Opinion Leaders

A study of Cross-Border Opinion Leadership on Instagram

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Master's thesis in Political Communication – Nordic Perspectives

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Abstract

The aim for this master thesis is to examine if and how cross-border opinion leadership exists in social media outlets on topics of political matters. Current research is conflicted whether such general leaders exist, who they are and how they communicate. Social media influencers as political opinion leaders and everyday political talk, especially on conventionally non-political arenas, are phenomena yet to be explored. The study uses quantitative methods, assessing contents of two popular Norwegian influencers on Instagram based on four selection periods. Findings suggest that mainstream influencers also can be political opinion leaders, and that cross-border opinion leadership exists in the new media system. In addition, personal touch to content caption increases engagement in political posts. Social media influencers as political opinion leaders may impact the democracy. It can weaken it by creating echo-chambers, facilitating the spread of fake-news and/or creating isolation. On the other hand, they may encourage audiences who earlier in mass-media logic were passive, in becoming active citizens and contributors to societies.

Preface and Acknowledgements

The process of writing this thesis has allowed me to learn much about myself as well as the field of study. It has at stressful times pushed me above and beyond my limits, but it has also given me the confidence in handling big projects by myself. Nevertheless, the process would have been a whole lot harder without these wonderful people.

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Rune Karlsen (Spring 2020 – Fall 2021) for his valuable insights, knowledge, guidance, and feedback. By showing genuine interest in my research problem and the research results, he has motivated me in times where I found it hard to motivate myself.

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Finally, I would like to praise my family, friends and boyfriend who have been there for me throughout this whole process. A special thanks to my boyfriend who has offered unvaluable help in Excel and data, as well as reading through and giving feedback on the many pages of this thesis.

Happy reading!

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1.0 Introduction

After the US presidential election in 1940, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 11, 31) discovered that people, more so than the media, affected people's voting. They found that personal influence was a bigger factor for people's decision-making than earlier believed, and that certain individuals within a group were more likely to influence others within the group. These people were referred to as opinion leaders and were believed to have single spheres of expertise. In 1949 Merton (213) split up the concept in two groups: opinion leaders that are experts in one specific field and opinion leaders that have influence in multiple, often unrelated fields. Prior research of Katz and Lazarsfeld had found no evidence of the latter. However, Merton's notion on multiple, cross-border opinion leadership was supported by research later conducted by Marcus and Bauer in 1964 (628) who found that established opinion leaders had a much higher chance of having multiple opinion leaderships, than individuals who had none to begin with.

The flow of communication and processes of public opinion formation has come a long way since the middle of the 20th century. New technology allows for communication to travel from people and outlets which was previously reserved for traditional news outlets. Simultaneously, opinion leaders are no longer bound to physical places to wield influence. Opinions and discussions are increasingly built and presented online, often through people's own social media profiles or in other online networks. Some researchers (see Rogstad 2016,144) showed that blogs, such as Instagram profiles, have developed into important news sources for people, and that these are actually trustworthy in certain areas. Findings from Rogstad's (2016, 153) research supports this claim arguing that new media communicates issues which earlier have been overlooked, and bring these issues into the public agenda, thus contributing to push important political debates into the agenda.

The modern term of opinion leaders may therefore be referred to as influentials or influencers. Reports prove that while consumption of traditional news sources are in decline, online news, including social media, have become increasingly popular information sources for people. The same report suggests that especially amongst younger citizens, social media is used as an information hub. (Newman et al. 2020, 77) Online influencers have huge followings, and can reach numerous people simultaneously. Through social media they can use their own profiles to share opinions and influence others. These influentials are therefore critical nodes in the

communication flow of these networks (Karlsen 2015, 301), and research should arguably be prioritized accordingly.

Information on an important and complex theme such as politics may present itself through everyday political talk on social media platforms like Instagram. A variety of theorists (see Norris 2000, 121), were all positive to the democratic implications the internet would inhabit. They emphasize empowered citizens by lowered thresholds between ordinary citizens and the government, not needing to have certain positions, financial capital, status, or networks in order to influence political debates using new technology. Online platforms may help citizens who used to be passive to become more active by "meeting them where they are" through new logics. Such implications may push these previously passive people to become active and informed citizens in democracies. Researchers (see Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 217) have found opinion leaders also to be perceived as more trustworthy than traditional media, which further strengthens the argument that influence possessed by these people should be studied further.

A study by Wiken (2020, 10) suggests that a person can make others think that it is worth listening to you by either just being famous or by being an influencer. It is of course a far stretch to state listeners equals opinion leadership, however, it may spark attention on important political and societal topics and thought processes, which in turn can lead to them seeking such information and opinions from these very influencers. As such, one may call these people opinion leaders indeed. This predisposition of gaining influence in situations or on matters not relevant to their typical theme of profile, makes it interesting to see whether cross-border opinion leadership exists in the new media system.

1.1 Research Question

The rise of social media has made opinion leaders more relevant than in the previous media system. Through digitalization social media have become increasingly important sources for people to gather information from, and opinion leaders are central nodes within these structures as they disseminate information to the public online (Karlsen 2015, 301). Nodes are referred to as users in such networks. While social media has increased in use and consumption, new types of opinion leaders have emerged on the platforms, called influencers. These people have through own initiatives on social media become celebrity influencers by creating their own structures on the platform in terms of followers (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna

2018, 435). Popularity is gained through their representation of interest area, like lifestyle or fashion, and can be considered as opinion leadership domains of these individuals. Accordingly, they inhibit the power to reach and influence a vast number of people online, given new tools and accessibility offered by social media in both consumption and producing information online (Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 215). New network structures allow for the modern opinion leader to address and discuss important matters such as politics without having to bypass the traditional media (Park et al. 2015, 246). Their dominant position in the digital media system actualizes whether they can also take on a political role, that is having cross-border or overlapping opinion leaderships.

This paper aims to explore whether influencers, opinion leaders on fashion and lifestyle, also have a political role. More precisely, I ask:

"Are celebrity influencers cross-border opinion leaders to the extent that they are also political opinion leaders?"

This type of an overall problem statement can be answered and limited in various ways. Since the focus of this paper will be on celebrity influencers as political opinion leaders and how political opinion leadership is communicated, I specify this question with two more detailed research questions.

Research question 1 (RQ1): To what extent are celebrity influencers also political opinion leaders?

Research question 2 (RQ2): What characterizes the way celebrity influencers exercise cross-border opinion leadership?

In research question one, cross-border opinion leadership will be investigated by examining influencer publishing habits of political content on their Instagram profiles. The influencers will further be referred to as nodes, influentials, social media bloggers and opinion leaders.

Research question two aims to explore how the influencers communicate politics in terms of what instruments they use. It may be that certain types of tools increase or even decrease engagement.

The following research investigates Norwegian opinion leaders on Instagram. Karlsen (2015, 306) found social media research in Norway particularly interesting because of the central

part that internet plays in society the and the fairly large social media consumption. Instagram is one of the biggest social mediums in Norway and because of its mix between everyday life and political content (Wiken 2020, 1-2), the platform seems like a fitting arena to investigate cross-border opinion leadership in the era of the new media system.

The paper is structured by first opening the research gap through reasons of importance and prior research of cross-border opinion leadership. Next, the conceptual framework will be presented followed by an explanation of the methodology used to investigate the research problem. Further, results of the data analyzed using SPSS will be discussed. In the final chapter, established theory together with my own analyses and findings will form discussion related to the research problem and questions. Ultimately, this will formulate a conclusion.

1.2 Reasons of Importance

Existing literature does not offer a lot of research on political communication and engagement in everyday lives. It often gathers viewpoints from obvious political arenas, sites, and people, excluding those that do not meet the formal standards. While some literature about politics on Instagram are more concerned about how politicians and parties may utilize the platform in their campaigns and audience's use of it in election times (see Wiken 2020, 2), this paper takes a different approach by looking into how unformal politics occur in everyday life for common people through influencers on the platform. It is important because "Understanding the dynamics of everyday political talk and participation matters, as these are key issues in the context of ongoing reflections on the health of civic life in many Western democracies" (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 84). This means that such arenas likely represent the viewpoints and concerns in societies. Having mainstream influencers increasing and setting agendas about important political and societal issues may motivate less active audiences to engage on such matters, especially amongst younger segments. This may have positive implications on democracies. It is nevertheless worth mentioning that this does not come without reservation about risks, for example, the spread of fake news. A report from the Norwegian Media Authority (Medietilsynet 2021, 21) found that young people have a tendency to turn to celebrity and entertainment-based news, rather than "hard news" such as economy, society and politics compared to the older generation. Such news avoidance may increase the risk of differences in our democracies, separating those who are and are not informed citizens, resulting in an increased fragmented public.

By investigating a third space like Instagram one can dodge many of the issues regarding political discussions on traditionally political arenas such as polarization and news avoidance from less active audiences (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 79, 84). In other words, political discussion and influence may appear on less traditional platforms, as well as from people less known for having a political profile, and still have an impact on our societies and democracies, especially amongst the younger generation. Even Oslo municipality is no stranger using influencers to reach the younger generation with political messages (Aronsen 2020). Such actions may be efficient and even necessary to reach a younger audience when the majority of those responding not to be interested in news (8%) are just amongst this age segment. They are not only less interested in news, but also have less of political interest, have lower trust in news and are more likely to use social media as news sources. (Kampanje 2019) Everyday political talk amongst ordinary citizens is thought to be an essential trait in democratic societies (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 77).

1.3 Prior Research of Cross-Border Opinion Leadership

Katz and Lazarsfeld's study from 1955 wanted to know what or who, other than the media, had affected people's voting decision after the 1940's presidential election. Personal influence became evident as a factor for people's decision-making, and some people within a group were found more likely to influence within the group than other members. These people also had higher media consumption than others, and are known as opinion leaders (Weimann 1994, 12). Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 333-334) found no evidence of opinion leaders to be general in the sense that they are more likely to have overlapping opinion leaderships. Myers and Robertson (1972, 45) had a few years later put different opinion leadership themes into two categories and found these two not to be overlapping unless the themes belonged in the same category.

Conventional opinion leadership theory has in other words been sceptic and conflicting to cross-border opinion leadership. Many of these studies were, however, conducted before the era of social media. Media logic has changed to network media logic, and conditions for an overlap tendency may therefore have changed as well. New communication technologies have made researchers such as Kalsnes (2016, 14) question conventional knowledge about political communication and public sphere. The rise of social media is thus said to alter the logic and implications of opinion leaders, from being off-line to now have access online. Such

developments call for new research in contextualizing and researching online opinion leaders (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 470).

Additionally, existing social media opinion leadership theory until this day has mostly focused on commercial product advocacy, and not so much on the natural selection of contents, which is what the majority of contents on social media consists of (Tafesse and Wood 2021, 1). This paper thus takes on a different approach by using content categories which are found to naturally exist on these platforms. Measurements of engagement which determine the presence of opinion leadership, are being tested in the same way as Tafesse and Wood (2021, 2) through number of likes and comments by other social media users. I use the term “users” instead of “audience” because these are believed to be more active since the introduction of social media.

2.0 Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to conceptualize the aim of this paper and is presented as theoretical framework of this research. First off, central elements in communication flow and media will lay the foundation of the paper. These theories will serve as the base of how we understand influentials in new networks. Furthermore, aspects of opinion leader's impact and topicality in this modern era will be presented. These concepts will help understand the first research question RQ1 of this master thesis. In the final chapters, key styles of influence which can affect the efficiency of content engagement in such social media networks will be presented and will help answer RQ2.

2.1 Flow of Communication - Opinion formation throughout time

To fully grasp the concept of opinion leaders as mediators and their role in public opinion making, it seems appropriate to go back to the very essence, namely how the flow of communication takes place in society. Deutsch from 1963 referred to in Esser (2013) lists multiple scholars arguing that politics is so closely connected to communication one might say that politics is communication. Public opinion theory is seen as the foundation of opinion leadership because these individuals influence this concept in a way that changes and develops over time, from the early stages of third places in old Europe to third spaces. In the latter we find people-to-people online discussions and information sharing/gathering of societal and political debates. This sub-chapter will review what is perceived as public opinion's three phases throughout time. The self-made illustration below represents the stages of public opinion making seen over time.

Figure 1: The Development of Opinion Formation

Figure 1 above illustrates how and where public opinion has developed over time, from third spaces to mass media, to mass interpersonal communication. The stages of communication flow are further explained below.

2.1.1 Third Place to Spaces – Person to Person

The flow of communication and public opinion making in the earlier days could be found in "third places". Public opinion is the general understanding of policies of societal concerns, and third spaces refers to discussions amongst the informed citizens gathering in coffee shops and salons discussing these very matters (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 464). These places where traditionally set in physical places in a close demographic radius and typically outside of the work and home sphere, but still felt like a natural place where every day political talk could emerge (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 79).

Because of its demographic and limited access, it can be criticized in its form of "public". Public comes from the German word "Öffentlichkeit" and refers to an open mutual arena where the private and public meet to discuss and gather information relevant to the commons. Neither the working class nor the majority of women had access to these arenas. (Dørum 2017, 15, 55) Nevertheless, Oldenburg's (1996, 8) theory urges the importance of such third spaces, because they may lead to political debates among ordinary citizens, assessing and improving opinions by talking to one another instead of solely devouring whatever is communicated through professional news outlets such as traditional newspapers. It was during this period from 1840 to 1890 when the communication society began to root, where journalism became a public actor and printed newspaper was the main media outlet. In Norway for example, the number of newspapers increased from 28 to 107, although many people during this time could not read. (Eide and Larsen 2017, 181-183) Many newspapers also had clear agendas by being party-pressed papers, serving different parties either directly or indirectly (Gripsrud 2017, 250). It may therefore not be a surprise that the public rather wished to discuss such matters amongst themselves, instead of relying on the opinions from the newspapers many could not even read.

Since the rise of the internet, third spaces has in later research been argued to include or even replace these old third places for everyday political talk to virtual communities altogether, altering the original concept from third places to third spaces (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 80). This way of communicating politics and forming opinions through person-to-person communication in a two-way setting instead of shaping opinions based on media outlets is called a one-step communication flow.

2.1.2 Mass Communication – Mass to mass

The period after 1890 towards 1940 in Norway is characterized as the age of the masses, and refers to the time when newspapers became more accessible, more people could read, and therefore communication of news and politics could reach a wider proportion of the public. (Gripsrud 2017, 235) The communication started flowing mass to mass, where an increasing number of media outlets and suppliers aimed to reach as many people as possible. Mass media are outlets for communication, and was earlier dominated by television, print newspapers and radio (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 465). Studies (see Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 465-466) have argued that these outlets have a significant effect on citizens view on public opinion. Further it explains how they would not only have the power to set agendas for discourse, but would also dictate what the public should think about various issues. These viewpoints of media's power have been criticized in later research have been criticized.

Debates about this one-way nature of communication of citizens being passive consumers rather than thinking individuals, may both be justified and rejected since the development of Web 2.0. New communication technology made it possible to reach an even bigger audience and facilitated competition among outlets. Traditional outlets like newspaper, radio and television adapted when the internet was introduced, affecting political communication and public sphere as we know it (Kalsnes 2016, 21). Together with the internet, smart phones replaced the computer (Newman et al. 2020, 77), and therefore communication and information was made more efficient, place-independent and accessible to all. Consequently, reading news is no longer only limited to the elites.

2.1.3 Blend of Mass and Interpersonal – Mass to person/ person to mass

Since the rise of the internet and new technologies, social media has emerged, and mainly refers to web and mobile-based social media platforms where citizens engage in a social way of interacting with both content as well as each other (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 23). The logic of social media is separated from traditional mass media logic, but often intertwining, and mainly concerns the costs of such social media platforms (Kalsnes 2016, 26). The reason for the overlapping logic comes from these platforms' ability to inhabit both mass and interpersonal communication in the same arena, e.g. a news article (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 464), Instagram posts, Tweets etc. Media logic can help understand the influence the media has on institutions and people, particularly within politics (Kalsnes 2016, 24). It also facilitates for people to post and debate in their own forums, regardless of news agendas and

common opinions. In other words, citizens are no longer bound to have formal positions in order to influence news or political agendas, and mass media does not alone sit with all its power. Such informal ways to debate or seek information on political and societal news can be drawn back to third spaces and can be defined as "A third space is, thus, a formally non-political online discussion space where political talk can emerge" (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 80). This implies that arenas earlier referred to as third places now have emerged to third spaces online. These traditionally non-political arenas facilitate for political talk, allowing everyday citizens to become a part of it.

Just like Neubaum and Krämer (2017, 465), this phenomenon will be referred to as mass interpersonal communication. The communication does not just flow from person to person like in third places, nor from mass to mass, but is instead scattered amongst mass to person, person to mass and people to people in third spaces. Communication can both have one and two-step flows, and since citizens may respond back to both people and mass communications on the platforms (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 23), this implies that a two-way communication process is present.

In a political communication setting, politicians have altered their way of communicating through this new media, just as the newspapers are now online. The trend is using short catchy phrases, visual and entertainment designs to reach audiences on the platforms. Some researchers (see Klinger and Svensson 2016, 23-24), have nevertheless found tendencies of politicians and political organizations downplaying the value of these new media platforms. Instead, they were found to use them as tools for traditional broadcasting making them one-way outlets.

Social media has in other words opened up possibilities for people to connect with one another, contrary to mass media logic where mostly one-way communication and information sharing are present (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 32). News-media, also referred to as mass media logic, can because of its overlap with social media logic meet some of the same dimensions, although altered. Such implications will be discussed in the next sub-chapter.

2.1.4 Mass Media Logic and Social Media Logic

There are three different dimensions to news-media logic: the professional, the commercial and the technological aspects. These can provide valuable information about how influentials

on social media perform as mediators of news and politics compared to traditional news organizations and journalists.

Professionalism is rooted in the growing privatization and independency of news-outlets. It also means that journalists follow a set of norms and facilitate the public's interests by setting important agendas, being balanced and neutral and acting as watch-dogs for ordinary citizens (Esser 2013, 169-170). In a network-media logic this ideal plays out by people on platforms sharing personal intel to other often like-minded people. A study (see Klinger and Svensson 2016, 33) implies that this use of information as a way of mass self-communication is far from perceiving audiences as passive like in mass media logic.

Commercialization has been a growing influence on mass media logic since mid-1980s, and many Western media systems are now less autonomous, driven by commercial forces and less attached to politics. News organizations privilege business models with increased entertainment content which is sold to users. Such imperatives can be argued to undermine political relevance as well as the development of informed opinions for citizens. (Esser 2013, 171-172) In a network-media logic, content production costs are low which invalidates the commercial logic earlier presented in a mass media logic where particularly print newspapers and TV heavily depend on subscribers paying for content. In media logic, content is often produced with a lot of personal information on social media platforms. The business model in this logic is therefore more concerned about connectivity and popularity of the content. (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 29-31)

The technological aspect has altered the way in which content is produced and shared. There are certain types of formats for every media outlet depending its nature, for instance TV being more visual and easier to consume than print news. (Esser 2013, 173) In mass media logic, the technology facilitates for a distinct public sphere with single broadcastings for passive audiences set to physical limitations, while network-media logic facilitates for numerous parts of the public with rapid updates where citizens may engage and interact. The online ideal of sharing personal information is in contrast to mass media, where professional and set frames are ideals. (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 29-33) The aspects presented are illustrated below in a self-made figure inspired by the three factors.

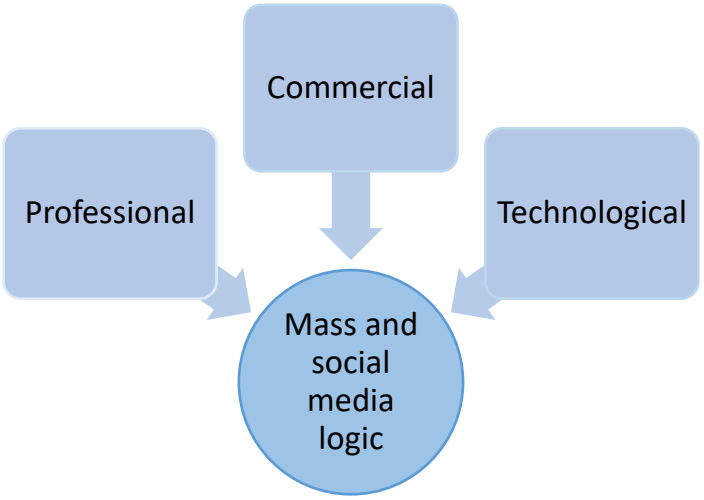

Figure 2: Aspects of Mass and Social Media Logic

As illustrated in Figure 2, professionalism, commercialism and technology are three factors that interplay with mass logic and are argued to potentially influence social media logic. Now that an overview of how public opinion making has shifted throughout time has been presented, I will continue by presenting how this can be contextualized when talking about opinion leader's position in this flow.

2.2 Opinion Leaders and the Two-Step Flow of Communication

After the nineteenth century where communication in societies floated from person to person in intimate settings, societies changed to a time dominated by mass media. It was during this era opinion leadership theory bloomed, and earlier theory about the media being all-powerful and having direct effects on citizens was challenged. (Weimann 1994, 9) Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 11, 31) became curious of what influenced people's voting decisions after the 1940 presidential election campaign. Research from this campaign studied other factors apart from mass media that would influence their decision-making process. If mass media did not influence to the extent many believed it did, then what or who did? This sparked the notion of opinion leaders in a two-step flow of communication, serving as additional mediums to mass communication. Opinion leaders have been proven through classic research of two-step information flow to be fundamental cues in networks, as for political communication they need to be centrally situated and active in these very online networks in order to be a vital part of the flow (Karlsen 2015, 306).

Three main leads of Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) study became evident. First, the extent of impact personal influence had during the election, mainly in everyday settings between

friends and family of everyday political talk like earlier and later mentioned. Second, certain people across all social classes were identified as influencing opinions of other people in their groups more than others. Despite of class, these people were similar to others in the group except their political interests were higher. Third, these opinion leaders had a higher mass media consumption than the rest of the society, supporting the notion that the flow travelled from the mass media to the opinion leaders and then to their followers, also referred to in the literature as the two-step flow model. (Weimann 1994, 12) Instead of communication travelling from mass media to people, the two-step model suggests that communication rather travels from the media to opinion leaders and then to the less active people. These mediators are said to serve as key parts of most interpersonal bonds within single networks of communication. (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 32-33) The communication flow and influence in societies would look somewhat like the self-made illustration presented below.

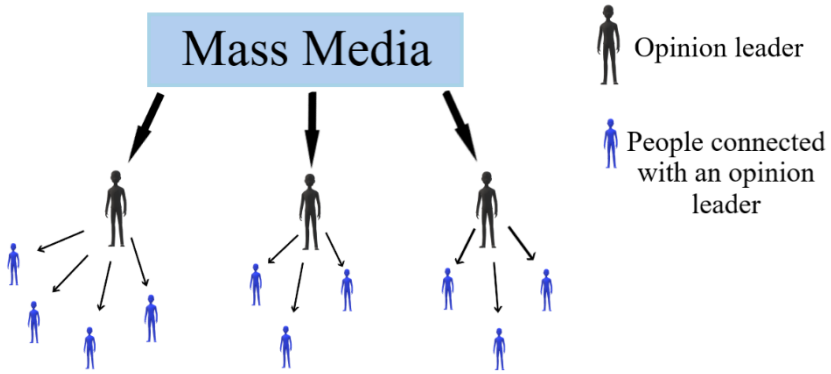

Figure 3: The Two-Step Flow of Communication

As Figure 3 illustrates, opinion leaders work as facilitators and mediators in networks online, creating their own small spheres. This model has nevertheless been criticised for its simplified reasoning that communication flows directly from mass media to opinion leaders. These people also have contact with other experts and knowledgeable individuals, making the flow not necessarily as direct as one thought it to be, and the media not all that powerful (Weimann 1994, 25). It has also been criticized for ignoring the possibility of audiences being active participants, rather viewing them as naive non-thinking masses (Livingstone 2006, 236).

People thus tend to look to others for attitude and opinion building in uncertain times, and by interacting with each other within networks, collective opinions are made through collective issues (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 57). These people are by scholars referred to as opinion

leaders, and will interpret messages from the media before diffusing it in their networks, mediating and contextualizing the original message (Karlsen 2015, 302). Identification to the opinion or cause is vital for an intimate relationship, and to be considered an opinion leader within a network (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 52-53). Opinion leaders in these groups serve as interpreters after diffusing information for those who are less active and more passive (Karlsen 2015, 305). The opinion leaders represent the general viewpoint of the group or network, work as facilitators within them and are further conscious of the members standpoints on their topic of expertise. In a group, opinions have a higher chance of being steady and only change when everyone is onboard regarding altering their common opinion, often happening by the strain of a campaign. (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 8-9) Central elements to opinion leaders are their activeness within networks transmitting information to their followers as well as to influence them (Karlsen 2015, 314). In uncertain times especially, there are risks of opinion leaders selectively transferring subjects or only parts of them that fits their viewpoints or expertise, and may in turn prohibit but also enable important changes in societies (Livingstone 2006, 236).

For a person to be recognized as an opinion leader one must affect a certain number of people in their decision making in one way or another (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 2). There are four known methods to detect and measure opinion leaders influence: the sociometric, the informants ratings, the self-designation and the observation method (Weimann 1994, 29). The first can be drawn back to Moreno's earlier work referred to in Weimann (1994, 29-30), and went about asking people within a group who they would seek out on specific topics, and that person whose name would be mentioned most times, would be the opinion leader on that given matter. The second operates by instead of asking everyone in a group or society, one selects individuals based on knowledge and social ties to the group (Weimann 1994, 31-32). The third seeks them out by asking respondents in a group about their influence, for example one may use Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) simple question from the election study, which is as follows: "Have you recently tried to influence someone's political opinion and has anyone seeked you out to advise them on political matters?" (Weimann 1994, 33-34). The fourth uses observation as a tool, and by carefully selecting trained people who observe only in small social groups one could detect opinion leaders within these units (Weimann 1994, 46).

2.3 Technology, Social Media and its Affordances

Technology has changed the way communication flows in societies, and has especially made new ways for political communication to be distributed and consumed. While TV, radio and print newspapers dominated the mass media era, the introduction of the internet has made the same outlets digital and mobile. (Norris 2000, 120-121) Kalsnes (2016, 14) found these new communication technologies to question conventional knowledge of political communication and public sphere, altering the logic of the media in how to achieve interest, exposure and influence. Audiences have therefore changed from mass media to new media (Livingstone 2006, 233). Although technology can be argued to challenge traditional knowledge of political communication and the public sphere, the mass media and social media logic have also been argued to co-exist and influence one another, referred to as a "hybrid media system" by other scholars (see Kalsnes 2016, 14). Social media content often draws content from mass media in the way it is often re-produced and referred to, like news stories, links or even TV shows (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 29). The results of these new technologies are argued to increase interactivity, restructuring the public sphere (Kalsnes 2016, 20).

From third places to spaces as earlier presented, social media lower barriers for people to discuss matters without being physically present, by engaging through "likes" and comments (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 470), or through other acts like "retweeting" on Twitter, re-publishing on Facebook or tagging and mentioning on Instagram. People face greater possibilities of influencing public debates today through opportunities offered by new digital media, compared to times where mass media dominated the flow of communication. The number of people using social media to influence politics is increasing. Such implications can either work as remedies for democracies by opening up such spaces to common people or enable political elites. (Chadwick, Dennis, and Smith 2016, 19) Politicians have through new media dedicated more time and space on their platforms, absorbing more of the private side of politics (Karlsen and Enjolras 2016, 339), and thus adopted the new media logic. Sharing of personal information is to be recognized as an online ideal (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 33).

Similarly, ordinary citizens have new logics of producing and consuming news, as well as participating and influencing systems in new ways that earlier was not possible. Karlsen and Enjolras (2016, 344-345) found that the number of followers as well as number of retweets, comments and mentions, served as indicators of how influential a person or their content was

on Twitter. Nevertheless, they also emphasize that the number of followers might only imply fame and not necessarily influence, whereas number of mentions and retweets serve as best indicators. Based on these notions one can spot some people that are more influential than others on social media platforms, and instead of passing information and frames from person to person, also called word of mouth, we now face new ways for information to flow in the new media.

Nahon et al. from 2011 referred to in Klinger and Svensson (2016, 31) describes the "network-enhanced word of mouth", also referred to as eWOM, as virality when reaching a big group on social media, passing it to like-minded people. Because social media's distribution patterns travel from user to user, political communication should see virality as an ideal within the networks. This ideal isolates from personal communication where content most often keep within the circle of close connections and has a tendency of going viral by mere coincidence. (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 31) Influencers may have different ideals though, than what this traditional network media logic presents. Their aim may be argued to heavily revolve around getting as much exposure as possible in the form of followers, likes, comments and attention towards their content.

The flow of information relies on citizens use of platforms and how active they are. Newman et al. (2020, 77) found through their report that while traditional news sources such as TV, radio and print news are in decline, 88% of Norwegians use online news weekly including social media. When considering devices news are being consumed with, the shift has changed from computers to smart phones. Facebook is still the social media platform most used when reading news, and for many young users, social media is used as an information hub. A report from Medietilsynet (2021, 8) indicated however that most people below 30 uses online newspapers and TV instead of social media in their search for news. Nevertheless, 6 out of 10 men and 7 out of 10 women below 30 year uses Instagram multiple times a day (Ipsos 2020). It is therefore reason to believe this segment come across unformal political content in an un-conscious way. This is clarified when young users utilize online media and streaming services more than the older generation, which still sticks to the more traditional news and are more consistent in this way of consuming news (Medietilsynet 2021, 3). They may have their favorite newspaper that they regularly consume, instead of having a news mix. Although there is an overall increase in online news consummation, age gaps in the news consumption patterns still exists (Medietilsynet 2021, 19). This becomes evident in the same report where

the majority of those between 9-18 years old uses social media along with online newspapers when consuming news. The degree to which someone is exposed to old and new media therefor heavily relies on technological political and economic factors, as well as the degree of which they intend for information to reach them (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 21). The latter is also referred to by e.g. Wright, Graham, and Jackson (2016, 79, 84) as news-avoidance.

Cantril and Allport's book from 1935 referred to in Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 22) found that also the medium itself affects to what degree people are being persuaded. Instagram is a typical social network site or service, also referred to as SNS. These sites work as both media and networks, and opinion leaders as active users are important for interpreting information in these networks (Karlsen 2015, 314). The platform's main form of communications is done through pictures and videos (Wiken 2020, 2), and this visual presentation therefore stands out from other platforms where politics are discussed, like Twitter. A typical online social network site facilitates for people to network from user to user, and consist of a public or quasi- public profile and lists of connections (Karlsen 2015, 305), like "friends" on Facebook or in this case "followers" on Instagram. In the latter, communication from people in your network is visible on your profile to a greater extent than others through algorithms. These algorithms often selects the exposure in your profile based on connections interests and activities in the network, where messages are distributed from users in selected networks and further visible in other users "feeds". (Karlsen 2015, 302-303) Additionally to the medium, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 22) found that language, form and presentation in contents also are important contributors to the degree of which people are being influenced.

Because Instagram is the second most frequent downloaded app in Apple Store (Alwan, Fazl-Ersi, and Vahedian 2020, 169594), it becomes interesting to use this platform in research about influencers and everyday politics. Livingstone (2006, 233) emphasizes the need for and importance of ordinary citizens to engage with media to increase democratic involvement. Through social media platforms such as Instagram, chances of mixing everyday lives with political debates may increase and are as such important traits for the public sphere to thrive and further democratic societies.

2.3.1 Instagram as "A Third Space"

Third space is a construct built on reviewing Ray Oldenburg's theory and is a continuation based on his original work. The concept takes place in public places outside work or home

environment where everyday people, often regulars, can discuss in a natural setting. Therefore every coffe shop can not be considered third places, it must endorse some social and environmental aspects. (Wright, Graham, and Jackson 2016, 81) This framework is continued by asserting online communities as part of third spaces, as Wiken (2020) does. Although such arenas are not traditionally characterized as political spaces, political discussions may take place.

Studies show that influencers on Instagram often use a mix of everyday and political content to make a connection with their followers. Everyday content would also often coincide with political content, which would seem to increase the interest from their followers. Such traits of everyday content is one of the pillars of third spaces. (Wiken 2020, 6) By having many friends or followers in your online social network site with a broad network, chances are you might be an influencer (Dubois and Gaffney 2014, 1263). It can be difficult to measure their impact on these networks through what they communicate, but they tend to concentrate their contents to singular or narrow themes (Bashari and Fazl-Ersi 2020, 409). It is this notion that is challenged through this research.

2.4 Revising Traditional Opinion Leadership Theory: Cross-Border Opinion Leadership

As demonstrated above, technical eases have made new patters for the flow of communication. Because of digitalization and social media becoming increasingly important sources for people to collect information, it is crucial to evaluate the part that opinion leaders play in the flow of communication, as they are central nodes within these new network structures, disseminating information to the public online (Karlsen 2015, 301). Opinion leaders have together with new network structures been given new tools and are more accessible to the public online. They can now through social media produce and spread news online (Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 215). Findings suggest that those who are committed to a political cause or have great political interest but have troubles communicating these offline, face greater chances of opinion-sharing online. The separation of offline and online communication can, however, be argued to become less prevalent because people will discuss issues they found online in their interpersonal circle and vice versa (Pang et al. 2016). Online opinion leadership may in other words be different to offline

opinion leadership or even overlap the logics discussed in previous chapters, and is therefore important to contextualize and research. (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 470)

Although influencing opinions through traditional settings of interpersonal communication is no longer the popular procedure to influence opinions, opinion leaders now face new opportunities that may even be more efficient (Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 215). Offline and online opinion leadership are separated in the way communication flows, earlier in-person by traditional word-of-mouth directly flowing from person to person, whereas the internet offers communication through eWOM, as earlier accounted for in section 2.3. The format of information and opinions usually presents itself through text, pictures, videos, even emojis (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 432) and "click speeches", which will be explained in section 2.4.1.

Unlike opinion leaders in the traditional offline two-way communication flow, the age of online opinion leaders has been argued to return to a one-way communication flow. Bennett and Manheim (2006, 213) reason this by demonstrating the changes in technologies and further social ties in societies. They point out that the mass media is said to diminish the audience mass by micro targeting them with various messages, which causes the opinion leaders to lose their importance in the flow, as an individual can find content and frameworks that suit the individual. At best, they only strengthen established opinions from the mass media rather than reframing them, which raises the question whether opinion leaders are in fact leaders.

People increasingly consume and participate in political information through online channels, although Columbia studies referred to in Weimann (1994, 182) also found evidence of isolation due to its nature of reinforcing current political likings and following those that fit one's preferences and opinions. Even though there is a growing trend of people fetching their information online and on social media platforms, they seem less interested using these channels for their political agendas, mainly when it comes down to traditional politics of elections (Karlsen 2015, 302). Additionally, the silencing mechanism has been of concern amongst public opinion researchers. The theory is based on the fact that one would not express opinions that previously have not been accepted in an interpersonal setting, often concerning controversial topics. (Matthes, Knoll, and von Sikorski 2018, 6) Noelle-Neumann from 1994 referred to in Neubaum and Krämer (2017, 471) suggests that the mechanism

comes to surface on highly or non-public arenas, such as open social media profiles that reaches a wide audience or a conversation at dinner, because people fear rejection and isolation.

Nevertheless, online platforms foster diversity of opinions, and one can always find groups or people with similar controversial opinions as oneself compared to the offline opinion climate, particularly where one can choose to be anonymous (Matthes, Knoll, and von Sikorski 2018, 7). Therefore, both opinion expression and engagement in online climates might reduce the silence mechanism. Rojas (2010, 343) further found that people are more likely to express controversial opinions online as a corrective action in case of biased media messages, to make sure all sides are being heard in mass interpersonal political talk.

Although opinion leaders are said to extract information from the mass media, Weimann (1994, 83) takes note that information more so stems from private sources. Walter and Brüggemann (2020, 267) found through their study that one can be seen as an opinion leader in social media networks by overcoming the traditional paradigm of the two-step flow, given that they have access to first-hand information. In other words, they do not have to rely on traditional media to gather information. Nevertheless, it also became evident in the same study that political actors more often fulfilled acts of opinion leaders by raising more engagement on their tweets than "normal" people. First-hand information may therefore not be a remedy to opinion leadership success, but they can reach the public in new and efficient ways. Through online platforms such as websites, blogs and social media, gatekeepers such as political actors and the mass media are now easy to bypass (Kalsnes 2016, 76), making it possible for opinion leaders to communicate directly to the public. Kalsnes (2016, 75) discovered that even political journalists search for information on ordinary users' social media accounts, and particularly those characterized as influencers or opinion leaders, and that this practice is of importance to the media actors. Social media facilitates opinion leaders to reach a wider audience through a selection of different platforms. A study (see Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 217) furthermore found information communicated through online opinion leaders to be more trustworthy than information coming from traditional media outlets.

A study by Watts and Dodds (2007), however, found that opinion leaders or influentials may be less prevalent in the process of public opinion making, but rather so influence a mass who

is predisposed to already be an easy influenced individual. Social network sites or online social networks have, however, been growing in use since the time this study was conducted, and such tendencies may therefore not be as prevalent as earlier. Accordingly, the mass as spectators might not be as passive as earlier research implies. Such tendencies can be found in a study by Wiken (2020, 7) where she found influencers' opinions on Instagram to become increasingly valuable for their followers, and through this carrying out important topics by actualizing them and starting thinking processes in the minds of their audience. Having more personal bonds to the mediator compared to what is possible in traditional media strengthens the belief of influencers being more influential than prior research indicates. The reason being that the person introducing such issue themes may spark political interest where there was none or little to begin with. A study by Karlsen and Enjolras (2016, 352) discovered that influentials on Twitter dominate the use of interactive facilities and more often lead political talks than other users. Karlsen (2015, 314) found furthermore through his research that opinion leaders are a must in information flow on social network sites, and from these platforms to further social networks.

As mentioned, technical developments have been argued to increase the isolation of people in the flow of communication, but are also argued to unite them through structures social network sites facilitate. This logic constitutes an overlapping dynamic across not only users on the various platforms, but also the different mediums. For that very reason, opinion leaders in the world of technology and social network sites are presumably as important here as they were in the original concept of Lazarsfeld and colleagues, as long as they are active and forward information. (Karlsen 2015, 302) A social network site that is popular, especially amongst younger users and central to this research, is Instagram.

2.4.1 Instagram as a Social Media Platform

Karlsen (2015, 306) found social media research in Norway particularly interesting because of the central part internet plays in the society, and the rather large social media consumption. Instagram is a picture/video sharing social media platform, and communication therefore appears mainly through these pictorial representations, often with associated captions. This medium therefore has a different form of communication than traditional text-based mediums such as print and online newspapers. The representation is often either characterized by aesthetically pleasing picture-prefect content, or the total opposite like raw and real pictures opposed to the online ideal. To engage followers and create stronger bonds to them, many

choose to showcase emotions like joy, anger, sadness or brutality in their contents. Additionally, both mass-exposure and the ability to recognize either the person or the thematic are important drivers for the follower to keep interest. (Wiken 2020, 9, 11) In order to be influential on Twitter one should post regularly and relatable, often throwing humour into the message mix (Rogstad 2016, 152). Rogstad generally lists four factors for content reach on social media: well thought out and short message sets, having your own style though it does not need to be personal, topical content and humour or sarcasm (Mellum 2016). This research, however, focuses on the social media platform Instagram.

In 2018, Instagram ranked as the second most used online social network, facilitating over 700 million active users worldwide. These networks contain accounts and their relationship to other users such as followers, which is more permanent compared to one-time commitments like watching their stories, likes, comments, re-sharing or saving posts. Pictures, videos and stories shared by influencers engage a higher number of people than those less influential. (Segev, Avigdor, and Avigdor 2018, 1009) Instagram is, however, semipublic similar to other social network sites such as Facebook, meaning one can choose which individuals will have access to their posts (Karlsen 2015, 305).

In Norway 38% of the population uses Instagram daily with 2 623 000 Norwegian profiles. Ipsos (2020) publishes quarterly records of Instagram usages in Norway. The report from 2020 shows how women top the statistics across all age-groups, and general usage frequency per day has steadily increased since the second quarter of 2016. 7 out of 10 women below 30 are daily users on the platform, visiting it multiple times a day. (Ipsos 2020)

Culture for personalization on the platform can be spotted in the study of Wiken (2020, 1) where she found influencers to connect political views with their everyday lives on Instagram. The identity built and presented allows them to come close to their followers as you would with a friend in “real life”. This bond makes the influencers more trustworthy and comparable to their masses. Because of this notion, influencers serve as personal guides for their followers on topics surrounding political and societal matters, although the followers do not always agree with the opinion of the leader. This affects their followers by getting them into subjects and creating similar opinions on matters they normally would not form opinions about compared to other more traditional mediums. (Wiken 2020, 6, 7) The same study, however, found that political debates in comment sections occur more often in formal or hard political

contents, compared to informal or soft politics where comment sections were longer and dominated with emojis and few words. (Wiken 2020, 13) The seriousness of political content may explain these findings because highly serious matters can make it difficult for people to contribute with brief and funny comments. National politics or scandals on Twitter, however, are easier for people to comment on. (Rogstad 2016, 148-150)

Signs of interest from followers through likes, comments and re-sharing that dominates Instagram as a platform, might though be misleading. The low barriers for what seemingly appear as engagement and commitment to a cause might be a senseless reaction from the consumer's side. On political matters such engagement might just reflect the followers' need to boost their own ego (Neubaum and Krämer 2017, 470). Simultaneously Pang et al. (2016) findings demonstrate that these acts may work as a type of opinion expression and refers to them as "click-speeches". Likes and comments are, in contrast to previous views, used by Tafesse and Wood (2021, 3) as indicators for engagement, of which they represent likeness from the public and the degree of openness in adopting or be influenced by their views and opinions. In addition, the researchers throw number of followees and followers, frequency of posting, as well as type of opinion leadership into the mix of important factors to social media engagement strategies.

In their research on Instagram, Tafesse and Wood (2021, 7-8) discovered some interesting connections between the strategies. Firstly, a high number of followers decreased engagement from the influencer's followers, and ties this to followers perceiving them less identical with themselves because they seem more like traditional celebrities rather than influencers. Secondly, the higher number of people an influencer follows, the more engagement will they receive from followers, because it demonstrates to their followers that they are active and seek information, and also identify themselves with "the common". Thirdly, engagement decreased in those situations where the influencer's posting frequency was high, indicating that users demand original content that is not made in a blink of a second, given that Instagram offers them endless amounts of content. Fourthly, a high number of followers affects engagement on those who have various themes of contents, debating whether it is due to the followers become doubtful about the influencer's character. Lastly, frequency of posting and several themes in posts increase engagement, as variety makes it interesting for the followers to engage.

Trustworthiness, identification, and originality therefore seems to be critical factors for someone to have engagement on their posts, and in turn be referred to as opinion leaders.

2.4.2 Cross-Border Opinion Leadership

The idea of a cross-border opinion leader derives from the first typology of this sort worked out by Robert Merton where the opinion leaders were categorized in two sections depending on how many spheres the influentials wield influence in. The first, monomorphic, are those who are found to be experts in one specific field, narrowed down not overlapping. The second, polymorphic, wields influence in various fields, occasionally not even related. (Merton 1949, 213) The latter of which will be referred to as cross-border opinion leadership, have previously been referred to as overlapping (Weimann 1994, 61), multiple-area and general leadership (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 332) to name a few.

Back in 1949 when Merton (182) first published his research, the aim was to detect the space of personal influence in different communities, but as earlier presented, interpersonal influence has developed accordingly with the media logic. So has the perception of men exclusively being seen as opinion leaders, Merton referring to these leaders as "men of influence", and "he" is an influential when having many followers in one field or smaller groups of followers in different spheres (1949, 214). A few years later, however, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) sought out to investigate women's role as public affair leaders and general leaders. It, however, focused on information and opinion, and not so much on plain political action as women at this point in time rarely involved or even had opinions explicitly on political matters. (1955, 271) One can assume that:

> Those people who are found to be leaders in any one area should be more likely than others to be leaders in other areas, because being leaders in any one area means that they should have, in significant measure, those traits or characteristics required for leadership in other areas (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 332).

This assumption gives a reasonable indication as of why general leaders exist in the real world. Katz and Lazarsfeld had, however, reservations against this notion, and ultimately found no evidence of two-area overlapping opinion leadership tendencies (1955, 333-334). Marcus and Bauer (1964, 628) later re-tested Katz and Lazarsfeld's study but added the likelihood of not being a leader in neither two-area nor third-sphere, where findings were

significant enough to prove that general leadership are in fact a re-occurring phenomenon and not left to chance.

Some years later in 1972, Myers and Robertson divided spheres into different categories, those interests found in an at-home-environment, those outside of it and lastly family care. They organize the topics in the following factors:[1]

Home interests	Out of home interests	Family care
Home upkeep	Politics	Children's upbringing
Personal care	Automobiles	Medical care
Women's clothing	Recreation and travel	
Household appliances		
Household furnishing		
Cooking and foods		

Amongst the first category mentioned one finds e.g., women's fashion, personal care, interior and food. In the second, politics and travel interests. When studying these categories, Myers and Robertson found upbringing of children and health to belong to a third category, named family care. They found that opinion leadership overlapped those interests that seemed familiar, meaning belonged in the same category. They did not however find compelling evidence that overlaps would float between at home and outside home interests. (45) The degree to which one has general leadership is, nonetheless, dependent on other factors like brand or sphere, selection period, the form of leader and network or platform analysed (Weimann 1994, 69-70).

As Merton, I too wonder whether general opinion leaders simply exists, or if they develop from a single sphere leader to an overlapping leader through adaption of good reputation from one field to another, otherwise known as the "halo effect" (1949, 213). If the latter is to be true, maybe celebrities with already established prestige in public spaces can exceed their influence in other spheres than their original domain, especially in the age of new network structures and social media.

[1] Myers and Robertson's division of interest categories within factors of home-interests, out-of-home interests and family care.

2.4.3 Celebrities in Networks

Lin, Bruning, and Swarna (2018, 431) present how online opinion leaders may serve numerous roles, from experts, as in traditional opinion leadership theory, to celebrities and influencers. They mention several athletes like Serena Williams and David Beckham, that not only serve their leadership role as experts within their respective sports, but also serve a role as celebrities (435). Tying this back to Merton (1949), it seems like the question about the development of general leaders holds true according to Lin, Bruning, and Swarna (2018, 431). Celebrities may share their opinions on complex policy subjects despite little to no expertise on the matter. Instances of celebrities speaking out on politics is not something new, but these groups of people now have the ability to connect with a larger audience than before through eWOM (Park et al. 2015, 246-247). Wiken (2020, 10) found indications that one can make people feel like it is worth listening to you just by being known or an influencer. This halo effect has been discussed to have both positive and negative consequences for democratic societies.

Apart from traditional celebrities, one can find people on social media that through their own initiatives on platforms not only have become micro-celebrities, but have gained a substantial group of followers on their platforms (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 435). These self-made celebrity bloggers on social media are one of the groups that where found most retweeted in the research of Rogstad (2016, 153). People on social media view influencers as authentic and good-looking, often seeing them as comparable to themselves (Ki et al. 2020, 3). New network structures allow these people to address and discuss political matters with the public without having to bypass the traditional media (Park et al. 2015, 246). A study (see Park et al. 2015, 247) found that engagement from the public and their expectations of policy-makers' transparency, increase when celebrities actively engage. In marketing, celebrities may also add fame and profit to a brand because of their status and relationship to potential customers through favourable eWOM (see Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 435). Influencers may therefore help brand promotion by helping them sell products, but they may also "sell" ideas through their platforms such as political opinions.

Followers of political celebrities may though in turn receive a skewed message, not representative to the political cause, creating echo-chambers where one disregards and avoids any information of opposite views (Livingstone 2006, 236; Park et al. 2015, 247). The study of Park et al. (2015, 256) demonstrates just how citizens who find themselves locked in echo-

chambers more frequently than others follow political celebrities with influence on Twitter. A study of Wiken (2020, 13) discovered, however, that the more formal political contents are on Instagram, the more likely they are to cause political discussion in the comment sections. When asserting content of less formal character though, comment sections were found to be more extensive with fewer words and greater amounts of characters like emojis.

2.5 Summary

This theory chapter will act as basis for the analysis and discussion chapters later on. It started by presenting the historical perspective of public opinion formation and information flow. Following, the phenomenon of opinion leaders was explained in more depths. How technology and social media have changed the flow of communication was then taken account for. The last section of the chapter demonstrated how these developments affect traditional opinion leadership, and presented established theory about cross-border opinion leadership and the phenomenon of political celebrities/influentials.

3.0 Methodology

In order to answer the research problem “Are celebrity influencers cross-border opinion leaders to the extent that they are also political opinion leaders?” an appropriate methodology is key. Two sub-research questions are designed to help answer it, and both questions will be explored using quantitative methods.

RQ1: To what extent are celebrity influencers also political opinion leaders?

RQ2: What characterizes the way celebrity influencers exercise cross-border opinion leadership?

The research curiosity came while observing influencers that were gaining attention in traditional media like newspapers and TV on political topics, far from what they normally would engage and post about on their social media profiles. It sparked a thought whether such posts also would engage their followers as per usual within their respective opinion leaderships. This way of approaching a study is called an inductive method, and occurs through observations that lead to hypotheses, followed by researching the occurrence. Although this procedure rarely results in reoccurring standards, it can provide interesting insights or contexts one normally would not stumble across. (Ringdal 2013, 45)

The data will be gathered from the selected influencers' profiles on the social media platform Instagram; see the reasoning for the selection under 3.1. This is called a document research using secondary data from a first-hand source, since the information gathered is written by someone else (Jacobsen 2015, 187-188). One may refer to Instagram as a kind of semi-public diary or blog, where it is the individuals themselves who choose the content and caption for their own profiles. The research will only look at contents published, and not the story function on Instagram. This function could also be interesting to investigate further since most people on the platform update this function more often than they publish actual posts. Stories are, however, time limited and only visible on the publisher’s profile for 24 hours before disappearing for good, which may cause problems with reliability and validity, and has therefore not been included in the data.

At first I wanted to use a method triangulation, where one combines data through both quantitative and qualitative analyses (Jacobsen 2015, 139). However, during the data collection and exploration of previous research on the field I found this to be uncommon.

Many researchers use either quantitative or qualitative methods, instead of triangulating them to research opinion leaders and influentials on Instagram (Tafesse and Wood 2021; Rogstad 2016; Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955). This helps reassuring the validity of my choice to pursue a solely quantitative method. The many aspects I wanted to investigate further would neither have been possible timewise nor fit the qualitative agenda with method triangulation.

The analysis chapter will give an overview of overlapping opinion leadership tendencies, what kinds of instruments are used and if these are efficient, as well as the characteristics of comments. Since instruments are presented through visual and textual components, this is defined as a quantitative content analysis (Neuendorf 2017, 21). Contents such as language, form and presentation are important contributors to influence (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 22), hence why RQ2 was constructed and will deep dive in instruments of caption and characteristics of comments.

Content analysis has increasingly been growing in popularity and use in both mass communication research as well as political science according to researchers (see Neuendorf 2017, 2-3). Because these research types arguably are closely related to opinion leadership research, it seems like a fitting way to go forward in the research methodology. Content analysis can give fruitful intel about the various methods used like repetitions, referring to authorities or important happenings, following a "trend" also called band-wagon effect, presenting facts or whether the information is presented only from one or both sides of the issue case (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 23). There are no conventional measurements within the field of communication, and hypotheses are not developed based on theoretical rules. This means the researcher has to find a middle ground between measurement theory and what is practically applicable. (Fink 2009, 380) The content analysis is descriptive in the sense that it is set out to describe patterns and meaning in the data.

Focusing solely on quantitative methods seems profitable in order to research the aspects of which I am curious about. Not only does it tell us whether opinion leaders can have cross-border opinion leaderships, especially when it comes to political posts, but also how they accumulate satisfying engagement on such topics. The first sub-research question will help answer if there are overlapping opinion leadership tendencies, and the second sub-question can help to understand how they use tools to create engagement and how the users respond to the different contents.

3.1 Selecting Opinion Leaders

In the process of choosing units, or nodes as opinion leaders can be referred to as, it is appropriate to choose some that differentiates, to make it as representative as possible (Ringdal 2013, 27). Influencers with different types of influencer profiles, or opinion leaderships, therefore seems like the obvious point of departure to have fruitful data. One of them has a mix of humoristic/lifestyle theme, while the other one has a lifestyle/beauty one. When choosing two different types of opinion leaders, we achieve a comparative basis (Jacobsen 2015, 105). A chance to examine different outcomes for different types of influencers occurs. However, based on my own impression most influencers on Instagram are women with lifestyle-type of profiles. Social media activity as a whole usually centralizes around interests and lifestyle anyways (Ki et al. 2020, 5). The nodes chosen are thus merely a natural representation of the Instagram sphere.

There are no lists that present big influencers on Instagram in Norway, neither their political activism. The influencers have therefore been chosen based on my knowledge and insight on who may be more politically active than others, as well as discussing the matter with my network which mainly consists of young people, both male and female, between the age of 23-26. Other people in my network have also confirmed their knowledge to these influencers. In many ways, this method is comparable to earlier work of Morenos where he would ask people within a group who they would turn to on specific topics, and that person who would be mentioned the most is the opinion leader on the subject (Weimann 1994, 29-30). Using a previously proven method not only makes the selection more valid, but this method is also very time and cost efficient. In a broad sense, these units seem like top of the head influencers, especially amongst young adults. Defining someone as influentials may be difficult.

> This means that describing someone as an “influential” or “opinion leader” can be problematic because it is difficult to identify traceable practices, specific tools or strategies, or even structures of social connections that are necessarily unique to influencers. (Dubois and Gaffney 2014, 1262)

In other words, detecting and defining someone as influential or an opinion leader may be tricky. Earlier studies like Katz and Lazarsfeld from 1955 as well as Myers and Robertson from 1972 used a panel method with random sample where respondents are detached from

their usual social environments, in order to detect opinion leaders. Both used a single method of measurement, the self-designation, meaning results only rely on the respondent's answers. By asking people directly and isolated, one may have a validity problem. Because both surveys asked people directly whether they have tried to influence someone to their own political opinions and if they recently have been asked for advice on political matters, the answer may be far from reality. They may lie or be subjective to their own influence, which will in turn affect the validity of the data. Since these earlier studies came before the rise of social media, a different method in finding opinion leaders seems necessary to fit the agenda of this study.

Studies (see Dubois and Gaffney 2014, 1263) have introduced an easy way to measure influence by the number of followers an individual on social networking sites (SNS) possesses. Nodes are in these situations capable of reaching a significant number of people through their SNS. An influential is said in these cases to "have a following". (Dubois and Gaffney 2014, 1263) Sun et al. (2016) present three different methods in finding influencers in social networks: topological-centred, interaction-centred and topic-centred. This paper is inspired by interaction-centred tools where one is considered influential based on the number of followers. Criteria for the nodes in this study is therefore to exceed 150 000 followers on their Instagram profiles. For the sake of the opinion leaders' anonymity, they will be referred to as node 1 and node 2, whereas node 1 has 475 000 followers as of 01.03.21 and node 2 has 156 000 followers as of 01.03.21.

3.2 Selection Period

Since the research goal is to look at influencers' cross-border opinion leadership concerning politics, it seems natural to choose periods where big media/news events within this respect have taken place. If we are to perceive influencers as mediators like traditional media, we also could expect them to follow a similar news-agenda. This assumption is based on the idea that the mass media logic and network logic is intertwined as earlier discussed in the theory chapter. Unlike Myers and Robertson (1972) who studied overlapping opinion leadership at a single point in time, I have chosen four periods of which the data is gathered from. Abnormal activity in terms of continuity, frequency of publishing content, likes and comments, but also the nature of content are concerns that settled the selection periods. It is important to me that the data would represent times both before and during the global pandemic of Covid19. In this

way one can compare periods before and during to achieve a holistic image of overlapping public opinion leadership. This may be important because there is not much research yet on how Covid19, as the biggest global health crisis in recent times, has affected online public opinion formation on social media.

For the purpose of this research, two months in 2019 and two in 2020 are the chosen selection periods based on some key happenings during these months. In 2019, the months of March and August will be used as selection periods. March because of Greta Thunberg's march for climate, which in total engaged 1,5 million young people around the world. August is based on the eye-opening revelation of Brasil's intended Amazonas fire action. (Tannæs-Fjeld 2019) In 2020, May and October will be used as selection periods. On the 25th of May, a police homicide on a black Afro-American named George Floyd sparked a social and political movement in the states and world over, labelled BLM (black lives matter) against systematic racism and police violence. In October the same year, Poland introduced new abortion rules that made freedom in abortion close to non-existent, which caused big demonstrations and reactions worldwide. (NTB 2020) As mentioned before, this type of design is referred to as a comparative case, because at least two selected areas of time (four months of selection periods) and space (two different influencers) gives ground to compare cases, and perhaps uncover causal relationships (Jacobsen 2015, 105). It is thus a type of case study called a small-N-study, because it limits the number of units down to not more than 5-10. The aim here is to concentrate more on the phenomenon rather than the units, although these naturally also will be central to this study. (106)

3.3 The Concept of Politics

To investigate cross-border opinion leadership in politics, it is important to specify what is meant by political posts. Traditional political knowledge and informed citizens are usually most concerned about hard politics. On the other hand, there are researchers like Wright, Graham, and Jackson (2016) that are more interested in normal people's everyday discussions about informal politics. Graham, Jackson, and Wright (2015) found that on third spaces like Instagram, everyday issues are discussed on a community level and by this are drawn over to talks about political matter. Both hard and soft politics will most likely fall in a hard, or in-between hard and soft news category. Hard news can be defined as news that serve high value for the public and is often considered important, like social issues, economy and politics,

whereas soft news does not need to be well-timed, has very simple messages and can be seen as interesting, like gossip and sports (Brekken, Thorbjørnsrud, and Aalberg 2012, 66-67). Researchers (see Rogstad 2016, 144-145) have found evidence that matters such as sports and entertainment belonging in a soft content category, gained most attention on Twitter, and politics was found as the bottom theme of popularity on the platform.

Categories within the political concept itself can also be divided like news categories, in soft and hard politics or formal and informal politics if you will (Wiken 2020, 13). Because this research focuses more on informal institutions and interactions about politics in an everyday kind of setting, the majority of following categories will therefore fall under informal or soft politics (Radnitz 2011, 352).

The concept of politics is expanded for the purpose to include many of the topics being brought up by the influencers, and as Wiken (2020, 13) it will embrace also the cultural aspects of community engagement. Therefore, the term "politics" will include political activeness and engagement on posts that show interest towards all kinds of political, environmental, and societal issues that shape and influence a society in some type of way. This may include a bunch of themes, but for this purpose, eight different categories have been selected that embrace all the posts analysed. The categories are 1. Assessment of politicians, 2. Social media policies, 3. Environment (environmental protection and animal protection), 4. Disasters/accidents/terror, 5. Body/appearance (pressure/ideals/editing), 6. Vulnerable groups (children, discrimination, minorities, physical/mental disabilities), 7. Gender differences/equality (economy, rights, limitations, criticism) and 8. Corona (socially critical behaviour or similar). On Twitter, news about the well-being of animals, climate change and gender equality receive a lot of engagement (Rogstad 2016, 153). The former two can be found under category 3. Environment, and the latter 7. Gender differences/equality.

These categories give insight into the diversity of political topics found on the platform, and the majority of them are topics centralized around identity politics.

3.4 Quantitative Content Analysis

To detect whether the opinion leaders are influential also outside of their respective opinion leaderships on Instagram, it is appropriate to use quantitative method. The aim is to yield a numeric set of categories and measurements of the quantities of further variables (Fink 2009). As Neuendorf (2017, 21) points to, a quantitative content analysis is meant to create a

summary of the specific message in numbers, it is not appropriate to go in depths in the message set. Content analysis is highly centralized around message methodology, but in this research it will be used more as by Neuendorf (2017, 34) who includes any type of messages like text, sound, images or other characteristics. The reason being that there are plenty of possibilities on Instagram to express oneself, it is not merely done through text or pictures, but rather a mix of multiple tools for self-expression, such as emojis. On Instagram you also have the option to tag people, businesses, or other profiles, as well as "geo-tagging", that is by making your location known to people looking at your content. The analysis is though not multimodal as such because it is not trying to understand the meaning behind the message as in qualitative method (Wiken 2020, 5), but because of the mix of elements found on Instagram one might perceive the platform as multimodal.

Different measures are, as demonstrated above, common to mix on platforms like Instagram, although the picture/video is the main focus of the content because it simply takes up more space on the viewer's device. The picture or video itself is the first thing you will notice when viewing Instagram content. Measures in this context are tools that are used to influence on the platform. It is interesting to look at the contents as a whole because the mix might as well change the perception of the whole content. Besides looking into the content from the influencers' themselves, I will also do a quick run-through of some characteristics in the comment section below the content, as Wiken (2020, 5) does.

Measures are quite specific to the medium, hence why set categories may be hard to find in existing literature, especially those of newer mediums and innovate platforms such as Instagram. Østbye et al. (2013, 67) strengthen this belief by stating that the text is also characterized by the medium through which the message is communicated. Textual codes are when one uses the data to create codes instead of constructing these based on theory (Tjora 2012, 179). This way of constructing codes may represent the individual case better and more natural, also referred to as an inductive method as earlier explained (Ringdal 2013, 45). Some of the variables have therefore been constructed based on textual coding, but some are also inspired by categories made of Myers and Robertson (1972) which will be explained in more depth in section 3.4.1. Important to operationalization of categories, however, are that these are thorough and independently worked through (Neuendorf 2017, 131).

Quantitative method will give a general understanding of patterns in opinion leaders' overlapping tendencies on Instagram when it comes to political content, not to mention how they do it and what kind of response that it leads to from users.

3.4.1 Collection of Data and Analysis

To provide an overview of cross-border opinion leadership on Instagram it seems fitting to limit the research to specific points in time. It also seems fitting to limit the amount of opinion leaders. These periods and influentials have been discussed in section 3.1 and 3.2. It is only appropriate to limit the research in this way based on limited time and resources available when writing a thesis. The paper is thus limited in the respects mentioned above in order for it to be fruitful and comprehensible. Based on this notion, it is possible to count political posts and means used on the posts, not to mention what type of political posts are most common and implications it may have on engagement.

The influencers have different opinion leaderships and audiences, which gives the research some variety. Both influencers are verified and, therefore, have open profiles, which gives anyone with an Instagram account access to their profiles and posts. Being verified on the platform is presented as a blue symbol next to the user's profile name and means that the administrators have approved that the person or business is legitime. On March 2021 Instagram informs that this mark is reserved only for public people, celebrities, and brands. Posts published on the platform are accessible as long as the moderator of the profile does not delete the content, or for some reason get reported and removed by Instagram's administrators. Therefore, it was possible to gather data months, even years after published. Nevertheless, there is no guaranty that some posts have not been deleted in retrospect. Political views may be in greater risk of being controversial compared to e.g., commercial content, and content that has caused controversy may therefore have been deleted for the sake of either the influencers themselves or their audience.

The data consists of 172 posts in total, 112 of these from node 1 and 60 from node 2. This means one node posts more than the other. Each post constitutes a unit, and each of them has been examined based on some selected variables. These variables include theme of content, number of likes and comments, and different properties of the content. Number of likes and comments are quite self-explanatory, yet theme of content and properties of the content are

separated by the overall theme of the content posted, the instruments used by the node to create engagement and characteristics of the comments.

Number of likes and comments are continuous variables (Ringdal 2013, 314) and the categorical measures are divided representing the exact distance between them, such answers of units are metric/ratio (Jacobsen 2015, 256). Theme of post have categorical/nominal categories, and such a measurement level helps us to put the different units in categories (Ringdal 2013, 314). I quickly realized some posts fulfilled multiple themes and properties, and instead of limiting codes after main themes like Allern does with news categories (2001, 85), I opted for a more inclusive approach. By allowing a maximum of two themes, the data set represents a more holistic picture of the actual posts. See Appendix 4 for example of a coded content or unit. The instruments of influence consist of nine variables and have categorical/nominal measurement levels, because these can be put into certain categories together (Jacobsen 2015, 256). Characteristics of comments consists of three variables and categories are referred to as ordered in range or in ordinal levels, because they give an indication of the relationship between them (Jacobsen 2015, 256). Instruments of influence and characteristics of comments belong to properties of content and will be explained further below.

When looking through the contents of the nodes, a sense of usual content themes started to emerge. It became evident some were more frequent than others, and based on this insight, the different categories for both overall themes as well as political themes shaped the categorical outcome used in the analysis. This way of analysing based on certain recurring themes is called a thematic analysis (Gentikow 2005). This research is, however, only partially thematic because it also compares the different nodes.

The themes are 1. Politics, 2. Advertising, 3. Adventures, 4. Children, 5. Relationships, 6. Interior/Fashion/Make-up/Beauty and 7. Entertainment. The sub-categories of politics are coded from 1.1 through 1.8 and was earlier presented in section 3.3. These categories are connected to the single units being studied and will represent themes of opinion leaderships. Some of the mentioned themes are inspired by Myers and Robertson's (1972, 45) three factors: in-house interests, out-of-house interests and family care. Their topics like Household furnishing equals this research's category 6. Interior, Women's clothing equals 6. Fashion, Personal care equals 6. Make-up/Beauty, Politics equals 1. Politics, Recreation and travel

equals 3. Adventures, and lastly Children's upbringing equals 4. Children. (Myers and Robertson 1972, 45) Myers and Robertson's topics are though based on a prepared set of interviews with housewives and are therefore not presentative for this study. Some of the topics from this study have therefore been altered or added to fit content found online. The three demonstrate where the different categories are placed within each factor:[2]

Home interests	Out of home interests	Family care
Interior/ fashion/- make-up/ beauty	Politics Advertising Adventures Entertainment	Children Relationships

Advertising is, for example, added to the mix since brand promotion is a big part of existing social media opinion leadership theory (Tafesse and Wood 2021, 1), and celebrities within networks may add fame to brands through promotion (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 435). Nevertheless, researchers like Klinger and Svensson (2016, 29-31) say this logic goes against networked media logic. I find it favorable classifying the topics in same kinds of factors as Myers and Robertson (1972) does, as shown above. This is for the purpose of analyzing the data, to easier detect overlapping tendencies, and to challenge the existing literature.

Properties of content are those variables that analyse the content itself, both when it comes to instruments used and comments of the content. Instruments of influence are mostly measured with dichotomous variables, meaning they only have two alternatives that are mutually exclusive, while others have numerous measures called qualitative polyatomic variables (Neuendorf 2017, 91).

The instruments represent the choices influencers themselves have made for their content. The dichotomous variables include humor or sarcasm in caption (0/1), sadness in caption (0/1), hard or soft caption (1/2), scope of caption (1/2), emoji in caption (0/1) and geo-tag in content (0/1). Zero represents that they are not present. Hard captions focus on case, while soft caption is personal. Scope of caption divides short captions with maximum 125 characters,

[2] Myers and Robertson's factors of home-interests, out-of-home interests and family care are presented in the light of categories worked out in this research.

and long ones with those that exceed 125 characters, the reason being that maximum of characters allowed by Instagram in a caption is 2200, but is truncated at 125 characters. The qualitative polyatomic variables consist of link in caption (0/1/2/3), tag in content (0/1/2/3) and music in content (0/1/2). Again, the value of 0 represents that these variables are not present in the content.

The characteristic for comments makes up users who have commented on the post, and are measured by scaling the categories, meaning that we can measure the variable (Ringdal 2013, 94). It is important with such variables that one balances the answer (Jacobsen 2015, 262), which is why neutral options are placed in the middle, see Appendix 2 under M, N and O. The variables are as follows: majority of gender in comment section (1/2/3), type of respond in comment section (1/2/3) and relevance of comment section (1/2/3). Determinators for relevance is whether users comment on the case in content. Categories are here systematized by percentage.

Throughout the process of data collection, the material was reported in an excel sheet simultaneously coded by applying the prepared codebook. After completing data collection, the sheet was converted and applied to SPSS, a statistical Package for the Social Sciences, where the data later was studied to complete an overall overview of the records.

3.5 Research Quality

Ringdal (2013, 96) lays out three important factors that can be used to determine the research quality: dimensionality, reliability, and validity. They are foremost important in quantitative methods (Ringdal 2013, 87), which is why they will be considered in this chapter.

Dimensionality is about the scales you use in research. They should be homogeneous and concrete for the purpose of the research question. (Ringdal 2013, 96) In order to study overlapping opinion leadership, I needed to know the influencer's primary opinion leadership, theme of contents, and the amount of likes and comments as continuous variables. Properties of content is not necessarily important to evaluate if there *are* overlapping tendencies, but may give interesting insight into *how* contents are portraited. The mentioned scales are central to make meaningful information that will help answer the research question.

Reliability questions whether the study is trustworthy, meaning it can be re-tested using the same methods and selection and still lead to the same result (Ringdal 2013, 96). Neat and

precise coding is an important indicator for the trustworthiness of a study. I made sure the coding was done accordingly to the codebook by going over the codes before analysing the data. In addition, I went over original variables and codes such as themes of content numerous times during the data collection, because I mid-way decided to expand the quantitative data with new variables such as hard or soft caption and gender of comments, see Appendix 2 (from point D to O).

For it to be possible for other researchers to re-test this study, it is important to know what the variables mean and how the values are defined (Ringdal 2013, 260). In section 3.4.1 I explained the different scales and what the single variables implies. The codebook is also important for re-testing purposes as one can use the same values as in this study, see Appendix 2. However, as the aim of this research is to find representative tendencies, the findings may not be generalizing for overlapping opinion leadership. The influencers are also anonymous for ethical data collection purposes. This means that even by knowing the meaning of the variables and having the codebook at hand will give no guarantees for similar results as other selections (nodes) would be highly likely. Anonymity also limits examples in the sense that I cannot demonstrate how the contents have been coded by using pictures/videos of the influencers as examples.

Validity questions if we actually measure the construct that we want to investigate and relies on high reliability (Ringdal 2013, 96). Contrary to Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) as well as Myers and Robertson (1972) who asked a big set of people if they see themselves as opinion leaders, I took known influencers online to represent as opinion leaders, women that previously was of gender perceived as not interested in talking about own political opinions. Based on some criteria like number of followers, gender and different influencer profiles, I was able to find samples, or nodes, for my study. This method is called a quota sampling and is a non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is not meant to statistically generalize a phenomenon, because the selection is not representative to the population (Ringdal 2013, 213). It is however a practical and economically efficient method that can spot patterns and represent a substantial number of influencers on Instagram, because most of them are young women. Criteria as such are some examples used in quota sampling mentioned by Ringdal (2013, 213). It can also be referred to as a discretionary selection, because as a researcher I have picked those I think will be better representatives for the population. First, I made a list of known influencers and had people in my circle pick out two they perceive as

most politically active. By choosing only two influencers I was able to gather more data over multiple periods, instead of getting a superficial impression of many.

Because I study contents on social media, it is difficult to trace one by one user to see whether they engage on topics outside of the influencer's image, and therefore if they are viewed by one single person to be an opinion leader on something else than their respective opinion leadership. I therefore cannot run same tests like Myers and Robertson (1972) with rotated factor loadings for opinion leadership overlap correlations, because the data does not follow these people singlehandedly post by post. What I can, however, is to see the overall tendency to engagement such as likes and comments, as well as what the influencers themselves post and how they use captions.

3.6 Ethical Framework

Ethics are an important aspect to any research, as it may affect the people being researched, how others perceive it and how it may be used later. It is thus important to consider these aspects before one chooses to go through with the research as well as assess these aspects during the research process. (Jacobsen 2015, 45) Ringdal (2013) presents the following seven important factors to consider in order to protect the people being researched.

The first five are as follows: avoiding damage and serious loads on them, informing them about the field being studied, them having free choice of consent approval of attendance, consider affected third parties, and as a researcher to be respectful for their privacy and close relations of the individual (455). The ethics in content analysis are often not an issue due to its publicly nature of message content. There is, however, a consensus of truthful data across all fields of studies. (Neuendorf 2017, 130) The factors above are less sensitive in this research because Instagram is a semi-open social media platform, and the units chosen for this research have open profiles thus have themselves chosen what to publish. Even though this reason is not enough to process personal data without some restrictions, the influencers are anonymized by referring to them as node 1 and node 2 may be. The data has been coded and categorized, leaving the chance of identification close to none. I will never reproduce specific statements that may lead to identification, but rather give these categories such as hard or soft captions. Nor will I use illustrations directly gathered from the influencers. When thoroughly going through indicators such as followers and followees, one might be able to identify the

influencers, but their identities are not exposed as such because their names will never be mentioned.

Another factor is the researcher's duty to report the research before collection of data can begin (Ringdal 2013, 455). Because I collect data of people, I needed to have the research approved by NSD, Norwegian Centre for Research Data, before conducting the research. The consent is important for scholars who wishes to study people and society. The consent can be found in Appendix 1.

Lastly, the demand about confidentiality is to be considered (Ringdal 2013, 455). This implies that names are not mentioned in my research material, neither have they been discussed with any outsiders. These data have been properly stored using an encryption key only I have access to. All information containing personal data will also be deleted by the end of the data collection period, as of 15.11.2021.

3.7 Summary

This research will attempt answering if overlapping opinion leadership on Instagram exists and how by looking into two Norwegian influencers' contents on the platform through quantitative method. It will help determine if celebrity influencers also are political opinion leaders through categorization of content themes and countable indicators such as likes and comments. It will also look at instruments used and how these affect engagement. Lastly it will look at tendencies in comment sections. The following chapter will investigate the mix of factors on Instagram, looking at the influencers individually, coherently and comparatively.

4.0 Quantitative Content Analysis

In this chapter I investigate the research questions empirically. More precisely, I will through quantitative content analysis examine the engagement on cross-border opinion leadership and what instruments are being used, in order to obtain an overall understanding to political cross-border opinion leadership.

As earlier mentioned, the quantitative data consists of 172 units collected across two separate mainstream nodes on Instagram within four different selection periods. The analysis will take aboard general findings across both influencers and, in addition, compare them. The tests that will be used for the quantitative analyses are frequency, cross tables, chi-square and regression analyses. The output of all analyses from SPSS can be found in Appendix 3, and the figures represented as percentages are rounded to the nearest decimal for simplicity. The first part will lay out the different themes of content including the more detailed themes of political posts, and how engagement on the political categories compares to those of usual character for the influencers. The sum of these parts will make it possible to answer the first sub-research questions for this paper:

RQ1: To what extent are celebrity influencers also political opinion leaders?

Through this research question I want to explore the possibility of connections between engagement and the theme of the post, mainly concerning political posts, and the influencers' "usual" posts. Perhaps social media influencers possess the ability to have multiple opinion leaderships, and thus be considered as political opinion leaders.

Further, the analysis will pursue different attributes to contents and comment section, and how this might affect engagement. Number of likes and comments are in other words frequently used as dependent variables. These factors will help answer the second sub-research question:

RQ2: What characterizes the way celebrity influencers exercise cross-border opinion leadership?

It might be that certain attributes impact engagement more than others, and that some are used more frequently than others. These are the aspects that will be explored in order to answer sub-research question 2. First off in the analysis section, some basic descriptive statistics will be presented.

4.1 An Overview: Descriptive Statistics

Node 1 has 475 000 followers and follows 1023 profiles on Instagram, while node 2 has 156 000 followers and follows 1291. Despite node 1 having a high follower rate, the influencer follows less than node 2. It is to that extent that node 1 only follows one person per 464 follower, and node 2 follows one person per 120 followers. There is in other words a big contrast of followee per follower ratio comparing the two influencers.

The data represents in total 172 posts, which will be used in the following analyses. Influencer 1 represents 112 of these cases (65,1%), while influencer 2 represents 60 (34,9%). This clearly indicates that node 1 has been posting twice as much during the four months than node 2. The average of likes per post when considering both influencers are 10 556,40. However, node 1 receives far more likes on average at 14 345 than node 2 at 3483. These observations can be explained by the difference of in follower count, where node 1 has far more followers than node 2. High standard deviation is therefore expected, considering that engagement may variate depending on content theme and other variables such as humor or caption length. Influencer as a control variable is therefore frequently used.

The influencers have both different posting frequencies and themes of contents in which they decide to dedicate their platforms to. It is useful to divide the themes of contents into categories to get an overview of what types of content is mostly posted and which of these create more engagement. The process of finding and implementing representative categories for themes is earlier accounted for in the methodology chapter. In this particular case, political posts are the most interesting to investigate further, but it is also important to get an overall understanding of their usual engagement on other themes, especially those that are closely related to the influencers' opinion leaderships. By doing so, one can create a comparative basis for engagement. Node 1 is most known for profiling lifestyle/beauty while node 2 has a humoristic theme. The categories have been worked out before and during the process of gathering data to best represent the units being studied, an inductive way of constructing codes. The topics are presented in Figure 4 below.

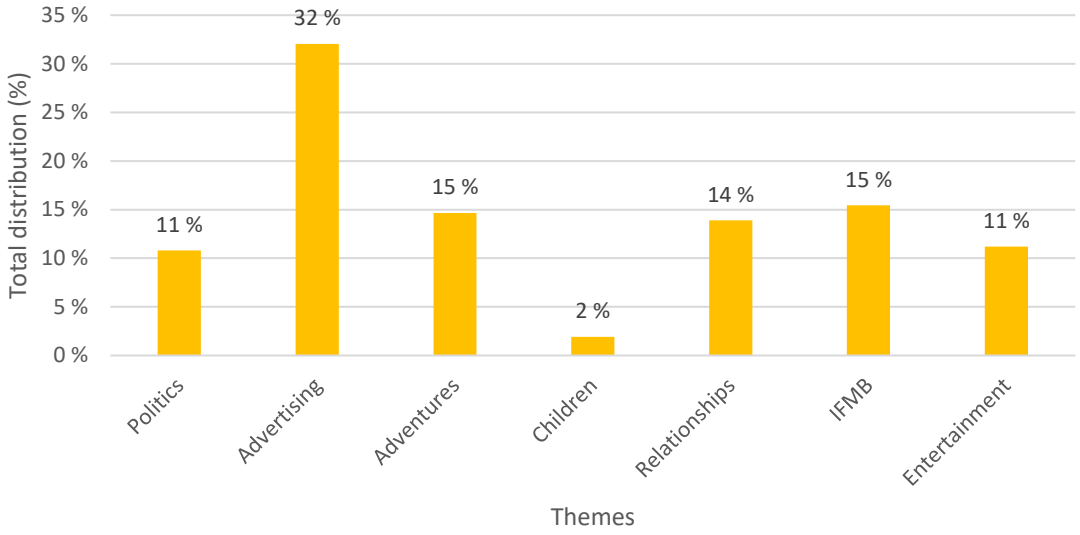

Figure 4: Content Theme Distribution (N = 259[3])

Figure 4 indeed shows that the influencers talk about politics. In sum the influencers have 28 posts about politics, 83 of advertising, 38 of adventures, 5 of children, 36 of relationships, 40 of interior/fashion/make-up/beauty and 29 of entertainment. The overall high representation of advertising is not surprising, since a big part of influencer's aim on social media is to earn money. If you put all these numbers together, it will exceed the total data value of 172. The reason for this is that I have allowed for maximum two themes per post as earlier mentioned.

There are in total 28 posts containing political messages; however, it is worth mentioning that two of these posts, one for each influencer, contain two types of political messages. In total there are thus 30 registered political themes, see Appendix 4 for example. Out of the 172 units gathered, 28 of these (16,3%) have political themes, while the 144 rest (83,7%) have various other themes. Node 1 has a total of 13 posts of political theme which embodies 11,6 percent of the influencer's posts during the selection months, while node 2 has 15 which composes 25,0 percent of all the content this influencer has posted during the four months. However, the total number of posts from node 1 is more, which means on average node 2 more frequently posts content of political character despite having lower general posting frequency, 112 vs. 60.

[3] 259 since this frequency takes account for every theme found. Reminder that each content can have maximum 2 themes each.

To better understand the variety in political contents, politics have been categorized and coded into sub-political categories, see chapter 3.3 for an in-depth explanation of these or the codebook in Appendix 2 for a quick overview. Distribution of these political categories are presented below in Figure 5 and presents these in percentage for node 1 and 2 coherently.

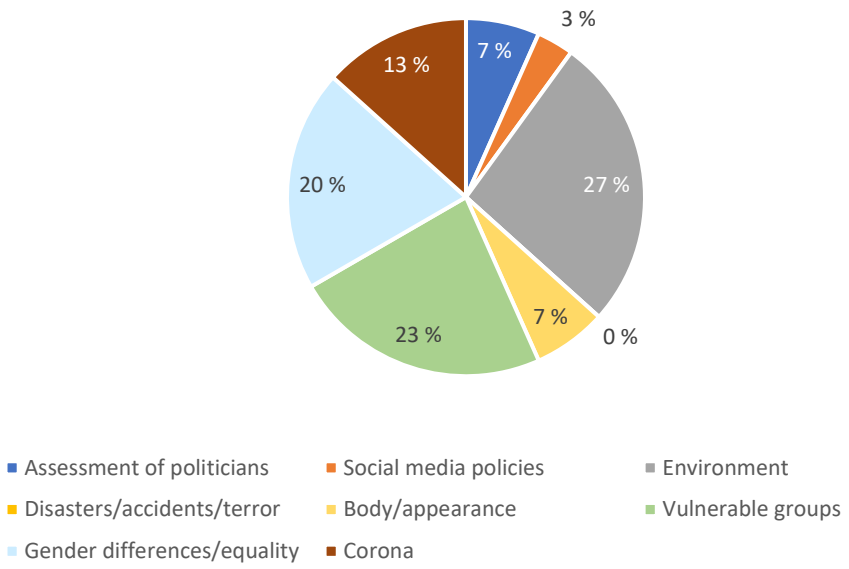

Figure 5: Overall Sub-Political Theme Distribution (N = 30[4])

Out of the political themes, environmental posts dominate with 27 percent of political posts, while it appears to be none of disasters/accidents/terror. Vulnerable groups is the second most frequent category with 23 percent. Gender differences/equality also have a high frequency with 20 percent. Consequences due to corona constitutes 13 percent of political posts. Lastly, assessment of politicians and body/appearance only makes up 7 percent of political posts, and just 3 percent are about social media policies. Overall, the influencers seem to be more interested in environment, vulnerable groups, and gender differences/equality than other political issues. The figures used to present the data have so far been focusing on the collected impression of the data, but it is also important to get an impression of the variations within each influencer because of the observed posting frequency. A bar graph is presented below to demonstrate the differences in themes of contents posted comparing the two influencers.

[4] As earlier mentioned, political themes were found 30 times, but in 28 posts. This is because two posts related to two different political themes. I have chosen to include all political themes found in posts to best represent the reality of the data, and N therefore equals 30.

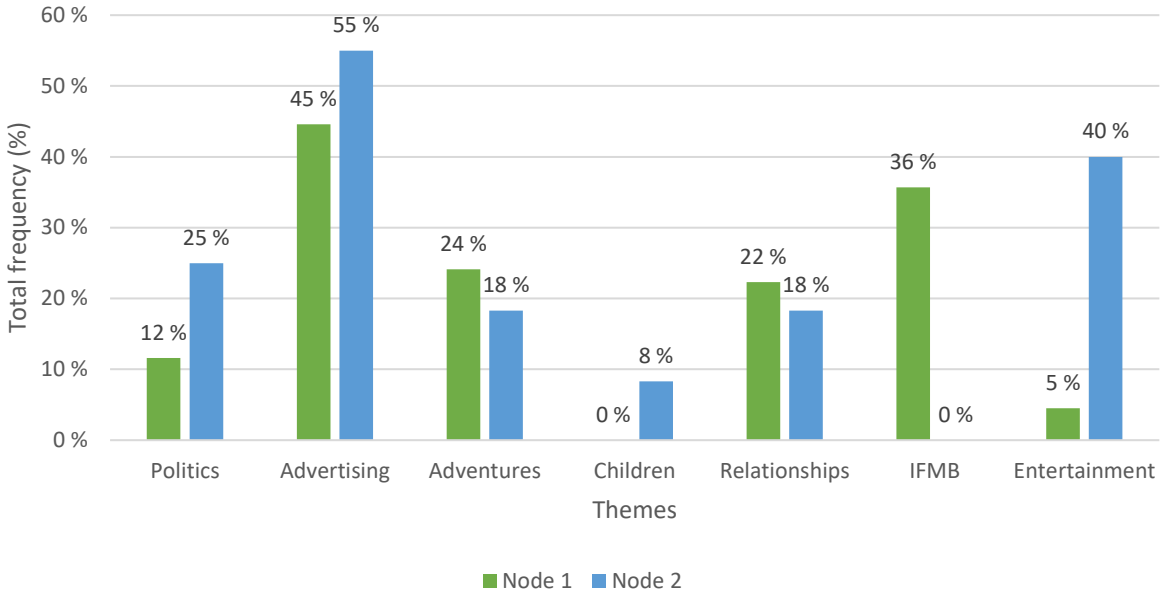

Figure 6: Content Theme x Influencers (N: Node 1 = 112; Node 2 = 60).

Figure 6 shows how node 1 shares far less political content than node 2, with node 1 at 12 percent and node 2 at 25 percent. Node 2 advertises on average more than node 1 per post, but both influencers dedicate much space on their platforms for commercial content. Both influencers' profiles contain nearly 50 percent advert content. Nor do the influencers differ a lot when it comes to adventure themed posts, node 1 with 24 percent and node 2 with 18 percent. When it comes to children, node 1 does not post anything related to this theme, whereas for node 2 this theme constitutes 8 percent of the content, which is also not much. The influencers are also similar when it comes to publishing relationship themed content, both near 20 percent where node 1 has 22 percent related to it, and node 2 has 18 percent. The biggest contrasts one can find is in the two last themes, IFMB and entertainment. IFMB is short for interior/fashion/make-up/beauty, and a whopping 36 percent makes up this topic of content node 1 has posted, while node 2 does not dedicate any of their profile to this. When looking at entertainment, node 2 with 40 percent is far more active than node 1 with 5 percent.

The findings of theme IFMB and entertainment are not surprising, since node 1's expected opinion leadership is centered around things such as interior, fashion, make-up and beauty, as well as node 2's expected opinion leadership in entertainment. Such findings are thus expected. Node 1's main contents of themes are therefore advertising (45%), adventures (24%) and IFMB (36%). Node 2's main contents of themes are politics (25%), advertising (55%) and entertainment (40%). They may share contents with different themes on their

social media profiles as demonstrated above, but just because they personally engage on different matters, does not mean that they are looked upon as opinion leaders within them. Predictors as comments, but especially likes will be used to determine what sorts of themes create engagement, and ultimately lead to possible opinion leadership within those themes.

4.1.1 In-House interests, Out-of-House interests, and Family Care

In this part I will investigate what themes create more engagement. Instead of using traditional news categories, these are closer related to political categories as they have been worked out in prior research to separate and structure them. Earlier research predicts that themes belonging to the same factors often are more clustered to multiple opinion leaderships (Myers and Robertson 1972). In the method chapter I discussed how my topics of content themes had been worked out, and which factors they would belong to. Instead of using Myers and Robertson's original category names, I choose to refer to these as home-interests, out-of-home interests, and family care. The reason being that these names seem more up to date. If the theory holds in this context, the themes will cluster depending on average likes within the same factors. Let's look at the figures below to see whether it relates to this case.

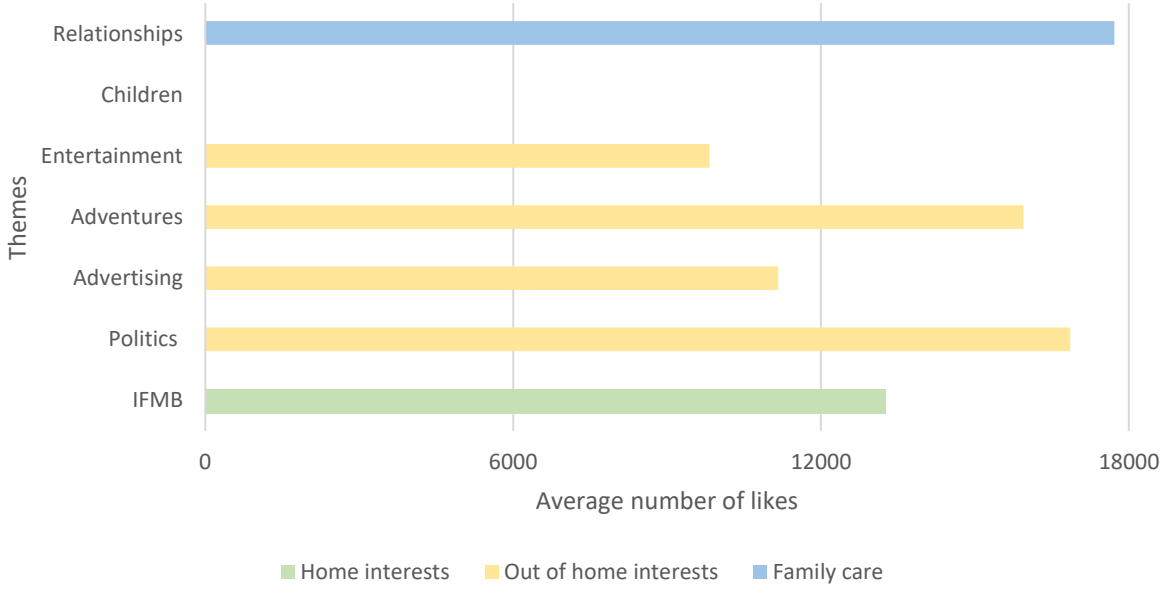

Figure 7: Interest Factors x Average Likes for node 1 (N = 112).

In Figure 7 one can see that for node 1, interests in factors by likes seems to cluster to some degree in out-of-home interests, whereas politics and adventures score as second and third topics that receive most likes on average. Relationships, often associated with taking pictures

or dedicating the contents to friends or family, have the most engagement on average and belongs to the factor of family care. There are, however, no contents about children, hence no likes on this topic, which is why this column equals zero. A high number of total contents for node 1 is though placed under the category for IFMB as presented in Figure 6, and would most likely cluster significantly if this category was to be divided. This theme is closely related to the node's expected original opinion leadership. Next I will look at whether interest factors for node 2 also cluster.

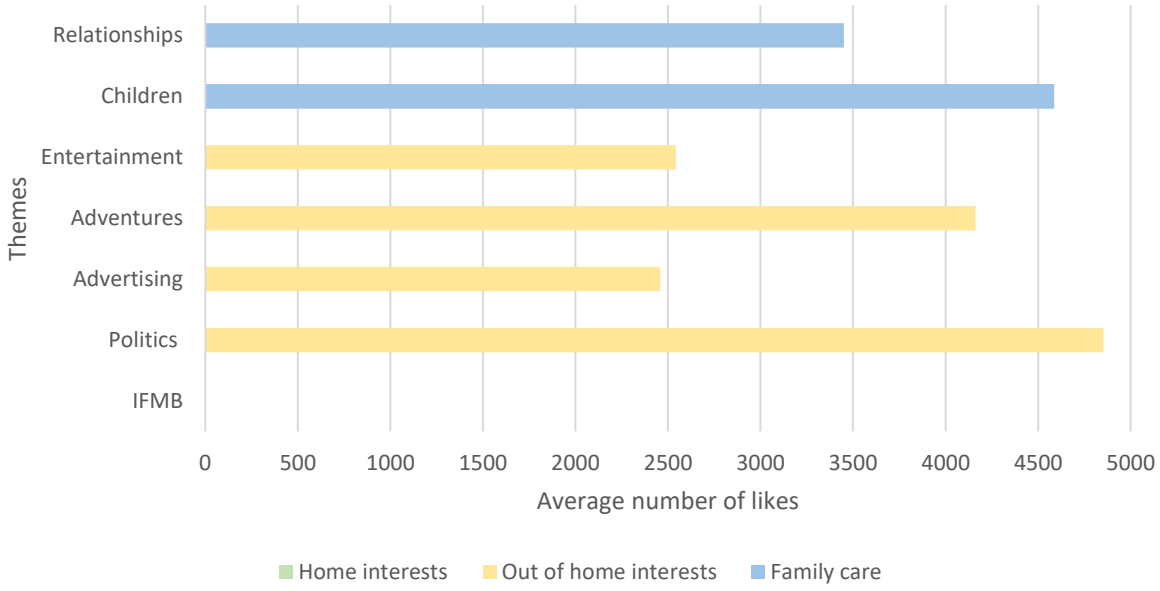

Figure 8: Interest Factors x Average Likes for node 2 (N = 60).

In Figure 8, interests in factors by likes for node 2 also seems to be somewhat clustered. The influencer actually receives most likes on average on content related to politics, and second most likes on average about adventures. These themes belong to the same factor of out-of-home interests. The third most popular theme regarding engagement is children, where also relationship scores high and belongs to factor of family care. There are no contents, however, on IFMB as of why no average of likes can be presented. A big part of content for node 2 is entertainment and can also be viewed upon as this influencer's expected original opinion leadership, see Figure 6. It is therefore a higher expectation for likes on such contents, although viewers might see this kind of content repetitive and boring. This may explain why the average of likes are below what I expected.

Neither of the influencers have significant clustering going on in the factors of home-interests, out-of-home interests or family care. A reason for this might be that the number of themes within each factor are skewed. The theory of such factors in cross-border opinion leadership of Myers and Robertson (1972, 45) is, however, also skewed, and should therefore not impact the results in such great extent. There might be other explanatory aspects for this which will further be discussed in the discussion chapter 5.0.

Through the analyses so far one can see that both influencers also are politically active on Instagram, though one seems to be a little more active than the other. Question is if these contents receive the same amount of engagement as other themed posts.

4.2 Regression Analysis on Political Themed Posts and Engagement

To predict the covariance of engagement in political contents, a multiple regression analysis is used. Because engagement as likes and comments are continuous variables, regression is appropriate. The dependent variable is engagement in form of the number of likes and comments, and the independent variables are theme politics and influencer. Influencer is used as a control variable because the two influencers have such different posting frequency, also when it comes down to political posts. The first regression analysis will investigate likes, political posts and influencers, and the second switches by using number of comments as dependent variable.

Table 1. The Effect of Political Content and Influencer on Likes.[a]

	Likes		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	14073,88	533,30	0,00
Politics	2340,73*	1146,10	0,04
Influencer	-11175,82	887,76	0,00
R^2	0,47		

UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05
Dependent variable (likes: continuous)
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N =172)

In the first ANOVA the overall regression is significant because the level of sig. is ,000, which means the predictors can successfully explain engagement. Sig. is traditionally referred to as P value, and since ,000 is so low and highly unlikely, the highest value is reported as <

,001. It can be determined as significant whenever the level is lower than the Alpha level of ,05, which means we can by at least 95% tell that at least one of the predictors are significant.

The measure of effect size is considered in Model Summary under R Squared and is ,47. This is reported in Table 1 and tells us that 47% of the variation in engagement can be explained by predictors of political content and influencer. It is, however, important to find out whether both of the predictors have positive effect on engagement, which is where Coefficient table comes in handy.

Under the Coefficient table is where the individual predictors (theme politics and influencer) are looked at separately and their effects, see Table 1. First looking at theme politics, the significant value is at ,04, which tells that this is a significant predictor of engagement, because it is lower than the alpha level of ,05. The unstandardized B value explains that the average of likes, the constant, are at 14073,88, and posts that are about politics on average increase the number of likes with 2340,73 controlled with the influencers. This means that likes increase in content of politics, hence does the influencers gain more engagement on posts that are political. A control variable was, however, included to see the differences of engagement in political posts, and through the coefficient table one can indeed see that those variations on likes for political posts are high when looking at the standard error value of 887,76. This may be because node 1 on average posts more in general but relatively less about politics than node 2, who in turn receives less likes. If this control variable would not be included, the data would perhaps imply that political posts receive less engagement on average, which is false.

Table 2. The Effect of Political Content and Influencer on Comments.[a]

	Comments		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	706,86	195,48	0,00
Politics	-192,18	420,11	0,64
Influencer	-607,13	325,42	0,06
R^2	0,01		

UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05
Dependent variable (comments: continuous)
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N =172)

Now that it is established that political posts increase likes, it would be interesting to see if the same thing goes for comments using the same kind of regression analysis. Comments are in addition to likes also used as measurement for engagement in other literature like Tafesse and Wood (2021), and will be also tested here. The first table of interest, ANOVA, unfortunately is not significant with a level of ,013. Further explanation of Table 2 will therefore not be made because none of the predictors will be significant on number of comments. This implies that political contents do not increase the number of comments, even though the influencers have been used as a control variable.

As the previous regression demonstrated, political contents do not predict number of comments, but do, however, predict number of likes. As one cannot be sure all types of political posts increase engagement or if there are certain political themes that people find more interesting, separate analysis will be made regarding the sub-political themes. First, the frequency of political theme engagement across influencers will be presented.

4.3 Sub-Political Themed Posts and Engagement

Some themes may drive engagement on political posts more than others. Before looking into if some receive more engagement than others, frequency as percentage of individual political content distribution across the two influencers will be presented below.

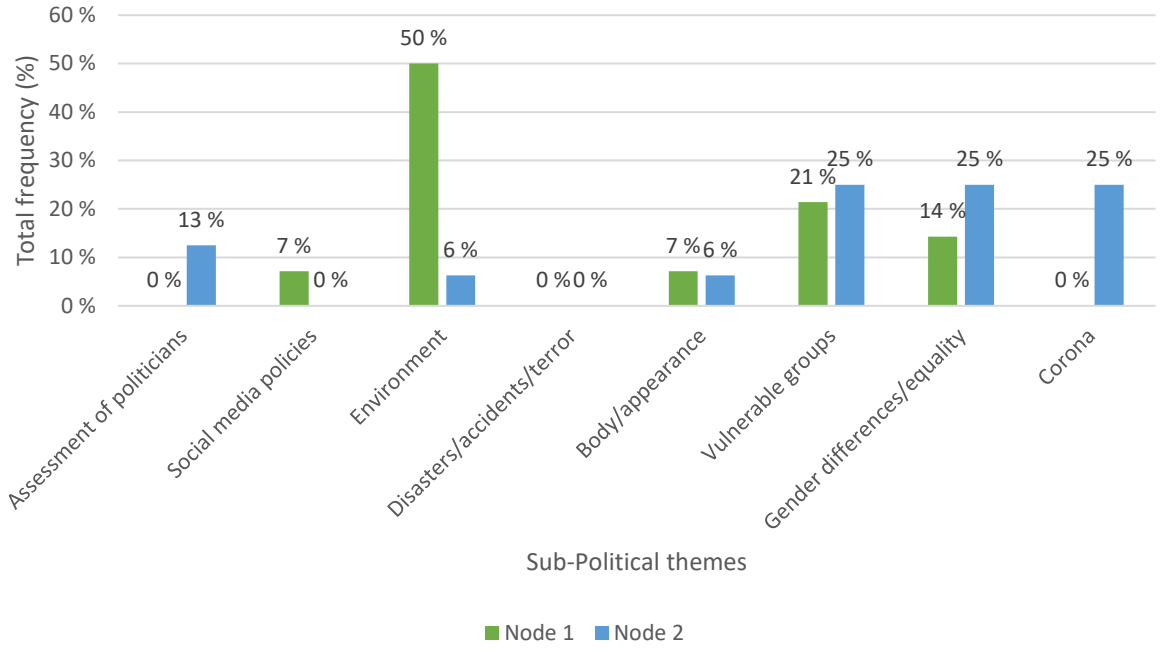

Figure 9: Sub-Political Themes x Influencers (N: Node 1 = 14; Node 2 = 16).

Figure 9 illustrates clear differences in what kind of political agendas the influencers engage in. Node 1 does not have a single post about assessment of politicians, disasters/accidents/ terror nor corona. Node 2, however, does not have a single post about social media policies nor disasters/accidents/terror. Commonly they share an interest for vulnerable groups and gender differences/equality. Political posts of the former constitute 21 percent of node 1's content, and 25 percent for node 2. Political posts of the latter constitute 14 percent of node 1's content, and 25 percent of node 2. They both have similar degree of interest, thus low in body/appearance, node 1 with 7 percent and node 2 with 6 percent. Assessment of politicians makes up 13 percent of node 2's political content, and 25 percent of corona. Node 1 has 7 percent of political content of social media policies, and also has far more content about environment. Now moving on to see if any of these sub-themes can be explained as the main drivers for engagement.

4.3.1 Regression Analysis on Sub-Political Themes and Likes

The following regression analysis is used to see if there are some specific political posts that increase engagement. The previous regression analysis demonstrated how political posts increase engagement, but there might not be all types of political content that drives engagement of likes. The output from the analysis can be found in Appendix 3.

Table 3. The Effect of Various Political Contents on Likes.[a]

	Likes		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	0,00	10598,37	0,00
Social media policies	23358,84**	8129,83	0,00
Environment	2361,12	2688,62	0,38
Disasters/accidents/terror[b]			
Body/appearance	4710,12	5270,55	0,37
Vulnerable groups	-1428,76	2890,27	0,62
Gender differences/equality	-2219,21	3396,94	0,51
Corona	-6495,87	3752,16	0,08
R^2	0,08		

UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05
Dependent variable (likes: continuous)
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N =172)
[b]Column remains empty due to the lack of content on disasters/accidents/terror, which is why this category does not appear in the analysis and cannot be discussed further

In the first table of output, ANOVA tells that the overall regression is significant at ,049 because it is below the alpha level of ,05, which means we can by at least 95% tell that at least one of the predictors of sub-political themes is significant.

The measure of effect size is considered in Model Summary under R Squared and is ,28. This tells us that 28% of the variation in engagement can be explained by predictors of sub-political content. Already here it can be observed that some of the sub-political themes do not predict engagement.

The Coefficient table studies the individual predictors (political themes) and looks at them separately and their effects, see Table 3. Katpol2 which represents social media policies is significant at ,00, and receives far more likes than the average political post of 10598,37. Posts about social media policies therefore do predict and increase likes. As for the other themes, one cannot say for sure if it does because the variance is too great to predict engagement based on these themes.

Further, most of the political themes have higher sig. levels than ,005 and indicate that they are not significant and cannot be trusted. This includes assessment of politicians, environment, body/appearance, vulnerable groups, gender differences/equality and corona.

The reason being that the standard error levels almost equal the unstandardized B, which indicates high variations of amount of likes on the vast political themes. There is in other words no correlation between mentioned themes and likes. Political posts may though carry certain characteristics which will be examined in more depth on in the next two sections.

4.4 Caption and Tools of Contents

Other than the factors analysed above, Instagram facilitates multiple tools for people on the platform to use when posting contents. Descriptive frequencies and cross tabulations are used to find how the influencers make use of tools on Instagram. Cross tabulations are illustrated in figures on those attributes that based on theory is worth investigating further. Below frequencies of the influencers are presented both cohesively and individually. An additional reminder that the sum will not equal the sum of units collected, since I allowed for maximum two content themes per unit like previously accounted for. The majority of percent representations are rounded to the nearest whole number for the sake of simplicity, except for those numbers that have unsatisfactory decimals to be rounded up or down. The first six traits of which have been chosen to analyse tools one may use on Instagram are those used in content captions, while the three last are special tools for contents only.

Humour or sarcasm is found in 83 of the 172 posts and represents a total of 48 percent of the contents. Of these, 37 stem from node 1 (45%), and 46 from node 2 (55%). There is thus less content with humoristic or sarcastic character; however, given that there are many other moods one may use, close to 50 percent is relatively high.

Humour or sarcasm

	No	%	Yes	%	N
Politics	13	46 %	15	54 %	28
Advertising	49	59 %	34	41 %	83
Adventures	19	50 %	19	50 %	38
Children	0	0 %	5	100 %	5
Relationships	20	56 %	16	44 %	36
IFMB	23	58 %	17	42 %	40
Entertainment	9	31 %	20	69 %	29
					sum 259

Figure 10: Humour or Sarcasm x Content Themes (N = 259)[5]

[5] N equals 259 since this frequency table takes account for every theme found. Reminder that each content can have maximum 2 themes each.

Many of the content themes are torn in use of humour or sarcasm as demonstrated in Figure 10. Politics, advertising, adventures, relationships, and interior/fashion/make-up/beauty all have close to a 50/50 percent split when it comes to using humour or sarcasm in the content caption. Only children with a 100 percent and entertainment of 69 percent sticks out with the majority of content including humour or sarcasm. Most surprisingly to this cross table is the use of humour or sarcasm in political content because politics is a serious topic in many cases and for many people.

Sadness is found in 14 of the collected units and represents 8,1 percent of the contents. Of these, 10 belong to node 1 (71%), and 4 to node 2 (29%). The few cases of sadness used in caption may be explained through the wish for many on social media platforms to be perceived as happy fulfilled persons.

Hard or soft contents looks to whether the caption is case-based or personal. Out of the total 172 units collected, 65 are case-based and instrumental (38%) and 107 are of personal character (62%). Node 1 has 30 case-based and 82 personal captions (27% / 73%), while node 2 has 35 case-based and 25 personal captions (58% / 42%)

Personal or case-based					
	Case	%	Personal	%	N
Politics	20	71 %	8	29 %	28
Advertising	48	58 %	35	42 %	83
Adventures	4	11 %	34	89 %	38
Children	0	0 %	5	100 %	5
Relationships	4	11 %	32	89 %	36
IFMB	11	27 %	29	73 %	40
Entertainment	18	62 %	11	38 %	29
					sum 259

Figure 11: Personal or Case-Based x Content Themes (N = 259)[6]

The majority of the collected units across content themes have personal character in the caption as demonstrated in Figure 11. This is not surprising given that influencers on Instagram often showcase aspects of their private lives. Adventures, children, relationships and interior/fashion/make-up/beauty weights heavier on personal captions with above 70% of such character. Politics, advertising, and entertainment have on average more of a case-based

[6] N equals 259 since this frequency table takes account for every theme found. Reminder that each content can have maximum 2 themes each.

character. These findings demonstrate that such themes may be less related to their private lives, as of why they choose to focus their captions on communication related closer to the case than themselves. Entertainment, for instance, is frequently a theme presented by node 2 as demonstrated in Figure 6, and represents this person's expected opinion leadership. Hard focus on these appears natural, since entertainment is aligned with the influencer's professional career. Influencers on Instagram may in general have an economic and branding focus, thus advertising also weights heavier in case-based content. Politics, however, can be discussed to both be personal and case based of nature, but initial thoughts would suggest the latter, which is what this analysis also points to, because of the seriousness character political subjects often beholds.

Short or long caption is measured by the threshold of 250 characters. Out of the total 172 units collected, 92 of the content captions are short (53,5%), and 80 are long (46,5%). Node 1 has 55 short and 57 long captions (49% / 51%), while node 2 has 37 short and 23 long captions (62% / 38%).

Short or long					
	Short	%	Long	%	N
Politics	10	36 %	18	64 %	28
Advertising	24	29 %	59	71 %	83
Adventures	28	74 %	10	26 %	38
Children	5	100 %	0	0 %	5
Relationships	22	61 %	14	39 %	36
IFMB	26	65 %	14	35 %	40
Entertainment	18	62 %	11	38 %	29
					sum 259

Figure 12: Short or Long x Content Themes (N = 259)[7]

Most of the captions studied are short as demonstrated in Figure 12. These include adventures, children, relationships, interior/fashion/make-up/beauty and entertainment facilitating over 60% of all of them. The three latter themes are though just above 50%, indicating that a mix of short and long captions are common in such contents. Contrary, political and advert related content has more often long captions. This tendency may be explained through the need to give instructions or detailed information about the matters. A

[7] N equals 259 since this frequency table takes account for every theme found. Reminder that each content can have maximum 2 themes each.

step-by-step tutorial of how to enter a brand competition giveaway, or intricate subjects that need further explanation or discussion are just some examples of instances where captions are and need to be longer than 250 characters.

Links in caption may amplify the message set and can refer to organizations/businesses or other people on Instagram. In the majority of cases links are not used and include 93 of the total 172 posts (55%). In cases where it is used, however, references are quite mixed. In 25 of the cases, the influencer tags organization/business (14%), in 26 one or multiple people are tagged (15%), and lastly 28 cases tags both organization/business and one or more people (16%). Node 1 has 76 posts without caption tags (68%), 22 tags of organization/business (20%), 9 of person (8%) and 5 of both (4%). Node 2, however, has 17 posts without caption tags (28,3%), 3 tags of organization/business (5%), 17 of person (28,3%) and 23 of both (38,3%). On average node 1 seems to use tags directed to businesses more often than node 2. This is interesting since node 2's collected content more often is of advertising character as demonstrated in Figure 6. Node 2 also tags both in same contents relatively more frequently than node 1.

The use of emojis in contents caption happens in 111 out of the total 172 cases (64,5%). Emojis may add context or spice to a message set and is presented as small visual signs or symbols that may be added to or without text. They can be seen as unformal and creative ways of communicating and are often found in personal digital exchanges. Node 1 uses emojis in 102 of their 112 posts (91%). Node 2 only uses it in 9 of their 60 posts (15%). There is consequently a big difference between the influencers in the use of emojis. One possible explanation may be the age gap between them, as emojis more widely are used amongst the younger segments and those raised in the age of social media.

The next three tools represent those that are connected to content only, not content captions. The first one is tags, and the majority of contents do not include tags, in fact 127 out of 172 units are without content tags (73,8%). Content tags imply that the tags are fixed to the picture itself, and not the text, contrary to tags in caption. It can thus add context or amplify the total message set just as caption tags. The most used content tags are connected to organization/business and make up 27 of the units (15,7%). The second most used tag are those of people and represents 15 units (8,7%). The least used are those tags that combine the two mentioned above and are only used 3 times out of the 172 cases (1,7%). Node 1 has 73

posts without content tags (65%), 27 tags of organization/business (24%), 9 of person (8%) and 3 of both (3%). Node 2, however, has 54 posts without contents tags (90%), 0 tags of organization/business (0%), 6 of person (10%) and 0 of both (0%). The analysis indicates that node 1 uses content tags more frequently than node 2, a percentage of 25 more often to be exact. The former node consequently uses this tool to connect the content to an organization or business and is singlehandedly responsible for the high overall representation of tags directed to organization/business of 15,7 percent. They, however, tag people or both people and organization/business almost as often in their posts. Node 2's low distribution of contents where organization/business is tagged may be interesting for the same reasons as explained under caption tag.

The second is geo-tags and are used just about as often as they are not. In 84 contents, geo-tag is used and represents 48,8 percent of the collected units. Node 1 uses it in 76 of 112 posts (68%), and node 2 uses is in just 8 out of 60 posts (13%). Node 1 therefore uses it far more than node 2. Using geo-tags may help the users to feel closer and more connected to the influencer. It is a piece of their private life they choose to share, just as a friend would ask you "Where are you now?".

The third is music and can only be used in contents that consist of videos. It is therefore used relatively rarely, just 23 out of the total posts have music in them (13%). A high number of these, 21 posts, have music that is perceived as happy beats where rhythm is high paced (12%). There are only 2 contents with music that is perceived as sad or melancholic (1%). Node 1 has 7 posts with happy music (6%), and 1 post with sad music (1%). Node 2 has 14 posts with happy music (23%), and 1 post with sad music (2%). Neither of the nodes seem to use music much in their contents, however, node 2 uses it more, and these contents are often connected to commercial posts. In cases where music is used, happy beats are common. One rare occasion where sad music is used, is though in politically themed post, which is interesting, but not a reoccurring characteristic for political posts.

4.4.1 Regression Analysis on Attributes of Caption and Contents

Now that frequencies of captions and tools of content is presented and discussed, I move on to investigate the impact on engagement in the form of likes these tools have on political posts. A regression analysis is again used to see if there is covariance between attributes mentioned

in the previous chapter, and degree of engagement on political posts. Influencer is again used as control variable.

Table 4. The Effect of Caption and Contents Attributes, Politics and Influencer on Likes.[a]

	Likes		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	5324,58	2693,37	0,05
Influencer	-7876,61	1571,76	0,00
Humour or sarcasm	184,99	944,43	0,84
Sadness	2045,15	1665,69	0,22
Hard or soft	3408,30**	1012,45	0,00
Short or long	45,92	895,44	0,95
Link	54,10	449,51	0,90
Emoji	1382,60	1352,08	0,30
Tag	7,32	580,04	0,99
Geo-tag	1926,79*	969,47	0,04
Music	-1531,60	1131,90	0,17
R^2	0,55		

UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$
Dependent variable (likes: continuous).
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N = 172)

In Table 4, 55% of variances on likes can be explained by the predictors above. Only two attributes are found to be significant, hard or soft caption at ,001, and geo-tag at ,49. The latter tells us that likes increases in political contents where geo-tag is used.

To find out if hard or soft captions may explain the results, one may have a quick look into the codebook to see which of the caption types have the highest value. Soft caption is defined as 2, and because the test above is significant and positive this tells us that when political contents have soft captions, likes increases. To double-check this finding, individual tests for hard and soft captions were ran, this can be found in Appendix 3. Had beta still been significant but negative, hard captions would increase likes. In this analysis influencers are too used as a control variable, because of big variations which effects the standard error, due to the differences in posting frequency and the overall contrast in received likes.

Most of the attributes of both content caption and content are above the sig. level of ,05, which means there's no correlation between them and the degree of engagement on political

posts. These include captions that have humour or sarcasm, sadness, link and emoji in them, as well as if the message is short or long. Use of content tag or music neither has a significant impact on engagement.

Generally, when assessing all the nine attributes, there is not much evidence that some lead to more engagement on political contents than others. It seems like the content itself determine the degree of response.

4.5 Attributes of Comment Section

Aside from how the influencers chooses to present their content as demonstrated above, it is interesting to look at tendencies in the comment sections. High engagement does not necessarily mean most people agree with the content. Research of Facebook has indeed found that content of divisive or polarizing character creates engagement (Plikk 2021). Results from the first regression analysis, see Table 1, demonstrated that politics as a theme of content is in fact a factor for engagement, and may be explained if comments of sex, types of response and relevance disrupts from normal comment patterns.

Majority of people commenting on the contents are women. 129 contents women are found to be main contributors to the comment sections (75%), 41 contents of men (23,8%), and only two are mixed in a 50/50 or 40/60 distribution (1,2%). Both influencers have more women commentating than men. Node 1 has 74 contents where the majority are women (66%), 36 of men (32%) and 2 of equal representation (2%). Node 2 has 55 contents where the majority are women (92%), 5 of men (8%) and 0 of equal representation. These observations align with numbers earlier presented of women being more active on Instagram than men.

Majority of response type in contents are positive. 162 contents are positive (94,2%), and 10 are mixed by 50/50 or 40/60 (5,8%). Contents with over 70% negative comments were not found. Both influencers' contents mainly consist of positive comments. Node 1 has 106 contents where comment sections are positive (95%), and 6 that are mixed (5%). Node 2 has 56 contents where comment sections are positive (93%), and 4 that are mixed (7%).

The degree of relevance in the comment sections are mostly relevant, that is when the commentator answers to the content or caption message. In 139 cases, comments are mostly relevant (81%), 19 are mixed 50/50 or 40/60 (11%), and 14 are irrelevant (8%). Both influencers have more contents with mostly relevant comments. Node 1 has 81 contents

where the majority answers to the message (72%), 17 that are mixed (15%) and 14 that are mostly irrelevant (13%). Node 2 has 58 contents where the majority answers to the message (97%), 2 that are mixed (3%) and 0 contents where response mostly is irrelevant.

4.5.1 Regression Analysis of Comments and Engagement

Independent regression analyses for number of likes, commenters-gender, type and relevance as well as number of comments, commenters-gender, type and relevance, will help understand the relationship between engagement and comment section. Influencer is again used as a control variable in both tests.

Table 5. The Effect of Commenters-gender, Type, Relevance, Politics and Influencer on Likes.[a]

	Likes		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	8662,92	2077,90	0,00
Gender	1437,16	980,97	0,145
Type	6536,56**	1851,41	0,00
Relevance	-2284,06**	714,60	0,00
Influencer	-11450,50	893,82	0,00
Politics	407,02	1142,86	0,72
R^2	0,54		

UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05
Dependent variable (likes: continuous)
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N = 172)

In the first analysis with likes as dependent variable, the ANOVA table tells that there are some predictors, independent variables, that are significant and may explain the variance of likes. When looking at the corresponding coefficient table, see Table 5, 54% of the variance in likes can be explained by the predictors above. Just two of the comment predictors are significant, type of response at ,00 and relevance ,00. Gender in comment sections is therefore not a predictor for likes. The unstandardized beta level indicates that there is a positive relationship between type of response and number of likes. Because the value is positive, likes increases at the highest value, which is that majority of response in comment sections are positive, see Appendix 2. This is the highest value of beta predictor and means that type of

response is the most significant indicator of likes in this analysis. The unstandardized beta level on relevance, however, indicates that there is a negative relationship between relevance and likes. Because the lowest value of relevance in comments sections is a mix of 40/60 or 50/50 distribution, see Appendix 2, these findings suggest that likes increase where comment sections are more mixed in relevance, than if they would be mainly positive.

Table 6. The Effect of Commenters-Gender, Type, Relevance, Politics and Influencer on Comments.[a]

	Likes		
	UB	SE	p
Constant	1177,39	815,63	0,15
Gender	-203,35	385,05	0,59
Type	167,60	726,73	0,81
Relevance	-262,36	280,50	0,35
Influencer	-757,78	350,85	0,03
Politics	-221,18	448,60	0,62
R^2	0,00		

SB: Standardized B
UB: Unstandardized B
SE: Standard error
** p < 0.01; * p < 0.05
Dependent variable (comments: continuous)
[a]Entries are regression coefficients, unstandardized B, standard error, R^2 and P-value (N = 172)

The second analysis where number of comments is used as dependent variable, the first ANOVA table tells that there is no successful significance within any of the predictors of comments, and the corresponding coefficient table is therefore absolute. This is represented in Table 6, where 0 percent of the predictors are proven not to explain the variance in number of comments. Commenters-gender, type of response and relevance do not thus predict the number of comments. The control variable of influencer again indicates big variations due to posting frequencies.

When collecting the data, however, some patterns regarding gender in comments, type of comments and relevance in political content started to emerge. On average, despite content themes, the comment sections are dominated by women. They are often positive and answers to caption/content message which is just what the data output presented above confirms.

The usual comment section often consists of women that are positive and respond to the message of the content/caption. Yet, I got a different impression when looking into political contents. Comment sections here looks more diverse in gender, response type and relevance. I have therefore manipulated the independent variables to only represent males or mixed, negative comments or mixed, and irrelevant comments or mixed, to see whether there is a correlation between these and political contents.

4.5.2 Chi-Square Test

To assess the relationship between male/mixed commentators, negative/mixed response, irrelevant/mixed response and political contents, a Chi-Square test seems fitting because all the variables are nominal. It can be used to see if there is a significant relationship between these and political contents, and to what degree (Ringdal 2013, 303).

The comment sections found in political contents seem to stand out from the typical ones. It appears more men are commenting, the response seems to be mixed and not all comments are quite relevant to the content/caption message. Based on these observations throughout collecting data, I will explore if the tendency is greater for men or a mix of gender commenting, negative or mixed comments as well as irrelevant or mixed feedback on political content. In other words, I want to see if these variables correlate through a Chi-Square test.

Table 7. Relationship between Politics and Comments where Majority is Men or Mixed, Negative or Mixed response, and Not Relevant or Mixed response.[a]

	PCS	CV	VN
Men or mixed	0,056		11
Negative or mixed	0*	0,29	6
Not relevant or mixed	0,022*	0,17	1

PCS: Pearson's Chi-Square
CV: Cramer's V
VN: Total amount in political posts
** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$

[a]Entries are cross table Chi-Square, Cramer's V and VN (valid number of each circumstance in political posts.) Total political posts included (N = 28).

The following analysis is based on the Chi-Square test and is represented through Table 7. The test for men/mixed in comment section tells that there are 11 contents where men or a mix of gender dominates the comment section in political contents of total 28 political contents, and 17 other contents have such tendencies in the comment section. Pearson's Chi-Square is not sig. at ,056, which indicates that there is no significant relationship between

comments sections that are dominated by men or a mix, and political contents. Therefore, there is no need to look at the symmetric measures. The sig. level is though close to being significant and may still give indications that there could be a relationship.

The second test of negative/mixed response in comment section tells that there are six contents where majority of comments are negative or mixed in political contents of total 28 political contents, only four other contents have such tendencies in the comment section. The Pearson's Chi-Square is sig. at ,00, which means that these variables are not independent from one another. Therefore, one can assess the strength of the relationship by looking at the symmetric measures table where Cramer's V is at ,29. When this value is above ,2, one can suggest that there is a moderate relationship between negative or mixed comments and political content.

The last test for irrelevant/mixed response in comment sections tells that there is one content where majority of the comments are irrelevant or mixed in political contents of total 28 political contents, and 27 other contents have such tendencies. The Pearson's Chi-Square is sig. at ,022, which means that there is a 2% chance that the results happened by chance. Under the symmetric measures table Cramer's V is at ,17, which indicates that there is a weak relationship between irrelevant or mixed comments and political content.

4.6 General Observations

Both influencers are known to be controversial, perhaps because they are women who use new technology and social media to express their opinions on political matters. They are both active on the platform, and variate in content themes. Women seem to be their main gender of target group as it is them who most often comment on content. Comments are mostly positive including short messages or emojis, and their responses are often relevant which may indicate both younger target groups as well as active and engaged users or regulars. It seems like both influencers are interested in achieving and maintaining personal bonds with their followers using personal captions and pictures of personal character, like pictures of family or friends. Personal captions are even observed in many contents of advertising. The tendency of responding to exceptionally nice comments seems to be present for both influencers, as well as responding to those that are relevant but contradictory to their opinions based on content caption.

Men seem to be more interested in contents that are of political character or nudity. Co-existence of these, however, seems to have a negative effect on positiveness in comment sections. Organizations like Peta is no stranger using nudity to provoke reactions and engagement on political issues of animal or environmental protection, and as a tradition uses celebrities to present their cause. It might lead to contrast in opinions on such campaigns, but it at least seems to engage more people than usual and in turn result in public debates on the matter. It has previously been said that personal content leads to more engagement, and for many, being naked is a highly personal matter. Despite political content and nudity, humour also seems to be a driving factor for men to engage.

4.7 Summary

Throughout the chapter, multiple analyses have been used to make sense of the data, and to ultimately help answering the research question. In the next section these analyses will be implemented with reviewed theory in order to evaluate the findings with existing literature.

5.0 Discussion

Opinion leaders in the era of social media have become increasingly relevant compared to the earlier media system. Digitalization has facilitated for people to use social media platforms as information sources to a greater extent, and opinion leaders are central nodes within these networks because they diffuse information to the public online (Karlsen 2015, 301). Information has thus become digital and globalized, giving common people access and the power to share opinions and influence public opinion and discussion. Recent developments of social media as information hubs have facilitated for new types of opinion leaders to emerge online, referred to as influencers. Opinion leaders that would back in the days influence only through word of mouth, can now use their social media platforms like Instagram through network-enhanced word of mouth. It is these platforms younger segments and many adults will turn to for information, and is thus especially important to consider given that younger people are less interested in politics (Kampanje 2019). Through own initiatives on social media platforms, people can become celebrity influencers with their own structures and networks (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 435), capable of influencing a great number of people online through new opportunities such as tools of influence and accessibility (Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 215). Mainstream or celebrity influencers have huge followings and may act as opinion leaders to help spread such important messages about society and politics. Their dominant position in the digital media system therefore actualizes whether they can also play a political role, that is having cross-border opinion leaderships.

In this research two popular Norwegian influencers have been used to represent the tendencies and possibilities for influencers to also act as political opinion leaders. The main research question for this paper has been: *"Are celebrity influencers cross-border opinion leaders to the extent that they are also political opinion leaders?"*

In the quest of answering the research question, quantitative methods have been used. More precisely I have studied the communication of two celebrity influencers on Instagram covering a four month time period. The research has looked at what types of interest areas the influencers engage on and to what extent. The different subjects within the theme of politics was also examined. The overall subjects and the specific ones for politics have been analysed using regression analysis to see the correlation between these and engagement. Further, tools or charachteristics in caption and contents for political contents was studied using regression

analysis. Charachetristics for comments sections was also explored and closer investigated using a Chi-Square test to see the relationship between these charachteristics and engagement. In this final chapter central findings from the analyses will be presented and further discussed in the light of previous assumptions and existing theory. The chapter is structured by first presenting and discussing these findings, and later in section 5.6 tied to the overall and sub-research questions.

5.1 Signs of Cross-Border tendencies

Although the celebrity influencers mostly communicated about interior, fashion, make-up and beauty, the descriptive analyses of topics showed that political issues was a substantial aspect as well. Before the regression analyses were ran, some indications pointed to that the influencers may in fact have multiple opinion leaderships. Through frequencies illustrated in Figure 6, their expected opinion leadership themes became evident. Posting frequency of node 1 aligned with the expectancy of interior, fashion, make-up and beauty theme and posting frequency on entertainment fulfilled expectancy of node 2. In the same figure we saw how posting rates on advertisement was high for both influencers, which was also expected given that being an influencer on social media nowadays is considered a profession. This finding supports the notion of commercialization in mass media logic, where activities are tightly connected with commercial forces. Only 28 contents were about politics, and also aligns with systems being less attached to politics like in mass media logic. (Esser 2013, 171-172)

There were three political topics that seemed to be of main concern for the influencers: environment, vulnerable groups, and gender differences/equality, as illustrated in Figure 5. Posting frequency on these topics, in other words, dominated political contents. These topics may be considered as soft or unformal politics as earlier presented. It illustrates that Instagram as an arena for everyday political talk may in fact be more concerned about topics of informal character rather than formal politics like “Assessment of politicians” which was one of the sub-political themes in this research. The influencers do not only indicate an opinion leadership on such politics, but they may also give valuable insight mirroring the public’s main topics of interest and opinion.

5.1.1 In-Home, Out-of-Home and Family Care

Early predictors of the analysis weakened the belief that influencers can only serve limited or single opinion leaderships. According to Myers and Robertson (1972, 45) as earlier presented

in the theory chapter, opinion leaderships are categorical bound in in-home interests, out-of-home interests and family care. The theory suggests cross-border opinion leadership will be much more likely if the themes are bound to the same category, see chapter 2.4.2 for their original division. Because research of cross-border opinion leadership may date back to as early as 1972 like in this case, such implications may be outdated considering the rise of social media and new network structures and logics. Therefore, I decided to re-test this theory by having some of my own content themes be inspired by Myers and Robertson's categories, but also make sure to replace or add where it seemed necessary to fit the modern agenda like earlier discussed in the methodology chapter. The content themes were then structured into same kinds of interest factors as the original theory suggested, and further analysed comparing these and the number of likes each theme got within the interest factors, see Figure 7 and 8. In these figures both influencers, node 1 and node 2, seem to have quite equal distribution of engagement from their followers across these categories. Number of likes do not seem to cluster significantly to either category but are more so spread throughout. It also becomes evident in these figures that the influencers gain much attention on contents that are about politics, which is contrary to Myers and Robertson (1972, 45) findings, and strengthen the expectations of celebrity influencers also being political opinion leaders, and ultimately have cross-border opinion leaderships.

5.2 Celebrity Influencers as Political Opinion Leaders

The analysis of Table 1 demonstrated how politics is no less engaging than other topics. In fact, the analysis shows that themes that are about politics on average increase the number of likes. As earlier discussed, likes are used as an important indicator for engagement on social media, and are referred to by Pang et al. (2016) as click-speeches, which represents the individual's opinion online. Likes as indicator for engagement and influence may be seen as controversial as earlier discussed. Users might simply "like" something to boost their own ego on political content like Neubaum and Krämer (2017, 470) explain. It is, however, used in this research as a successful indicator for supporting opinions on the content like Tafesse and Wood (2021, 3) does in their research. Because the influencers seem to receive more attention in the form of likes and, therefore, believed to have supporting beliefs on such topics, it may also indicate that they are political opinion leaders.

To some extent these findings are at odds with the early work on opinion leaders, who claimed they were restricted to one topic of opinion leadership. An opinion leader is traditionally someone seen as an expert within a specific topic (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 8-9), but since the celebrity influencers gain equal or even more likes on political contents, cross-border opinion leadership seems plausible. This finding supports Karlsen and Enjolras (2016, 352) research where influentials were found to lead political talks more than other users. It is also in line with Merton's (1949, 213) second category of opinion leaders called polymorphic, where influence can be present on various fields occasionally not even related. The influencers used in this research have lifestyle-type of profiles on Instagram, but also seem to have political influence, thus the influencers are polymorphic. Even though the influencers appear to have multiple interests emerging as different content themes, it does not seem to negatively affect the engagement on the "out of the ordinary" posts such as politics. This is contrary to the findings of Tafesse and Wood (2021, 7-8), where high numbers of followers combined with various themes had negative effects on engagement. It, however, supports the same research where another finding indicated high posting frequency and that several themes in posts would increase engagement. The influencers have a high following, but also posts regularly on their profiles, which seems to have increased the engagement.

Everyday political talk on a platform like Instagram seems to thus impact opinions through social media influencers as opinion leaders. Since normal people can become influencers on social media platforms, such implications are unattached from social classes as opposed to opinion leaders in third places where they needed to be a part of the elite. These implication are similar to those Kats and Lazarsfeld found in their study (Weimann 1994, 12). Contrary to Bashari and Fazl-Ersi (2020, 409), this research may indicate that influencers on social media are not in fact bound to concentrate their contents to single or narrow themes, but rather smitten their credibility and fame to other areas. This is also referred to in literature as "the halo effect" (Merton 1949, 213). These findings strengthen the belief of such effects because it seems as though their reputation as celebrity influencers may have transferred to areas such as politics through the "halo effect".

Much of the existing literature and especially the original ones were constructed before the social media age. A new logic has emerged and seems to affect the extent to which people can be opinion leaders, also on intricate subjects like politics. It also seems to affect the way in which the public engage on such complicated matters. Contrary to mass media logic, this

finding may suggest that professionalism as Esser (2013, 169-170) describes it, in the social media age is about to become absolute and rather align with network-media logic, given that influencers through mass-self communication can influence public opinion, and not just traditional news outlets. This also suggests that audiences like in mass media logic, are less passive in the network media logic (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 33). The fact that information is more accessible for everyday people and not restricted to, let's say a social class, seems inevitable. It might indicate the same as another study (see Weeks, Ardèvol-Abreu, and Gil de Zúñiga 2017, 217). That is, online opinion leaders are viewed upon as more trustworthy than traditional media, which is why they also earn credibility on political topics. The influencer's high following does not only point to fame as Karlsen and Enjolras (2016, 344-345) were worried about, but these findings suggest that one can also assess the extent of influence they have.

New findings such as presented in this research also indicate that celebrity influencers can be important facilitators in networks as part of a two-step flow for political information. They are overall active, although frequency of political posts could be higher, which is a prerequisite for opinion leaders to be a vital part of the flow according to Karlsen (2015, 306). One cannot, however, presume that political messages from the influencers are drawn from the mass media because these people may also take initiative of their own and not just redistribute mass media's news agenda. The two-step flow is therefore not a given as Weimann (1994, 25) criticizes the theory for. Instagram facilitates for a two-way communication, but as this finding suggests, people online may be less dependent on traditional news and may receive news only from people online in a one-step flow, bypassing the mass media.

Concerns may be raised to whether the influencers have reached the predictions of being opinion leaders through indicators such as number of likes. Celebrity influencers are further not political opinion leaders in a traditional setting but may be important nodes in networks to engage and influence those that are less active and have less of a political interest. Bennett and Manheim (2006, 213) indicated that users on social media might get their opinion frames elsewhere, like through targeted mass media messages, and in turn weaken opinion leaders in the two-step flow. If these influencers only strengthen already established opinions instead of reframing them, their role as opinion leaders may not be as strong as first believed. There is also no hard evidence that the influencers may not have accessed political information elsewhere than mass media, like from private sources (Weimann 1994, 83). Additionally, they

may introduce their followers to important subjects of a collective and informed society by getting the users interested and form opinions about matters they normally would not engage in like Wiken (2020, 6, 7) points out. As such, these influencers can be argued to withhold their role as opinion leaders even though they might adopt opinion frames from traditional media.

In Table 3, a deep dive in how the various sub-political subjects affect likes was conducted. Findings indicated, however, that only one political subject was significant, and therefore can explain the results from Table 1. Out of the political contents, only social media policies could successfully predict the increase of likes. As for the other sub-themes, we cannot be sure results have not appeared by mere coincidence, both because these were not significant and because standard variations were too high, indicating too big of variations. It seems like the users on Instagram perceive the thematic of social media policies as important, and the influencers are therefore able to keep their interest, as Wiken (2020, 9, 11) stresses the importance of. One of the social media policy contents received astonishing amounts of likes and had both nudity and humour/sarcasm as part of the content message. These perhaps contributing factors to increased number of likes, is not something one would expect in a traditional sense people to connect political matters to. On the other hand, it may intrigue the user's attention through original content that stands out from the ordinary feed, which Tafesse and Wood (2021, 7-8) also found as a factor for increased engagement on social media.

It seems as thus influencers do have the capacity of overlapping opinion leadership, or as Merton (1949, 213) refers to, polymorphic, where they wield influence in fields that are not even related. The influencers used as representatives for this research though, are not men, which was also emphasized in his work when speaking of influentials (214). Whether these influencers are restricted to two-area opinion leaderships or general leaderships as Marcus and Bauer (1964, 628) sought out to investigate, is not further researched in this paper. Instead, a different approach by exploring the possibility and tendency of celebrity influencers also being political opinion leaders, and in this way achieving cross-border opinion leadership, is conducted. This research does thus not answer if influencers on social media are in fact general leaders.

5.2.1 Soft Captions and Geo-tags

The format of information and opinions online is said to often represent itself through text, pictures, videos and emojis (Lin, Bruning, and Swarna 2018, 432). This research has mostly looked at text and other medium specific tools like tags and links. How the influencers choose to express themselves was explored and led to some interesting findings.

Predictor of hard or soft captions affects likes in political posts as presented in Table 4. Through soft or personal captions, the influencer adds a personal touch to the message set. Identifying with someone online creates a stronger relationship to the user and is a vital necessity for someone to become an influencer within a network according to Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 52-53). At this point it was evident that soft captions lead to more likes on political posts, see Table 4. This led to the finding of soft captions increasing likes in political contents, but also that hard captions in fact decreased likes on political content.

The fact that likes increase on political posts where captions are soft is surprising. On one side it supports the notion of a network-media logic where sharing personal information is an online ideal, contrary to mass media logic where professionalism and set frames are key (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 29-33). It is also said that sharing personal information is to be recognized as an online ideal (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 33), like soft captions often consists of. On the other side, politics may be viewed upon by many as highly public and intricate matters where personal stories are less relevant than the cause itself. However, earlier research has too found personal touch in content to increase likes on political contents. Wiken (2020, 6), for instance, found that engagement increased when influencers mixed everyday life content with political content. Her research showcases that personal touch to influencer's content is a factor that increases likes on political posts. It might be that the captions investigated in my research are written in a format of the influencers' own style, also named as one of the factors for social media reach by Rogstad (Mellum 2016).

Similarly, findings that hard captions decrease likes in political content is just as surprising. This might be due to the online ideal of sharing personal information so that the users recognize the person of the post in content message, which in turn increases their interest (Wiken 2020, 9, 11). Humour or sarcasm and short message sets, however, were not significantly related to likes on political contents. This is in contrast to views of Rogstad

where these should be some of the important factors for content reach on social media (Mellum 2016).

Other than soft and hard captions, geo-tag is another predictor for likes to increase in political contents, see Table 4. This predictor is, however, on the verge of not being significant, which may indicate that variations are close to being so big that the results are not to be trusted. Nevertheless, it is a predictor for increased likes. It is possible that influencers use this tool to help users feel in touch and personal with the influencer by seeing where they are. This is in line with the online ideal of being personal, such as soft captions represent (Wiken 2020, 9, 11).

5.2.2 Type and Relevance of Response in Comment Section

Further, this research found that predictors of comment type and relevance in comment sections influence likes, see Table 5. I will not go too much in depth because they do not help answer the research problem as such but are, however, interesting findings one may explore further. The predictor of type of response in comment section increased the number of likes in contents. Contrary, predictor of relevance in comment section decreased the number of likes in contents. Without further investigating these findings I cannot conclude e.g., if likes are to increase where response mainly is negative, mixed or positive, though the latter seems most likely. Accordingly, there is no evidence that likes decrease where response is mainly irrelevant, mixed or relevant. I though found it interesting that the distribution of gender in comment sections did not seem to affect likes, because when gathering data, it seemed that e.g., men were more interested in certain themes such as politics.

5.3 Variations in Comment Section

Apart from likes, there are some interesting findings of variations in comment sections. I found this interesting to explore in addition to likes because politics may be of a subject that sparks people to express strong opinions. That of most interest is that number of comments do not significantly increase on political content compared to other contents, as demonstrated in Table 2. This finding aligns with what Rogstad explains, which is that people might find it difficult to comment on intricate matters that politics often are, and the comments that are made in these instances are therefore often brief and use less humour. (Rogstad 2016, 148-150) Even though it might be that people have conflicting opinions to the influencer, it seems as thus they keep it to themselves, or perhaps comment rates are low because majority of

users feel the same way about the matter as the influencer. Either way this might be of concern because engagement from ordinary citizens is important to democratic involvement (Livingstone 2006, 233).

Further, majority of those commenting on the influencers' contents are women, as presented in the section of general observations as well as in chapter 4.5. I do not find this finding surprising given that 7 out of 10 women below 30 use Instagram daily in Norway according to a report from Ipsos (2020). It is in my opinion that the influencers also target the very same gender, women. The overall response is also positive and relevant, see chapter 4.5. The high degree of users responding in relevant matters may suggest that audiences are more so users, because they act attentive and respond to the message of content in a deliberate manner. Users of social media may therefore be argued to be less passive than earlier presumed in mass media logic (Klinger and Svensson 2016, 33). Lastly, the majority gender, type of response and relevance in comment sections did not predict number of comments. This means that it does not seem to matter if the majority commenting are men or women, positive or negative, relevant or not. The number of comments seem thus to be stable regardless of the mentioned predictors.

5.4 Perceived Variations in Comment Sections of Political Contents

In chapter 4.5.2 of the analysis, I showed how some variations of comment sections in political contents appeared to have re-occurring tendencies. Therefore, a test of relationship between politics and comments where majority is men or mixed, negative or mixed, and not relevant or mixed was conducted, see Table 7. The result indicated, contrary to earlier impression, that there is no relationship between men or a mix of gender commentating and political contents. The data analysis was though close to being significant, which may indicate a relationship if e.g., the sample would be larger.

There is, however, a moderate relationship between negative/mixed comments and political contents. The fact that political contents and negative, or mix of negative and positive response, are not independent from one another, may indicate that many of the users disagree with the opinion in the message set and are trying to change them. They may try to influence other users or the opinion leader by stating their opposite views, and through this shaking the group as a whole (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955, 8-9). Political opinions may often be seen as controversial but do not, however, seem to impact the spiral of silence. A study (see Neubaum

and Krämer 2017, 471) suggested that this mechanism where people do not voice their opinion without pre-approval of common consensus on the topic in fear of being rejected or isolated, often appears on arenas that are highly public, such as open social media profiles. The first finding suggesting the spiral of silence not to be present is that the influencers do post content of political matters on their open profiles. Second, people are more likely to have mixed or opposite opinions that they choose to express in comment sections. This supports the finding of Rojas (2010, 343), where opposite opinions may be voiced in cases where one perceives the content message as biased. Though the influencers are found to be political opinion leaders, this research too, similar as Wiken (2020, 6, 7) found, indicates that the followers do not always agree with the political opinions of influencers.

Finally, there is a weak relationship between irrelevant/mixed response in comment sections and political content. The relationship is weak but does, however, indicate that politics as a controversial topic may lead people to be confused about the message, against it or totally disregard it. This finding may suggest as earlier indicated by Wiken (2020, 13), that soft political contents such as the many this research has based its categories on, results in less debating in comment sections and more use of emojis.

5.5 Characteristics in Political Contents

Although many attributes used in the analysis did not result in hard predictors of likes and comments, I find it reasonable to discuss the characteristics often found, or not, in political contents. This is to better understand how the influencers work with their tools to influence on political matters.

Majority of political content consists of humour or sarcasm in caption, see Figure 10, which is interesting considering political matters often bring a certain seriousness with them. On the contrary, sadness was not found much in general, although this could be due to the online ideal of presenting yourself as happy and your life as “picture perfect” (Wiken 2020, 9, 11).

Even though likes increase on political posts that have soft captions as earlier presented, most of political posts have hard or case-based captions as presented in Figure 11, which represents the serious character of politics. According to the findings, however, hard captions seem to decrease likes. This might be due to the online ideal of sharing personal information so that the users recognize the person of the post in content message and in turn increase interest (Wiken 2020, 9, 11).

Whether political contents have short or long captions did not influence the number of likes as earlier presented in Table 4. For the most part, however, political contents contained long captions, see Figure 12, which may be because political matters as intricate subjects in many cases need further elaboration. It therefore seems that 250 characters do not make up long enough captions to contribute to the content image. Based on Rogstad, high frequency of long captions may have decreased likes, because short message sets are listed as one of the factors for successful social media reach (Mellum 2016).

Caption link and content tag are neither successful predictors for likes, and is for the most part not frequently used either. It may be that usage of these can increase trustworthiness and verify the content message in some type of way, and in turn increase likes.

5.6 Conclusion

Throughout this paper, multiple discoveries have led to the point where a conclusion can be made. From literature review to methodology, analysis and discussion, all parts that will ultimately help answer the main research problem. Two sub-research questions were constructed to help answer the main research problem.

RQ1: To what extent are celebrity influencers also political opinion leaders?

Findings from this research suggest that celebrity influencers can indeed be political opinion leaders. At least on third spaces such as Instagram where individuals can become influencers, and anyone who wants can participate as users on the platform. They are not political experts but have, through activities on the platform, gained a substantial number of followers who are being influenced. Comments are often less positive and relevant on political posts compared to other types of contents, but political posts nevertheless receive more likes. These results are based on the presumption that likes perform as “click speech” and represents equal supporting belief systems from the users to the influencer’s message and content.

It seems like role, reputation and popularity of the celebrity influencers enables them to exceed their areas of influence through “the halo effect” (Merton 1949, 213). Findings of celebrity influencers as political opinion leaders may only predict influence on contents of informal character, as the political categories in this research mainly are soft as discussed in section 3.3. Accordingly, the influencers’ political agendas were mainly found to be soft as well. This research therefore illustrates that celebrity influencers can be political opinion leaders to the extent that the political subjects are soft or informal.

RQ2: What characterizes the way celebrity influencers exercise cross-border opinion leadership?

The influencers mostly use humour or sarcasm in political content, their captions are hard or case-based and often long exceeding 250 characters. Nevertheless, what characterizes political contents that receive more likes than on average are those that have soft captions and geo-tags. Soft caption of personal nature seems to legitimize the role of influencers on social media and allow them to establish personal bonds with their followers or other users online. As a result, the threshold for liking content as an act of supporting beliefs to the message set seem to decrease. These implications seem to be valid for the use of geo-tags as well.
Based on the knowledge from RQ1 and RQ2, I will now go ahead to the conclusion of the main research problem of this paper:

"Are celebrity influencers cross-border opinion leaders to the extent that they are also political opinion leaders?"

The research has demonstrated how the new system of networked media logic may foster tendencies of cross-border opinion leadership. In contrast to opinion leaders in third places, celebrity influencers on social media platforms can exceed their role by also being political opinion leaders in third spaces such as Instagram. Personal communication seems to be key for influencers to gain trust and confidence from users to be accepted as opinion leaders on other areas. Not only does cross-border opinion leadership exist in this new system, it also facilitates for women to become opinion leaders in contrast to times of third places where mainly men had access to such statuses. This study is neither focusing on men as influencers like Merton (1949), nor women's limited information and opinion sharing as the study of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), but rather takes an inclusive approach when it comes to what is considered political opinion and who can be leaders.

The influencers may not be considered as opinion leaders in the traditional sense of being an opinion leader, but, as demonstrated through this research, these pople do nevertheless have influence on multiple topics outside of their ususal spehere. I therefore suggest, unlike Merton (1949), that one does not need to be considered an opinion leader in order to be influential. Further, these findings cannot predict whether cross-border tendendcy or general leadership is the case in the new system. If the "halo effect" is as strong as presumed, they might as well influence on all topics of which they share opinions about. General opinion leadership would

consequently be more of a fitting term rather than cross-border opinion leaders. Nevertheless, the new system of social media seems to be fostering possibilities for people to become opinion leaders on multiple topics in contrast to earlier beliefs in the old system.

Findings in this research support the notion that social media influencers also can be political opinion leaders. This tendency may have both positive and negative implications on democracies and societies.

5.6.1 Further Implications of Results

This research has demonstrated just how influencers on social media also can be political opinion leaders, and further have cross-border opinion leaderships through personal communication. Put in perspective, such findings and tendencies change the flow of public opinion and may come with both remedies and challenges to a healthy democracy.

The power that earlier belonged to mass media and traditional news outlets in the communication flow, is now to a greater extent shared with political opinion leaders in increasingly important social media networks. Such implications may offer remedies for democracies, because influence on political debates no longer is limited to mass media (Chadwick, Dennis, and Smith 2016, 19). Those who earlier were passive consumers in the communication flow now have the power to participate in public opinion matters through their own channels. Influencers as political opinion leaders may consequently reach audiences that were unreachable in the mass communication flow, and turn them from passive to active citizens in societies (Karlsen 2015, 305). Celebrity influencers on social media have a big group of following and popularity. They have a good starting point for disseminating important information for society such as politics and may fulfill the ideal of virality in these networks as stressed by Klinger and Svensson (2016, 31).

Eighty-eight percent of Norwegians use online news weekly including social media, and young people between 9-18 years old use social media along with online news as information hubs (Medietilsynet 2021, 8, 19). People seem to often use a news mix when gathering information and may come across informal political content in an unconscious way. Having political contents in traditionally non-political arenas such as Instagram where everyday political talk can take place, may lower the expectations for both the distributer and consumer. In one way this may have positive effects on democracies because it means everyone, even news-avoiders, are fed with important subjects for them to be informative and strengthen

democracies. On the other hand, it may lead to skewed or poor information, e.g., fake news, that may have negative effects on societies.

The influencers have the power to provide users of matters that are handpicked and only represents fractions of the bigger picture of the cause. The representation might be skewed or subjective and becomes a problem when influencers through the "halo effect" wield influence on serious matters of which they have little insight on. Such implications may either enable or prohibit important changes in societies as Livingstone (2006, 236) notes. Wielding influence on serious matters such as politics by just being known or an influencer as Wiken (2020, 10) also found indications of, may therefore lead to weakened democracies through false or skewed information. A remedy could be regulating the industry to a greater extent like in traditional news media, given the impact influencers have on the public, especially amongst younger segments.

The influencers may not be political celebrities as such, not in the traditional way anyways, but the public may hold the power to turn them into one through social media. Influencers may use their broad networks politically, which may be of concern in a democratic perspective. It may create echo-chambers and isolation, which is one of the concerns of Livingstone (2006, 236) and Park et al. (2015, 247). Additionally, it may facilitate for populistic simple solutions and add to the publics' miscontent. These aspects hold for further research.

5.6.2 Limitations and Further Research

The first immediate limitation in this research is that it is built on the premises that likes serve as an indicator for positive engagement, that is, supporting belief systems to the message set of the content. Opinion leadership is present on certain content topics that receive more likes than the usual content. However, opinion leadership also implies that you have an impact on a specific topic, and that people take your opinions to consideration and maybe alter their own. Likes can though be a mindless action or in some cases an act of protest. In order to be an opinion leader you must affect a certain number of people in their decision making in one way or another, as said by some of the most known pioneers within public opinion and opinion leadership theory, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955, 2). Therefore, I cannot state that likes serve as an absolute answer to a fulfilled opinion leadership, but it is, however, used by other scholars

(Tafesse and Wood 2021; Pang et al. 2016) in a similar fashion, as earlier discussed in chapter 2.4.1, which gives the methodology some credibility, nevertheless.

Additionally, as concerns of Bennett and Manheim (2006, 213) points to, these influencers may only strengthen already established opinions instead of reframing them as opinion leaders should, questioning their role in the flow. It is impossible to know for sure if they successfully have influenced the user's opinions. Further research of qualitative methods such as interviews asking users whether the content has influenced them in a way could potentially help diminish such concerns.

Findings may also be affected by brand or sphere, selection period, the form of leader and the platform analyzed as Weimann (1994, 69-70) points out. Ergo, one cannot know for sure if results would be the same if one would choose other influencers to analyse, a different social media platform such as Facebook or research at a different point in time. Further research could also investigate the "stories" function on Instagram, which is updated more frequently than usual posts. This would, however, cause obsticles empirically because these are automatically deleted from the feed after 24 hours, and "click speeches" such as likes or comments from users are not visible, thus making it difficult to prove engagement and in turn cross-border opinion leadership.

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Appendix 1: Consent from NSD

NSD sin vurdering

Prosjekttittel

«Finnes det grenseoverskridende opinionslederskap på Instagram? Kan man være opinionsleder på flere temaer, eller kan en opinionsleder bevege seg over på ett annet tema og engasjere?»

Referansenummer

434535

Registrert

30.09.2020 av Isabel Bernhardsen – isabebe@uio.no

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Universitetet i Oslo / Det humanistiske fakultet / Institutt for medier og kommunikasjon

Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Rune Karlsen, rune.karlsen@media.uio.no, tlf: 22856287

Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

Kontaktinformasjon, student

Isabel Bernhardsen, isabelbernhardsen@hotmail.com, tlf: 90076786

Prosjektperiode

16.09.2020 – 15.11.2021

Status

04.06.2021 – Vurdert

Vurdering (2)

04.06.2021 – Vurdert

NSD har vurdert endringen registrert 3.6.2021.

Vi har nå registrert 15.11.2021 som ny sluttdato for behandling av personopplysninger.

NSD vil følge opp ved ny planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Håkon J. Tranvåg

Lykke til videre med prosjektet!

20.11.2020 – Vurdert

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen, så fremt behandlingen gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet 20.11.2020 med vedlegg, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

https://nsd.no/personvernombud/meld_prosjekt/meld_endringer.html

Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle særlige kategorier av personopplysninger om politisk oppfatning og alminnelige personopplysninger frem til 1.6.2021.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet innhenter personopplysninger fra Instagram-kontoer, alle med mer enn 40 000 følgere. Dette er brukere som selv publiserer bilder på sine kontoer med mål om å nå flest mulig. Det er selve innlegget som skal analyseres, samt hvilket engasjement det skaper i kommentarfeltet under. Det tas bare skjermbilde av selve innlegget, som så kodes, men navn på personen eller kommentarene som følger under lagres ikke.

NSD vurderer at ulempen for de registrerte reduseres da dette er opplysninger de registrerte selv publiserer på åpne kontoer, med mange følgere. Den forventede offentligheten ansees som høy.

Prosjektet vil behandle særlige kategorier av personopplysninger med grunnlag i at oppgaven er nødvendig for formål knyttet til vitenskapelig eller historisk forskning.

Behandlingen har hjemmelsgrunnlag i personvernforordningen 6 nr. 1 bokstav e), jf. Art. 6 nr. 3 bokstav b), jf. Art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav j), jf. Personopplysningsloven §§ 8 og 9.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

- om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a)

- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenelige formål

- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet

- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19) og protest (art 21).

Data innhentes fra åpne profiler med flere tusen følgere på Instagram. Behandlingstiden er kort, og å gi individuell informasjon vil kreve ytterlige behandling av personopplysninger enn det som er nødvendig for formålet. Sett opp mot nytten de registrerte vil ha av informasjonen vil det innebære uforholdsmessig stor innsats å informere de registrerte. Det kan derfor unntas fra informasjonsplikt etter art. 14 nr. 5 b).

De øvrige rettighetene gjelder likevel, og vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Håkon J. Tranvåg

Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

Appendix 2: Codebook

A. Likes:

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3

Også videre.

B. Kommentarer:

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3

Også videre.

C. Tema i innhold:

1. Politisk innhold
   1.1 Vurdering av politikere
   1.2 Retningslinjer på sosiale medier
   1.3 Miljø
   1.4 Katastrofer/ulykker/ terror
   1.5 Kropps/utseende (press/idealer/redigering)
   1.6 Utsatte/sårbare grupper (barn, diskriminering)
   1.7 Kjønnsforskjeller (økonomi, rettigheter, begrensninger og/eller kritikk)
   1.8 Korona (samfunnskritisk oppførsel eller lignende??)
2. Reklame
3. Opplevelser
4. Barn
5. Sosiale relasjoner (venner/familie)
6. Interiør/mote/sminke/skjønnhet
7. Underholdning

D. Humor eller sarkasme i bildetekst:

0. Nei
1. Ja

E. Tristhet i bildetekst:

0. Nei
1. Ja

F. Hard eller myk bildetekst:

1. Hard
2. Myk

G. Omfang bildetekst:

1. Kort
2. Lang

H. Link i bildetekst:

0. Ingen link
1. Link til organisasjon
2. Link til person
3. Link til begge

I. Emoji i bildetekst:

0. Nei
1. Ja

J. Tag i innlegg:

0. Ingen tag
1. Tagget organisasjon
2. Tagget person
3. Tagget begge

K. Geo-tag i innlegg:

0. Nei
1. Ja

L. Musikk i innlegg:

0. Ingen musikk
1. Glad musikk
2. Trist musikk

M. Kjønn i kommentarfelt:

1. Over 70% er kvinner
2. Mikset: Andel kvinner og menn er delt 50/50 eller 40/60
3. Over 70% er menn

N. Type respons i kommentarfelt:

1. Over 70% er positive
2. Mikset: Andel positive og negative kommentarer er delt 50/50 eller 40/60
3. Over 70% er negative

O. Relevansen i kommentarfelt:

1. Over 70% svarer på budskapet i innholdet
2. Mikset: Andel relevante og irrelevante kommentarer er delt 50/50 eller 40/60
3. Over 70% av svarene er irrelevante ift. Budskapet i innholdet

Appendix 3: SPSS output

Overall frequencies

Frequency of post

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Node1	112	65,1	65,1	65,1
	Node2	60	34,9	34,9	100,0
	Total	172	100,0	100,0	

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

Influencer	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node2	3483,25	60	2904,783
Node1	14345,58	112	6489,831
Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Mean likes x content theme x influencer

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_politikk	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	14015,44	99	5903,337
	politikk er tema i posten	16859,69	13	9861,067
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	3026,64	45	2834,696
	politikk er tema i posten	4853,07	15	2761,188
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	10581,44	144	7244,299
	politikk er tema i posten	10427,57	28	9184,510
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_reklame	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	16906,95	62	6446,500
	reklame er tema i posten	11169,48	50	5008,052
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	4735,26	27	2953,965
	reklame er tema i posten	2458,88	33	2462,236
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	13214,42	89	7940,422
	reklame er tema i posten	7706,23	83	5978,928
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_opplevelser	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	13837,35	85	6609,631
	opplevelser er tema i posten	15945,56	27	5930,000
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	3331,02	49	2699,751
	opplevelser er tema i posten	4161,36	11	3765,357
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	9995,49	134	7484,579
	opplevelser er tema i posten	12534,34	38	7607,648
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_barn	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	14345,58	112	6489,831
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	3382,82	55	2933,456
	barn er tema i posten	4588,00	5	2573,532
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	10735,09	167	7593,923
	barn er tema i posten	4588,00	5	2573,532
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_relasjoner	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	13375,36	87	6331,285
	1,00	17721,96	25	5989,114
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	3490,35	49	3142,957
	1,00	3451,64	11	1538,254
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	9813,85	136	7192,775
	1,00	13361,58	36	8349,730
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_imss	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	14947,94	72	7016,463
	1,00	13261,33	40	5326,649
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	3483,25	60	2904,783
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	9736,72	132	7957,357
	1,00	13261,33	40	5326,649
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Report

likes (anno 01.03.21)

influencer2	tema_underholdning	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Node1	,00	14556,79	107	6495,284
	1,00	9825,80	5	4903,269
	Total	14345,58	112	6489,831
Node2	,00	4109,58	36	2314,162
	1,00	2543,75	24	3458,353
	Total	3483,25	60	2904,783
Total	,00	11926,72	143	7315,554
	1,00	3799,28	29	4593,008
	Total	10556,40	172	7563,674

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis of likes, theme politics and influencer

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4734449189,061	2	2367224594,531	79,246	,000[b]
	Residual	5048316830,055	169	29871697,219		
	Total	9782766019,116	171			

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), influencer2, theme_politics

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,696[a]	,484	,478	5465,501

a. Predictors: (Constant), influencer2, theme_politics

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	14073,888	533,300		26,390	,000
	theme_politics	2340,730	1146,105	,115	2,042	,043
	influencer2	-11175,821	887,769	-,706	-12,589	,000

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Table 2: Multiple regression analysis of comments, theme politics and influencer

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16488333,711	2	8244166,856	2,054	,131[b]
	Residual	678325973,329	169	4013763,156		
	Total	694814307,041	171			

a. Dependent Variable: kommentarer (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), tema_politikk, influencer2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,154[a]	,024	,012	2003,438

a. Predictors: (Constant), influencer2, tema_politikk

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	706,861	195,487		3,616	,000
	tema_politikk	-192,183	420,117	-,035	-,457	,648
	influencer2	-607,131	325,421	-,144	-1,866	,064

a. Dependent Variable: kommentarer (anno 01.03.21)

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis of sub political themes and engagement

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,285[a]	,081	,042	7402,707

a. Predictors: (Constant), katpol8, katpol2, katpol5, katpol1, katpol6, katpol3, katpol7

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	795554467,328	7	113650638,190	2,074	,049[b]
	Residual	8987211551,788	164	54800070,438		
	Total	9782766019,116	171			

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), katpol8, katpol2, katpol5, katpol1, katpol6, katpol3, katpol7

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	10598,371	615,386		17,222	,000
	katpol1	-4793,871	5270,554	-,068	-,910	,364
	katpol2	23358,846	8129,836	,235	2,873	,005
	katpol3	2361,129	2688,626	,066	,878	,381
	katpol5	4710,129	5270,554	,067	,894	,373

	katpol6	-1428,768	2890,271	-,037	-,494	,622
	katpol7	-2219,217	3396,940	-,054	-,653	,514
	katpol8	-6495,871	3752,162	-,130	-1,731	,085

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Frequency of influencer, attributes or caption and content x content theme

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	40	49	89
	1	49	34	83
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	70	19	89
	1	64	19	83
Total		134	38	172

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	89	0	89
	1	78	5	83
Total		167	5	172

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	69	20	89

	1	67	16	83
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	66	23	89
	1	66	17	83
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	0	80	9	89
	1	63	20	83
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Caption: Sadness (0/1) Crosstabulation

Count

		Caption: Sadness (0/1)		
		0	1	Total
influencer2	Node 1	102	10	112
	Node 2	56	4	60
Total		158	14	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	140	18	158
	1	4	10	14
Total		144	28	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

	tema_reklame		
	,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total

Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	79	79	158
	1	10	4	14
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	121	37	158
	1	13	1	14
Total		134	38	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	153	5	158
	1	14	0	14
Total		167	5	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	124	34	158
	1	12	2	14
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	119	39	158
	1	13	1	14
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Sadness (0/1) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Sadness (0/1)	0	129	29	158
	1	14	0	14
Total		143	29	172

influencer2 * Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) Crosstabulation

Count

		Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)		
		1	2	Total
influencer2	Node 1	30	82	112
	Node 2	35	25	60
Total		65	107	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	45	20	65
	2	99	8	107
Total		144	28	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	17	48	65
	2	72	35	107
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	61	4	65
	2	73	34	107

Total	134	38	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	65	0	65
	2	102	5	107
Total		167	5	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	61	4	65
	2	75	32	107
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	54	11	65
	2	78	29	107
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Hard or soft (1/2) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	1	47	18	65
	2	96	11	107
Total		143	29	172

influencer2 * Caption: Short or long (1/2) Crosstabulation

Count

		Caption: Short or long (1/2)		
		1	2	Total
influencer2	Node 1	55	57	112
	Node 2	37	23	60
Total		92	80	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	82	10	92
	2	62	18	80
Total		144	28	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	68	24	92
	2	21	59	80
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	64	28	92
	2	70	10	80
Total		134	38	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	87	5	92
	2	80	0	80
Total		167	5	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	70	22	92
	2	66	14	80
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	66	26	92
	2	66	14	80
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Short or long (1/2) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Short or long (1/2)	1	74	18	92
	2	69	11	80
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) Crosstabulation

Count

		Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)				
		0	1	2	3	Total
influencer2	Node 1	76	22	9	5	112
	Node 2	17	3	17	23	60
Total		93	25	26	28	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	80	13	93
	1	20	5	25
	2	19	7	26
	3	25	3	28
Total		144	28	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	63	30	93
	1	4	21	25
	2	19	7	26
	3	3	25	28
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	65	28	93
	1	24	1	25
	2	19	7	26
	3	26	2	28
Total		134	38	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	90	3	93
	1	24	1	25
	2	25	1	26
	3	28	0	28

Total	167	5	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	69	24	93
	1	23	2	25
	2	19	7	26
	3	25	3	28
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	70	23	93
	1	13	12	25
	2	22	4	26
	3	27	1	28
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Link (0/1/2/3) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	0	85	8	93
	1	25	0	25
	2	22	4	26
	3	11	17	28
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Caption: Emoji (0/1) Crosstabulation

Count

		Caption: Emoji (0/1)		
		0	1	Total
influencer2	Node 1	10	102	112
	Node 2	51	9	60

Total	61	111	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	50	11	61
	1	94	17	111
Total		144	28	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	31	30	61
	1	58	53	111
Total		89	83	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	47	14	61
	1	87	24	111
Total		134	38	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	57	4	61
	1	110	1	111
Total		167	5	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	50	11	61
	1	86	25	111
Total		136	36	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	56	5	61
	1	76	35	111
Total		132	40	172

Caption: Emoji (0/1) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Caption: Emoji (0/1)	0	37	24	61
	1	106	5	111
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) Crosstabulation

Count

		Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)				
		0	1	2	3	Total
influencer2	Node 1	73	27	9	3	112
	Node 2	54	0	6	0	60
Total		127	27	15	3	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	105	22	127
	1	22	5	27
	2	14	1	15

	3	3	0	3
Total		144	28	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	63	64	127
	1	16	11	27
	2	10	5	15
	3	0	3	3
Total		89	83	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	101	26	127
	1	19	8	27
	2	11	4	15
	3	3	0	3
Total		134	38	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	123	4	127
	1	27	0	27
	2	14	1	15
	3	3	0	3
Total		167	5	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	106	21	127

	1	23	4	27
	2	5	10	15
	3	2	1	3
Total		136	36	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	101	26	127
	1	16	11	27
	2	13	2	15
	3	2	1	3
Total		132	40	172

Content: Tag (0/1/2/3) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	0	99	28	127
	1	26	1	27
	2	15	0	15
	3	3	0	3
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Content: Geo-tag (0/1) Crosstabulation

Count

		Content: Geo-tag (0/1)		
		0	1	Total
influencer2	Node 1	36	76	112
	Node 2	52	8	60
Total		88	84	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	69	19	88
	1	75	9	84

Total		144	28	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	34	54	88
	1	55	29	84
Total		89	83	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	75	13	88
	1	59	25	84
Total		134	38	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	84	4	88
	1	83	1	84
Total		167	5	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	70	18	88
	1	66	18	84
Total		136	36	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	76	12	88
	1	56	28	84
Total		132	40	172

Content: Geo-tag (0/1) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	0	65	23	88
	1	78	6	84
Total		143	29	172

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influencer2 * Content: Music (0/1/2) Crosstabulation

Count

		Content: Music (0/1/2)			
		0	1	2	Total
influencer2	Node 1	104	7	1	112
	Node 2	45	14	1	60
Total		149	21	2	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_politikk Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_politikk		
		,00	politikk er tema i posten	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	126	23	149
	1	17	4	21
	2	1	1	2
Total		144	28	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_reklame Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_reklame		
		,00	reklame er tema i posten	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	85	64	149
	1	4	17	21

	2	0	2	2
Total		89	83	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_opplevelser Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_opplevelser		
		,00	opplevelser er tema i posten	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	114	35	149
	1	18	3	21
	2	2	0	2
Total		134	38	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_barn Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_barn		
		,00	barn er tema i posten	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	144	5	149
	1	21	0	21
	2	2	0	2
Total		167	5	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_relasjoner Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_relasjoner		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	113	36	149
	1	21	0	21
	2	2	0	2
Total		136	36	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_imss Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_imss		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	111	38	149
	1	19	2	21
	2	2	0	2
Total		132	40	172

Content: Music (0/1/2) * tema_underholdning Crosstabulation

Count

		tema_underholdning		
		,00	1,00	Total
Content: Music (0/1/2)	0	132	17	149
	1	10	11	21
	2	1	1	2
Total		143	29	172

Table 4: Multiple regression analysis of attributes of caption and contents, theme politics and influencer

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,747[a]	,557	,527	5202,424

a. Predictors: (Constant), Content: Music (0/1/2), Caption: Sadness (0/1), Content: Geo-tag (0/1), Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1), Content: Tag (0/1/2/3), Caption: Short or long (1/2), Caption: Hard or soft (1/2), tema_politikk, Caption: Link (0/1/2/3), Caption: Emoji (0/1), influencer2

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5452331368,013	11	495666488,001	18,314	,000[b]
	Residual	4330434651,103	160	27065216,569		
	Total	9782766019,116	171			

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Content: Music (0/1/2), Caption: Sadness (0/1), Content: Geo-tag (0/1), Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1), Content: Tag (0/1/2/3), Caption: Short or long (1/2), Caption: Hard or soft (1/2), tema_politikk, Caption: Link (0/1/2/3), Caption: Emoji (0/1), influencer2

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	10581,444	632,139		16,739	,000
	tema_politikk	-153,873	1566,744	-,008	-,098	,922
2	(Constant)	14073,888	533,300		26,390	,000
	tema_politikk	2340,730	1146,105	,115	2,042	,043
	influencer2	-11175,821	887,769	-,706	-12,589	,000
3	(Constant)	5324,576	2693,367		1,977	,050
	tema_politikk	2849,070	1310,761	,139	2,174	,031
	influencer2	-7876,614	1571,762	-,498	-5,011	,000
	Caption: Humour or sarcasm (0/1)	184,994	944,429	,012	,196	,845
	Caption: Sadness (0/1)	2045,149	1665,686	,074	1,228	,221
	Caption: Hard or soft (1/2)	3408,301	1012,445	,219	3,366	,001
	Caption: Short or long (1/2)	45,915	895,444	,003	,051	,959
	Caption: Link (0/1/2/3)	54,097	449,514	,008	,120	,904
	Caption: Emoji (0/1)	1382,604	1352,079	,088	1,023	,308
	Content: Tag (0/1/2/3)	7,320	580,042	,001	,013	,990
	Content: Geo-tag (0/1)	1926,794	969,472	,128	1,987	,049
	Content: Music (0/1/2)	-1531,596	1131,898	-,078	-1,353	,178

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	14948,426	547,277		27,314	,000
	tema_politikk	3649,716	1133,284	,179	3,220	,002
	influencer2	-10142,174	879,088	-,641	-11,537	,000
	hard.cap	-3832,168	893,953	-,246	-4,287	,000

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	11116,258	856,689		12,976	,000
	tema_politikk	3649,716	1133,284	,179	3,220	,002
	soft.cap	1916,084	446,976	,246	4,287	,000
	influencer2	-10142,174	879,088	-,641	-11,537	,000

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Frequency of influencer x comment sex, type of response and relevance

Count

		Comment: Sex (1/2/3)			
		1	2	3	Total
influencer2	Node 1	74	36	2	112
	Node 2	55	5	0	60
Total		129	41	2	172

Count

		Comment: Type of response (1/2/3)		
		1	2	Total
influencer2	Node 1	106	6	112
	Node 2	56	4	60
Total		162	10	172

Count

		Comment: Relevance (1/2/3)			
		1	2	3	Total
influencer2	Node 1	81	17	14	112
	Node 2	58	2	0	60
Total		139	19	14	172

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis of likes and comment sex, type and relevance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,744[a]	,554	,541	5126,058

a. Predictors: (Constant), Comment: Relevance (1/2/3), Comment: Type of response (1/2/3), influencer2, tema_politikk, Comment: Sex (1/2/3)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5420872345,660	5	1084174469,132	41,260	,000[b]
	Residual	4361893673,457	166	26276467,912		
	Total	9782766019,116	171			

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Comment: Relevance (1/2/3), Comment: Type of response (1/2/3), influencer2, tema_politikk, Comment: Sex (1/2/3)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	8662,926	2077,903		4,169	,000
	influencer2	-11450,500	893,826	-,724	-12,811	,000
	tema_politikk	407,028	1142,863	,020	,356	,722
	Comment: Sex (1/2/3)	1437,168	980,970	,089	1,465	,145
	Comment: Type of response (1/2/3)	6536,565	1851,417	,203	3,531	,001
	Comment: Relevance (1/2/3)	-2284,066	714,607	-,182	-3,196	,002

a. Dependent Variable: likes (anno 01.03.21)

Table 6: Multiple regression analysis of number of comments and comment sex, type and relevance

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,181[a]	,033	,004	2012,112

a. Predictors: (Constant), tema_politikk, Comment: Sex (1/2/3) , influencer2, Comment: Relavancy (1/2/3), Comment: Type of response (1/2/3)

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22747537,914	5	4549507,583	1,124	,350[b]
	Residual	672066769,126	166	4048594,995		
	Total	694814307,041	171			

a. Dependent Variable: kommentarer (anno 01.03.21)

b. Predictors: (Constant), tema_politikk, Comment: Sex (1/2/3) , influencer2, Comment: Relevance (1/2/3), Comment: Type of response (1/2/3)

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1177,398	815,631		1,444	,151
	Comment: Sex (1/2/3)	-203,351	385,057	-,047	-,528	,598
	Comment: Type of response (1/2/3)	167,601	726,730	,020	,231	,818
	Comment: Relevance (1/2/3)	-262,361	280,502	-,078	-,935	,351
	influencer2	-757,789	350,850	-,180	-2,160	,032
	tema_politikk	-221,186	448,604	-,041	-,493	,623

a. Dependent Variable: kommentarer (anno 01.03.21)

Table 7: Chi-Square test of political contents and men/mixed, negative/mixed, irrelevance/mixed in comment section

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
tema_politikk * mixed.men	172	100,0%	0	0,0%	172	100,0%
tema_politikk * mixed.neg	172	100,0%	0	0,0%	172	100,0%
tema_politikk * mixed.not.rel	172	100,0%	0	0,0%	172	100,0%

tema_politikk * mixed.men

Crosstab

Count

		mixed.men		
		,00	1,00	Total
tema_politikk	,00	112	32	144
	politikk er tema i posten	17	11	28
Total		129	43	172

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3,640[a]	1	,056		
Continuity Correction[b]	2,787	1	,095		
Likelihood Ratio	3,367	1	,066		
Fisher's Exact Test				,092	,051
Linear-by-Linear Association	3,619	1	,057		
N of Valid Cases	172				

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7,00.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

tema_politikk * mixed.neg

Crosstab

Count

		mixed.neg		
		,00	1,00	Total
tema_politikk	,00	140	4	144

	politikk er tema i posten	22	6	28
Total		162	10	172

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14,891[a]	1	,000		
Continuity Correction[b]	11,680	1	,001		
Likelihood Ratio	10,653	1	,001		
Fisher's Exact Test				,001	,001
Linear-by-Linear Association	14,805	1	,000		
N of Valid Cases	172				

a. 1 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,63.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,294	,000
	Cramer's V	,294	,000
N of Valid Cases		172	

tema_politikk * mixed.not.rel

Crosstab

Count

		mixed.not.rel		
		,00	1,00	Total
tema_politikk	,00	112	32	144
	politikk er tema i posten	27	1	28
Total		139	33	172

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5,259[a]	1	,022		
Continuity Correction[b]	4,125	1	,042		
Likelihood Ratio	7,001	1	,008		

Fisher's Exact Test				,019	,013
Linear-by-Linear Association	5,229	1	,022		
N of Valid Cases	172				

a. 0 cells (0,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5,37.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,175	,022
	Cramer's V	,175	,022
N of Valid Cases		172	

Appendix 4: Examples of coding

Example of quantitative coding of node 1 (posting date 14th of May 2020)

Date	Likes (01.03.21)	Comments (01.03.21)	Theme 1 See codebook	Theme 2 See codebook	Humour or sarcasm 0 = No 1 = Yes
14th of May 2020	12145	101	2	1.3	0

Sadness 0 = No 1 = Yes	Hard or soft 1 = Hard 2 = Soft	Short or long 1 = Short 2 = Long	Link 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both	Emoji 0 = No 1 = Yes	Tag 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both
1	2	2	1	1	0

Geo-tag 0 = No 1 = Yes	Music 0 = No 1 = Yes, happy 2 = Yes, sad	Majority Sex 1 = Women 2 = Mixed 3 = Men	Majority type of response 1 = Positive 2 = Mixed 3 = Negative	Majority relevance 1 = Relevant 2 = Mixed 3 = Irrelevant
0	0	1	1	1

Example of quantitative coding of node 2 (posting date 14th of May 2020)

Date	Likes (01.03.21)	Comments (01.03.21)	Theme 1 See codebook	Theme 2 See codebook	Humour or sarcasm 0 = No 1 = Yes
14th of May 2020	870	27	2		0

Sadness 0 = No 1 = Yes	Hard or soft 1 = Hard 2 = Soft	Short or long 1 = Short 2 = Long	Link 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both	Emoji 0 = No 1 = Yes	Tag 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both
0	1	2	3	0	0

Geo-tag 0 = No 1 = Yes	Music 0 = No 1 = Yes, happy 2 = Yes, sad	Majority Sex 1 = Women 2 = Mixed 3 = Men	Majority type of response 1 = Positive 2 = Mixed 3 = Negative	Majority relevance 1 = Relevant 2 = Mixed 3 = Irrelevant
0	0	1	1	1

Example of quantitative coding for multiple political themes in a single post of node 1 (posting date 1st of November 2020)

Date	Likes (01.03.21)	Comments (01.03.21)	Theme 1 See codebook	Theme 2 See codebook	Humour or sarcasm 0 = No 1 = Yes
1st of November 2020	31738	620	1.2	1.7	1

Sadness 0 = No 1 = Yes	Hard or soft 1 = Hard 2 = Soft	Short or long 1 = Short 2 = Long	Link 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both	Emoji 0 = No 1 = Yes	Tag 0 = No link 1 = Organization 2 = Person 3 = Both
1	2	1	0	1	1

Geo-tag 0 = No 1 = Yes	Music 0 = No 1 = Yes, happy 2 = Yes, sad	Majority Sex 1 = Women 2 = Mixed 3 = Men	Majority type of response 1 = Positive 2 = Mixed 3 = Negative	Majority relevance 1 = Relevant 2 = Mixed 3 = Irrelevant
1	0	2	2	1