

**Consumer's Attitudes towards Social  
Media Advertising of Health Products  
In Ukraine and Russia**

Anastasiia Fareniuk

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Abstract <p>The use of social media in marketing and advertising have been rising for the past years and it is still rising now as well as social media is an advertising platform has various advantages. And nowadays social media is one of the main and best ways for brands to advertise their product/services.</p> <p>The main tasks and objectives are to understand the role of social media in marketing and understand what are the attitudes of the consumers towards social media advertising in general and social media advertising of health products in particular.</p> <p>For the method of the research, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used making a mixed method of the research. Because of the presence of multiple choice questions as well as open-ended questions in the online questionnaire, the mixed method was chosen. Nevertheless, the emphasis was put more on the qualitative method as it is mostly referring to the social aspect and understanding and not so much to the numbers and figures. As for the theoretical framework, the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991) was used with its three main factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control.</p> <p>Results of the research showed that overall, the consumers attitude towards advertng in social media is mainly positive for the majority of the respondents from Russia and Ukraine. Especially when it comes to the social media advertising of health products (mainly on Instagram), respondents react to such advertisement in a very positive way, not to mention the fact that to the most of the respondents, such advertising of health products is inspiring and motivational, helps to follow a healthier lifestyle.</p> <p>The research was conducted in the marketing sphere, mainly in social media marketing (SMM), thus the results show the actuality of advertisement of health products in social media and consumer's attitudes towards it. Also, for this research, the online questionnaire was used to determine the attitude towards social media advertising of health products from the consumers only from Ukraine and Russia.</p>		

Key words /tags

Consumer's Attitude, Online Marketing, Digital Marketing, social media marketing, social media advertising

Miscellaneous ([Confidential information](#))

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# 1 Introduction

This research evaluates the effect of consumer's attitude towards advertising of health products in social media in two different countries: Ukraine and Russia. It may seem that these countries are similar to each other, but in reality, they have major differences in language, mentality, way of living and etc. The study conducts the information carried from two questionnaires targeted to needed countries, which are: Ukraine and Russia. The questionnaire is oriented mostly for the students (14-25 years old) and supported by the questions concerning social media advertising of products which are promoting healthy lifestyle (products such as: matcha powder, protein bars, vitamin water and etc.) and student's (= consumer's) attitudes towards them.

This topic was chosen because of the growing popularity of the health products and its advertising in social media (especially in Instagram) by influencers, bloggers and celebrities and brands themselves. Such promotion of healthy lifestyle products by almost all the influencers in social media caused a huge demand for these products, and now there are more and more new companies in this sphere. This survey consists of questions about young people's attitudes to advertising of different health products in social media, as well as any kind of advertising and promotion in social media and how they react to it, if it makes them annoyed or opposite, interested in promoted products. Of course it depends on many factors such as consumer's age, country, way of living, their beliefs and feelings. And that's why I got interested in this topic.

## 1.1 History of Online Marketing and SMM

Online Marketing itself is a fairly new concept and way of advertising. Its history started around 1990 's, when the search engine was created, and by that, digital marketing was born. And around 2000's lots of marketers had an opportunity to publish their ads on various websites. So what's digital marketing? This term is used to indicate interactive and targeted marketing of products and services via using digital technologies, internet, social media and more in order to attract potential customers and make

them stay customers for a long period of time. In general, digital marketing is promoting services or products on the Internet, electronic billboards, TV's and more through multiple methods and channels. The online marketing channels are: video marketing, mobile marketing, website marketing, social media marketing and many more.

As for the history, digital marketing was developing more or less normally, but not too fast, comparing the rapid speed with which it develops nowadays. But with launch of YouTube, online advertising was gaining more and more popularity. As the YouTube vloggers would get more followers, brands and its digital marketers were happy to suggest advertising of their products and services on those vlogs. And YouTube became a very promising and strong platform for Online marketing, there were and still are, as it seems, endless opportunities for collaborations of brands and influencers which led to increasing sales of the products in most of the cases. As the time went by, digital marketing was growing with every year, and of course, in the beginning it was very much different from what it is now.

## 1.2 SMM- Social Media Marketing

With the increasing popularity of social media, marketing based on advertising in Facebook, Twitter and etc. has gone up as well. Social Media Marketing is a very famous term for already a couple of years. And by now, it is one of the best, easiest and effective ways of marketing, mainly focusing on the younger generation. So, what is Social Media Marketing? SMM is advertising and reaching for the people in social media via paid ads from certain influencer or social network itself and content campaigns such as posts in social media with the advertised product or service, generally posted by bloggers, celebrities and influencers. The paid ads and postings can be a visible for the followers and viewers advertisement as well as such sponsored post or etc. could be a not stated advertisement, so it is not directly told to the viewers that a certain post contains a marketing campaign.

The advantage of SMM is also in creating a strong brand awareness which leads to building trust between the consumer and a certain brand. The trust is built on the factor that a potential customer (follower or viewer of an influencer or etc.) already has trust for this person (e.g. blogger) with a number of audience, and it is easier for him/her to buy a product or service from seeing such advertisement rather than from a random advertisement on TV or on a webpage. Therefore, trust in any case in marketing is one of the most important aspects which in further lead to more effective marketing and bigger sales from it. This works in a few steps, first a certain brand which wants to raise their brand awareness through an influencer in a certain social network, for instance Instagram. A company or a brand then contacts a chosen influencer with the goal of collaboration, in order to reach more potential customers. By that, influencer tries to engage the customer by presenting the ads in their own way. The advantage of this method is in the fact that every influencer or blogger knows how to promote a product or service to their own followers, hence, viewers are more engaged to visit the website of a brand which is sited in blogger's post for example. And with that, there is a greater chance that by clicking the link to a website which a customer found in social media, and scrolling through it, he/she will actually buy some of the advertised products/services. In other words, after such social media ads, the potential customer will definitely consider trying out the brand's products and etc.

What is more, social media marketing is not only about collaborating with influencers and buying advertisement from them to promote your brand. Another important part of it is businesses having their own strong, engaging and effective social media accounts. In reality, this is how social media marketing started. If some time ago many companies were only offline, as time went by, they started going online very fast, because they needed new customers who will also continue buying from them.

Now you can't imagine any brand without a few of social media accounts, because this is how they get the feedback from their actual users and attract new ones, this is how they connect and build trust. And from how these accounts look like, depends a lot of factors e.g. if your customers stay your customers, or if they see a better and stronger brand image displayed in social media, and decide to try that company in-



stead of yours. Therefore, now for a company it is not enough just to have a few accounts in social media, the importance is in the fact how they look, if they are engaging for the potential customers and if they are put into good use in general. That is why nowadays social media marketing is the main channel through which companies advertise their products/services, and now it is growing more and more every day. Hence, in future, the more attractive the online marketing, especially SMM, the more benefits it will give to the company.

### 1.3 Why SMM is growing?

Due to increasing number of social media users, and not only younger generation, the role of social media marketing itself becomes bigger. According to Hootsuite, 3.484 billion of people are being active social media users, that's a significant number, and it grows with every year, and every day there new users to every other social network. Therefore, with a bigger number of users, meaning consumers or potential customers, the social media marketing also grows. Not to mention that, a worldwide famous social network like Instagram, has over 1 billion of users all over the world. And as it is known, today's Instagram is one of the biggest advertising platforms. It definitely stands out of other networks, because it is a place where it is fairly easy to promote your own product or service, products of the company that you are working with and advertise and start a business. Moreover, nowadays, an increasingly popular thing on this social network is info-products and info-businesses. In other words, people create businesses in Instagram to sell their knowledge and useful information to a needed target audience. With existing and active social media it is much easier to do.

Nowadays there are plenty of SMM agencies helping companies to promote their products/services in a right way which will be suitable for the company/brand. This is only the starting point, in a few years this sphere in marketing is going to be huge and probably stay for a significant amount of time. Social media is what people are using every day, this is where they get inspiration, knowledge, motivation, will to get or not to get a certain product or service, this is where can give feedback (which is crucial for any business) and where they advise something to their friends. Hence, this is why

Social media marketing is growing, and is going to grow more in the future, and that's why brands should put maximum of effort into their brand image in social media, if they want to grow too.

#### 1.4 Research on Online Marketing in Ukraine and Russia

To start with, this research is based on the questions based on digital marketing, mainly on social media marketing and their attitudes to advertising of health products, particularly in Instagram, among its users in Ukraine and Russia and the comparison of the results.

First of all, why these two countries were chosen? The main reason is that Social Media Marketing in both Ukraine and Russia is blooming now, the usage of social media is constant and big, moreover, the number of bloggers and influencers is going up with everyday too, especially among younger people. Therefore, the percentage of online marketers and digital marketing use in general, increases. The role of social media marketing in both countries is significant and effectively used by all sides that can get benefits from it: SMM agencies, single social media marketers, brands and companies and for the customers as well. As for Ukraine, the majority of social media marketing happens directly in Instagram because of the prohibition of the other popular social Russian network which was used in Ukraine too – VK (VKontakte). Today it is no longer blocked but people still use Instagram the most among all the others networks available. Both teenagers and older people (17-20 years old) use Instagram the most. And for the majority of SMM agencies, bloggers and other influencers on social media that is the target audience. Although when it comes to Russia, VK is very popular among teenagers aged 14-16 years old. They still use Instagram, but not as actively as VK. Of course it depends of the region too, and their social environment as well as people they spend the most of the time with. For the adults in Russia, aged around 20 years old and more, Instagram still stays the main social network to use and that's where they see the biggest percentage of advertisement, where they are mostly engaged to it and where it works out the most effectively.

According to a conducted research, in both Russia and Ukraine, the most used social media network is Instagram, then goes VK but only for a certain small age group. Which makes Instagram the biggest digital marketing and ad-friendly platform out of all the other social networks in these countries. Moreover, inhabitants of these two countries, mainly age group of 14-25 years old, perceive online marketing and ads in social media in a very positive way. When it comes to the least used social network in Ukraine and in Russia, that would be Twitter and Facebook, as well as it's mainly used in the English speaking countries or in Europe, and it seems like it's targeted to people living in those areas too.

In general, online marketing is very much likely to be perceived better by consumers from Ukraine and Russia because according to a research it is perceived by them very well and the ads seem to be very effective in order to engage more people to purchase a certain product or service promoted in Social Media.

## 1.5 Motivation of the Research

According to Hootsuite Academy (2019), 3.48 billions of people use social media nowadays, and this number is 9% higher than the last year's statistics. What is more, the number is going to grow more and get higher and higher with every year. It is already a significant amount of people using Internet for social media and this is where the majority gets advertisement of the products and services from. Only from the last year 366 millions of people joined any kind of social network, meaning that it is around a million new users every day. As for the future, it is obvious that this number is going to go up in the next years. According to the statistics that we have now, there is going to be more of such way of advertising, which is more of social media marketing in particular. Not to mention that the average time spent in social media is 2,5 hours a day worldwide. But in Ukraine and Russia the number is higher. In some of the cases the number can go up to 6-7 hours per day, which means almost all of their day is spent in social media. Therefore, social media users see the SMM almost all the time while being online. For the most part of users online, browsing through social network sites became a huge habit which is significantly hard to give up. And these statistics

regards not only younger generation. People aged 35 and more are using the social media not less than younger users, the only difference is that they use different social networks and the first ones are more selective and not as easily reached through the same channels. But the main difference is that they use the social networks where there is less advertisement, which is also promoted in more old-school ways (for instance: in different publics and groups, and just online-banners from brands appearing on the feed) and it is targeted for them only. There are certain social networks in Ukraine and Russia which are used only by people 35+ in most of the cases, the one example is – “Odnoklassniki”.

From what was stated before, it can be seen that online marketing can have multiple ways of reaching the potential customers. And when it comes to benefits that brands and companies get from using such marketing strategy, numerous can be mentioned. It is known that 90% of companies raised their brand awareness by promoting their products in social media. If users see the well-shown ad of the certain brand and they like it, there is a big chance that they would advise the product to their friends and family. According to Oberlo (2019), 71 % of users who had a good experience with brand advertisement in social media would recommend it to their friends. Based on this information, SMM is a growing part of online marketing and this is very beneficial for the brands promoting themselves in social media. Also giving food for thoughts for those who still as a brand don't have an active social media accounts, depending on their target group.

Nowadays, promotion of health products in particular, is extremely popular in social media in Russia and Ukraine, especially on Instagram. The industry of health products, which is multiple brands connected to health, fitness and wellbeing was blooming in 2018 and in 2019 still is. For instance, brands like Bombbar (protein bars, cookies, syrups and etc.), Pump Up (sport app), I Love Matcha (green tea matcha powder and products from it), Chikalab (protein bars and etc.), Sporty (protein cookies) and others. Brand awareness was raised exponentially because of the number of SMM around it, paid partnerships with lots of influencers (bloggers in majority) and ads from Instagram itself. Due to such digital marketing, sales significantly increased, and what is more, these companies got lots of permanent customers from it, who were buying

products from the, on a regular basis. In Russia this sphere of health products marketing was developed more than in Ukraine, hence, there were more purchases to those companies in Russia than in Ukraine. What is interesting, not only popular brands won from it, but the bloggers themselves created their own brands connected to health, fitness and wellbeing area. The majority was concentrated on info-products, e.g. webinars, checklists, guides and courses on that topic. Apart from that, some influencers even created their own products also, and a lot of those “brands” which they created turned out to be very successful, and not only attracted more famous in Russia and Ukraine brands to partner with them, but also build trust with their followers (consumers) and therefore, engaging more of them to try out those health products and create bigger sales.

To conclude, the research was motivated by big increase in the interest of the customers for such part of online marketing as promoting of the health products in Instagram by using SMM and understanding consumer’s attitudes towards them.

## 1.6 Research Questions

As already mentioned before, the research is conducted because of the growing social media marketing, in Instagram in particular, and the attitudes consumers have towards advertising health products in social media in Russia and Ukraine.

The main questions behind this research and questionnaire are:

What are the consumer’s attitudes towards advertising of the health products and advertising in general in social media in Ukraine and Russia?

How advertising in social media affects the customer experience and purchasing power of the customer in Ukraine and Russia?

Why is it important to make the social media marketing suitable for different kind of consumers (and different cultures) and what it has to do with consumer’s attitudes?

## 1.7 Structure of the Thesis

In order to understand the basic theory about digital marketing and SMM, and the structure of how it works in Ukraine and Russia, chapter one, meaning Introduction was created. The theory continues in chapter two, describing more deeply the topic of consumer's attitudes in general and towards health products in countries such as Russia, Ukraine. Second chapter is targeted to review different theories and articles on the given topic and have a better understanding of its structure. Chapter three, which is called methodology, talks about the method chosen for the research, describes and analyses how the data was collected and the research approach. Whereas in the fourth chapter, the research results are described, particularly, result of the questionnaire in both Ukraine and Russia. After, the final discussion part starts and concludes the whole work and research and also answers the research questions asked in the introduction of the thesis, and consists of recommendation for future research too.

## 2 Literature Review

This literature review consists of a few sub-chapters about consumer's attitude in general, customer's beliefs, feelings and behavioral intentions. As well as about consumer's attitudes towards online advertising and promotion of health products in social media, mainly on Instagram. Moreover, it reviews why consumer's attitudes are so important in online marketing concepts.

### 2.1 Consumer's attitude: what is it?

To start with, the term of consumer's attitude is going to be revealed in this sub-chapter. So, what is it in terms of marketing? Thurstone (1928) defines attitude as: *"the total sum of man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, pre-conceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specified topic."* What is more, attitude as a definition itself, depends on other known concepts and is connected to them. Therefore, there are many definitions existing of a word 'attitude'. Thus, in

marketing sphere, consumer's attitude basically means the combination of customer's beliefs, feelings and behavioral intentions towards any product, service or brand. In other words, it means the way how a customer reacts to product, its promotion and etc. This strategy could be very beneficial for the brands and companies as well as it shows how its customers react to one or other product or service, or the brand in general and helps it to improve the needed parts of online marketing and give the customer what he/she wants. Due to limited amount of articles and literature on this topic in Ukraine and Russia, first, the general information on consumer's attitude is going to be reviewed. From that, it can be seen that there is a gap in the researches about this topic, in particular connected to countries such as Russia and Ukraine. First of all, who are the consumers? According to Walters (1974), a consumer is a person who has aims to purchase a product or service for personal needs and etc. So, a consumer is the next stage of a customer who wants to buy something. Therefore, consumers, as well as any other social media users, tend to undergo all the advertising going on in any kind of social network, and by this, their behaviours and in further attitudes directly affects the number of sales from that advertisement. Belch&Belch (1990) link the human behaviour and consumer behaviour, where it's seen that, one is dependent from other. Moreover, presenting the right and more suitable promotion of ads of any brand is an effective way to lead the consumers as the potential buyers to actually purchase the product/service.

According to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1973), there are 6 cultural dimensions existing. The research that was conducted by Geert Hofstede, revealed that the cultural differences can be divided into 6 dimensions, moreover, the countries can be distinguished from each other with the use of these cultural dimensions. In other words, by splitting the two countries by each of those dimensions and analysing the outcome, the behaviours, preferences, intentions of people from those countries can be understood better. This model can be used in various spheres, as well as in marketing it can bring great use too.

Geert Hofstede conducted his research and got the results in over than 70 countries, from which only 40 country's scores were used, after, the number raised to 50. Each country of this research was scored by Hofstede on the scale from 0 to 100, for every

dimension out of six. The data for this research was conducted between 1967 and 1973. Firstly only four cultures were identified, but then, together with Drs Michael H. Bond and Michael Minkov, the other two were added to this cultural model. The are the following cultural dimensions in this model:

1. Power Distance index
2. Collectivism Vs. Individualism
3. Masculinity Vs. Femininity
4. Uncertainty Avoidance index
5. Long term orientation Vs. short term normative orientation
6. Indulgence Vs. Restraint

In the chart bellow you can see the Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Overview

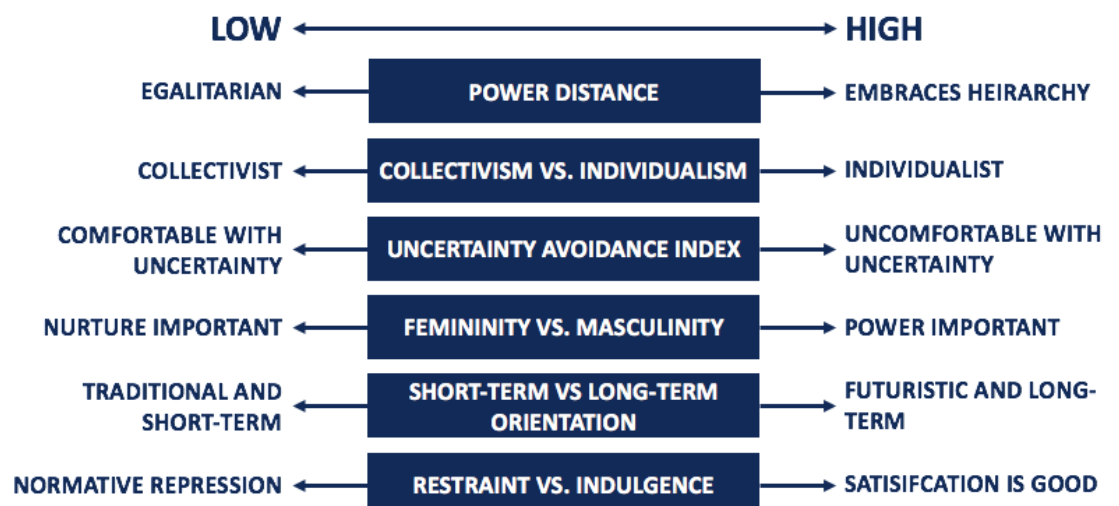


Figure 1. Geert Hofstede's 6 Cultural Dimensions (1973)

*Power Distance Index:* it refers to a degree of inequality which exists and is accepted among people and on power in society. In other words, to which degree the people with less power in society accept that power and what kind of expectations they have for the power, e.g. if it is divided inequally or etc. Thus, how the whole society perceives inequality. In different countries and cultures, power distance can differ strongly, in some it can be more similar.



High Power Distance score: The society accepts the hierarchical distribution of power. (inequality)

Low Power Distance score: The power in society is shared and widely dispersed. (equality is more valued)

*Collectivism Vs. Individualism:* it refers to the strength of ties within people in a community. So, how people perceive each other in a community and their connection between each other. In collectivist society people's connection to each other is stronger, they perceive themselves in a community as "we". Whereas in an Individualist society, people have a weaker interpersonal connection, therefore they perceive themselves in a community as "I". In other words, this dimension shows the extent to which in a society it is easy to create a "group". Moreover, in communities with high score of individualism, people in this community are more concerned about reaching their own personal goals, whereas in a collectivism society, the common, social goals and the welfare of the society is more important than the personal.

Collectivist society: In these countries people in a community have more loyalty for the others, people defend each others interests and they take more responsibility for others.

Individualist society: In these countries people tend to be less loyal to each other, people take less responsibility for the actions of others.

*Masculinity Vs. Femininity:* this refers to distribution of roles between men and women. So, this dimension measures the extent to which masculine or feminine values are more important in a society of a certain country. In a more masculine type of society, the preference goes to being more successful, strong and etc., also achievements are very important. What is more, this kind of a community is more competitive. But when it comes to a more feminine society, here the values are: quality of life, cooperation, caring of the weak and etc. Thus, the society is more consensual.

**Masculine Society:** In these countries being strong and successful is important. Status also plays the main role in such society.

**Feminine Society:** In these countries, strong cooperation with others and quality of life is important. The society is more relationship oriented.

*Uncertainty Avoidance Index:* it refers to the extent to which members of a community react to unknown situations, changes and unpredictable occasions in their lives. In other words, this dimension shows the degree to which people in a certain society feel uncomfortable with uncertainty. What is more, it shows how people deal with these situations depending on a country. It is either they try to control everything they can or just make things happen without trying to take the control. In the countries with a higher uncertainty avoidance index, people are more concerned about future, and try to control as much as they can, whereas in countries with lower score, the society is more relaxed and at the same time, more risky.

**High Uncertainty Avoidance Index:** In these countries people try to make their lives more predictable and less risky, by trying to control everything. They have bigger fear of unclear future.

**Low Uncertainty Index:** In these countries people are more relaxed, open and don't feel the need to control everything. They are more risky, and are not afraid of an unclear future so much.

*Long Term Orientation Vs. Short Term Orientation:* it refers to the time horizon in the society. In other words, it is how societies prioritize the past, present and future, what is more valuable for them and towards which period of life they are more oriented. This dimension shows what is more important for people in a society- traditional methods, they are more concerned about the present and think about past or thinking about the future. In the countries with the long term orientation, people are more pragmatic and future-oriented, whereas in the short term orientation case, people have more traditional image of time, principles and truth is more important.

Long Term Orientation: In these countries people in a society are more pragmatic and modest. They plan for the future.

Short Term Orientation: In these countries people tend to stress the importance of principles, truth and consistency. This society is more present-orientated.

*Indulgence Vs. Restraint: (developed together with Minkov, 1973)* this refers to the fact of whether in a society it is more acceptable to enjoy life and etc. or the moderation and restraint play the main role. Therefore, in the countries with high score of indulgence, the free gratification is encouraged, meaning having fun, showing feelings and emotions and enjoying life, whereas in low score of indulgence Vs. restraint there is a suppressive gratification, strict rules and more regulations.

High score of Indulgence Vs. restraint: In these countries, there is more of free gratification in a society, having fun and enjoying life is important.

Low score of Indulgence Vs. Restraint: In these countries, there is more suppressing gratification. The rules and regulations are more important.

According to described above six cultural dimensions developed by Hofstede (1973), it can be seen that cultural differences can have a great impact on the people's behaviours, intentions, buying power, attitudes and therefore on the whole sphere of marketing. That is why, using these cultural dimensions and analysing different countries according to them, can help to provide more information on how to market in those countries and how to advertise to certain cultures and target groups, especially in social media, in order to get them interested in a product/service/brand. And, what is also important – what NOT to do, depending on the country and the culture. Thus, this theory is even more useful to understand consumers attitudes towards brands/products and etc.

### 2.1.2 Beliefs

Consumer's beliefs is the first part of the combination of consumer's attitudes. Fishbein & Ajzen (1980) link the consumer's attitudes with beliefs: *"In trying to understand attitudes, beliefs play a crucial role, because it has been shown that the attitudes are measured by assessing a person's beliefs."* It represents the beliefs that a consumer may have towards one or other product, service or brand, are strongly connected to their attitudes, and more, they are a part of it. Moreover, a consumer may have positive and negative beliefs, as well as they could also be neutral. In some of the cases, a consumer's belief about a certain brand for example, can be everything at once, so: positive, negative and neutral at the same time, e.g. he/she might like something about the brand, like a certain object of it (positive belief), but then to some products of the brand he/she might be disposed negatively, in other words not liking some parts of the brand or its product (negative beliefs), and finally, this consumer might have a neutral opinion on some part of the brand or a company (neutral beliefs), which makes it challenging to determine the actual belief that a consumer may have towards a certain brand. For instance, there is a Fishbein model about consumer's behaviour which helps to determine the reason of choice of a certain product/service by analysing consumer's overall attitudes to it. When it comes to consumer's beliefs about a certain product or service, it is easier to distinguish his/hers beliefs towards it, because usually they are more defined. According to Fishbein & Ajzen (1980), information that a person/consumer has about the product or etc. create their beliefs. Thus, beliefs are formed by the given/found information. What is interesting, beliefs may vary from consumer's mood or the situation that he/she is in. Moreover, beliefs can also be contradictory, that is why it is so hard to determine the overall belief and attitude of a consumer to a product/service/brand. Hence, consumer's beliefs are significantly important to understand in order to provide a working and effective advertisement.

### 2.1.3 Feelings

For the consumers feelings, they can also have positive and negative feelings towards a brand or its products. These feelings can be connected and can be based on the beliefs that a consumer has, but on the other hand, feelings can have nothing to do with individual's beliefs on a certain product, service or brand. Similarly to beliefs, feelings towards a brand could stop a consumer from buying anything from it, even if they more or less like the product, when they have negative feelings to a brand. And of course if the feelings are positive, this is one more thing that helps a customer to make a purchase from a certain brand. It is hard to change consumer's feelings about your brand, but it is still possible. In such case, building trust between consumer and a brand is crucial. Mostly when a consumer has trust for a brand, he/she has mainly positive feelings towards it. Of course, building trust is not a fast process, as well as building positive feelings of a consumers towards your brand. In most of the cases it depends from a certain consumer, so the research may be conducted on this topic, to understand the feelings of your customers. And the results should be thoroughly analysed, that's why constantly getting consumer's feedback is crucial for any brand to get better and grow.

Nowadays, with the growing social media industry, it is a lot easier and faster to get feedback from the customers via social network, than it was before.

### 2.1.4 Behavioural Intentions

When it comes to behavioural intentions, it is a decision that a consumer makes towards a product/service, meaning decides to buy or not to buy it from a certain brand. In other words, the intentions that the customer has towards a certain product or service. It is known in literature, that consumer's attitude is strongly determined by the favourability of his intentions. (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This decision is usually the result of the beliefs and feelings (or together) that a consumer has about this product or service. Although, sometimes, the choice is made by the consumer in a result of other things, depending on the situation and circumstances. According to Fishbein &

Ajzen (1975), there are four elements included in the consumer's intention, which are: behavior, target object, the situation and the time in which the whole process is performed. There could be a few reasons standing behind consumer's choice of buying or not buying. First of all, if the consumer previously had negative experiences with one or other product or service, it can affect to his/her will to buy a similar product/service even if it's totally different brand. Not to mention that social influence has a great power in influencing the decisions of the consumer. For instance, if his/her friends bought a highly promoted product, the consumer himself would want to buy it too, even if before he/she didn't really want to purchase it. In most of the cases, consumer's social environment affects greatly his/her beliefs and feelings, which leads to affecting his behavioural intentions towards any brand or product. This emphasizes how much easier is it to change consumer's attitudes and intentions by positioning a brand and its advertising in social media in a right, suitable to a consumer way, because in social media, there are lots of influencers, for whom consumers of different needs, beliefs, intentions and attitudes have already built trust. Therefore, partnering with all the different kinds of influencers will raise the brand's sales in times.

### 2.1.5 Theory of Planned Behavior

There are certain ways of predicting consumer's behavioural intentions and understanding how consumer's attitudes and intentions connected to his/her actions, in this case actin is buying or not buying a product or service from a brand. The reviewed theory is called the theory of planned behaviour (1985, 1991, Icek Ajzen). The theory helps to understand how we can change people's (consumer's in this case) behavior, as well as it predicts the premeditated behavior, because the behavior can be planned. This theory is the continuation of the theory of reasoned action, which resulted in the finding out the fact that the behavior is not totally controlled by one. Later on, the theory was named as it is now, theory of planned behavior. According to this theory, individual's actions are led by three factors:

- behavioral beliefs (beliefs about possible behavioral consequences)

- normative beliefs (beliefs about normative expectations of others)
- control beliefs (beliefs about the presence of factors which might contribute or opposite, hinder the implementation of the behavior)

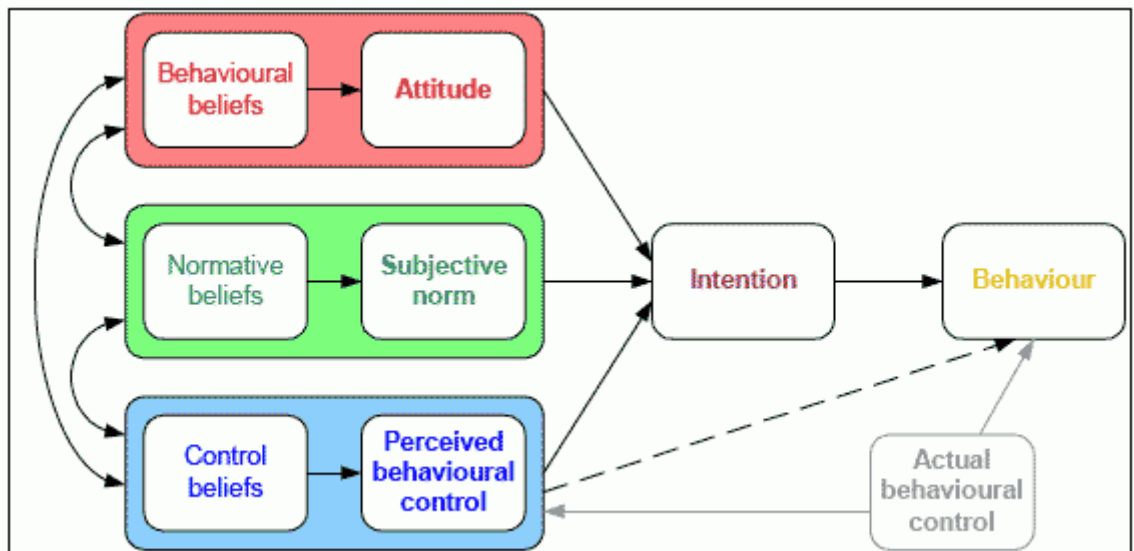


Figure 2. Theory of Planned Behaviour, Icek Ajzen (1991)

In the figure 1, one can see a structured scheme of Theory of planned behaviour. According to Icek Ajzen (1985,1991), there are three main beliefs: behavioural, normative and control. They, in its turn, influence the three other parts of this theory which are: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. First of all, what are the behavioural beliefs?

According to the theory of planned behaviour (1991), behavioural belief is a belief that an individual might have, which happens to be a connector between person's behaviour and the result that this specific behaviour may bring. If beforehand, individual has positive beliefs and feelings about a certain product/service/brand or etc. , this would most likely mean that hi/her behaviour will be resulted from these beliefs, and this person most likely is going to buy a product for example. And on the other hand, if the person refers to the situation or product from a negative perspective, the expected outcome probably would be negative as well. By this, the individual's behaviour and its outcome, can be predicted beforehand. Moreover, his behavioural beliefs, strongly reflect his/her attitudes.

According to Ajzen's theory, normative beliefs are beliefs that a person might have, which are built on the normative expectation of other important people in his/her life. Here, predicting the reaction and attitude of a person would be a lot harder, because the decision that he/she makes can be influenced by external and internal factors, such as his friends or family. So, the social environment definitely affects individual's attitudes, beliefs on anything, for instance, situation/brand/product/service and more. These are normative beliefs that a person gets from the expectations of others about him. What is more important in this case, is the way how a person perceives these expectations of others, and this is directly connected to the level of importance of other people in the social environment that she/he is in. For instance, if the consumer sees an advertisement, he might not be as easily attracted to it in order to buy a promoted product/service, but if he/she sees an important person for him/her, like a close friend or family member, using the product or this person expects him/her to use it, he is more likely to purchase it, because of the normative beliefs which were affected by a certain person in the environment around. And these normative beliefs, are in further, playing a significant role in individual's decision making toward behavioural intentions. Hence, normative beliefs, create a subjective norms which can depend from the expectation of others.

According to this theory, the third factor of it, which is called control belief, is a kind of belief about the presence of the factors in individual's environment, that can contribute or hinder his behavioural model. This means that, if there are certain control factors being present, they can influence on behavioural intentions of the person, and how will the performance of certain actions (like buying a product) can go. The control factors can be significantly different and the level of importance of these factors will predict the individual's behaviour in future. For example, if there is a chance of high importance of a certain control factor, one would most likely act according to this factor. These control beliefs, in further has an impact to perceived behavioural control of a person.

To conclude, together all of these three beliefs that an individual has, turn out to his/her behavioural intentions which later on lead to making decisions and in further actions which are affected by the combination of these beliefs. The reviewed theory



of planned behaviour turned out to be increasingly helpful in many fields, and a great use came to this theory in the marketing sector, because of the possibility of predicting the consumer's behaviour, predicting market consumption, and understanding how to advertise different product/services/brands depending on consumer's attitudes.

### 2.2.1 Consumer's Attitude towards online advertising

According to Interantional Journal of Advertising (January, 2009), there are four types of online advertising in marketing, which are: e-advertisng (which is advertisement throught internet websites), email-advertising (sending ads by email), SMS and MMS advertsing. At that time, these four advertising methods were very popular and comapring to more old "traditional" advertising, more innovative and interactive, and was called digital advertisement. Moreover, these types of advertising were known as the interactive way of promoting, and attract more positive consumer's attitudes. When it comes to consumer's attitude towards these types of advertising, it can be seen that such promotions, were mainly perceived quite positive among the internet users. According to a research made on this topic (2009), which was conducted with the university students participating the questionnaires, the results showed that 3 main attitudes, and the words wit with they would describe these types of advertising were: informative, entertaining and irritating. Hence, in this case these types of digital advertising were at that time, perceived more positively than negatively in terms of consumer's attutudes in marketing.

Whereas nowadays, these four types of advertising are no longer the main in the modern digital marketing. What came instead of it, is social media marketing and advertising. Because of the growing number of internet users, as well as social media users ( which gets begger every day), this type of online marketing is msotly used in our time, and, as is stated as one of the most effective, especially comparing to the old types of difital marketing. Now there is still some email advertisement existing, but in most of the cases it's not effective and informative, it only turnes out to be more irritating for the consumer.

### 2.2.2 Consumer's Attitude towards Social Media Advertising

According to "The effect of consumer perceptions on their attitude, behaviour and purchase intention in social media advertising" article, internet is an irreplaceable tool, which lead people to using social media. Whenever the consumer is, either at home or at work, in any place he/she would use internet, in particular social media networks. Hence, advertising in social media is very effective because at any time and any place the consumer can see a social media ad and get interested in it. In the stated earlier article, it is referred to understand the perceptions of the consumers about advertising in social media, the article also evaluates the results of the study.

To start with, as stated in the article, internet and mostly social media allows people to take more control over some parts of their lives, such as: communication, knowledge, decisions and more. By this, understanding their decisions made because of social media could be very beneficial for marketers, understanding the knowledge that they got and that can get in future, and give it to them, because together with the knowledge they are getting more interested in a certain brand/product/service which is advertised in social media nowadays. What is more, social media helps to build the trustful relationship between the brand and its customers. Which leads to the understanding that building trust, is also building stronger customer base and in the end, more customers and more sales. If they have trust for a brand, they would advise its products to their friends and family, and this is only beneficial situation to a brand. But not every advertising instills trust for the product or brand. With social media, it is not only possible to engage new customers to a brand/company, but also keep track of your competitors. Moreover, the behaviour of the consumers is tracked much easier through social media than any other advertisement platform, because of the feedback that the customers, users give everyday. That is why, it is crucial to have an influencer who already built trust with his/hers followers and etc. In such case, there a bigger chance that a consumer would be interested in a product which is advertised by a known person whom he/she can trust than by a person who he/she sees for the first time. And nowadays, reaching fast a big amount of people is possible with the social media.

Due to increasing usage of social networks, and advertising in them, customers expectations are also rising and changing, together with the various trends happening in social media. If before it was quite easy to impress a customer with a simple ads in social media, especially on Instagram, now it is a lot harder to do. As well as social networks themselves develop every day, getting new features (which also quite often include business features, which are very helpful for the brands in advertising their products and ect.), influencers as well improve their blogs and other in order to reach more people and attract potential consumers to their ads, provided either by them or brands/companies they partner with. Today, even Instagram itself can promote your post with advertisement in it. Hence, the users are used to various ads in social media, and it's not as easy anymore, to impress and get them interested, because their expectatins are now higher than they used to be a few years ago.

In today's case, it is crucial to know what your customers already have seen, what they want to see, what they are interested in. Therefore, following different trends in social media, for example on Instagram would get any brand to a more beneficial position than their competitors who don't even think to do it. That is why, the study in this article "The effect of consumer perceptions, attitude, behaviour and purchase intention in social media advertising" was conducted, to understand the consumer's perceptions and how they may have changed with time. The one of the things that also changed in consumer's behaviour and attitudes, is that from the position of passive users, the majority transformed into an active position, taking part in the social media life and reacting actively to advertising there as well. Therefore, the change in the position of users in social media, changed also their perceptions as the consumers toward advertising in social media. For a consumer, it is important to know that his/her opinion was heard, and that according to their feedback, positive or especially negative and constructive, companies/brands do change the reviewed product or etc. Like this, consumer sees that what he/she thinks is important to a brand. And that's why nowadays people like social networks and use it so frequently. Thus, companies started to use social media for advertisement, because of the interactivity of this method.

According to the article, there are few consumers perceptions which were found in the study more oftenly. These are: informativeness (what was pointed out by many respondents is that the social media advertising was informative, and giving them, modern and up-to-date information on many topics/products and more), entertainment (research showed that in any case, the advertisement is better to be more interactive and entertaining, as well as diversity plays the role too, because of a more positive attitudes toward it from the side of a consumer), reliability ( trust-building is important between a consumer and a brand, the more reliable the advertisement, the better for the market), value corruption ( the advertisement can be perceived in a wrong way by the consumer, so the companies should be very strict with finding a right way to present a product/service, because it has a big impact on the consumers perception and attitude).

From the research conducted by Zafar and Khan (2011), turned out that the majority of the students use social media more than 7 times per day, which is relatively is big number. Moreover, according to a questionnaire, the most used social media was Facebook (40.9 %). What is interesting, answer to this particular question differs according to the country in which it was asked. So depending on the country, the most used social network could be different. Which is why it is important to customize the online advertising according to a target group and a country, and the easiest and the most effective way to do it is advertise in social media.

As already mentioned before, following the trends to advertise in social media is crucial nowadays, moreover, the trends vary from countries and many other. Today, one of the most famous, and sales effective trend in social media, especially in Instagram – is the health products and more or less everything connected to it. Hence, the next parts is going to review the rising trend of promoting health products, organic food and etc., and the consumer's attitude towards advertising it.

### 2.3.1 To conclude: Social media Trends affecting its advertising and consumer's attitudes towards it

First of all, what is a trend? According to Cambridge English Dictionary, trend is a direction of changes and development, trend is also estimated as something fashionable. For the most part, today the word trend is used in the social media sphere. Where if something is trending, means that it is famous in certain sectors. The trends on social media are constantly changing, some of them stay longer and some are coming through very fast. That is why for brands it is important to be aware of the existing trends on the main social media platforms like: Instagram (the biggest number of trends, and people following them) and Facebook, etc. Moreover, social media users, who are at the same time also consumers, mostly follow the trends, and if not all of them, but the biggest trends are not missed by the majority of them, at least everyone would have heard about the most popular of them. So, being "in trend" is highly important for a company in social media, because from this depends a lot, and on the trends all of the current advertisements in SM (social media) is built. As mentioned above, trends are changing fast, and people following those, see the change immediately, which does not leave a chance for a certain brand to be "out of the game" if they want their ads to be effective. Moreover, with new upcoming trends, the purchasing power is rising significantly, which means that this topic shouldn't be ignored.

A human is a social creature, which leads to a fact that he is easily influenced by the social environment around him. According to Paek H., Yu J., Bae B. (2009), it was found that online promotion of health products is only bound on the culture from the strategy of this promotion point of view. Meaning that usually, such factors as social environment affect the consumer in terms of online promotion of health. Often, a consumer is asking for an advice from his friends, family or simply searches for advice online, which means reading reviews to products/services/brands from other people. Trend in some way is a big influence on a consumer, because of the mass interest in a certain product or topic. According to Maslow's theory of hierarchy of needs (1943), one of the basic person's needs are in food and sleep. According to *Consumers Attitude*

*towards Organic Food* (2015) For a modern person, the quality of the food became very important, he/she now thinks about the nutrition more than used to. That is why now, in society, the topic of healthy living and health products is becoming popular and trendy. One of such trends which covered the social networks and spread all over the Internet is so called “clean eating”. The number of clean eating blogs, sport blogs on Instagram is huge, especially now in Russia and Ukraine. And even creating the separate brands concerning this topic, which became very successful thanks to social media advertising and the rise of the trend of healthy products.



## Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Figure 3. Maslow's Theory of Hierarchy of Needs

Nowadays, one of the biggest trends, mostly in Instagram is advertising of health products and more connected to it. It is spread all over the world, starting from USA, and going to the Europe. In this thesis, it is going to be talked about the advertising of the health products in social media and customer's attitudes towards it, particularly, it's advertising and trending in Ukraine and Russia. For these two countries this topic is fairly new, whereas for USA and Europe it is not as active as it used to be some time ago.

### 2.3.2 To conclude: Why consumers are more attracted to online advertising?

Understanding why the online advertisement is so important in today's modern world, with new technologies coming out, people become used to digital every day more and more. According to Boateng H. And Okoe A. (2015) Online advertising, mainly the social media one, is so much important because of its simplicity and complexity at the same time. With Social media marketing, it is easy to promote anything from any part of the world, and the advertisement can be perceived worldwide. Moreover, putting on advertisement in social network, for example Instagram or Facebook, is possible 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, as well as seeing it. By this, the consumer is surrounded by the ads almost all the time, which raises the chance for him/her to get interested in a brand or a product in order to buy it. What is more, through social media, any kind of target group can be reached, and any ad can be customizable for almost every consumer, because of the suitable promotion way which can be done by a certain influencer. And this is what attracts the consumer. They are more engaged to online advertising, and mainly in social media, because they have trust for the people who advertise certain products, they can give a direct feedback, ask a question at any time or write about a problem, and they will immediately be seen, and the question will be answered. Not to mention that, in this case, consumer also stays current because of social media marketing, which was already stated above, such as informativeness. And last but not least, social media advertising leaves to the consumer the chance to choose from multiple options. Nevertheless, to some part of people in the Internet, social media advertising seems annoying and they don't like it, but it doesn't change the fact that it works on the majority, even on those who don't like it. Still, for many users, entertainment is one more factor, why they are engaged by social media advertising.

To conclude, according to Boateng H. And Okoe A. (2015) customers always want to be heard, they want their opinion to matter for the companies and brands, entertainment and informativeness also plays a huge role in a successful social media

advertising, and that is why, customer are attracted and will be attracted by online marketing in the future.

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework

In this case, theoretical framework is based on the key concepts of the research and the research questions, which are mainly focused on the understanding why is consumers attitude towards advertising any product or brand in social media is so important, moreover, why is it important to make social media marketing suitable to different consumer groups and their attitudes. Furthermore, in the case of Russia and Ukraine, as well as the research was conducted and targeted for these two countries, the question is how social media advertising affects the purchasing power and customer experiences of consumers in these countries.

According to Wicker (1971), many researches showed the connection between attitudes and behaviours. Nowadays it can be seen that attitudes really affect people's behaviors, especially it can be seen in the social media marketing. As the attitudes have an impact on consumers behavior, which in the end lead to bigger purchasing power and sales to brands and companies. By this, such term as consumers attitudes cannot be ignored in marketing sphere.

What is more, in a theory of planned behavior (Icek Ajzen, 1991), it is explained how it is possible to change consumer's behavior, because it can be planned. And there are several ways existing of predicting consumer's intentions and understanding how those intentions and attitudes connected to his actions ( in this case, the action is bying the product or other). Usually, consumer's actions are the result of three factors as stated before: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs and control beliefs. These factors, in further influence three other parts of this theory (theory of planned behavior, Icek Ajzen, 1991) which are – attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. By this, ajzen (1991), directly links beliefs of a person (consumer) to his attitudes.



Not to mention, that Hofstede's theory of six cultural dimensions (Geert Hofstede, 1971) also talks about people's attitudes in each of the dimensions according to their culture and country. As turned out, this (cultural differences) has a great impact on people's intentions and attitudes towards anything, in this case towards online advertising. And this particular theory applies very well to my research conducted on the consumers attitudes towards social media advertising of health products in Ukraine and Russia. Because of the fact that the results received from this research are very different if comparing them with results in different cultured countries. For instance, below is situated the figure on the Hofstede's six cultural dimensions in Russia and Ukraine.

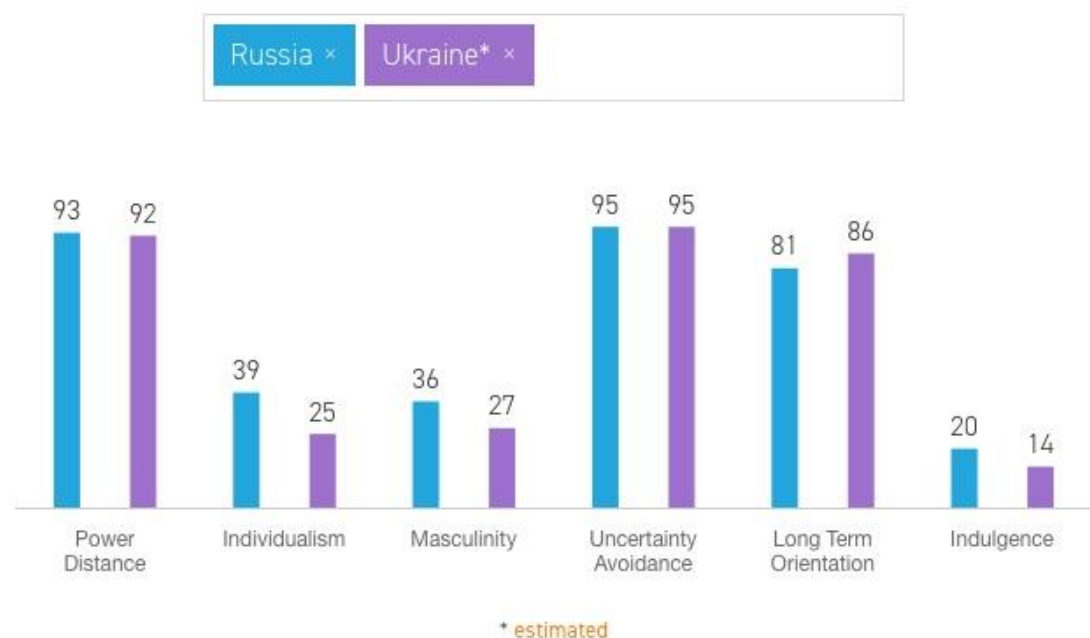


Figure 4. Geert Hofstede's six cultural dimensions, 1971. (Results in Russia and Ukraine)

Here it is seen that in the half of the dimensions results within Russia and Ukraine are quite the same, but in some of them there are still some differences. Thus, those differences can be analysed and by that, consumer attitudes, intentions and etc, are getting clearer. In this case, the difference between chosen countries is not as big, as it can get when comparing other countries with totally different cultures. Therefore, for such countries, the attitudes towards online advertisement can be extremely different.

### 3 Methodology

As already stated in the Introduction chapter, the goal of conducted research is to understand the attitudes of consumers to social media advertising of health products in Ukraine and Russia. Moreover, the research also covers the general attitude of a consumer to advertisement in social media, their opinion on using social media (frequency and etc.) and their buying power and intentions toward ads in social media, health products promotions and more. In this chapter, research approach, research context, data collection and data analysis is going to be presented.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

To start with, the approach which was chosen for this specific research is inductive because of the fact that it suits better the research that was conducted. So, what is an inductive approach to a research? Inductive approach is usually used when the study where theory is built on the observation of the practical reality. It means that in such case, first the data is collected, then it is being analysed as well as finding the patterns of the existing reality which then leads to a general theory after the previous steps were taken. By this, the general outcomes come from the specific ones. In other words, movement from an individual observation to establishment of general patterns, so from more specific to general.

In this approach, the researcher first collects data which is needed for him and his research, for example interviewing the respondents or creating online questionnaire, then he/she when having the needed amount of answers, starts looking for general patterns which are connected to the goal of the research, and try to create a theory which would explain the patterns taken from these answers that he/she got from the questionnaire or interviewing. Basically, this approach is based on the experiences that the respondents had, while the researcher is trying to understand how those experiences lead to certain patterns depending on the topic of the research., which in the end, lead to developing a theory based on those patterns.

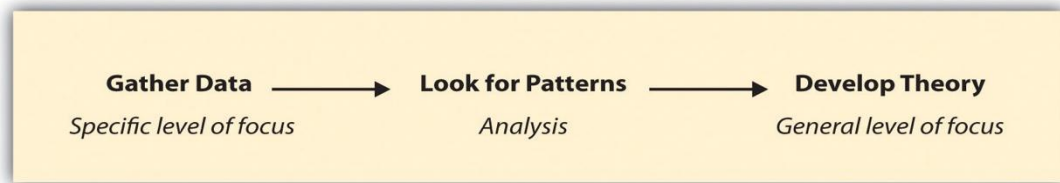


Figure 5. The process of inductive approach to a research (Inductive or Deductive? Two different Approaches)

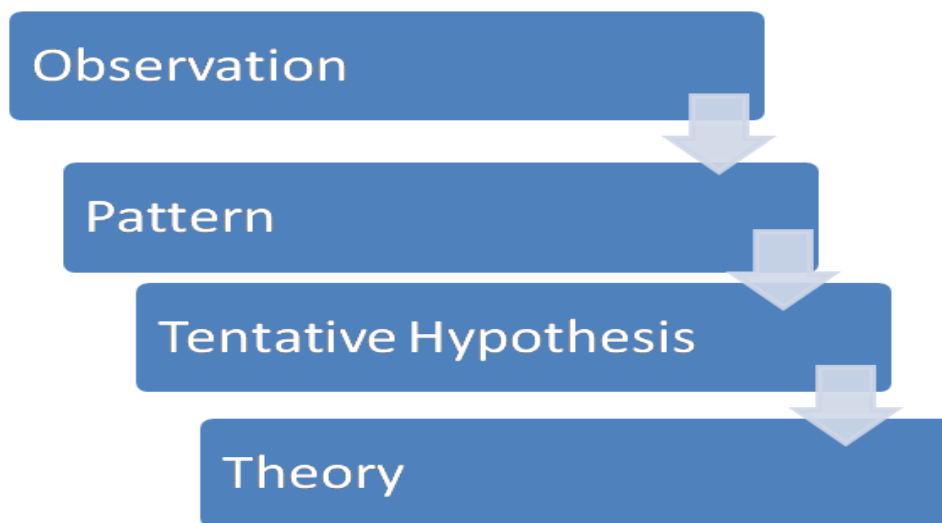


Figure 6. Inductive approach (Inductive or Deductive? Two different Approaches)

Thus, it can be seen from the given figures, that certain approach works best for the research on the attitudes of consumers in Ukraine and Russia towards social media advertising of health products. First of all, the data was collected through an online questionnaire, which is the first step – gathering data (see figure 3). Then, the content which is the result of the questionnaire was analysed and looked for patterns, that is the second step – looking for patterns, and finally, the last step is developing a theory. (figure 3)

### 3.2 Research Context

First of all, in the chosen research method both qualitative and quantitative analysis are used. As well as in the conducted questionnaire, there are two different types of

questions are used: multiple choice questions and open questions. Both of them were selected because of intention to understand consumer's intentions and attitudes towards social media advertising. By including multiple-choice and open questions to a conducted questionnaire, there is a bigger chance of getting all the needed information from it, because different types of questions lead to the broader and more diverse answers from the respondents.

The 100 of respondents from Ukraine and Russia answered the questions about their attitudes to advertising in social media (with the stress on health products). The respondents answered questions also about their attitude to social media and advertising in it in general, as well as how much time do they spend on a daily basis in social networks. The final number of questions answered by respondents from Ukraine (40%) and Russia (50%) is 15. (one of the respondents was not from Russia or Ukraine). The age of the people participating in the questionnaire has divided into a few groups, where: teenagers (10%), people aged less than 25 (48%) and people aged more than 25 (42%). Mostly female users were taking part in the questionnaire, where 13% were male, and 87% were female.

### 3.3 Data Collection

First of all, what is data collection? Collecting of the data is a process of analysing the information and putting it together in order to answer the research questions and get the possible outcome of the conducted research. As found, data collection helps to learn about the potential customers and understand their needs, preferences and attitudes, which in the result can be used to improve brand/product line/ services or eliminate the unwanted by the consumers things. Moreover, it helps to understand the trends and as a brand be aware of what is trending at this specific time. Not to mention that by collecting and analysing the data, targeting and segmenting the audience becomes easier.

For this questionnaire, as the method of data collection are used qualitative (because of the existence of open-ended questions in the survey) and quantitative (because of

the multiple-choice questions). As it is known, there is a mixed type of data collection method – which combines quantitative and qualitative methods in one. This is usually used when a survey or questionnaire consists of multiple choice-questions (which is the majority in my questionnaire) and open questions (there are a few of those in my questionnaire).

First of all, the main goal of qualitative analysis is the understanding of the social and etc. aspect of the conducted research. Whereas quantitative method is more focused on the numbers that the social and more reflective data. When it comes to my conducted research, I understand that nevertheless, the method of data collection is mixed, still more emphasis is on the qualitative method. Even despite the fact of having more of multiple choice questions, still they are more qualitative, because the answers suggested, are very descriptive and broad. And the main focus of the survey is not the numbers but the social aspect of understanding people's attitude as the consumers to a chosen topic – social media advertising of health products. The qualitative method is closer to this questionnaire, because the questions cover the topic of consumer's opinions on certain things and topics, which is important to understand their thoughts and, attitudes and behaviors.

To conclude, in the conducted research, there are 15 questions, 13 of which are multiple choice questions, answers to which are very full and descriptive. Moreover, in all of the questions the choice of open-answer was available, and in the majority of the questions were used by many respondents. And 2 of the survey questions were open questions. To compare the answers from the majority of the multiple choice and open questions, the given answer was about the same length. Hence, multiple choice answers were as descriptive and full as the answers to open questions, in some of the cases even more.

From the above, the questions mainly were selected based on the observations of the social media advertising and user's attitudes towards it. What is more, the data collection is also based on the research questions (Introduction 1.6) and according to the theoretical framework based on the theory of planned behavior (Icek Ajzen, 1991) and Hofstede's six cultural dimensions (Geert Hofstede, 1971), because the

questionnaire was conducted in the two countries with different cultures – Ukraine and Russia.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

To start with, data analysis is the evaluation and measuring of the collected data in order to reach the certain results concerning the research purpose and questions. According to *Ethnography, Observational Research and Narrative Inquiry (1994-2012)*, content analysis is *“an interpretive and naturalistic approach. It is both observational and narrative in nature, and relies less on the experimental elements normally associated with scientific research.”*

Content analysis is usually used to determine the intentions and attitudes, and identify the trends of a group or an individual (group in this case). Moreover, this analysis helps to understand and describe the behavioral intentions by analyzing the responses of a group and reveal the differences of those attitudes. With this type of data analysis, it is easier to gather and conclude the information in order to have the summary of it within the audience and its culture and attitudes by transforming the gathered data into text and analyzing it.

As well as data of my conducted survey is in the form of questionnaire, the information was put into a computer, to analyze the data more easily. The conducted information from a questionnaire was put into a MS Word file, in order to read the given answers all together and more thoroughly.

According to Gibbs (2007), coding is *“how you define what the data you are analyzing about”*. In other words, coding is a tool to help the researchers to analyze and categorize the data collected for a research or other, in order to identify the potential concepts, relating them and put the responses into categories for a better presumption and understanding of the results.

For an effective coding, the conducted information which was put into a coherent text in MS Word, was thoroughly read a few times in order to understand and identify the possible concepts and etc. The coding was based on the research questions and the topic from the theoretical framework – Theory of planned behavior (Icek Ajzen, 1991), which covers the three factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. The text was coded also in MS Word, according to the mentioned above topic from the theoretical framework. In coding, there were used three main codes corresponding to three factors of theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The description of the results of these 3 factors coding is presented in the chapter 4.

<b>Code</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>AT</b>	Attitudes
<b>SN</b>	Subjective Norms
<b>PC</b>	Perceived Behavioral Control

Table 1. Coding of the Questionnaire

Above, the coding of the conducted questionnaire can be seen, according to a theme mentioned in the theoretical framework (2.4).

## **4 Research Results**

In this chapter, the results of the questionnaire are presented, with the factors from a theory of planned behavior, which is derived from the theoretical framework. These factors are: attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control. As mentioned

before, the questionnaire was conducted in Russia (50%) and Ukraine (50%) among people aged between 14 years old and 25 and more. The questionnaire was conducted on the topic of this thesis – Consumers attitude towards social media advertising of health products. Nevertheless, in the survey, the questions were not only about social media advertising of health products, but also social media advertisement in general, of any type of product/service/brand and etc. and consumer's attitude towards it. Moreover, it was also asked about the most used social network among the respondents, to estimate the most popular advertising and most-used social media in Ukraine and Russia. Around 100 people took part in the online questionnaire on this thesis's topic.

#### 4.1 Attitude (AT)

As stated in the literature review part, attitude is one of the three factors of a theory of planned behavior according to Icek Ajzen (1991). Basically, attitude in this case is the outcome of an impact of the behavioral beliefs of a person. They are usually based on the beliefs of an individual about the possible consequences of his/her behavior, which normally effects their attitudes. So, in other words, such beliefs are a link between person's behavior and the possible outcome of such behavior. For instance, in a social media advertising, a consumer sees a certain ad, and perceives it positively, , in other words expects a positive outcome from it, he/she is more likely to behave in the way to approve the expectation, his/her attitude becomes positive and there is a bigger chance of an action (purchasing the advertised product/service/buying something from a promoted brand) from the consumer. That is an example of the theory of planned behavior (Icek Ajzen,1991) factor – attitude (behavioral beliefs).

From the answers received from the respondents from Ukraine and Russia from the conducted online survey, it can be seen, that the perception of social media advertising is usually neutral. Turned out, that 49 % of people who frequently see ads in social media, have a neutral attitude towards it. 23 % of respondents say that their attitude towards advertising in social networks is very positive, moreover they sometimes buy the promoted products/services from the social media ads. The rest, which is 13 % and



13% of the respondents is either more negative than positive about the topic, or simply don't care about it or do not see the advertisement so frequently.

From the results it is seen, that the majority which is 45% of respondents, say that they see advertising on Instagram often. Whereas the other 38% of people, state that they see it very often/ all the time. Only 10 % of people say that they see social network ads just sometimes. The rest – 7 % chose an open-answer option, the majority of this percentage says that they do not use social media that often, therefore, don't see lots of ads there.

What is more, respondents say that some part of purchases that they have made is effected by the ads on social media to which they were positively tuned. So, 10 % of people say that many of their purchased were made under the impact of social media advertising. Then, the majority, which is the 43 % of respondents, say that some part of their purchases were influenced by the SM (social media) advertising, when they were attracted to them positively. What is interesting, 15 % of respondents said that they want to buy the advertised product/service and their expectations are positive, sometime for some personal reason they cannot do it. And only 32 % of people say that there is no impact to them.

According to the questionnaire, respondents, when asked about their attitude towards social media advertising, say that their attitude is either positive or neutral. Some of the answers were more negative, saying that social media advertising is annoying. The positive responses usually looked like: *"positively in most of the cases"*, *"that's great"*, *"advertisements are good"* and so on. The more negative responses were: *"bad, it disturbs"* or just *"negative"*. Nevertheless, the majority of answers were either positive or neutral, as well as the "middle" ones, such as: *"Sometimes it annoys, but there's some interesting advertising"* or *"More positively than negatively"*. From this, it is seen that in most of the cases, people's attitude towards social media ads is positive or neutral.

The answers also show that the majority of people agree that having a positive attitude towards a certain product will most likely buy this product, because they were intended to it positively beforehand. 100 % of the responses were supporting the idea of the behavioral believes in this situation. Some of the respondents said that they would buy the product for sure if that are positively disposed to it, and at the same time if their attitude is negative beforehand, they would not buy the promoted product. One of the respondents said: *“Positive or negative expectations have a leading role in making a decision of whether to buy product or not”*. Another shared response is: *“If I like a product, I don’t think that anything can stop me from buying it”*. Some of the other responses were: *“This is the most important in making a purchase”* (meaning attitude and expectation towards the product). This are the responses from people talking about negative attitudes towards the product or service: *“If I’m negatively set towards a product, I will never buy it”* or *“I guess that’s true, if I’m negatively set about the product, most likely I’m not going to buy it”*.

Again, this simply leads to consumer’s attitudes towards a certain product/service/brand, either positive or negative. Hence, according to those attitudes, their actions such as actually buying the product, align with them.

## 4.2 Subjective Norms (SN)

When it comes to the second factor of theory of planned behavior (Ajzen,1991), it can be seen also from the chapter 2, that subjective norms which is also referred as normative beliefs, is a belief which includes the close and important people to the individual and their behavioral intentions and the way in which the person perceives them. What also plays role here, is the level of importance of those characters to a person. Together, these two factors make normative believes or in other words subjective norms, which in further affect that person’s decision-making and his/her behaviors.

For instance, an individual sees an advertisement on social media, and wants to buy this promoted product/service, but then remembers what his/her friend told them about this brand/product/service. In case it the saying was negative, it such case a

person is more likely to not purchase the advertised on social media product even if he/she wanted to before, because his/her friend's words bring importance for that person, and therefore, impact his/her behaviors. Same would be with the positive feedback from close friends or family, if they like the product, the individual would probably purchase it.

From the questionnaire it is seen that, for some of the respondents his/her friend's or family's words about a product or service mean a lot, and probably if they don't like it, the person will not purchase it either. Whereas some of the respondents state that their friend's (or family's) opinions don't affect their decision-making towards buying the product/service or their perception to the brand. Nevertheless, in most of the cases, according to the responses, people rely and listen for the opinions of their close friends and etc. about things such as products/services/brands/ads and so on. Around 80 % of respondents say that if they're family or friend doesn't like certain product, they probably wouldn't buy it or in contrast to that, if they're friend likes the product or service, there's more chance that if they had an intention to purchase it, they would eventually do it. Here are some of the responses: *"Yes, people who are important to me have an impact on my buying intentions"*. A lot of the responses consisted of general words about the importance of their friend's opinions to them and impact on their buying power and decision-making. But some of the answer were more specific: *"Yes, some of my purchases were not made because of the bad words about those products from my close people"*. Of course, there were responses somewhere in the middle, for example: *"I tend to trust my own taste, but sometimes I still listen to the other people's opinions"*. As it is seen, mostly consumers tend to listen to their friend's opinion about whether to buy a product or service or not. Thus, normative believes (subjective norms) play a big role in consumer's actions like decision-making, buying intention and in further the action – buying or not buying the advertised product. So, not only individual's attitudes should be considered, but also his social environment (close friends, family and etc.).

What is more, according to the online questionnaire, 31 % of respondents say that they see the social media advertisement of health products very often, especially lately. The other 28 % say that they see such ads on Instagram often, which together

makes 59 % of people who constantly see health products promotions in social media, mostly on Instagram. The rest say that they either see it rarely or don't see it at all. Only 6 % say that they do not use Instagram that often and that's why don't see such ads.

The results show also consumer's attitude towards social media advertising of particularly health products. It is seen that, around 64 % of respondents like such ads and have a very positive attitude towards it, moreover, they say that such advertising is motivational, modern, inspiring and good for people. Here are some of the many positive answers:

*"my attitude towards it is very good, it affected me and now I eat "clean"*

*"It's a good option to make people follow the healthier lifestyle"*

*"I think it's normal for a modern world"* and many more.

The 29 % of responses were neutral, where people said that they are "okay" with such ads in social media. And only 2 % of the respondents said that they do not like health products ads in social networks. The rest 5 % either said that they are not using social media or do not see such ads there.

According to the survey, 88 % of respondents use Instagram always/on daily basis or very often. Only 9 % of them use Instagram more rarely than the other social media. (This mostly refers to the younger generation in Russia, teenagers aged 14-16, as well as among them the most popular social media is Russian social network "VK").

When the respondents were asked which of the social network they use the most, 80 % of them answered that it is Instagram. "VK" took the second place with 18 %, then Facebook with just 9 %. It turned out, that both in Russia and Ukraine, the least used social networks are Facebook (9 %) and Twitter (only 1%). The rest 4 % named other Social networks such as "Odnoklassniki" which is also a Russian social network, mostly used by people aged 35 and more.

### 4.3 Perceived Behavioral Control (PC)

According to a theoretical framework, perceived behavioral control or control beliefs are the individuals' beliefs about the existence of certain factors which can either contribute or hinder his/her behavior. These factors may have a different level of importance to the person, and each of those factors can impact differently on that person. In the end, he/she would probably behave in a line to the one of those factors that has the strongest influence on him/her. For instance, when a consumer sees a discount for a product or service and it has a high level of importance to him/her, this is a factor which can contribute to actually buying this product/service. In other words, this specific factor of a discount helps the consumer to behave according to this factor and make an action (purchase the wanted product).

According to the online survey, when being asked about some factors that contribute or hinder people towards behaving certain way, they answered a few examples of such factors, and all of them said that there are such factors existing in their lives, especially as consumers. The majority of the respondents said that there are certain factors which actually contribute or hinder them from buying a product/service. One of the main factors for the respondents was the factor of a strong advertising campaign, if for them the ad was good and they liked it, most likely they would buy the product according to this certain factor:

*"First of all, it's a good advertising from anybody"*

*"Of course, advertisement helps to notice the product. If choosing between the promoted product and a product without any kind of ads, probably I wouldn't even look at the product which was not advertised"*

*“Different factors affect purchasing. Product’s trending, ads, price and so on”*

Whereas another factor which was also mentioned quite a few times is the factor of discount for a product/service. So, when the consumer sees a discount for a product which he/she didn’t need before, now with such contributing factor, there is a very big chance of him/her actually acting in a line to that factor – buying the product/service, but in case if this factor has a certain importance to him/her. Majority of people are incurred to the factor of sales or discount, and in such scenario it is much easier for them to purchase something that they do not necessarily need:

*“I often buy products on sale, if not the discount, I wouldn’t buy it”*

*“Very often I’m buying products with the discount, which I don’t really need”*

When talking about negative factors, respondents either said that it is a bad promotion of the product or high price for it. Although, for some of the people ads became too annoying and they say that wouldn’t buy the product if it is too advertised. Others say that every time there are different factors occurring.

*“There are some factors, like good or bad advertising, if it is good I would probably buy the product, if not then I wouldn’t. (it depends from how interested I am in the product)”*

*“The most important factor – money. If I have money and I need the product, then I will buy it. “*

*“The factor is the love for the product”*

The results show that there were lots of answers, many of them were focused first of all on the good or bad advertising on the product, presence of discounts and the price of the product. But of course, there were answers of respondents which were different from others, for example for some of the respondents the ingredients of the product is an important factor. Some say that the negative experience with a product would

stop them from buying it again. And for the others the contributing or hindering factor is the opinion of their close people about the product or service (in this case, normative beliefs and control beliefs mix).

#### 4.4 Summary of the results

All these three factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, all together make a behavioral intention of an individual, which later on lead to an action. For a consumer this action will be buying the product or service. With the help of this theory, we can predict the consumer's behavioral intentions and in further promote and produce products which would have more importance to a consumer in order for him/her to purchase it. That is why, social media helps so much in understanding what the consumer wants from a brand, what kind of products and services, and what is not engaging to him/her. As well as, social media bring the ability for a consumer to give his feedback and get an answer very fast, this is very consumer's feedback actually means something, and where brands take action in order to improve the product to make the consumer happy.

Social media, especially Instagram, is a very flexible advertising platform, where every consumer target group can find the right and acceptable ads of the same product from different perspectives, people and more.

To conclude, the the results of the conducted online questionnaire among the respondents from Ukraine and Russia, show that the majority have a very positive attitude not only to social media advertising of health products, but also to social media advertising in general. In today's modern world, people accept the new ways of advertisement, what is more, most of them even like it. Consumers apart from just looking at the social media advertisement, find it quite effective, and many of them actually made some purchases because of it.

Hence, social media advertisement of health products and any other product/services/brands is nowadays one of the most effective ways of marketing in Russia and Ukraine.

## 5 Discussion

In this chapter, I am going to discuss the outcome of this thesis, answer the research questions, talk about the limitations of the research, as well as provide the recommendation for the future research and the summary of this thesis.

For various businesses and brands, it is crucial to understand the importance of social media marketing and using of many social networks to communicate with the consumer, getting feedback, understanding its customer's attitudes and behavioral intentions and by that improving its goods or services. With the help of the SMM, a brand can more easily get to another level of marketing and advertising. From the research results in Ukraine and Russia, it is seen that lots of companies successfully use social media marketing because social media advertising is blooming now. What is more, consumer's opinions, feedback and attitudes are being counted, in order to provide the best advertising, product and service. Which in the end is beneficial to both sides: consumer and a brand.

### 5.1 Answer to the research questions

The three main questions were asked in the beginning of this research in order to understand the consumers attitudes towards social media advertising of health products in Russia and Ukraine.

What are the consumer's attitudes towards advertising of the health products and advertising in general in social media in Ukraine and Russia? According to a conducted online questionnaire, the consumers mostly positively react to the advertisement in social media in general, as well as advertising of health products such as: protein bars



“Bombbar”, matcha powder “I Love Matcha”, and etc. in particular. It is known that promotions of health products are mainly made through Instagram, as being the most used social network among the majority of respondents in both Ukraine and Russia. As turned out, the attitudes of the Instagram users (consumers) in both countries have mostly positive attitudes towards such advertisement. Moreover, for many it is a motivation to follow a healthier lifestyle and they feel better after seeing these ads on social media. Nevertheless, of course there are consumers and users in social media for whom any advertisement in social media is annoying and in general they don't like it. But, what is important to know, is the fact that there are still some consumers who are not stable in their answers on their attitudes towards social media advertising of health products. Thus, the opinions and feedback of these social network users/ consumers is the one which should be also counted for a brand to improve their ads on social media. Nevertheless, as the research shows, the majority of consumers have a very positive attitude towards social media advertising of any kind of products, especially to ads of health products because of its “mission” to motivate and inspire people to choose healthier things.

How advertising in social media affects the customer experience and purchasing power of the customer in Ukraine and Russia? To start with, advertising in social media has a direct connection to the customer experience and the purchasing power of the consumer. First of all, consumer by seeing a better or worse promotion of a certain product in social media, already subconsciously decides whether he/she likes it and has an intention to buy it. What is more, many factors affect the consumers purchasing power, as already mentioned in the previous chapter. From the conducted research it can be seen that social media advertising in Ukraine and Russia brings mostly positive customer experience and only raises the purchasing power of the consumer and with it, the brand's sales. According to the questionnaire, in both Ukraine and Russia, 59 % of respondents say that they see social media advertising very often, then 35 % of them say that they see it often, whereas only 6 % either do not see ads in social media or do not use it. As well as consumer's attitudes to the social media advertising are in further affect his/her behavioral intentions, which in the end leads to an action such as purchasing the product, it depends from a company which attitude will the customer have after seeing a certain ad on Instagram, positive or negative. That is why

advertising is really affects the purchasing power of the consumer in various ways, explained above.

Why is it important to make the social media marketing suitable for different kind of consumers (and different cultures) and what it has to do with consumer's attitudes? Social media is a multicultural platform, most of the social networks are used by different countries and cultures, which makes it very important to find the right way of advertising the same product to different target groups and in different countries. Consumer's attitudes are also strongly connected to the country where they are from. It can be seen from the Geert Hofstede's theory of six cultural dimensions (1971), where different cultures react differently to these six dimensions. Moreover, not only it is important to understand the advertising in different countries, but also advertising to different target groups which are not necessarily from different countries or cultures. It is crucial that companies take into an account that there is not just one way of advertising in social media, and different target groups need different approaches.

## 5.2 Limitations of the research

To start with, the literature on the topic of the social media advertising of health products and consumer's attitudes towards it based on the chosen two countries Ukraine and Russia is not very spread. As such, there is literature existing on the separate topics of advertising of health products and consumer's attitudes towards social media advertisement.

There are some limitations to the study. First of all, because of the absence of a few important questions in the first online survey when there was the needed number of responses already, one more short open-question online questionnaire was made covering those questions which were needed for the conducted research. As I am not a professional in the sphere of research, the analysis may have its inaccuracies. Also, as I am not a professional marketer, some of questions of the questionnaires might be put not in the professional right way.

Also, there was a limitation of time. The research should have been done in a shorter period of time.

### 5.3 Recommendation for a Future Research

To start with, in this modern world, social media is growing very rapidly, and developing more, becoming the main platform for online marketing and brand's advertising. In future, social media tends to be even bigger influence for the consumer than it is now, whereas still consumer's attitudes would have to be researched again, because of the rapid change of trends and etc.

In the future, companies/brands should consider taking social media marketing more seriously, as well as this platform is where from they can get the most of the customers, and it is important to work towards to multiple strong social network accounts for a consumer to be engaged to it, and in further have a positive attitude towards it. Because of the fact that advertising of health products is trending now on social media in Ukraine and Russia, this topic was chosen for a research. As the recommendation of the future research, I would suggest to observe and see what is trending in the world and in social media to provide the newest and most relevant information from the research.

### 5.4 Summary

To conclude, as well as advertising of health products is one of the biggest trends in social media among the users and the consumers in Ukraine and Russia, understanding their attitudes towards it is crucial. As it can be seen from the conducted survey, in these two countries, the attitude towards advertising of health products and other in social media is mainly very positive and more favorable than any other ways of advertising, as well as they see these ads from the influencers whom they trust and it is easier for them to give feedback, which is very beneficial for the brands who are partnering with them. Not to mention that even from the brands themselves, consumers are likely to react positively to such advertising in social media.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Online Questionnaire 1

1. Where are you from?
  - Russia
  - Ukraine
  - Other
  
2. How old are you?
  - 14-16
  - 17-20
  - 21-24
  - more than 25
  
3. Your gender?
  - Male
  - Female
  
4. How often do you use social media?
  - Every day
  - Almost every day
  - Once a week
  - Sometimes
  - Other
  
5. Which social network are you using the most?
  - Instagram
  - Twitter
  - VK
  - Facebook
  - Other
  
6. How often do you use Instagram?
  - Always/every day
  - Often
  - Less than other networks
  - Other
  
7. Which social network are you using the least?

- Instagram
- VK
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Other

8. Have you seen advertising in social media and how do you perceive it?

- Very often / I like it, sometimes even buy something which was promoted in social media
- Very often/ neutrally
- Often/ it annoys me
- Sometimes/neutrally, I'm not interested in it

9. How often do you see ads of different brands on Instagram?

- Very often/ all the time
- Often
- Sometimes
- Other

10. What is your attitude towards advertising of brands on Instagram?  
Open-question

11. Who from do you see social media advertising the most?

- Bloggers/ influencers
- Celebrities
- Instagram itself
- Other

12. Do you think that some part of your purchases were inspired/motivated by the advertising on Instagram or other social media?

- Yes, lots of my purchases were made because of the social media advertising
- Yes, some of my purchases were made because of the social media advertising
- Very often I want to buy something because of the advertising in social media, but I'm not doing it
- No, it doesn't affect me

13. How often do you see advertising of health products on Instagram?

- Very often, especially lately
- Often
- Sometimes
- I don't see such advertising
- Other

14. What is your attitude towards social media advertising of health products?

Open-question

15. Did you buy health product because of the social media advertisement?

- Yes, constantly
- Yes, sometimes
- No more than few times
- I wanted to but it didn't work out
- No and I don't want to

16. Do you think that in your country social media advertisement is widespread?

- Yes, very much
- Yes
- No

## Appendix 2. Online Questionnaire 2.

1. Do you think that if you are positive about the product / service, is there a greater chance of buying it? And vice versa?

For example, you are positively disposed in advance to buy this or that thing, you have positive expectations about it, do you think that it is precisely because of this attitude and expectations that you are most likely to buy it?

Open-question

2. Do you think that part of your purchases was made or NOT made due to a positive or negative opinion on the product / service account from your friends and relatives?

For example, your friend said that the new-fashioned Instagram healthy diet product is nonsense. Before these words, you wanted to get it, but now you don't want to.

Open-question

3. Do you think that there are certain factors that contribute or hinder the purchase of a product? Do they affect the purchase?

For example, factors such as product / service advertising or others.

Open-question