empirically contestable rather than presumed determinants and, in this case, did not significantly change the primary pathways.

7.4 Practical implications

The findings suggest that successful influencer marketing should be approached as a relationship system rather than merely a means of disseminating messages, in which followers evaluate actions based on perceived responsibilities, equity, and the "social reality" of the relationship. Sponsorship transparency ought to be viewed by creators and brands as a fundamental relational standard. Psychological Contract Violation (PCV), the primary trigger that turns transparency cues into withdrawal reactions, is less likely to occur when audiences perceive concealment and receive timely and consistent disclosure (e.g., switching, avoiding influencers, and avoiding brands). As a result, proactive expectation management and compliance-by-design should be given top priority in campaign governance.

However, the results show that performance improves when the "bright-side" socioemotional path is strengthened. By creating content that encourages empathy and boosts social presence, creators and brand teams can increase the acceptance of recommendations. Disclosure is not replaced by these strategies. Instead, by making the conversation feel more human, respectful, and focused, they reduce relational tension.

7.5 Further research and limitations

There are several limitations of our study. First, the evidence is based on self-reported perceptual measures, which may exaggerate relationships because of common-method bias and may not accurately reflect avoidance/switching behavior. Another drawback is that it is challenging to infer how expectancy appraisals, psychological contract violation (PCV), and social presence evolve over time in the influencer-follower relationship, as the design captures responses at a single point in time. Another limitation is the operationalization of sponsorship transparency, as well as the specific stimulus and measurement decisions made in the study. However, disclosure effects are known to vary depending on message design, audience characteristics, platform context, and algorithmic constraints. This can affect what followers notice and how they interpret it (Uysal et al., 2026).

By broadening the relational and platform ecology in which violations are evaluated, future research can support EVT-based explanations. Future research should specifically use longitudinal or multiwave designs to track the accumulation or dissipation of PCV following repeated sponsored posts. Additionally, use behavioral indicators to enhance perceptions and explicitly model platform affordances that impact parasocial interaction and relationship formation. In line with Aw et al. (2026). These fields often have weak connections to transactional outcomes and are understudied.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

Using a dual-pathway Expectancy Violation Theory (EVT) model that combined a negative disclosure route and a positive empathic-attunement route, the dissertation investigated the transparency paradox in Greek fashion influencer marketing. Overall, the results demonstrate that transparency does not function in a straightforward linear fashion: recommendation acceptance was clearly positively impacted by empathic attunement, but sponsorship disclosure by itself did not directly raise influencer avoidance, influencer switching, or brand avoidance. Therefore, the study shows that followers' reactions are more influenced by the relational and socio-emotional meanings associated with influencer communication than by disclosure cues per se.

Regarding the first research objective, the study found that the disclosure of sponsorship did not directly lead to unfavorable behavioral outcomes. Rather than being directly related to disclosure, its effects emerged indirectly through psychological contract violation, suggesting that followers react negatively when they perceive a breach of relational expectations and authenticity. Regarding the second research goal, recommendation acceptance was greatly enhanced by perceived empathic attunement, both directly and indirectly through social presence. This demonstrates that influencers become more persuasive and socially significant when they are perceived as understanding the needs and viewpoints of their followers.

The third and fourth research objectives did not support the proposed boundary conditions. The product frame, follower cynicism, and honesty declaration did not significantly moderate the relationships analyzed in the model. These findings suggest that the model's explanatory power stems primarily from its mediating mechanisms rather than the suggested moderators. In particular, psychological contract violation remained the primary explanation for negative responses to sponsorship-related content, while social presence remained the primary explanation for positive recommendation outcomes.

In line with the discussion in Chapter 7, the study contributes to the literature by advancing a dual-path EVT explanation of influencer marketing, showing that negative and positive follower responses are produced through different but concurrent mechanisms. More specifically, the dissertation contributes to the study of digital influencer marketing by explaining transparency paradoxes through relational breach and socio-emotive presence, rather than treating disclosure as uniformly beneficial or harmful.

It also extends this discussion to the under-researched context of Greek fashion influencers, thereby enriching digital marketing knowledge beyond Anglo-American settings.

The study is of particular value to digital and influencer marketing scholars, as well as to brands, campaign managers, influencers, and regulatory stakeholders interested in transparency and the publics' trust. The research results indicate that practitioners should place greater emphasis on upholding authenticity, reducing perceived relational breach, and enhancing compassionate, socially present communication than on rigorously following disclosure rules. The study offers a cogent foundation for future research across cultures, platforms, and influencer types, despite limitations stemming from its cross-sectional design and self-reported measures. The dissertation concludes by demonstrating that relational credibility and emotional attunement are just as important to persuasive effectiveness in fashion influencer marketing as transparency.

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Appendix A: “Questionnaire”

COVER LETTER

Dear Madam/Sir,

For the research needs of the dissertation titled *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*, we would like to invite you to participate in our study.

The dissertation is prerequisite for the successful completion of the Master in Business Administration (M.B.A.) Programme of the Hellenic Open University (H.O.U.). The study aims to examine transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing by exploring how sponsorship disclosure, honesty declarations, and product framing interact with empathic attunement and social presence to shape consumer responses in the Greek context.

Based on the survey method, the responses of Greek consumers who follow fashion influencers on social media platforms (e.g., Instagram) are investigated.

Your participation in this study is of great importance to us. It is completely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any stage. It should only take you a few minutes to complete the survey.

The collected data will be used for the research needs of this dissertation.

Feel free to contact us.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Theodora Demeka Postgraduate student, Hellenic Open	Dr. George Spais Supervisor, Hellenic Open
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QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Fashion Influencer Engagement

1. Do you use Instagram? (mark (X) one answer)

☐ Yes

☐ No

[If you answered "No", please do not continue with the questionnaire. Thank you for your time.]

2. Do you follow any fashion influencers on Instagram? (mark (X) one answer)

☐ Yes

☐ No

[If you answered "No", please do not continue with the questionnaire. Thank you for your time.]

3. Have you ever seen a fashion influencer promote or recommend a product (e.g., clothing, accessories, beauty products) on Instagram? (mark (X) one answer)

☐ Yes

☐ No

[If you answered "No", please do not continue with the questionnaire. Thank you for your time.]

4. Which fashion influencers do you follow?

Instruction. Please tick (✓) all the fashion influencers you **currently follow** on any platform (e.g., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube). If you don't see someone you follow, select "Other (write-in)" and specify.

A) Greek fashion influencers

☐ **Evangelie Smyrniotaki (Style Heroine)** — Greek fashion influencer/creative director, profiled by *Vogue Greece* and known for luxury collaborations.

☐ **Elena Galifa** — Greek fashion/lifestyle creator and TV fashion personality (GNTM coach), with long-running content across Instagram/YouTube.

☐ **Mary Sinatsaki (Mairiboo)** — Greek presenter and long-time fashion/lifestyle creator with large YouTube/Instagram presence.

☐ **Ioanna Touni (@j.touni)** — Greek Instagram fashion/lifestyle creator with high follower base (ranking lists place her among the top in Greece).

☐ **Nefeli & Natalia Georgala (By Nef & Nat / Twinfashion)** — Greek fashion duo with international brand collaborations.

☐ **Other Greek fashion influencer(s)** (please specify):

B) Global fashion influencers

- ☐ **Chiara Ferragni** — Italian pioneer of fashion influencing; entrepreneur (The Blonde Salad/Chiara Ferragni Collection).

- ☐ **Aimee Song (Song of Style)** — US-based OG blogger/designer; BoF 500; launched knitwear label Amiya

- ☐ **Camila Coelho** — Brazilian-American fashion/beauty entrepreneur (Camila Coelho Collection; *Elaluz*);
- ☐ **Leonie Hanne** — German luxury fashion influencer; *Vogue Scandinavia* digital cover during Paris Couture Week.
- ☐ **Negin Mirsalehi** — Dutch-Iranian fashion/beauty influencer; founder of haircare brand *Gisou*.
- ☐ **Bryanboy (Bryan Grey Yambao)** — Filipino-Swedish OG fashion blogger; BoF 500; Perfect Magazine editor.
- ☐ **Other global fashion influencer(s)** (please specify): _____

Section B — Your behavior as a follower

5. Please select one influencer from the above you follow most closely (write the @handle): _____

Following and exposure

6. How long have you followed this influencer (mark (X) one answer)?

☐ <6 months ☐ 6–12 months ☐ 1–2 years ☐ 2–3 years ☐ 3+ years

7. How often do you see their content (any platform (mark (X) one answer))?

☐ Several times daily ☐ Daily ☐ 3–5 times/week ☐ Weekly ☐ 3–5 times/month

8. Which platforms do you mainly use for this influencer (mark (X) one answer)?

☐ Instagram ☐ TikTok ☐ YouTube ☐ Blog/Website ☐ Other: _____

9. Engagement actions (mark (X) all that apply over the last 30 days)

- ☐ Liked posts/reels/stories
- ☐ Commented on posts
- ☐ Saved posts to revisit
- ☐ Shared posts via DM/story
- ☐ Clicked product links
- ☐ Joined live streams
- ☐ None of the above

Section C: Demographic Profile

10. Please select your gender (mark (X) one answer).

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ I prefer not to say

11. Please select the age group you belong (mark (X) one answer).

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 34
- ☐ 35 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 64
- ☐ 65 or over

[If you chose "Under 18", please do not answer the following questions.]

12. Please select the highest level of education you have completed (mark (X) one answer).

- ☐ Basic Education
- ☐ Secondary Education
- ☐ Higher Education
- ☐ Postgraduate Studies
- ☐ Other

13. In which city do you currently reside? (mark (X) one answer)

- ☐ Athens ☐ Piraeus ☐ Thessaloniki ☐ Patras ☐ Larisa ☐ Volos
- ☐ Heraklion ☐ Chania ☐ Other

Section D: Sponsored Post Observation

[Please think about a recent fashion influencer post you saw that recommended or featured a product. Answer the following questions based on that post.]

14. Based on the post you just thought of, did it include a sponsorship disclosure? (for example: 'Paid partnership', '#ad', '#sponsored' or a brand tag indicating a partnership)? (mark (X) one answer)

- ☐ Yes, the post included a sponsorship disclosure
- ☐ No, the post did not include a sponsorship disclosure

15. Did the post explicitly state that, despite being sponsored, the opinions expressed were honest and unbiased? (mark (X) one answer)

- ☐ Yes, the post included an honesty declaration
- ☐ No, the post did not include an honesty declaration

16. How was the product in the post presented? (mark (X) one answer)

- ☐ By emphasizing long-term benefits (e.g., sustainability, quality, investment pieces)
- ☐ By emphasizing immediate pleasure or indulgence (e.g., trendiness, instant gratification, enjoyment)

Section E: Psychological Contract Violation

17. The following statements relate to *psychological contract violation*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel a great deal of anger towards the influencer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel that the influencer has violated the contract between us.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel let down by the influencer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influencer has failed to meet the obligations I expected from them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section F: Influencer Avoidance

18. The following statements relate to *influencer avoidance*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would keep as much distance as possible between the influencer and myself.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would avoid following the Instagram page of the influencer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would avoid the influencer's posts in the future.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would limit my exposure to the influencer's content.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section G: Influencer Switching

19. The following statements relate to *influencer switching*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I do not expect to keep following the influencer for long.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I consider following other influencers with similar content.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I plan to shift my attention to alternative influencers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I plan to replace that influencer with someone else.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section H: Brand Avoidance

20. The following statements relate to *brand avoidance*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would not want to buy the brand featured in the post.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would cut off my relationship with the brand featured in the post.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would rather buy any other brand than the brand featured in the post.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section I: Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement

21. The following statements relate to *perceived empathic attunement*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The influencer understands how I feel.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influencer understands my needs and preferences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influencer responds from my perspective.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influencer's content reflects what matters to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section J: Social Presence

22. The following statements relate to *social presence*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel a sense of human contact with the influencer.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The influencer felt like a real, socially present person.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The interaction with the influencer felt personal.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section K: Recommendation Acceptance

23. The following statements relate to *recommendation acceptance*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would consider the influencer's recommendation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am willing to act on the influencer's recommendation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would engage positively with the recommended product.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Section L: Follower Cynicism

24. The following statements relate to *follower cynicism*. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please tick (X) one answer for each statement.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Most influencers do not mind manipulating consumers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers mainly act in their own self-interest.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers see followers as means to an end.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers exaggerate claims to persuade audiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers are generally dishonest about commercial motives.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers would break rules if it benefited them.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers cannot be trusted.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Influencers exploit followers for profit.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for completing the questionnaire!

ΣΥΝΟΛΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΗ

Αξιότιμη κυρία/Αξιότιμε Κύριε,

Για τις ερευνητικές ανάγκες της διπλωματικής εργασίας με τίτλο: «Παράδοξα διαφάνειας στο μάρκετινγκ επιρροής μόδας στην Ελλάδα: Ένα μοντέλο Θεωρίας Παραβίασης Προσδοκιών για τα σήματα δήλωσης και τον ενσυναισθητικό συντονισμό», θα θέλαμε να σας προσκαλέσουμε να συμμετάσχετε στην έρευνά μας .

Η εκπόνηση της διπλωματικής εργασίας αποτελεί βασική προϋπόθεση για την επιτυχή ολοκλήρωση του Μεταπτυχιακού Προγράμματος Σπουδών στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (Master in Business Administration-M.B.A.) του Ελληνικού Ανοικτού Πανεπιστημίου (ΕΑΠ). Η μελέτη στοχεύει να εξετάσει τα παράδοξα διαφάνειας στο μάρκετινγκ των επιρροέων μόδας, διερευνώντας πώς η δήλωση χορηγιών, οι δηλώσεις ειλικρίνειας και η διαμόρφωση προϊόντων αλληλεπιδρούν με την ενσυναίσθηση και την κοινωνική παρουσία για να διαμορφώσουν τις αντιδράσεις των καταναλωτών στο ελληνικό πλαίσιο.

Με βάση τη μέθοδο της έρευνας, διερευνώνται οι απαντήσεις των Ελλήνων καταναλωτών που ακολουθούν επιρροείς μόδας σε πλατφόρμες κοινωνικής δικτύωσης (π.χ. Instagram). Η συμμετοχή σας στην παρούσα έρευνα έχει σπουδαία αξία για εμάς, είναι πλήρως εθελοντική και διατηρείτε το δικαίωμα να υπαναχωρήσετε οποιαδήποτε στιγμή. Θα χρειαστούν μόνο μερικά λεπτά για να ολοκληρώσετε την έρευνα.

Τα δεδομένα που θα συλλεχθούν θα χρησιμοποιηθούν για τις ερευνητικές ανάγκες της παρούσας διπλωματικής εργασίας.

Μη διστάσετε να επικοινωνήσετε μαζί μας.

Σας ευχαριστούμε εκ των προτέρων για την συνεργασία σας.

Θεοδώρα Δεμέκα

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ΕΡΩΤΗΜΑΤΟΛΟΓΙΟ

Ενότητα Α: Δέσμευση στους Επιρροείς Μόδας

1. Χρησιμοποιείτε Instagram? (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Ναι

☐ Όχι

[Αν απαντήσατε "Όχι", παρακαλούμε μην συνεχίσετε με το ερωτηματολόγιο .
Ευχαριστούμε για το χρόνο σας.]

2. Ακολουθείτε κάποιον/α επιρροέα μόδας στο Instagram; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Ναι

☐ Όχι

[Αν απαντήσατε "Όχι", παρακαλούμε μην συνεχίσετε με το ερωτηματολόγιο .
Ευχαριστούμε για το χρόνο σας.]

3. Έχετε δει ποτέ έναν/μία επιρροέα μόδας να προωθεί ή να προτείνει ένα προϊόν (π.χ., ρουχισμός, αξεσουάρ, προϊόντα ομορφιάς) στο Instagram; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Ναι

☐ Όχι

[Αν απαντήσατε "Όχι", παρακαλούμε μην συνεχίσετε με το ερωτηματολόγιο .
Ευχαριστούμε για το χρόνο σας.]

4. Ποιόν/α επιρροέα μόδας ακολουθείτε;

Σημειώστε (X) όλους τους επιρροείς μόδας που ακολουθείτε αυτή τη στιγμή σε οποιαδήποτε πλατφόρμα (π.χ., Instagram, TikTok, YouTube). Αν δεν ακολουθείτε κάποιον , επιλέξτε «Άλλο (γράψτε)» και γίνετε πιο συγκεκριμένοι.

Α) Έλληνες Επιρροείς μόδας

☐ **Ευαγγελία Σμυρνιωτάκη (StyleHeroine)** — Ελληνίδα επιρροέας μόδας /δημιουργική διευθύντρια, για την οποία έχει κάνει το προφίλ της η Ελληνική Vogue και είναι γνωστή για τις συνεργασίες της με πολυτελή προϊόντα.

☐ **Έλενα Γαλιφά** — Ελληνίδα δημιουργός μόδας/τρόπου ζωής και τηλεοπτική προσωπικότητα μόδας (προπονήτρια στο GNTM), με μακροχρόνιο περιεχόμενο σε Instagram/YouTube.

☐ **Μαίρη Σινατσάκη (Mairiboo)** — Ελληνίδα παρουσιάστρια και δημιουργός μόδας/τρόπου ζωής με μακρά παρουσία στο YouTube/Instagram.

☐ **Ιωάννα Τούνη (@j.touni)** — Ελληνίδα δημιουργός μόδας/τρόπου ζωής στο Instagram με υψηλή βάση ακολούθων (οι λίστες κατάταξης την κατατάσσουν ανάμεσα στις κορυφαίες στην Ελλάδα).

☐ **Νεφέλη & Ναταλία Γεωργαλά (ByNef&Nat / Twinfashion)** — Ελληνικό δίδυμο μόδας με διεθνείς συνεργασίες με επώνυμες μάρκες.

☐ Άλλος Έλληνας επιρροέας μόδας (παρακαλώ διευκρινίστε): _____

B) Διεθνείς επιρροείς μόδας

☐ **ChiaraFerragni** — Ιταλίδα πρωτοπόρος στην επιρροή της μόδας· επιχειρηματίας (TheBlondeSalad/ChiaraFerragniCollection).

☐ **AimeeSong (SongofStyle)** — OG blogger/σχεδιαστής με έδρα τις ΗΠΑ, BoF 500, λάνσαρε την ετικέτα πλεκτών Amiya.

☐ **CamilaCoelho** — Βραζιλιάνο-αμερικανίδα επιχειρηματίας μόδας/ομορφιάς (CamilaCoelhoCollection, Elaluz).

☐ **Leonie Hanne** — Γερμανίδα επιρροέας μόδας πολυτελείας; Ψηφιακό εξώφυλλο μόδας στην Σκανδιναβική *Vogue* κατά την διάρκεια της εβδομάδας Υψηλής Ραπτικής στο Παρίσι.

☐ **NeginMirsalehi** — Ολλανδοϊρανή επιρροέας μόδας/ομορφιάς· ιδρύτρια της μάρκας περιποίησης μαλλιών Gisou.

☐ **Bryanboy (Bryan Grey Yambao)** — Φιλιππινέζο OG blogger μόδας, BoF 500, Συντάκτης του περιοδικού Perfect.

☐ Άλλος/οι Διεθνείς επιρροείς μόδας (διευκρινίστε): _____

Ενότητα Β —Η συμπεριφορά σας ως ακόλουθος

5. Επιλέξτε έναν επιρροέα από τους παραπάνω που ακολουθείτε περισσότερο (γράψτε @handle): _____

Παρακολούθηση και έκθεση

6. Πόσο χρονικό διάστημα ακολουθείτε αυτόν/η τον/την επιρροέα (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση) ;

☐ <6 μήνες ☐ 6–12 μήνες ☐ 1–2 χρόνια ☐ 2–3 χρόνια ☐ 3+ χρόνια

7. Πόσο συχνά βλέπετε το περιεχόμενό τους (σε οποιαδήποτε πλατφόρμα (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση);

☐ Αρκετές φορές την ημέρα ☐ Καθημερινά ☐ 3–5 φορές /εβδομάδα

☐ 1 φορά/ εβδομάδα ☐ 1 φορά/μήνα ☐ 3–5 φορές /μήνα

8. Ποιες πλατφόρμες χρησιμοποιείτε κυρίως για αυτόν τον επιρροέα; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Instagram ☐ TikTok ☐ YouTube ☐ Ιστολόγιο/Δικτυακός Τόπος ☐

Άλλο: _____

9. Ενέργειες εμπλοκής (σημειώστε (X) όλα όσα ισχύουν τις τελευταίες 30 ημέρες)

☐ Αναρτήσεις/βίντεο reels/ιστορίες που μου άρεσαν

☐ Σχολιασμός αναρτήσεων

☐ Αποθηκευμένες αναρτήσεις για επανεξέταση

☐ Κοινοποιημένες αναρτήσεις

☐ Κλικ στους συνδέσμους προϊόντων

☐ Συμμετοχή σε ζωντανές ροές

☐ Κανένα από τα παραπάνω

Ενότητα Γ: Δημογραφικά Στοιχεία

10. Επιλέξτε το φύλο σας (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση).

☐ Άντρας ☐ Γυναίκα ☐ Προτιμώ να μην αναφέρω

11. Επιλέξτε την ηλικιακή ομάδα στην οποία ανήκετε. (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση).

☐ Κάτω των 18

☐ 18 - 24

☐ 25 - 34

☐ 35 - 44

☐ 45 - 54

☐ 55 - 64

☐ 65 ή πάνω

[Αν επιλέξατε “Κάτω των 18”, παρακαλούμε να μην συνεχίσετε στις επόμενες ερωτήσεις]

12. Επιλέξτε το υψηλότερο επίπεδο εκπαίδευσης που έχετε ολοκληρώσει (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση).

☐ Βασική Εκπαίδευση

☐ Δευτεροβάθμια Εκπαίδευση

☐ Ανώτατη Εκπαίδευση

☐ Μεταπτυχιακές Σπουδές

☐ Άλλο

13. Σε ποια πόλη διαμένετε; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση).

☐ Αθήνα ☐ Πειραιάς ☐ Θεσσαλονίκη ☐ Πάτρα ☐ Λάρισα ☐ Βόλος

☐ Ηράκλειο ☐ Χανιά ☐ Άλλη

Ενότητα Δ: Επισήμανση Χορηγούμενης Ανάρτησης

[Παρακαλούμε σκεφτείτε μια πρόσφατη ανάρτηση ενός/μιας επιρροεαμόδας που είδατε, η οποία πρότεινε ή παρουσίαζε ένα προϊόν. Απαντήστε στις ακόλουθες ερωτήσεις με βάση αυτή την ανάρτηση.]

14. Η ανάρτηση που μόλις σκεφτήκατε περιελάμβανε κάποια δήλωση χορηγίας; (για παράδειγμα: Πληρωμένη συνεργασία, «#διαφήμιση », «#χορηγούμενη» ή μια ετικέτα επωνυμίας που να υποδεικνύει συνεργασία; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Ναι, η ανάρτηση περιελάμβανε δήλωση χορηγίας

☐ Όχι, η ανάρτηση δεν περιελάμβανε δήλωση χορηγίας

15. Υπήρχε ρητή αναφορά στην ανάρτηση ότι παρά το γεγονός ότι ήταν χορηγούμενη, οι απόψεις που εκφράστηκαν ήταν ειλικρινείς και αμερόληπτες; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Ναι, η ανάρτηση περιελάμβανε δήλωση ειλικρίνειας

☐ Όχι, η ανάρτηση δεν περιελάμβανε δήλωση ειλικρίνειας

16. Πώς παρουσιάστηκε το προϊόν στην ανάρτηση; (σημειώστε (X) μία απάντηση)

☐ Δίνοντας έμφαση στα μακροπρόθεσμα οφέλη (π.χ., βιωσιμότητα, ποιότητα, επένδυση)

☐ Δίνοντας έμφαση στην άμεση ευχαρίστηση ή απόλαυση (π.χ., τάσεις, άμεση ικανοποίηση, απόλαυση)

Ενότητα Ε: Παραβίαση Ψυχολογικού Συμβολαίου

17. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην παραβίαση του ψυχολογικού συμβολαίου. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Νιώθω πολύ θυμό για τον(ην) επιρροέα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Πιστεύω ότι ο/η επιρροέας παραβίασε τη συμφωνία που είχαμε.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Νιώθω απογοητευμένος(η) από τον/την επιρροέα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ο/Η επιρροέας δεν έχει εκπληρώσει τις υποχρεώσεις που περίμενα από αυτόν(η).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Z: Αποφυγή Επιρροέα

18. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην αποφυγή των επιρροέων. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Θα κρατούσα όσο το δυνατό μεγαλύτερη απόσταση με τον/την επιρροέα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα απέφευγα να ακολουθώ τη σελίδα του/της επιρροέα στο Instagram.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα απέφευγα τις αναρτήσεις του /της επιρροέα στο μέλλον.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα περιορίζα την έκθεσή μου στο περιεχόμενο του/της επιρροέα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Η: Αλλαγή Επιρροέα

19. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην αλλαγή επιρροέα. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Δεν προσδοκώ ότι θα συνεχίσω να ακολουθώ τον/την επιρροέα για πολύ.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Σκέφτομαι να ακολουθήσω άλλους επιρροείς με παρόμοιο περιεχόμενο.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Σκοπεύω να στρέψω την προσοχή μου σε εναλλακτικούς επιρροείς.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Σκοπεύω να αντικαταστήσω αυτό τον/την επιρροέα με κάποιον άλλον(ην).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Θ: Αποφυγή Μάρκας

20. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην αποφυγή της μάρκας. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Δεν θα ήθελα να αγοράσω την μάρκα που εμφανίζεται στην ανάρτηση.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα διέκοπτα τη σχέση μου με την μάρκα που παρουσιάζεται στην ανάρτηση.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα προτιμούσα να αγοράσω οποιαδήποτε άλλη μάρκα από αυτή που εμφανίζεται στην ανάρτηση.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Ι: Ο Αντιληπτός Ενσυναισθητικός Συντονισμός των Επιρροέων Μόδας

21. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στον αντιληπτό ενσυναισθητικό συντονισμό. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Ο/Η επιρρόεας καταλαβαίνει πως νιώθω.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ο/Η επιρρόεας κατανοεί τις ανάγκες και τις προτιμήσεις μου.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ο/Η επιρρόεας ανταποκρίνεται από την δική μου σκοπιά.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Το περιεχόμενο του/της επιρρόεας αντικατοπτρίζει ότι έχει σημασία για μένα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Κ: Κοινωνική Παρουσία

22. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην *κοινωνική παρουσία*. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Νιώθω μια αίσθηση ανθρώπινης επαφής με τον/την επιρρόεα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ο/Η επιρροέας μού φάνηκε σαν ένα πραγματικό άτομο, με αισθητή κοινωνική παρουσία.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Η αλληλεπίδραση με τον/την επιρροέα είχε προσωπικό χαρακτήρα.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Α: Αποδοχή Σύστασης

23. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στην *αποδοχή της σύστασης*. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Θα λάμβανα υπόψη μου τη σύσταση του/της επιτροπής.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Είμαι πρόθυμος/η να ενεργήσω σύμφωνα με τη σύσταση του/της επιτροπής.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Θα αλληλεπιδρούσα θετικά με το προτεινόμενο προϊόν.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Ενότητα Μ: Κυνισμός των ακολούθων

24. Οι ακόλουθες δηλώσεις αφορούν στον κυνισμό των ακολούθων. Παρακαλούμε σημειώστε (X) τον βαθμό συμφωνίας ή διαφωνίας σας για κάθε μία από τις ακόλουθες δηλώσεις.

Δήλωση	Διαφωνώ απόλυτα	Διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Διαφωνώ	Ούτε συμφωνώ ούτε διαφωνώ	Μάλλον Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ	Συμφωνώ απόλυτα
Οι περισσότεροι επιρροείς δεν έχουν πρόβλημα να χειραγωγούν τους καταναλωτές.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς ενεργούν κυρίως προς το δικό τους συμφέρον.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς βλέπουν τους ακολούθους ως μέσο για την επίτευξη ενός σκοπού.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς υπερβάλλουν στους ισχυρισμούς τους για να πείσουν το κοινό.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς, σε γενικές γραμμές, δεν είναι ειλικρινείς για τα εμπορικά κίνητρα τους.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς θα παραβίαζαν τους κανόνες αν αυτό τους ωφελούσε.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς δεν είναι άξιοι εμπιστοσύνης.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Οι επιρροείς	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

εκμεταλλεύονται τους ακολούθους τους για το κέρδος.							
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Σας ευχαριστούμε για την συμπλήρωση του ερωτηματολογίου!

Appendix B: “Tables and Figures”

Model	χ^2	df	p
Baseline model	27881.480	528	
Factor model	1347.243	467	< .001

Table B-1: Chi-square test and overall model fit of the confirmatory factor analysis.
(The estimator is DWLS. The test statistic is scaled-shifted. The standard error method is robust.sem.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Fit Index	Value
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.968
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	0.964
Bentler-Bonett Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI)	0.964
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.952
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	0.877
Bollen’s Relative Fit Index (RFI)	0.945
Bollen’s Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	0.968
Relative Noncentrality Index (RNI)	0.968

Table B-2: Additional fit indices of the confirmatory factor analysis model.
(Except for PNFI, fit indices are scaled because of categorical variables in the data.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Metric	Value
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.074
RMSEA 90% CI lower bound	0.070

Metric	Value
RMSEA 90% CI upper bound	0.079
RMSEA p-value	1.018×10^{-13}
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	0.063
Hoelter's critical N ($\alpha = .05$)	150.902
Hoelter's critical N ($\alpha = .01$)	157.450
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	0.992
McDonald Fit Index (MFI)	0.351

**Table B-3: Other fit measures of the confirmatory factor analysis model.
(RMSEA results are scaled because of categorical variables in the data.)**

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Indicator MSA	
PCV1	0.918
PCV2	0.887
PCV3	0.848
PCV4	0.897
IA1	0.929
IA2	0.902
IA3	0.921
IA4	0.938
IS1	0.916
IS2	0.765
IS3	0.888
IS4	0.889

Indicator MSA	
BA1	0.869
BA2	0.837
BA3	0.905
FIPEA1	0.789
FIPEA2	0.868
FIPEA3	0.890
FIPEA4	0.877
SP1	0.882
SP2	0.792
SP3	0.890
RAE1	0.737
RAE2	0.769
RAE3	0.837
FC1	0.940
FC2	0.854
FC3	0.858
FC4	0.885
FC5	0.951
FC6	0.835
FC7	0.877
FC8	0.902
Overall	0.878

TableB-4:Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test results.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

χ^2	df	p
11693.016	528	< .001

Table B-5: Bartlett's test of sphericity.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Indicator	R ²
PCV1	0.620
PCV2	0.807
PCV3	0.927
PCV4	0.803
IA1	0.793
IA2	0.935
IA3	0.946
IA4	0.871
IS1	0.907
IS2	0.133
IS3	0.659
IS4	0.687
BA1	0.721
BA2	0.753
BA3	0.788
FIPEA1	0.579
FIPEA2	0.799
FIPEA3	0.713

Indicator R ²	
FIPEA4	0.743
SP1	0.854
SP2	0.607
SP3	0.614
RAE1	0.690
RAE2	0.794
RAE3	0.650
FC1	0.418
FC2	0.850
FC3	0.851
FC4	0.834
FC5	0.765
FC6	0.696
FC7	0.741
FC8	0.753

Table B-6: R-squared values of the CFA indicators.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Factor Indicator		Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
PCV	PCV1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	PCV2	1.141	0.034	33.730	< .001	1.075	1.207
	PCV3	1.223	0.038	32.252	< .001	1.149	1.298
	PCV4	1.138	0.042	27.380	< .001	1.057	1.220
IA	IA1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000

Factor Indicator		Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
	IA2	1.086	0.014	77.243	< .001	1.058	1.113
	IA3	1.092	0.013	81.257	< .001	1.066	1.119
	IA4	1.048	0.012	84.371	< .001	1.024	1.072
	IS	IS1	1.000	0.000		1.000	1.000
	IS2	0.383	0.049	7.811	< .001	0.287	0.479
	IS3	0.853	0.031	27.910	< .001	0.793	0.912
	IS4	0.870	0.029	29.914	< .001	0.813	0.927
BA	BA1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	BA2	1.022	0.031	32.477	< .001	0.961	1.084
	BA3	1.046	0.030	34.372	< .001	0.986	1.105
FIPEA	FIPEA1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	FIPEA2	1.175	0.037	31.932	< .001	1.103	1.247
	FIPEA3	1.110	0.035	31.895	< .001	1.041	1.178
	FIPEA4	1.133	0.037	30.855	< .001	1.061	1.205
SP	SP1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	SP2	0.843	0.027	31.726	< .001	0.791	0.895
	SP3	0.848	0.028	30.472	< .001	0.793	0.902
RAE	RAE1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	RAE2	1.073	0.035	30.268	< .001	1.003	1.142
	RAE3	0.970	0.030	31.848	< .001	0.910	1.030
FC	FC1	1.000	0.000			1.000	1.000
	FC2	1.426	0.056	25.438	< .001	1.316	1.536
	FC3	1.427	0.056	25.264	< .001	1.316	1.537

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	Lower	Upper
	FC4	1.412	0.057	24.933	< .001	1.301	1.524
	FC5	1.352	0.054	25.174	< .001	1.247	1.458
	FC6	1.290	0.052	24.579	< .001	1.187	1.393
	FC7	1.331	0.055	24.019	< .001	1.222	1.439
	FC8	1.342	0.055	24.401	< .001	1.234	1.450

Table B-7: Standardized factor loadings and parameter estimates of the CFA model.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Factor	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
PCV	0.620	0.038	16.300	< .001	0.545	0.694
IA	0.793	0.021	36.896	< .001	0.751	0.835
IS	0.907	0.040	22.529	< .001	0.828	0.986
BA	0.721	0.036	19.892	< .001	0.650	0.792
FIPEA	0.579	0.035	16.351	< .001	0.509	0.648
SP	0.854	0.027	31.254	< .001	0.800	0.907
RAE	0.690	0.033	20.936	< .001	0.626	0.755
FC	0.418	0.037	11.435	< .001	0.347	0.490

Table B-8: Factor variances of the CFA model.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Factor 1	Factor 2	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
PCV	IA	0.554	0.030	18.365	< .001	0.495	0.613
PCV	IS	0.496	0.030	16.568	< .001	0.437	0.555

Factor 1	Factor 2	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
PCV	BA	0.394	0.030	13.294	< .001	0.336	0.453
PCV	FIPEA	-0.054	0.033	-1.663	0.096	-0.118	0.010
PCV	SP	-0.066	0.040	-1.633	0.103	-0.145	0.013
PCV	RAE	-0.037	0.036	-1.035	0.301	-0.108	0.033
PCV	FC	0.104	0.028	3.658	< .001	0.048	0.160
IA	IS	0.648	0.026	25.295	< .001	0.597	0.698
IA	BA	0.514	0.032	16.134	< .001	0.452	0.577
IA	FIPEA	-0.127	0.036	-3.561	< .001	-0.197	-0.057
IA	SP	-0.186	0.044	-4.245	< .001	-0.272	-0.100
IA	RAE	-0.094	0.040	-2.332	0.020	-0.172	-0.015
IA	FC	0.145	0.031	4.629	< .001	0.083	0.206
IS	BA	0.540	0.032	17.150	< .001	0.479	0.602
IS	FIPEA	-0.153	0.038	-3.998	< .001	-0.228	-0.078
IS	SP	-0.138	0.047	-2.910	0.004	-0.231	-0.045
IS	RAE	-0.050	0.041	-1.228	0.220	-0.129	0.030
IS	FC	0.246	0.031	7.847	< .001	0.185	0.307
BA	FIPEA	-0.093	0.033	-2.866	0.004	-0.157	-0.030
BA	SP	-0.108	0.041	-2.620	0.009	-0.189	-0.027
BA	RAE	-0.117	0.035	-3.311	< .001	-0.186	-0.048
BA	FC	0.170	0.028	6.010	< .001	0.115	0.226
FIPEA	SP	0.542	0.028	19.567	< .001	0.488	0.597
FIPEA	RAE	0.413	0.029	14.108	< .001	0.355	0.470
FIPEA	FC	-0.053	0.022	-2.393	0.017	-0.096	-0.010

Factor 1	Factor 2	Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
SP	RAE	0.527	0.030	17.670	< .001	0.469	0.586
SP	FC	-0.105	0.029	-3.666	< .001	-0.162	-0.049
RAE	FC	-0.032	0.022	-1.425	0.154	-0.076	0.012

Table B-9: Factor covariances of the CFA model.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Variable	Test	Statistic	df	p
IA	Student’s t-test	1.298	341	0.195
IA	Mann-Whitney U	13202.000		0.237

Table B-10:Independent samples t-test results for influencer avoidance.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Variable	W	p
IA	0.918	< .001

Table B-11:Shapiro-Wilk normality test for influencer avoidance residuals.

Significant results suggest deviation from normality.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of Variation	Mean Rank	Sum Rank
IA	1	242	2.991	1.754	0.113	0.586	176.054	42605.000
IA	2	101	2.728	1.599	0.159	0.586	162.287	16391.000

Table B-12:Group descriptives for influencer avoidance.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Variable	Test	Statistic	df	p
IS	Student's t-test	2.182	341	0.030
IS	Mann-Whitney U	13860.000		0.050

Table B-13: Independent samples t-test results for influencer switching.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Variable	W	p
IS	0.978	< .001

Table B-14: Shapiro-Wilk normality test for influencer switching residuals.

(Significant results suggest deviation from normality)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of Variation	Mean Rank	Sum Rank
IS	1	242	3.343	1.438	0.092	0.430	178.773	43263.000
IS	2	101	2.990	1.171	0.117	0.392	155.772	15733.000

Table B-15: Group descriptives for influencer switching.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Variable	Test	Statistic	df	p
BA	Student's t-test	0.856	341	0.393
BA	Mann-Whitney U	12783.000		0.500

Table B-16: Independent samples t-test results for brand avoidance.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Variable	W	p
BA	0.954	< .001

Table B-17: Shapiro-Wilk normality test for brand avoidance residuals.

(Significant results suggest deviation from normality.)
 Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of Variation	Mean Rank	Sum Rank
BA	1	242	3.106	1.490	0.096	0.480	174.322	42186.000
BA	2	101	2.957	1.416	0.141	0.479	166.436	16810.000

Table B-18:Group descriptives for brand avoidance.
 Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Variable	1	2
1. FIPEA	—	
2. RAE	0.516***	—

Table B-19: Spearman correlation between perceived empathic attunement and recommendation acceptance.

(Spearman’s rho coefficients are reported.
 ***p < .001.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
M ₀	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.314
M ₁	0.554	0.307	0.305	1.095

Table B-20:Model summary for regression analysis predicting recommendation acceptance from perceived empathic attunement.
 (M₁ includes FIPEA.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	181.037	1	181.037	150.865	< .001
Residual	409.198	341	1.200		
Total	590.235	342			

Table B-21: ANOVA results for regression model predicting recommendation acceptance.

(The model includes FIPEA as predictor.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Model	Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
M ₀	Intercept	3.556	0.071		50.130	< .001
M ₁	Intercept	1.839	0.152		12.120	< .001
	FIPEA	0.519	0.042	0.554	12.283	< .001

Table B-22:Regression coefficients predicting recommendation acceptance from perceived empathic attunement.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	-0.4670	0.1683	-2.7741	.0058	-0.7982	-0.1359
SD → IA	0.1204	0.1500	0.8025	.4228	-0.1746	0.4154
PCV → IA	0.8208	0.0477	17.2045	< .001	0.7270	0.9146
Effect Type	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
Direct effect	0.1204	0.1500	-0.1746	0.4154		
Indirect effect via PCV	-0.3833	0.1334	-0.6490	-0.1250		

Table B-23: Mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation.

(IA = Influencer Avoidance, SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	-0.4670	0.1683	-2.7741	.0058	-0.7982	-0.1359
SD → IS	-0.1347	0.1431	-0.9413	.3472	-0.4161	0.1468
PCV → IS	0.4672	0.0455	10.2642	< .001	0.3777	0.5567

Effect Type	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Direct effect	-0.1347	0.1431	-0.4161	0.1468
Indirect effect via PCV	-0.2182	0.0782	-0.3699	-0.0673

Table B-24: Mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation.

(IS = Influencer Switching, SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	-0.4670	0.1683	-2.7741	.0058	-0.7982	-0.1359
SD → BA	0.0874	0.1537	0.5688	.5699	-0.2148	0.3896
PCV → BA	0.5061	0.0489	10.3546	< .001	0.4100	0.6022

Effect Type	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Direct effect	0.0874	0.1537	-0.2148	0.3896
Indirect effect via PCV	-0.2364	0.0856	-0.4065	-0.0746

Table B-25: Mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation.

(BA = Brand Avoidance, SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
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Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
FIPEA → SP	0.6963	0.0441	15.7909	< .001	0.6096	0.7830
FIPEA → RAE	0.2834	0.0521	5.4445	< .001	0.1810	0.3858
SP → RAE	0.3377	0.0486	6.9502	< .001	0.2421	0.4333

Effect Type	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Direct effect	0.2834	0.0521	0.1810	0.3858
Indirect effect via SP	0.2351	0.0447	0.1472	0.3222

Table B-26: Mediation analysis for the indirect effect of perceived empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence.

(FIPEA = Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement, SP = Social Presence, RAE = Recommendation Acceptance.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.2647	0.8822	3.7007	.0003	1.5295	4.9999
SD	-0.2363	0.6203	-0.3810	.7035	-1.4564	0.9838
HD	-0.1423	0.5021	-0.2834	.7770	-1.1298	0.8452
SD × HD	-0.1548	0.3577	-0.4327	.6655	-0.8583	0.5488

Model Summary Value

R	0.1867
R ²	0.0349
F	4.0811
df	3, 339
p	.0072

Interaction Effect	R ²	Change F	df1	df2	p
SD × HD	0.0005	0.1872	1	339	.6655

Table B-27: Moderation analysis examining the moderating role of honesty declaration in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation.

(SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, HD = Honesty Declaration, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation.)
Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.9943	0.9413	1.0563	.2916	-0.8572	2.8457
SD	0.3702	0.6541	0.5660	.5718	-0.9163	1.6567
FC	0.3675	0.1738	2.1148	.0352	0.0257	0.7093
SD × FC	-0.1525	0.1229	-1.2413	.2153	-0.3942	0.0892

Model Summary Value

R	0.2212
R ²	0.0489
F	5.8119
df	3, 339
p	.0007

Interaction Effect R² Change F df1 df2 p

SD × FC	0.0043	1.5409	1	339	.2153
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Table B-28: Moderation analysis examining the moderating role of follower cynicism in the relationship between sponsorship disclosure and psychological contract violation.

(SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, FC = Follower Cynicism, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”.

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	0.4671	0.6173	0.7567	.4498	-0.7472	1.6814
FIPEA	0.9205	0.1591	5.7854	< .001	0.6075	1.2335
PF	0.4163	0.3503	1.1884	.2355	-0.2727	1.1054
FIPEA × PF	-0.1401	0.0934	-1.5008	.1343	-0.3238	0.0435

Model Summary Value

R	0.6532
R ²	0.4267
F	84.0963
df	3, 339
p	< .001

Interaction Effect	R ² Change	F	df1	df2	p
FIPEA × PF	0.0038	2.2524	1	339	.1343

Table B-29: Moderation analysis examining the moderating role of product frame in the relationship between perceived empathic attunement and social presence.

(FIPEA = Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement, PF = Product Frame, SP = Social Presence)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *"Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	-0.2363	0.6203	-0.3810	.7035	-1.4564	0.9838
HD → PCV	-0.1423	0.5021	-0.2834	.7770	-1.1298	0.8452
SD × HD → PCV	-0.1548	0.3577	-0.4327	.6655	-0.8583	0.5488
PCV → IS	0.4672	0.0455	10.2642	< .001	0.3777	0.5567
SD → IS	-0.1347	0.1431	-0.9413	.3472	-0.4161	0.1468

Conditional Indirect Effects	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
HD = 1	-0.1827	0.1375	-0.4621	0.0857
HD = 2	-0.2550	0.0961	-0.4453	-0.0695

Index of Moderated Mediation	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
HD	-0.0723	0.1644	-0.3945	0.2558

Table B-30: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration.
(SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, HD = Honesty Declaration, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation, IS = Influencer Switching)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	-0.2363	0.6203	-0.3810	.7035	-1.4564	0.9838
HD → PCV	-0.1423	0.5021	-0.2834	.7770	-1.1298	0.8452
SD × HD → PCV	-0.1548	0.3577	-0.4327	.6655	-0.8583	0.5488
PCV → BA	0.5061	0.0489	10.3546	< .001	0.4100	0.6022
SD → BA	0.0874	0.1537	0.5688	.5699	-0.2148	0.3896
Conditional Indirect Effects Effect BootSE BootLLCI BootULCI						
HD = 1			-0.1979	0.1490	-0.5039	0.0799
HD = 2			-0.2762	0.1012	-0.4747	-0.0769
Index of Moderated Mediation Index BootSE BootLLCI BootULCI						
HD			-0.0783	0.1742	-0.4189	0.2800

Table B-31: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration.
(SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, HD = Honesty Declaration, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation, BA = Brand Avoidance)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	0.3702	0.6541	0.5660	.5718	-0.9163	1.6567
FC → PCV	0.3675	0.1738	2.1148	.0352	0.0257	0.7093
SD × FC → PCV	-0.1525	0.1229	-1.2413	.2153	-0.3942	0.0892
PCV → IA	0.8208	0.0477	17.2045	< .001	0.7270	0.9146
SD → IA	0.1204	0.1500	0.8025	.4228	-0.1746	0.4154
Conditional Indirect Effects Effect BootSE BootLLCI BootULCI						

Conditional Indirect Effects	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FC = 4.000	-0.1968	0.1725	-0.5311	0.1514
FC = 5.500	-0.3846	0.1427	-0.6578	-0.1041
FC = 6.620	-0.5248	0.2110	-0.9338	-0.1153

Index of Moderated Mediation	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FC	-0.1252	0.1031	-0.3278	0.0692

Table B-32: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism. (SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, FC = Follower Cynicism, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation, IA = Influencer Avoidance)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
SD → PCV	0.3702	0.6541	0.5660	.5718	-0.9163	1.6567
FC → PCV	0.3675	0.1738	2.1148	.0352	0.0257	0.7093
SD × FC → PCV	-0.1525	0.1229	-1.2413	.2153	-0.3942	0.0892
PCV → IS	0.4672	0.0455	10.2642	< .001	0.3777	0.5567
SD → IS	-0.1347	0.1431	-0.9413	.3472	-0.4161	0.1468

Conditional Indirect Effects	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FC = 4.000	-0.1120	0.0963	-0.2853	0.0927
FC = 5.500	-0.2189	0.0830	-0.3842	-0.0583
FC = 6.620	-0.2987	0.1270	-0.5668	-0.0661

Index of Moderated Mediation	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FC	-0.0712	0.0613	-0.2055	0.0343

Table B-33: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism. (SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, FC = Follower Cynicism, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation, IS = Influencer Switching).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	
SD → PCV	0.3702	0.6541	0.5660	.5718	-0.9163	1.6567	
FC → PCV	0.3675	0.1738	2.1148	.0352	0.0257	0.7093	
SD × FC → PCV	-0.1525	0.1229	-1.2413	.2153	-0.3942	0.0892	
PCV → BA	0.5061	0.0489	10.3546	< .001	0.4100	0.6022	
SD → BA	0.0874	0.1537	0.5688	.5699	-0.2148	0.3896	
Conditional Indirect Effects			Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	
FC = 4.000			-0.1214	0.1026	-0.3133	0.0905	
FC = 5.500			-0.2371	0.0905	-0.4210	-0.0652	
FC = 6.620			-0.3236	0.1388	-0.6190	-0.0720	
Index of Moderated Mediation				Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
FC				-0.0772	0.0661	-0.2159	0.0426

Table B-34: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism.

(SD = Sponsorship Disclosure, FC = Follower Cynicism, PCV = Psychological Contract Violation, BA = Brand Avoidance)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”.

Path	B	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
FIPEA → SP	0.9205	0.1591	5.7854	< .001	0.6075	1.2335
PF → SP	0.4163	0.3503	1.1884	.2355	-0.2727	1.1054
FIPEA × PF → SP	-0.1401	0.0934	-1.5008	.1343	-0.3238	0.0435
SP → RAE	0.3377	0.0486	6.9502	< .001	0.2421	0.4333
FIPEA → RAE	0.2834	0.0521	5.4445	< .001	0.1810	0.3858
Conditional Indirect Effects						
Effect	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		

Conditional Indirect Effects	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
PF = 1	0.2635	0.0527	0.1586	0.3674
PF = 2	0.2162	0.0427	0.1335	0.3031

Index of Moderated Mediation	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
PF	-0.0473	0.0362	-0.1248	0.0168

Table B-35: Moderated mediation analysis examining the indirect effect of perceived empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence across product frame conditions. (FIPEA = Fashion Influencers' Perceived Empathic Attunement, SP = Social Presence, RAE = Recommendation Acceptance, PF = Product Frame.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) "Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"

Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	p	Partial η^2
Corrected Model	112.516	3	37.505	26.615	< .001	.191
Intercept	3851.548	1	3851.548	2733.146	< .001	.890
FIPEA group	96.779	1	96.779	68.677	< .001	.168
PF dummy	0.001	1	0.001	0.001	.979	.000
FIPEA group $\times$ PF dummy	0.036	1	0.036	0.025	.874	.000
Error	477.719	339	1.409			
Corrected Total	590.235	342				

Table B-36: Two-way ANOVA examining the interaction effect of empathic attunement and product frame on recommendation acceptance.

(Dependent variable: Recommendation Acceptance (RAE))

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) "Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement"

Empathic Attunement	Product Frame	Mean	SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Low	Virtue	3.043	0.173	2.702	3.383
Low	Vice	3.017	0.101	2.818	3.217
High	Virtue	4.162	0.138	3.891	4.434

Empathic Attunement	Product Frame	Mean	SE	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
High	Vice	4.180	0.129	3.927	4.434

Table B-37: Estimated marginal means of recommendation acceptance across empathic attunement and product frame conditions.

(Low = low empathic attunement cues, High = high empathic attunement cues)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Use of Instagram	Yes	343	100.0
Follow fashion influencer	Yes	343	100.0
Seen product promotion	Yes	343	100.0
Duration of following	1-2 years	83	24.2
	3+ years	81	23.6
	<6 months	75	21.9
	6-12 months	55	16.0
	2-3 years	49	14.3
Content viewing frequency	Daily	107	31.2
	3-5 times/week	95	27.7
	Once/week	82	23.9
	Several times/day	27	7.9
	Once/month	21	6.1
	3-5 times/month	11	3.2
Platforms used	Instagram	277	80.8
	TikTok	48	14.0
	YouTube	11	3.2

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Blog/Website	5	1.5
	Pinterest	1	0.3
	Viber	1	0.3
	Female	219	63.8
	Male	121	35.3
	Prefer not to say	3	0.9
Age group	35-44	117	34.1
	25-34	92	26.8
	18-24	85	24.8
	45-54	42	12.2
	55-64	6	1.7
	65+	1	0.3
Education level	Higher education	128	37.3
	Postgraduate	121	35.3
	Secondary education	81	23.6
	Other	10	2.9
	Basic education	3	0.9
City of residence	Other	205	59.8
	Athens	82	23.9
	Patras	31	9.0
	Thessaloniki	14	4.1
	Larisa	6	1.7
	Piraeus	4	1.2

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
	Heraklion	1	0.3

Table B-38: Demographic characteristics of the sample.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

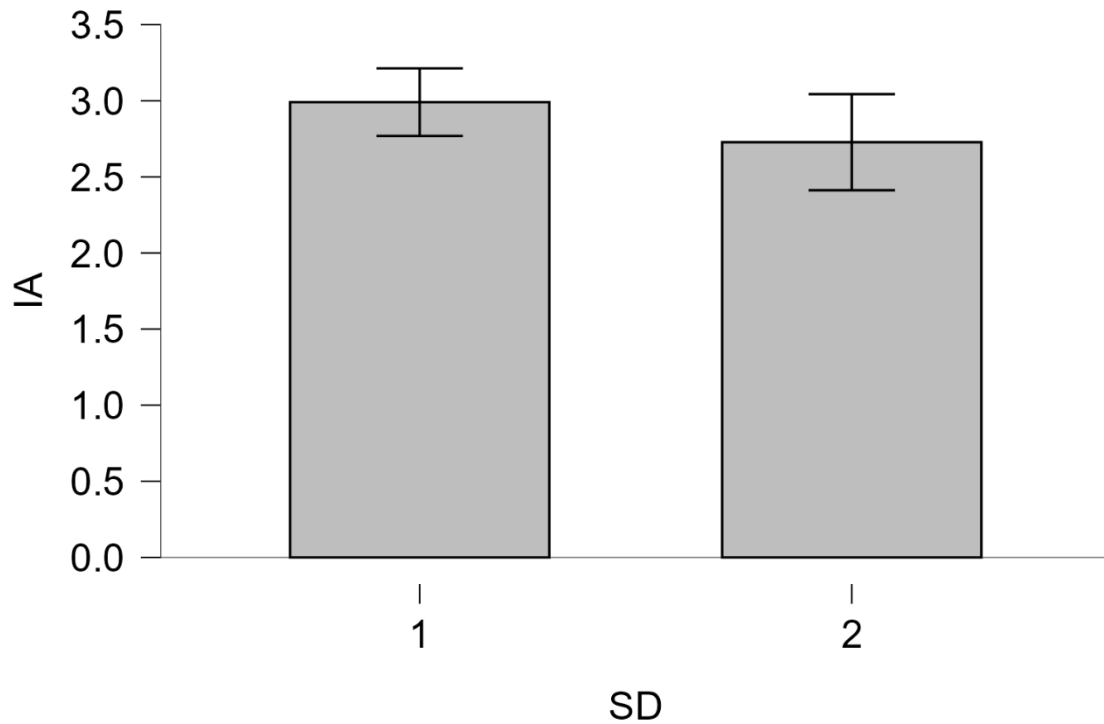


Figure B.1: Mean levels of influencer avoidance across sponsorship disclosure conditions.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

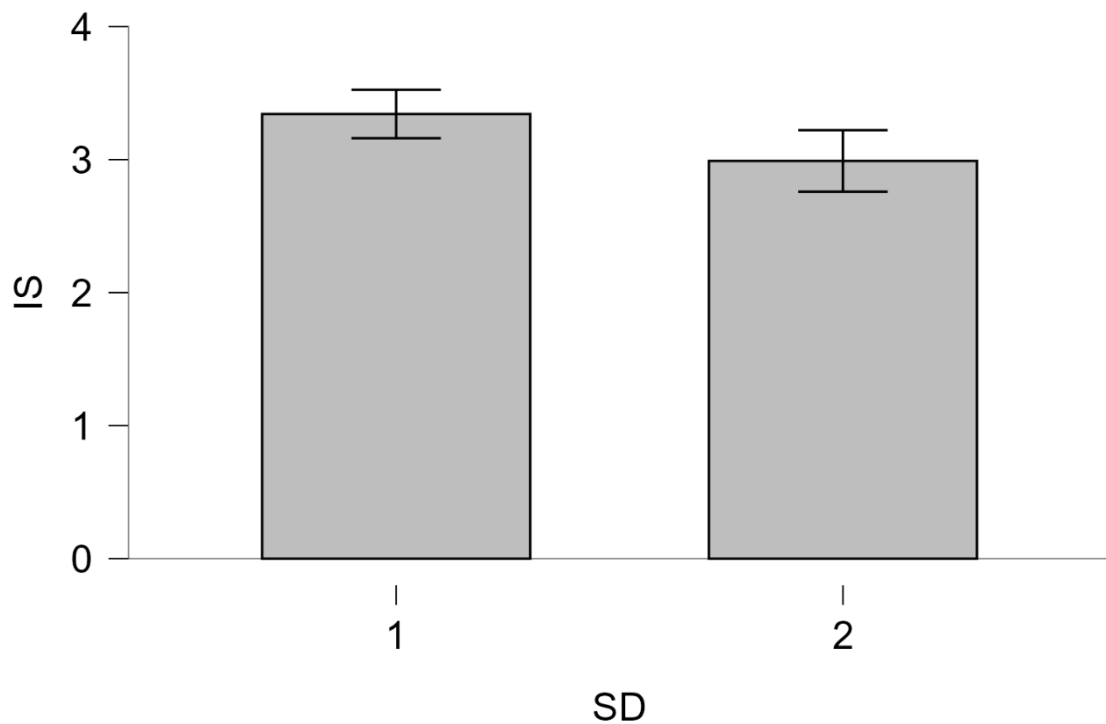


Figure B.2: Mean levels of influencer switching across sponsorship disclosure conditions.
Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

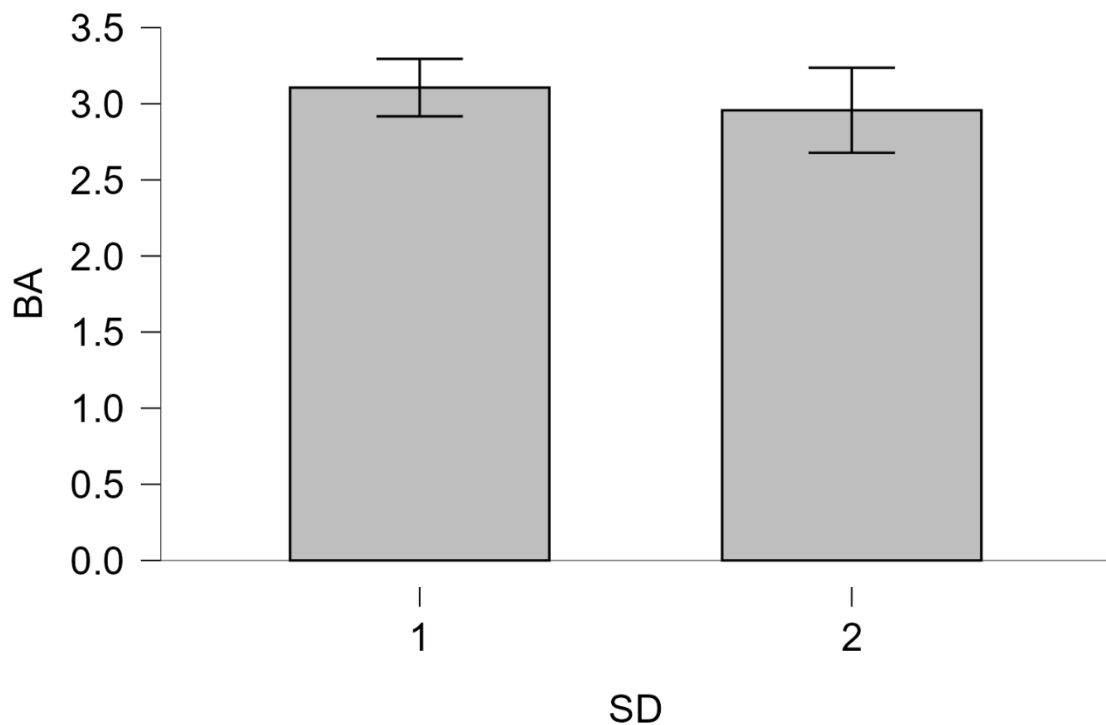


Figure B.3: Mean levels of brand avoidance across sponsorship disclosure conditions.
Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

Hypothesis Outcome	Group	n	M	SD	Median	IQR	U	p	rrb
H1a	Influencer Avoidance No disclosure	101	5.27	1.60	5.50	3.00	11240	.237	-.080
	Disclosure	242	5.01	1.75	5.25	2.50			
H1b	Influencer Switching No disclosure	101	5.01	1.17	5.00	1.75	10582	.050	-.134
	Disclosure	242	4.66	1.44	4.75	1.75			
H1c	Brand Avoidance No disclosure	101	5.04	1.42	5.00	2.00	11659	.499	-.046
	Disclosure	242	4.89	1.49	5.00	2.00			

Table B-39: Mann-Whitney U results and descriptive statistics for H1a-H1c.

(Note. rrb = rank-biserial correlation coefficient.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Hypothesis	Relationship	ρ	β	R^2	F	p
H2	FIPEA $\rightarrow$ RAE	.516	.554	.307	150.865	< .001

Table B-40: Spearman correlation and regression analysis for H2.

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Intercept	5.660	0.236	-	24.000	< .001
Sponsorship Disclosure (SDd)	-0.391	0.293	-0.124	-1.340	.182
Honesty Declaration (HDd)	0.452	0.294	0.145	1.540	.126
SDd × HDd	-0.155	0.358	-0.054	-0.433	.666

Table B-41: Moderation analysis examining the interaction effect of sponsorship disclosure and honesty declaration on psychological contract violation (H5a).

(Note. $R^2 = .035$, Adjusted $R^2 = .026$, $\Delta R^2 = .001$, $F_{\text{change}} = 0.187$, $p = .666$. SDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present. HDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Honesty declaration condition Conditional effect of SD on PCV

HD absent (0)	-0.391
HD present (1)	-0.546

Table B-42:Conditional effects of sponsorship disclosure on psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration (H5a)

(Note. Negative coefficients indicate lower psychological contract violation under sponsorship disclosure conditions.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	Estimate	95% CI
Conditional indirect effect when HD = 0	-0.179	[-0.466, 0.081]
Conditional indirect effect when HD = 1	-0.250	[-0.429, -0.065]
Index of moderated mediation	-0.071	[-0.371, 0.248]

Table B-43:Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration (H5b)

(Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples. HD = honesty declaration.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Path	B	p
SDd → PCV	-0.391	.182
HDd → PCV	0.452	.126

Path	B	p
SDd × HDd → PCV	-0.155	.666
PCV → Influencer Switching	0.457	< .001
SDd → Influencer Switching	-0.161	.262

Table B-44: Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting influencer switching (H5b).

(Note. SDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present. HDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	Estimate	95% CI
Conditional indirect effect when HD = 0	-0.194	[-0.489, 0.075]
Conditional indirect effect when HD = 1	-0.271	[-0.466, -0.082]
Index of moderated mediation	-0.077	[-0.398, 0.260]

Table B-45: Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of honesty declaration (H5c)

(Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples. HD = honesty declaration.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Path	B	p
SDd → PCV	-0.391	.182
HDd → PCV	0.452	.126
SDd × HDd → PCV	-0.155	.666
PCV → Brand Avoidance	0.496	< .001
SDd → Brand Avoidance	0.060	.697

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-46:Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting brand avoidance (H5c).

(Note. SDd: 0 = absent, 1 = present. HDD: 0 = absent, 1 = present.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	Estimate	95% CI
Low cynicism	-0.507	[-0.897, -0.121]
Moderate cynicism	-0.346	[-0.607, -0.075]
High cynicism	-0.185	[-0.520, 0.162]
Index of moderated mediation	0.122	[-0.065, 0.321]

Table B-47:Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism (H6b) (Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Path	B	p
SD ^d → PCV	-0.433	.011
FC ^c → PCV	0.062	.534
SD ^d × FC ^c → PCV	0.153	.215
PCV → Influencer Avoidance	0.800	< .001
SD ^d → Influencer Avoidance	0.158	.289

Table B-48:Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting influencer avoidance (H6b)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	Estimate	95% CI
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Effect	Estimate 95% CI	
Low cynicism	-0.271	[-0.511, -0.056]
Moderate cynicism	-0.185	[-0.328, -0.048]
High cynicism	-0.099	[-0.264, 0.086]
Index of moderated mediation	0.065	[-0.034, 0.186]

Table B-49: Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on influencer switching through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism (H6c) (Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

Path	B	p
SD ^d → PCV	-0.433	.011
FC ^c → PCV	0.062	.534
SD ^d × FC ^c → PCV	0.153	.215
PCV → Influencer Switching	0.427	< .001
SD ^d → Influencer Switching	-0.062	.651

Table B-50: Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting influencer switching (H6c).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) *“Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement”*

Effect	Estimate 95% CI	
Low cynicism	-0.301	[-0.574, -0.067]
Moderate cynicism	-0.205	[-0.370, -0.051]
High cynicism	-0.110	[-0.301, 0.094]
Index of moderated mediation	0.072	[-0.037, 0.205]

Table B-51: Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of sponsorship disclosure on brand avoidance through psychological contract violation across levels of follower cynicism (H6d) (Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Path	B	p
SD ^d → PCV	-0.433	.011
FC ^c → PCV	0.062	.534
SD ^d × FC ^c → PCV	0.153	.215
PCV → Brand Avoidance	0.474	< .001
SD ^d → Brand Avoidance	0.145	.335

Table B-52: Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting brand avoidance (H6d).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Intercept	4.533	0.108	-	42.091	< .001
Perceived Empathic Attunement (FIPEA ^c)	0.780	0.074	0.728	10.492	< .001
Product Frame (PF ^d)	0.048	0.133	0.015	0.359	.720
FIPEA ^c × PF ^d	-0.140	0.093	-0.103	-1.501	.134

Table B-53: Moderation analysis examining the interaction effect of perceived empathic attunement and product frame on social presence (H7a).

(Note. R² = .427, Adjusted R² = .422. PF^d: 0 = virtue products, 1 = vice products. FIPEA^c = mean-centered perceived empathic attunement.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Model	R ²	Adjusted R ²	ΔR ²	F change	p
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Model	R ²	Adjusted R ²	ΔR ²	F change	p
Main effects model	.423	.419	-	-	-
Interaction model	.427	.422	.004	2.252	.134

Table B-54: Model comparison for the moderation effect of product frame on social presence (H7a)
(Note. The interaction model includes FIPEA^c, PF^d, and FIPEA^c × PF^d.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	Estimate	95% CI
Virtue products	0.264	[0.159, 0.374]
Vice products	0.217	[0.133, 0.302]
Index of moderated mediation	-0.047	[-0.126, 0.017]

Table B-55: Moderated mediation analysis for the indirect effect of perceived empathic attunement on recommendation acceptance through social presence across product frame conditions (H7b).
(Note. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were estimated using 5,000 bootstrap samples.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Path	B	p
FIPEA ^c → SP	0.780	< .001
PF ^d → SP	0.048	.720
FIPEA ^c × PF ^d → SP	-0.140	.134
SP → Recommendation Acceptance	0.338	< .001
FIPEA ^c → Recommendation Acceptance	0.287	< .001

Table B-56: Path coefficients for the moderated mediation model predicting recommendation acceptance (H7b).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Effect	SS	df	F	p	Partial η^2
Empathic Attunement (EAd)	36.031	1	25.568	< .001	.070
Product Frame (PFd)	0.013	1	0.009	.923	< .001
EAd $\times$ PFd	0.036	1	0.025	.874	< .001
Residuals	477.720	339	-	-	-

Table B-57:Two-way ANOVA examining the effects of empathic attunement and product frame on recommendation acceptance (H7c)

(Note. Partial η^2 values are reported as measures of effect size.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Empathic Attunement	Product Frame	n	M	SD	Median	IQR
Low empathic attunement	Virtue products	74	3.84	1.31	4.00	1.67
Low empathic attunement	Vice products	85	3.82	1.19	4.00	1.67
High empathic attunement	Virtue products	47	4.96	1.12	5.00	2.00
High empathic attunement	Vice products	137	4.98	1.14	5.00	1.67

Table B-58:Descriptive statistics for recommendation acceptance across empathic attunement and product frame conditions (H7c).

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Intercept	3.838	0.138	27.811	< .001

Predictor	B	SE	t	p
Empathic Attunement (EAd)	1.120	0.221	5.057	< .001
Product Frame (PFd)	-0.018	0.189	-0.097	.923
EAd × PFd	0.044	0.275	0.159	.874

Table B-59:Regression coefficients for the interaction effect of empathic attunement and product frame on recommendation acceptance (H7c).

(Note. EAd: 0 = low empathic attunement, 1 = high empathic attunement. PFd: 0 = virtue products, 1 = vice products.)

Source: Demeka, T. (2026) “*Transparency paradoxes in fashion influencer marketing in Greece: An Expectancy Violation Theory model of disclosure signals and empathic attunement*”

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