

THESIS

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Social media influencers impact on beauty industry

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Literature review	6
2.1. The move from Traditional Marketing to Digital Marketing	6
2.2. Who is a social influencer?	7
2.3. Social media in marketing	8
2.4. Typology of influencers	10
2.5. Influencers impact on the brand	11
2.6. Credibility and trust	12
2.7. The cosmetic/ beauty industry	14
3. Research methodology and results of survey	16
3.1. Secondary research	16
3.2. Primary research	16
3.3. Research method	20
4. Research results and evaluation	21
5. Conclusions and suggestions	31
6. Summary	34
7. References	37
8. Appendix	41

1. Introduction

Nowadays, marketing and ads are everywhere, on social media, websites, and even in online games. This makes it really tough for marketers. With so many ads fighting for people's attention, it's super important for them to find new and creative ways to connect with their audience.

Because the internet keeps changing, marketers must keep coming up with new ideas. That's why we're seeing different and sometimes unusual ways to promote things. One example is how famous people are being used in ads in new and different ways.

In this dynamic digital realm, celebrity endorsement is being reimagined and reshaped to align with the preferences and behaviors of modern consumers. It's no longer limited to traditional advertisements or endorsements by well-known figures. Instead, it has evolved into an intricate web of influencer marketing, social media collaborations, and the cultivation of brand ambassadors who resonate deeply with their audiences.

This contemporary landscape challenges marketers to navigate this intricate web of influencer culture, capitalizing on the allure and authenticity of influencers and the seamless integration of product promotion within the online experiences of consumers. As the marketing arena continues to metamorphose, it's clear that the adaptability and innovative thinking of marketers are pivotal in effectively connecting with their ever-evolving target audience.

Indeed, (Hollensen and Schimmelpfennig 2013) study emphasizes that celebrity endorsement is less successful than previously, and that a new sort of endorser is now required. As a result, as traditional advertising loses traction with Millennial customers (Newman 2015), firms are shifting their focus to a relatively new phenomena in advertising: influencer marketing. According to 2014 statistics, beauty had the fourth place as a leading industry in the United States in terms of

influencer reach (“• Share of U.S. Marketing Influencers by Industry 2014 | Statista” n.d.). These influencers, branded "Beauty Gurus" online, utilize their makeup expertise to work with cosmetic businesses, making significant sums while creating brand awareness around items.

Influencers have grown in popularity because of the emergence of social media and their capacity to engage with their consumer peers. These self-made social media superstars are critical to brand narrative, and their views and opinions may be more convincing than advertising directly from the cosmetic firms themselves. With this insight, marketers and communication professionals are looking for methods to harness these new influencers in shaping brand discussion in the digital world.

In this challenging landscape, influencer marketing has emerged as a dynamic and influential strategy. It has gained prominence for its unique ability to leverage the profound and inherently authentic relationship that influencers share with their followers. This level of trust and engagement is something that businesses often struggle to foster independently with their consumers. Consequently, influencer marketing is widely regarded as one of the most vital and innovative marketing methods of the past decade, particularly for those professionals who are at the forefront of influencing purchase decision-making processes.

While there has been extensive research on the role of social influencers in various sectors, there is still a noticeable dearth of comprehensive studies specifically focused on beauty industry influencers. Recognizing this gap in knowledge, this research endeavor embarks on a journey into the realm of beauty social influencers to gain deeper insights into this distinctive sector.

To be more precise, the primary objective of this research is to delve into and comprehensively analyze the impact of social media influencers as a potent advertising source within the dynamic and ever-evolving landscape of the beauty industry. The aim is to explore how these influencers wield their influence, shape consumer behavior, and impact the branding strategies of beauty companies.

At the heart of this research lies a pivotal concern – the erosion of trust between consumers and influencers, which is the problem I’m trying to study. Influencers frequently endorse a multitude of products and offer effusive praise, which may not always align with the actual experiences of consumers who subsequently try these products. The dissonance between expectation and reality has led to issues of trust and authenticity in the influencer-consumer relationship, and it is this problem that this study seeks to address and understand more deeply. By doing so, it aims to shed light on how these challenges can be mitigated to benefit both influencers and consumers in the beauty industry.

This research is dedicated to addressing several pivotal questions that hold significant relevance in the realm of influencer marketing and its implications for the beauty industry:

- 1- Do people see influencers as credible or not credible?
- 2- Does the age of the online users have any relationship with the impact of influencers?
- 3- Does the non-credibility on influencers impact the beauty industry?

2. Literature review

2.1. The move from Traditional Marketing to Digital Marketing

In the previous ten years, there has been a significant shift from traditional marketing to digital marketing. Traditional marketing focused on physical means and took into account the following factors that influence customer purchasing: cultural forces, social forces, personal and psychological forces.(Durmaz and Efendioglu 2016). For firms, the arrival of digital marketing provided both opportunities and risks. Businesses' strategies for capturing their customers' attention have begun to vary as their requirements and expectations changed. Companies have evolved innovative ways to acquire new customers and keep existing ones satisfied in order to achieve a competitive advantage and enhance their performance. (Ungerman, Dedkova, and Gurinova 2018).

There are different opinions about digital marketing and whether it is a wave at the time, but (Slijepčević, 2020) considers that it is here to stay and that businesses should adapt their business models correspondingly, he also states that shifts in the digital marketing sector are always evolving, with the arrival of media platforms, content marketing, search engine optimization (SEO), pay per click, and other technologies accounting for major yearly alterations (Slijepčević, Radojević, and Perić 2020). This marketing can be accomplished using social media sites such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter, which will be discussed more. Another crucial platform is the website, which is generally regarded as the business's face and, when done right, may be one of the most successful. Businesses must adapt to this changing landscape and build a strong digital presence if they want to remain connected with their target audience. A company with a strong online presence, including a website and social media, that caters to the requirements and desires of their customers will resonate strongly with the target demographic, leading to brand awareness.

2.2. Who is a social influencer?

As previously noted, the shift from traditional to digital marketing is becoming increasingly visible. This shift has been enormous, and as a result, firms have had to reconsider their marketing strategies to stay up with the developing markets.

In comparison to traditional advertising approaches, research has demonstrated that internet word of mouth has a significant impact on customers' decision-making processes. (Atik and Ertekin 2012)

Social media influencers (SMIs) are a new type of independent third-party endorser who frame audience behaviors via blogs, tweets, as well as other social media platforms. (Freberg et al. 2011). They generate content supporting certain brands on platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook with the purpose of gaining a following and brand recognition.

According to Fredberg, the achievement of social media influencers is critical to brand success; thus, technology makes it possible to detect and track the importance of influencers to a company or organization. This technology examines the number of hits on all social media appearances, the amount of times a blog is shared, the number of likes and comments, and the followers. All these factors are vital to the success of a social media influencer. (Freberg et al. 2011)

Social media influencer marketing creates a new channel for brands to reach out to clients more directly, organically, and at scale in their daily lives. Influencers on social media advertise products through their personal lives, making them more relatable to the typical customer. Influencers are the ultimate link between a brand and its customers. Influencers have great social clout and trust because of their candor and transparency with consumers which is what drives the phenomenon's success. Whereas traditional marketing primarily targeted mainstream audiences, influencers have the unique capacity to reach previously unreachable specialized audiences.(Alvarez-Monzoncillo, n.d.)

2.3. Social media in marketing

Ninety-four percent of Generation Z—those born between 1995 and 2012—used social media as of June 2023. For the nation's Millennials, the same held true. In general, 74% of Baby Boomers and 86% of Gen X were active on social media. (Statista) The widespread use of social media as a marketing tool has transformed how firms engage with their clients. It has sparked a two-way dialogue between businesses and customers. As a result, customers are no longer passive recipients of marketing initiatives, but rather active participants throughout the entire process. Furthermore, they typically form an online social group based on same interests or opinions, making it easier for companies to pinpoint and reach their target clients. Whether for Word - of - mouth marketing or any other marketing strategy, social media may assist businesses in ways that enhance consumer involvement and referral distribution.(Lupo and Stroman 2020) When collaborating with influencers, there are variety of social media platforms to pick from, and they may be divided into five categories: microblogging, social networking sites, photo sharing, video sharing, and social blogging, Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram, WeChat, TikTok, Facebook Messenger, Telegram, Snapchat.(**Table1**) Microblogging allows users to create posts on Twitter with a maximum of 140 characters. It is thought to be beneficial for brand awareness and conversation propagation.(Suhaimi, Pubin, and Kamaruddin 2017) With the emphasis on contacting, social media sites have evolved several derived services, such as promoting and life sharing, throughout time. They are fantastic sites to build a devoted community because they have the most active users. As the titles suggest, photo sharing and video sharing refer to services that allow users to exchange photos and videos, such as Instagram and YouTube. Because of the ability of images and videos to hold more data, they are often utilized for embedding material and sharing life.(Castronovo and Huang 2012). Social blogging differs from microblogging in that a blog is normally hosted on its own website with its own URL and there are no restrictions on the length, design, or format of the post. It is regarded as a medium for driving WOM suggestions and establishing meaningful relationships (**Figure1**). (Castronovo and Huang 2012) Although many of them have combined numerous services together, such as the abovementioned social networking sites, we believe the customer experience and focus still vary from one to another.

Table 1: summary of social media tools

Microblogging	Posting short posts on what the user find interesting Weibo, Twitter
Social Networking Sites	Used to communicate with others, to find and to share similar interests with people Facebook, WeChat
Photo sharing	The user posts photos that can be shared with others Instagram, Pinterest
Video sharing	The user posts videos that can be shared with others YouTube, Bilibili
Social blogging	The blogger posts anything she/him wants. For example opinions, articles, stories or links to other websites

Figure 1: WOM's Revitalization through social media



2.4. Typology of influencers

An influencer is someone who has established credibility, authority, and a large following in a particular field or niche. They are typically individuals who have the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others because of their authenticity, expertise, or relatability. Influencers can operate in various spheres such as social media, fashion, beauty, fitness, gaming, or any other area where they have a dedicated and engaged audience. Their influence is often leveraged by brands and marketers for promotional purposes, as influencers can effectively sway the opinions, behaviors, and purchasing choices of their followers. Influencers are classified into numerous categories. Micro influencers are the first category. These influencers are not superstars and have a lesser following, but they usually specialize in a specific field, such as skincare, fashion, or make-up. Micro influencers are much smaller than macro or famous influencers, yet they have the benefit of understanding their target market very well. Many researchers concluded that marketers should not focus on the number of followers an influencer has because this does not necessarily affect the level of interaction they have. However, famous influencers typically have a large following and high levels of interaction, and brands strive to engage with them as much as possible. There are also macro influencers, who basically act as celebrity influencers. They are well-known superstars who have established a role as influencers as well as being well-known for their social media careers. There are numerous subgroups, which are listed below. (Крови 2020)

The Creator: These are influencers who employ special effects to make their content more visually appealing. They might generate money from a brief post that is only 15 seconds long. These followers will follow these accounts for the sake of aesthetics.

The Icon: these are celebrities who are also influencers. The information they upload may not be advertising a brand as such, but rather discussing their daily lives; Kim Kardashian is a fantastic example of an Icon. When a superstar influencer tweets about a brand, it can cost the brand up to \$500k per post. Many firms cannot afford to hire this kind of influencers, so they choose a smaller influencer. In many situations, these celebrities will be brand ambassadors for well-known companies, such as Harry Styles for Gucci

The Guru: influencers with a specific niche may fall into this category. This could be cuisine, fitness, fashion, or lifestyle, which they normally cover in depth on their platform. Jazminne Wade,

a well-known American influencer whose Instagram is centered on beauty is an example of this. Jazminne has a number of best-selling hair products and wigs and manages to install free wigs for her devoted followers that are mainly black women.

The Adventurer: These influencers are noted for their high levels of activity and visually appealing posts. Photographers, videographers, travelers, and adrenaline junkies are among them. They post incredibly visually appealing stuff and go to cities to make it. Patagonia, GoPro, and Red Bull are examples of brands that may fund such types of influencers.

The Entertainer: These are influencers who were discovered on YouTube and have since gone on to other platforms. They may develop stuff that is both humorous and enjoyable for the audience.

The blogger: people tend to forget that these bloggers are influencers too, brands mostly reach out to them when they want to work on their websites, ameliorate it and promote it. Because bloggers understand better their audience and know how to get their attention and attract them.

-Ages 16-24: 33.1% of women follow influencers, compared to 25.1% of men.

-Ages 25-34: these rates change to 26.1% of women and 21.9% of men.

-Ages 35-44: 20.1% of women and 18% of men.

-Ages 45-54: 15.4% of women and 14% of men.

-Ages 55-64: 10% of women and 9.5% of men. (“7 Stats That Show Women Dominate Influencer Marketing” n.d.)

2.5. Influencers impact on the brand

Brands have traditionally prioritized meeting the wants and needs of their customers. The image a brand acquires from its social media influencers aids in the development of direct ties with important consumers and promotes brand loyalty. While a brand does not have complete control over its online dialogue, the results emphasize the importance of an influencer and customer trust

in this individual is ingrained in the brand through the two-way conversation produced for the item through social media sources.(Goodman, Booth, and Matic 2011)

In the normal consumer's life, social media technologies are becoming increasingly essential and one of the main aspects of a communication plan. According to Gillin, a variety of variables contribute to the growing popularity of influencer marketing. These parameters vary from visitors and search engine rank.

These parameters are likely to evolve as media platforms improve. Other criteria for determining impact involve level of participation, frequency of activity, and significance in the market or community (Goodman, Booth, and Matic 2011) In terms of influencer aims, influencers on social media try to strengthen relationships with important audiences by boosting the business/reputation, brand's increasing customer awareness of their online activity, and requesting customer comments and feedback.(Goodman, Booth, and Matic 2011)difficult-to-measure characteristics like "content quality" to easily measurable ones like website

2.6. Credibility and trust

Credibility and trust are critical factors in influencer marketing. Influencers must develop a relationship with their audience by including a trust aspect in their material.(Abreu 2019). This will be developed over time as beauty influencers expand their platforms and endorse trustworthy businesses that are appropriate for their target demographic. If a social media influencer suggests a product or brand that is not respectable or at the level that they claim it to be, their audience will lose trust in them. When, on the other hand, an influencer promotes good items over time, it creates consumer trust and has a favorable influence on buying ability and connections between the consumer and the influencer. (Nurfadila 2020). As previously stated, authenticity is critical in influencer marketing; if they are sincere while focusing on quality, they will attract followers and interaction from this age range. As millennials and Generation Z have grown up in an environment of digital marketing overload, they are better able to differentiate between real influencer marketing and influencers wanting to make quick money, A 2022 study from digital consumer research firm Bulbshare found that 84% of Gen Z no longer trust influencers.(Barta et al. 2023)

People who use social media are more inclined to respect and act on your views if you are regarded as a reputable source. (Methodology, n.d.) Thus, with the rise of influencers around the world, the matter of trust has been more prominent in recent years. Several consumers believe that influencers are not being real, which has generated concerns in some areas. Consumers believe influencers may be pushing brands they do not usually contact with to generate income rather than because they love the brand and items involved. The ASAI (Advertising Standards Authority for Ireland) has announced that influencers must properly declare marketing communications as of 2017. This action was taken to protect consumers and prevent them from being deceived by influencers through advertising or social media. This means that if an influencer is gifted or paid to advertise an item or service, they should clearly indicate this by using the hashtags '#Ad, #SP, or #Gifted' at the commencement of their story/post (ASAI, 2021). Certainly, as the number of social media influencers grows, more laws are being implemented. The use of filters on Instagram when advertising a skincare product is prohibited in the United Kingdom for example because it can lead to an unrealistic depiction of what the item is capable of. This is another way of safeguarding consumers from deceit, all of these regulations eventually result in higher trust for influencers and strengthen their role in promoting goods.

Influencers' primary goal is to establish enduring bonds with their fans in order to develop vibrant communities. Influencers can accomplish this objective by discussing specific topics of shared interest and creating more affinities throughout their interactions. (Belanche et al. n.d.), This helps the relationships between the influencers and their fans by fostering interactions between them.

Influencers attempt to make their followers see them as "friends" with whom they share certain interests through their regular encounters, much like how regular relationships are formed through various touchpoints between the agents (Sokolova and Perez 2021) Influencers and companies occasionally work together, but this is uncommon. Because they might not be as closely related to the content that influencers typically produce, these tweets tend to be critical in nature. (Sánchez-Fernández and Jiménez-Castillo 2021) Influencers should therefore be especially cautious when engaging in these kinds of partnerships and incorporate their stories into them. (Ibáñez-Sánchez et al. 2022) Otherwise, his or her message may have some unfavorable knock-on consequences. both for the business and the influencer. Followers can specifically evaluate these publications because there is an apparent gap between the collaboration and the influencer's regular content. The

decision to follow or unfollow the influencer can be made at any moment by followers based on their (positive or negative) perceptions. referred to as a user's cerebral responses to the acquisition, the process, retention, and retrieval of stimuli (Eroglu, Machleit, and Davis 2001)

2.7. The cosmetic/ beauty industry

The cosmetics industry has always been profitable and will continue to be so in the future. Skincare is one of the main segments of this industry, and it appears that customers do not hesitate to invest their spare income on these items. The cosmetic industry has long depended on traditional marketing channels such as department stores, pharmacies, supermarkets, direct sales, television, and magazines. However, internet advertising has caused a substantial change in the way consumers acquire their items, which has had an influence on how cosmetic brands function.(Mulyono and Astuti 2021). According to a Cosmetics Europe study, 51% of customers gather details about beauty products through websites, blogs, social media networks, beauty forums, and applications. Influencer marketing programs have risen in the past few years and have become an essential type of advertising in the cosmetic business. Beauty Gurus have taken to social media channels to give makeup tips and services while also showcasing their skills and enthusiasm for cosmetics. This has benefited the makeup industry by raising awareness about the brands with which they work while also allowing them to profit.(Hassan et al. 2021). Social media influencers have grown in popularity over the years, with brands increasingly hiring influencers specifically chosen for their brand to engage with their target demographic and advertise their products. Influencers are widely used by firms such as MAC, Charlotte Tilbury, NYX, L'Oréal, and Milk Makeup to advertise and use their goods. (Hassan et al. 2021). Looking at the cosmetics industry as a whole, figures show that 33% of 18- to 29-year-old in the United States spend \$26 to \$50 monthly on a new item. This is a greater proportion than in older age groups. Although this age bracket may have

less disposable income than older consumers, they prioritize their income on skincare and make up. This is where the importance of establishing the target market for a brand is significant. Over the years, ethical challenges have grown within the cosmetic industry, including the lack of environmentally sustainable and cruelty-free goods. One of the most noticeable changes in the cosmetic industry over the past decade has been a growing interest in sustainable goods, since

maintaining a low environmental footprint has become increasingly essential to many consumers. Terms like safety, lack of harmful ingredients, and tolerability are all sought for in a cosmetic product available on the market currently. This has allowed corporations to pay special insight into the way their products are manufactured and packaged, since they are more aware of how sensitive consumers are to environment - friendly products, particularly among the demographic being analyzed according to (Quigley, Palacios, and Spehar 2006) They are aware of the long-term consequences for the ecosystem. This must be considered without compromising quality of the product, which is yet another issue that customers are concerned about. During a survey of American students, it was discovered by (Wei and Lu 2013) that one of their primary concerns was the quality of ecologically friendly items. As a result, brands must concentrate their efforts in this field. Another ethical concern is the use of animals in cosmetics testing. This has been an issue for many years, but it has recently gained prominence due to celebrities and well-known individuals speaking out against it and refusing to use brands that test their products on animals. NARS, a well-known make-up brand, has been in the spotlight for this topic. After 23 years, they declared that they were no longer cruelty free, which generated some consternation among their customers. It stemmed from their decision to sell its goods in China, which means NARS must comply with Chinese regulations requiring all cosmetics to be tested on animals. Unfortunately, this can be seen in numerous brands today, and in many situations, profit takes precedence above ethical concerns. Another inhumane treatment cosmetics business, Kat Von D, stated that many corporations were putting 'paycheck over compassion.' Nevertheless, many younger consumers view animal experimentation as a factor when purchasing a product. According to a Close-up Media poll, 36% of women would prefer to buy cruelty-free items. The study was conducted on the Perfect 365 app, and 15,000 people participated.(Hoffman and Atlas 2016). The Body Shop is an excellent example of a successful brand that prioritizes ethical principles. Dame Anita Roddick, who had a significant concern for the environment, started The Body Shop in 1976. ("New in Products | New Beauty | The Body Shop®" n.d.). Early adoption of cruelty-free products, sustainability, and preventing mistreatment of those who make the items have all helped to their growth.

3. Research methodology and results of survey

3.1. Secondary research

My research for my literature review focused on influencer marketing in the beauty sector, especially considering the value of social media marketing as a tool for strengthening beauty companies. The research report investigated social media's role in electronic word of mouth (EWOM) as well as the positive aspects of using it to sell beauty products. The study also investigated the effects of social media influencers, paying close attention to the beauty sector.

Finally, I made clear the study technique that is consistent with my secondary research goal in order to effectively deal with my research problem. I had to decide whether to perform a qualitative or quantitative study as a result. I chose quantitative research because I figured it would be a good fit for the topic I was interested in studying.

3.2. Primary research

For my thesis paper, I've chosen to perform quantitative research. To address my study question, I collected and assessed statistical data. I adopted a snowball sampling approach. Finding volunteers and sharing the information with those who are frequently accessible for the research and able to contribute to the study are required for this strategy. In order to reach a varied audience, including Moroccans and foreigners, of all ages as long as they're interested in beauty. I shared my questionnaire using my personal account on social media networks like Facebook and Instagram. I also disseminated the survey through social media to other international communities with members from all around the world.

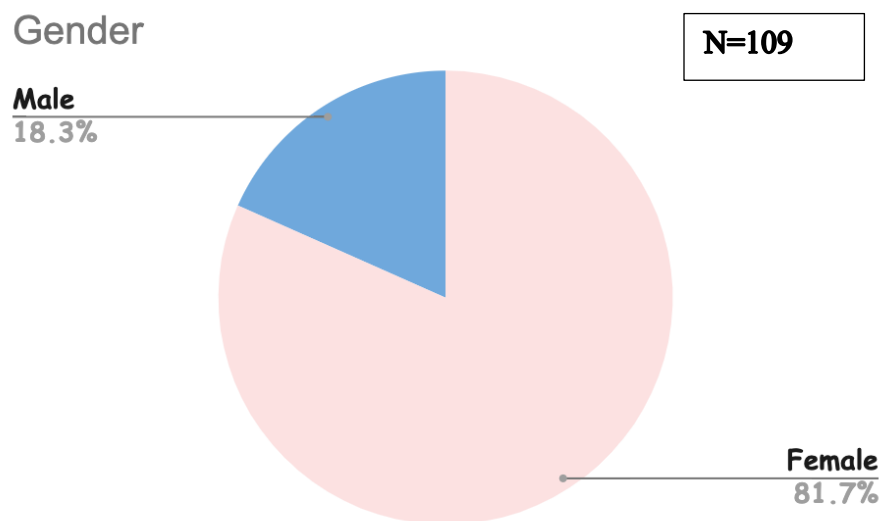
My research encompassed a broad spectrum of participants, comprising individuals of both genders, male and females, from diverse countries. Utilizing social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, I successfully engaged with a wide-ranging global audience.

The diversity within the sample will empower me to collect valuable insights regarding the influence of social media influencers on the beauty industry. This diversity will provide me with a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives and experiences of individuals grappling with a range of concerns in this context.

I opted for a sample size of 109 participants for my research study, a choice aligned with my research approach. I believe this sample size is sufficient to rigorously test my hypotheses and achieve a robust level of precision in my findings. While larger samples can offer advantages, I will now delve into the survey data, chosen as a quantitative method within my research framework, to create a comprehensive summary that encapsulates all the quantitative findings of the study.

Figure 1 presents data illustrating the distribution of males and females within each category. Females make up 81.65% of the total, while males constitute 18.35%.

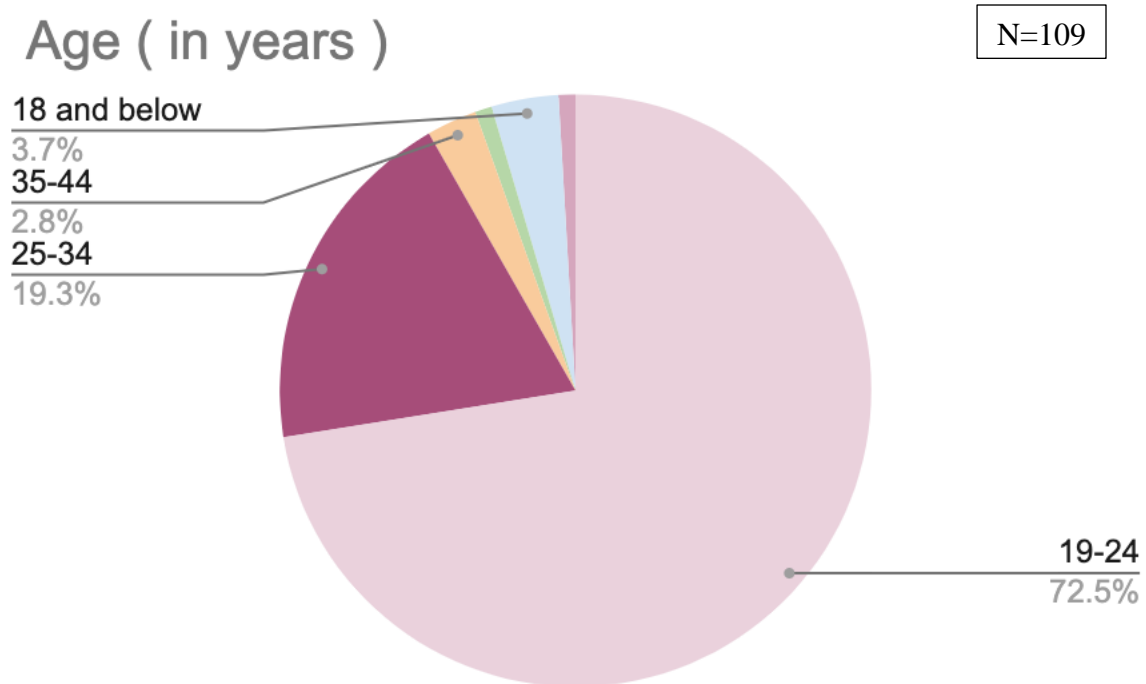
Figure1: Gender distribution of the sample



The age range of a group of participants is shown in the following **figure 2** and **3**. They are divided into year ranges, **Figure 2** shows the number of people in each category.

It's evident that the predominant age bracket is 19-24 years old, comprising 72.5% of the total responses. This suggests that a majority of the individuals in the group are in the 19-24 age range. Those aged between 25-34 years old are the second most prevalent, accounting for 19.3% of all responses.

Figure 2: The age range of the respondents in numbers



According to the data on **figure 3**, students constitute the largest socio-professional group, comprising 57.8% of all respondents, which most of them are holding a master's degree, **Figure 4** Following closely are employees, making up 26.6% of the total respondents.

Figure 3: Occupation of the respondents

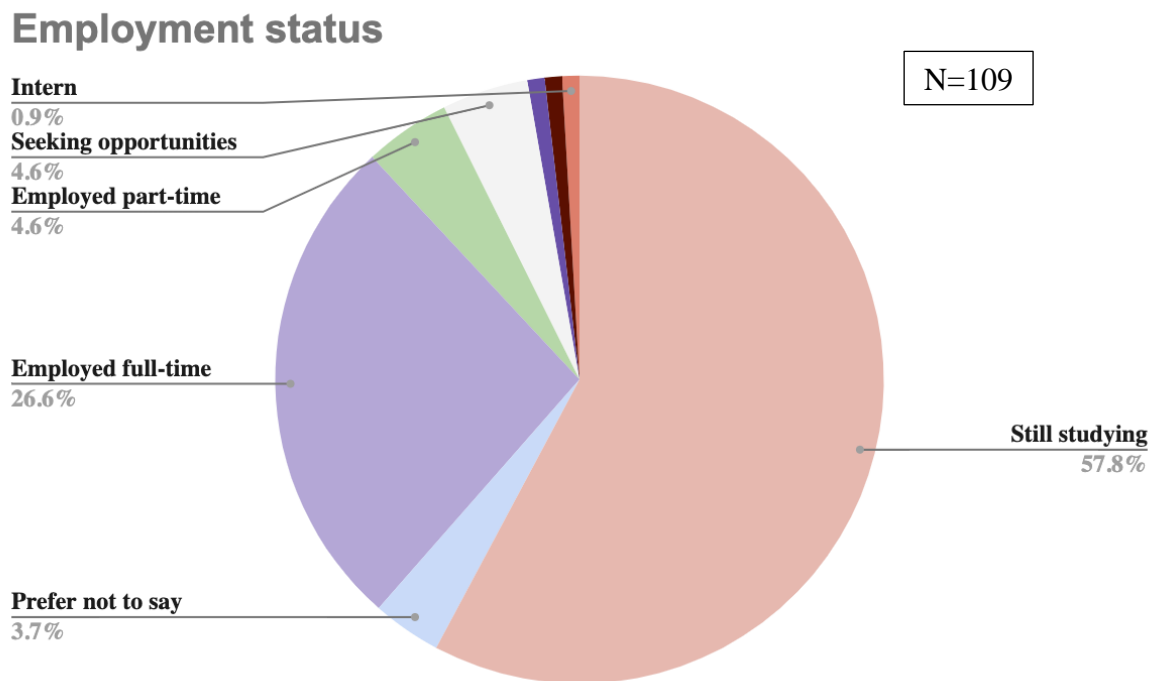
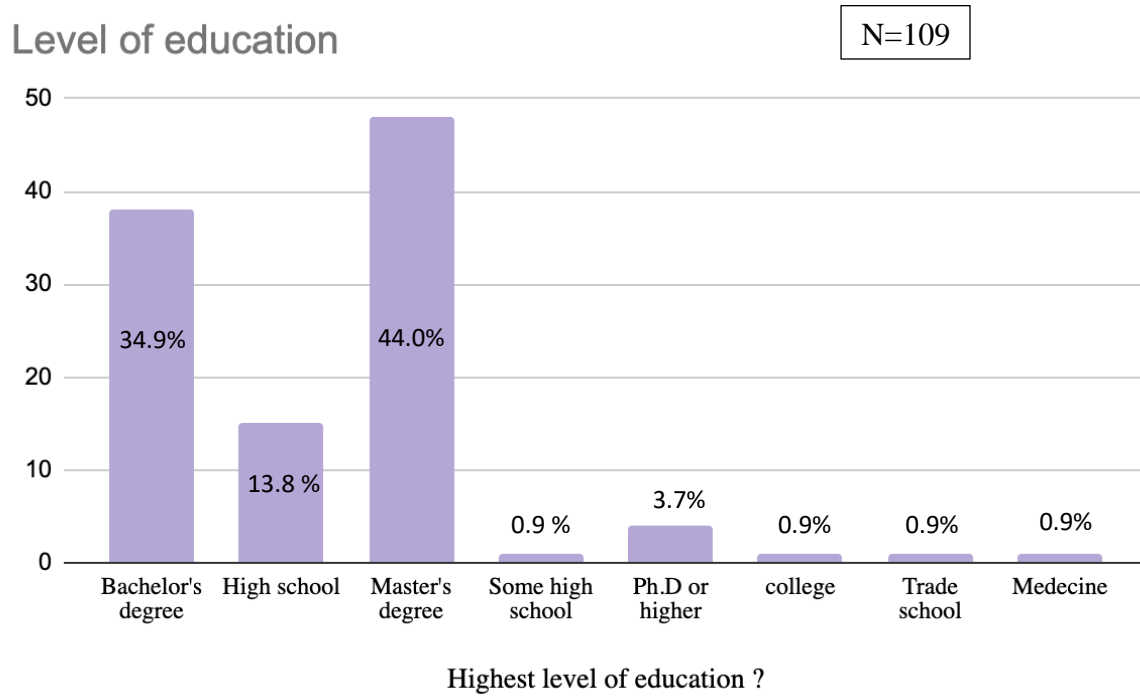


Figure 4: Level of education of the respondents



3.3. Research method

The questions in this survey are structured as closed questions, enabling respondents to choose from a predefined list of options. Closed questions in this survey take the form of single-response questions, where respondents select a single option from a provided list, as well as multiple-choice questions, where survey participants can choose multiple options from the list. Additionally, scaled questions are employed to gauge participants' opinions and sentiments regarding a specific product or service, assessing both the degree and direction of their views.

The questionnaire has been designed with four separate dimensions to collect data on:

- 1- social media usage
- 2- Influencers Impression

3- consumer behavior- purchase habits

4- Demographics

I utilized Microsoft Excel for our calculations. The data we gathered was inputted into the Excel software, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative characteristics. Subsequently, I will isolate the primary variables pertinent to our research objectives.

To analyze the obtained findings, I commenced by conducting an analysis of the demographic and characteristics of the sample population. This involved populating statistical tables with frequency data and creating corresponding graphical representations.

Next, I aimed to employ cross-tabulation analysis within the Excel program to investigate the relationships and dependencies uncovered among the desired characteristics. I also administered the chi-square test as part of this exploration.

4. Research results and evaluation

In this section, I presented the results of cross-tabulation analyses conducted to explore the relationships between specific questions in the questionnaire. This research has allowed me to uncover patterns and connections among numerous variables, providing valuable insights into influencer marketing and its implications for the beauty industry. I examined the links between social media influencers and consumer purchasing behavior, as well as the associations between social media usage and influencer perception. Through these investigations, I aim to gain a deeper understanding of how these variables interplay and impact beauty products and brand image in the current landscape.

Figure 5 presents the findings from my investigation into participants' daily social media usage habits, aimed at determining the amount of time individuals devote to social media each day. Among the 109 respondents, 28.4% reported spending more than 6 hours on social media. Additionally, 25.7% indicated a daily usage duration of 4 to 5 hours, with another 21.1% each spending between 3 to 4 hours and 2 to 3 hours. A smaller proportion, 3.7%, reported using social media for less than an hour.

These statistics highlight a significant portion of respondents who engage with social media frequently. This data suggests an opportunity for beauty brands to leverage this active social media presence, facilitating interactions with customers and promoting their products effectively.

Figure 5: Social media usage in a day

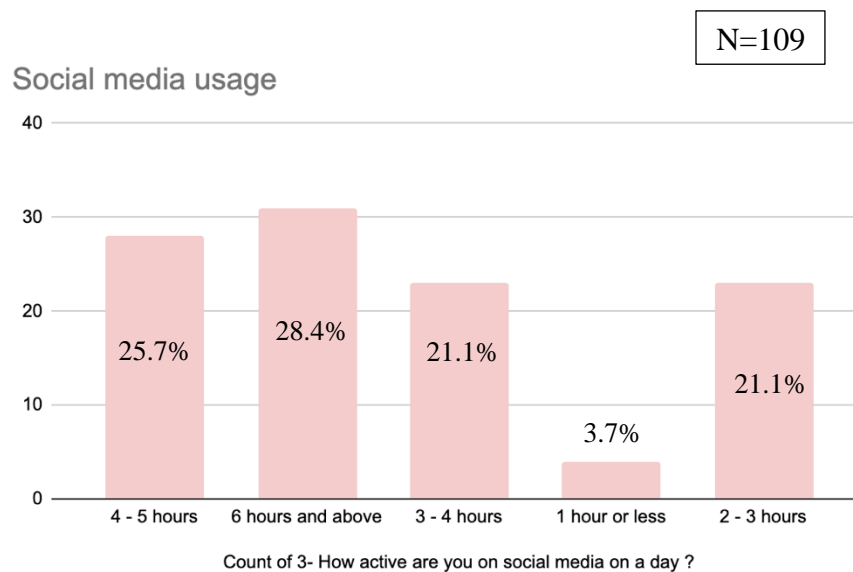
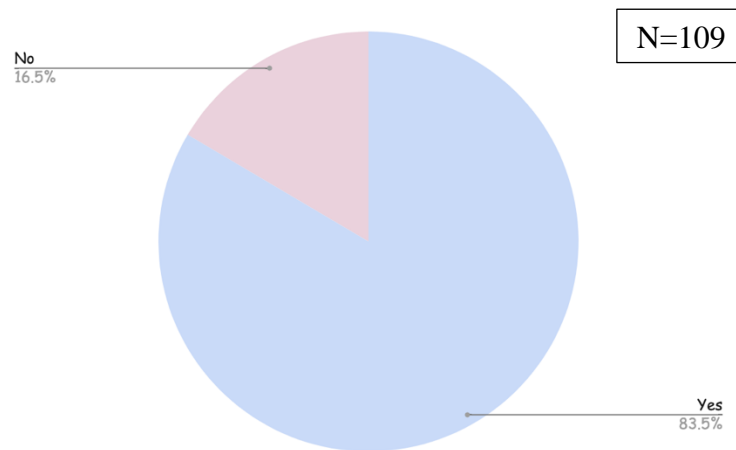


Figure 6 depicts the outcomes of the questionnaire, inquiring whether respondents follow social media influencers. Among the 109 participants, an overwhelming majority, totaling 83.5%, responded affirmatively with a "Yes," while the remaining 16.5% answered in the negative with a "No." This data underscores the substantial percentage of respondents who actively follow influencers on social media platforms.

Figure 6: Respondents who follow influencers.



In **Figure 7**, you can observe the data related to the frequency of beauty product purchases among our pool of 109 respondents. It's noteworthy that a substantial 42.3% reported purchasing beauty products on a monthly basis, while a relatively smaller 3.7% noted making weekly beauty product purchases.

Figure 7: Frequency of buying beauty

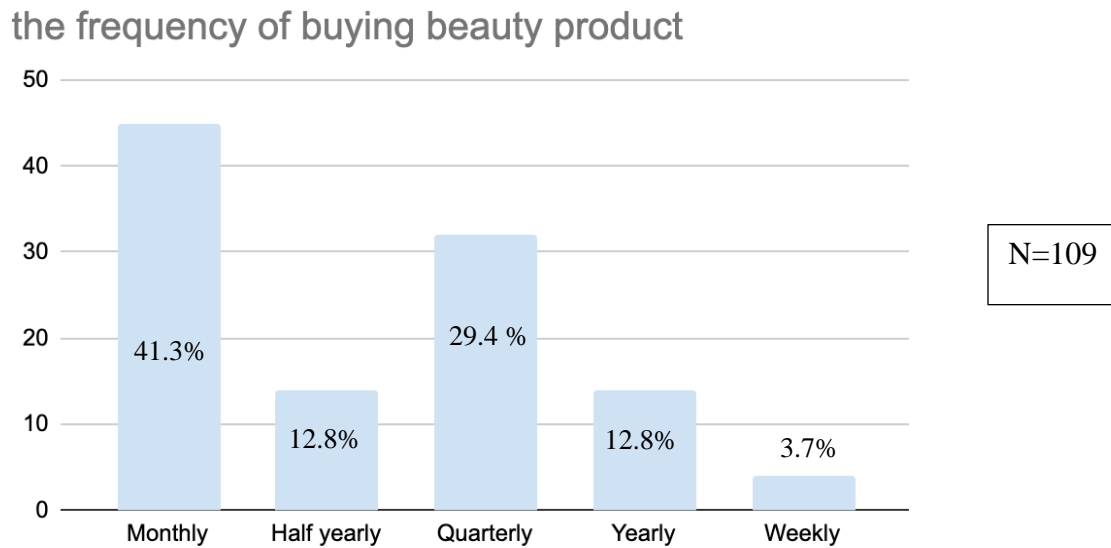
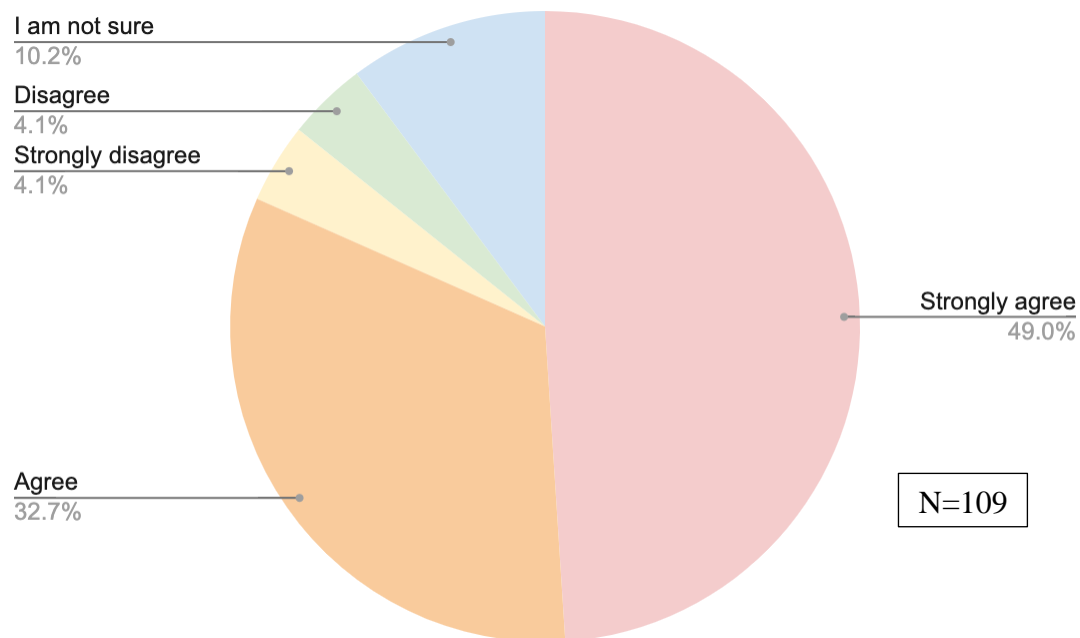


Figure 8 presents the responses in the questionnaire, which inquired about participants' tendency to seek reviews before purchasing beauty products. Notably, 49% of the respondents strongly agreed with this practice, while 32.7% expressed agreement. Conversely, only a small percentage, 4.1%, reported that they do not typically seek reviews before making a beauty product purchase.

Figure 8: opinions of the respondent about seeking a review before purchasing.



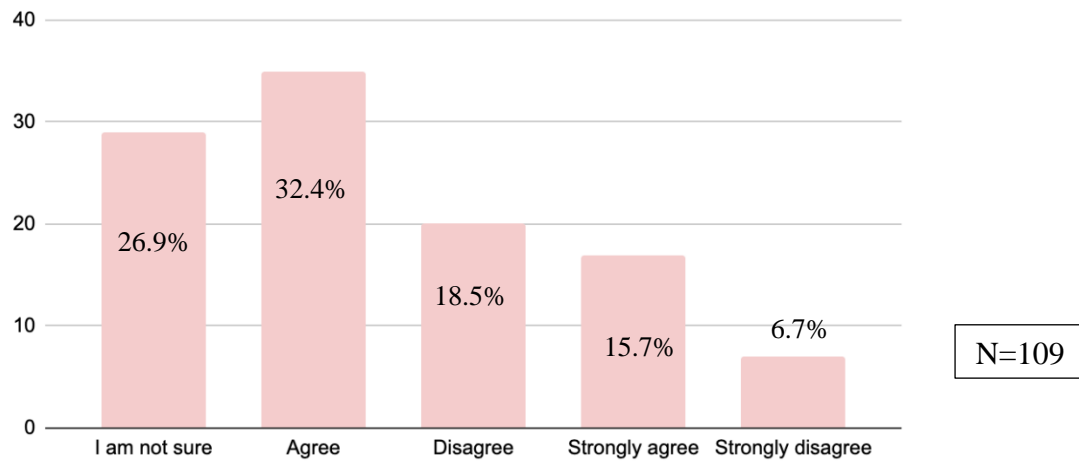
According to the responses provided by the participants, it is evident that a significant number of them have a preferred influencer. As depicted in **Figure 9**, a substantial 32.4% of the individuals agreed that they are inclined to try a beauty brand endorsed by their favorite influencer, whereas a minor percentage, 6.5%, expressed disagreement with this statement.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

Mean	2	Mean	38	Mean	10.3333333	Mean	1.33333333	Mean	0.66666667
Median	2	Median	38.5	Median	10.5	Median	1.5	Median	1
Mode	3	Mode	=	Mode	=	Mode	2	Mode	1
Standard Dev	1.54919334	Standard Dev	18.2098874	Standard Dev	4.92612085	Standard Dev	0.81649658	Standard Dev	0.51639778

Figure 9: respondents express their opinion regarding the statement.

If my favourite online personality recommends a beauty brand, I am more likely to try it

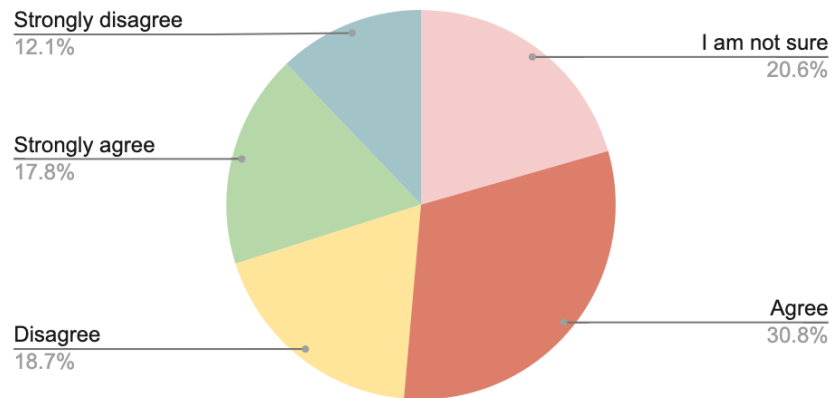


In **(Figure 10)**, you can see the respondents' opinions regarding whether they feel discouraged by influencers when purchasing beauty products. A notable 30.8% of the respondents agreed that they sometimes feel discouraged, while 18.7% disagreed, stating that influencers do not have a discouraging effect on their purchasing decisions.

Figure 10: respondents' statement about the discouraging effect on their purchasing decisions

I wanted a beauty product, and an influencer discouraged me to buy it

N=109



As per the data presented in Cross-tabulation **Table 3**, it's evident that social media networks and influencers hold significant importance as sources of information for respondents across all age groups. Notably, the majority of participants aged 19 to 24 displayed a strong inclination toward seeking online reviews before making purchases. Additionally, they affirmed that influencers exert a notable influence on their purchasing decisions, whether for encouragement or discouragement.

Furthermore, within this age group (19-24), the highest proportion of respondents expressed a preference for influencers. These findings underscore the importance of leveraging social media networks and influencers as vital channels for engaging with and catering to the preferences of the younger demographic in influencer marketing and promotional efforts.

Table 3: respondents' agreements to the statements above

AGE		Impact of influencers						TOTAL
		reviews	online recommendations	influencer recommendation	influencer encouragement	influencer discouragement	influence mention	
	18 and below	4	3	0	1	3	1	
	19-24	64	49	34	26	43	12	
	25-34	17	12	14	9	6	4	
	35-44	2	2	2	1	0	1	
	45-54	1	1	1	1	0	0	
	55-64	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	88	67	51	38	52	18	

Table 4: Chi-square test

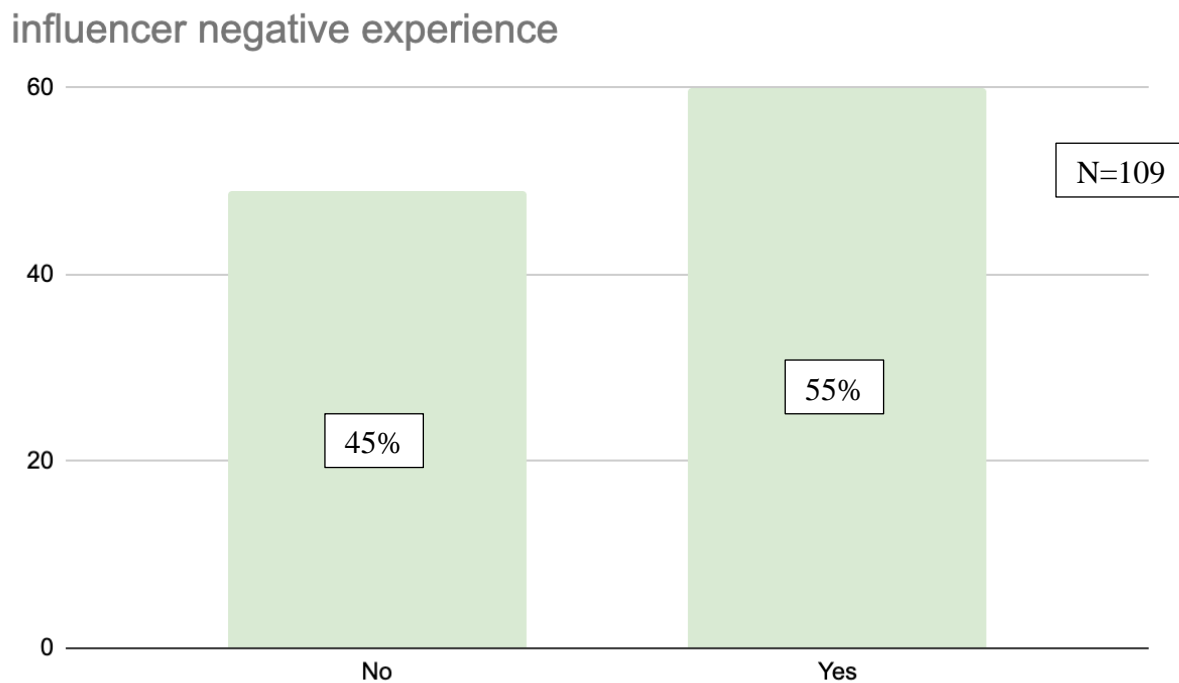
X ² =	11.97407496
DF	20
P-VALUE	0.916965412
chi sq test	0.916965412

As evident from the chi-square test **table 4**, the p-value stands at 0.91, exceeding the threshold of 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between age and the influence of influencers on purchasing habits.

As indicated by the data in **Figure 11**, out of the 109 respondents, 60 individuals reported negative experiences with influencers. Among this group, a significant majority, accounting for 52.4% of the respondents, attributed their negative reaction to the product not living up to the description provided by the influencer.

In summary, the crosstabulation analysis underscores the importance of prudent influencer selection by brands when promoting beauty products. This is particularly crucial when targeting individuals who are more likely to be influenced by these influencers.

Figure 11: negative experience with influencers.



I conducted a second chi-square test to investigate the potential existence of a significant relationship between customers' negative experiences with influencers and the level of trust they place in beauty brands.

Table 5: beauty company's trustworthiness in relationship with the negative experience with influencers

Negative experience		The company's trustworthiness increase if it gets promoted by the influencer					TOTAL
		strongly agree	agree	I am not sure	disagree	strongly disagree	
	yes	7	26	12	12	7	64
	no	5	14	17	7	6	49
	TOTAL	12	40	29	19	13	113

Table 6: Chi square test

χ^2	4.27224478
df	4
p value	0.37041353
chi sq test	0.37041353

Table 7: Descriptive statistics

Mean	21.3333333	Mean	16.3333333	Mean	37.6666667
Median	12	Median	10.5	Median	24
Mode	7	Mode	—	Mode	—
Standard Dev	22.0333081	Standard Dev	16.7052886	Standard Dev	38.3961804

As observed in Chi-square Test **Table 6**, the p-value registers at 0.37, surpassing the significance threshold of 0.05. This suggests that there is no statistically significant association between consumers' negative experiences with influencers and their level of trust in beauty companies. Consequently, even when individuals encounter adverse experiences with influencers, such as purchasing a product promoted by an influencer only to find that it doesn't match the influencer's description, it appears not to significantly affect their trust in beauty companies.

5. Conclusions and suggestions

A resounding majority, comprising 99.1% of respondents, answered in the affirmative, indicating their usage of social media. Among these individuals, 83.5% reported actively following influencers, whereas a smaller 16.5% confirmed not following any influencers.

Within our cohort of 109 respondents, it is worth highlighting that a significant 42.3% indicated a regular monthly purchase frequency for beauty products, while a comparatively smaller 3.7% mentioned weekly beauty product acquisitions.

My research findings underscore the significance of social media networks and influencers as crucial sources of information across all age groups, with a particular emphasis on individuals aged 19 to 24. This conclusion is supported by the respondents' consistent preference for online reviews, recommendations, and influencer endorsements as prerequisites before making online beauty product purchases. These results clearly illustrate the pivotal role of social media marketing in effectively engaging with and catering to the preferences of the target demographic.

To investigate the connection between influencers and the purchasing habits within specific age groups, I conducted chi-square tests. The results indicate that age and the influence of influencers are not correlated.

Furthermore, I noted that even when respondents had negative experiences with influencers, it did not affect the perception of trust consumers have in beauty brands. This was confirmed by a p-value lower than 0.05, indicating a lack of a significant relationship between negative experiences and the trustworthiness of beauty brands.

Based on the insights gathered from my questionnaire responses, it is evident that a significant majority of individuals prioritize social media as their primary source for seeking information, reviews, and recommendations related to beauty products. Furthermore, respondents expressed a prevailing belief in the persuasive power of organic reviews over sponsored advertisements from the companies themselves.

Additionally, a substantial portion of survey participants confirmed that their perception of an influencer's credibility is not adversely affected by the knowledge that the influencer is compensated for promoting a product.

In the contemporary era, the internet has become an ubiquitous tool utilized by individuals of all age groups, and the prevalence of social media platforms continues to rise.

In today's landscape, a significant proportion of beauty brands are actively leveraging various social media platforms. It's noteworthy that a staggering 94.5% of respondents indicated Instagram as their primary social media platform. This trend is particularly comprehensible, given that 72.5% of these respondents fall within the age group of 19-24. This could be a problem if the brand doesn't get to reach their specific target audience.

Upon the culmination of my research, I propose the following recommendations for beauty companies aiming to enhance their social media presence, thereby ensuring the maintenance of their positive reputation and brand image:

Target audience: It is really important for companies to effectively target their desired audience by catering to their interests, collaborating with influencers who wield substantial influence over this specific demographic, in the case of my research for example, beauty firms

should be promoting products mainly through Instagram in an attractive way to the people of 19 to 24 years old

Audience interests: A considerable number of respondents expressed a preference for organic reviews, deeming them more trustworthy and reliable than company-sponsored advertisements, which is very understandable, since most of us tend to directly skip this type of ads. Additionally, they indicated a higher level of trust in influencer endorsements and online recommendations compared to official company advertisements.

Credible influencers: In the present era, a growing number of beauty companies opt to collaborate with influencers to endorse their products, considering them the most trustworthy and relatable figures among online users. Consequently, it is crucial for these firms to make thoughtful selections when choosing the right influencer for their promotions. My research findings demonstrate that, even if an influencer lacks credibility, it doesn't significantly impact the overall brand image. Nonetheless, replacing such an influencer consumes additional resources in terms of both time and money, resulting in a net loss for the company in either scenario.

Code-promos and giveaways: As indicated in my survey, a significant 57.8% of respondents are currently pursuing their education. Companies targeting such an audience should consider initiatives like giveaways and discounts to appeal to individuals with limited income. Additionally, promotional codes, often endorsed by influencers, are effective in encouraging their viewers to explore new products.

Diverse Influencers: Collaborate with a diverse range of influencers to reach different demographics and expand the brand's appeal.

Content Guidelines: Establishing clear content guidelines that respect both the influencer's creativity and the brand's values. This includes visual aesthetics and messaging.

Testing and Experimentation: Companies shouldn't be afraid to test different influencer partnerships and strategies to find what works best for their brand.

Crisis Preparedness: Develop a plan for handling any negative situations or controversies that may arise in influencer campaigns.

Feedback Loop: Foster open communication with influencers, encouraging their input and insights, as they are the ones closest to their audience.

Measure Impact Beyond Sales: Recognizing that the influencer's impact can extend beyond direct sales, including brand awareness, reputation, and community-building. Implementing these strategies, beauty companies can establish a robust online presence, enhance their reputation with internet users, subsequently fostering stronger brand image and contributing to the overall growth of the beauty industry.

6. Summary

In summary, the marketing and communication department holds a pivotal role in crafting innovative marketing strategies to showcase beauty companies' products and services. Their efforts are instrumental in strengthening brand reputation and, consequently, attracting a larger customer base.

The influence of social media on consumer purchase behavior has piqued the interest of online marketing experts. They are actively adapting to meet consumer expectations by employing effective communication strategies, including social media marketing, to provide an authentic portrayal of their offerings.

My research aimed to assess the influence of social media on consumer decision-making and its repercussions on the beauty industry. Online marketing encompasses various forms, but my study primarily centers around influencer marketing, with a specific focus on determining its impact on the beauty sector.

The beauty industry is a highly dynamic and ever-evolving sector driven by trends, consumer preferences, and innovations. The industry includes well-established global brands, emerging indie brands, and a significant presence in e-commerce and social media marketing. Beauty companies strive to cater to diverse consumer needs, it continues to adapt to changing consumer values and preferences. On the other hand, social media marketing is of paramount importance for the beauty industry, a well-managed social media presence can significantly impact brand image, reinforcing credibility and trust. It is integral for the beauty industry to connect with its target audience, promote products, build brand image, and stay competitive in a rapidly evolving market. It provides a dynamic and versatile platform to engage with consumers and adapt to their ever-changing preferences.

As online communication continues to grow in significance, beauty brands must accelerate their strategic efforts to keep pace with key competitors. This entails reorganizing their structures to facilitate more effective advertising of products and services. Managers within the marketing and communication departments should receive training and make investments in social media to deliver added value to consumers and meet their evolving needs.

According to my study, social media exerts a substantial influence on the beauty industry. Companies should incorporate social media into their communication strategies to bolster their online presence and reputation. My research has revealed that leveraging social media to expand and enhance a brand's image and reputation among online consumers is widely acknowledged. This distinction allows companies to stand out in a competitive landscape and attract a larger clientele.

The majority of beauty companies maintain a presence on multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. However, a significant portion of the survey respondents noted that they spend most of their time on Instagram, in comparison to the other platforms. This presents a challenge for the firms, given the importance of effectively engaging with consumers of all demographics to successfully promote their offerings.

The research presented several recommendations to address these concerns and boost the company's social media presence. Firstly, it's suggested that the company consider the age and interests of their customers to determine the most appealing influencers for their target demographic. Reviews can serve as a valuable tool to assess potential improvements. Additionally, the company can offer a more personalized experience for their clients by organizing giveaways and code-promotions through influencers, encouraging them to explore new products. These strategies can help the company connect with their audience more effectively and enhance their social media presence.

Secondly, companies should be responsive to feedback, especially regarding the credibility of influencers promoting their products. If influencers are found to lack credibility, the company should be prepared to make necessary changes. To prevent this from occurring, companies must be diligent in their selection of representatives, ensuring they align with the brand's values and resonate with their audience.

Indeed, placing trust in influencers has evolved into a challenging endeavor in the present landscape. Many influencers are perceived as promoting products primarily for financial gain rather than genuine endorsement, significantly affecting public perception. Responses from my survey revealed that individuals described influencers as money-driven, pretentious, untruthful, and insincere.

However, this skepticism hasn't deterred people from following and being influenced by

influencers. Remarkably, more than 80% of respondents in my survey affirmed their active following of influencers.

Moreover, while some survey participants recounted negative experiences with influencers, my research findings, and their responses suggest that these experiences haven't had a discernible impact on the image, reputation, or brand perception of beauty companies.

Based on my research, it is evident that brand ambassadors and influencers hold a significant sway over consumer behavior. A considerable number of respondents expressed their willingness to explore new products when recommended by their favorite influencers. They noted that if an influencer endorsed a product they were considering, they would be highly inclined to make the purchase. Conversely, if influencers discouraged a product, they indicated a reluctance to proceed with the purchase.

In conclusion, by implementing these recommendations and embracing influencer marketing as a potent and direct tool for audience engagement, beauty companies can experience rapid growth. This, in turn, contributes to the overall evolution of the beauty industry. However, it also intensifies competition within the market as companies vie for the attention and loyalty of consumers.

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8. Appendix

Social media influencers impact on beauty industry

Hello everyone,

I am doing a short questionnaire about the beauty industry. This survey will focus on how influence the beauty industry. It will take less than 5 minutes.

Thank you for your time and help.

1- Do you have access to social media platforms? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2- Which social media platforms are you using the most? *

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ YouTube
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ Reddit
- ☐ Linkedin
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Other: _____

3- How active are you on social media on a day? *

- ☐ 1 hour or less
- ☐ 2 - 3 hours
- ☐ 3 - 4 hours
- ☐ 4 - 5 hours
- ☐ 6 hours and above

4- Do you follow any influencers? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

5- What is the first word that comes to your mind about influencers? *

6- Do you subscribe to any channels or concepts which are promoted by the influencer? *

- ☐ yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Other: _____

7- What is the frequency of buying beauty product? Please tick in appropriate box *

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Half Yearly
- ☐ Yearly

8- Which ones of the beauty/skin care products do you use at least once a week? *

- ☐ Antiperspirant
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Body lotion or moisturizer
- ☐ Body powder
- ☐ Perfume/cologne
- ☐ Other

9- When choosing beauty products, which one of the following factors matter to you? *

- ☐ Friend's recommendation
- ☐ No testing on animals
- ☐ influencer's recommendation
- ☐ Availability
- ☐ Brand
- ☐ Trends
- ☐ Other: _____

10- Where do you prefer to buy your beauty products *

- ☐ Stores
- ☐ Online
- ☐ Supermarkets
- ☐ Markets
- ☐ Salesperson
- ☐ Other: _____

11- In the following question, consumers decision towards purchase are listed. Please tick in the appropriate box that suits your mind-set.

	Strongly agree	Agree	I am not sure.	Disagree	Strongly disagree.
I actively seek out beauty product reviews before making purchase decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I purchase beauty products based on online recommendations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my favorite online personality recommends a beauty brand,, I am more likely to try it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I bought a beauty product,, because an influencers encouraged me to buy it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted a beauty product, and an influencer discouraged me to buy it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I bought beauty products just because my favorite influencers mentioned it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12- In the following question certain “I” perceptions are listed towards influencers / *

celebrity / popular accounts? Please tick the appropriate box which suits your mind set

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly agree	Agree	I am not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree.
Organic reviews are more trustworthy than company--controlled reviews..	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beauty influencers have my best interests at heart...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Influencers will not purposefully endorse a beauty brand that will harm me..	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I were to find out that my favourite influencer had been paid for their endorsement, it would not negatively impact my perception of their credibility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I believe that the
company's
trustworthiness
increase if it gets
promoted by the

☐☐☐☐☐

influencer of my
choice.

I think beauty
influencers /
celebrity / popular
accounts have
helped me build
loyalty towards
beauty brands

☐☐☐☐☐

1.

yearly

Daily

Weekly

monthly

Quarterly

Half

Yearly

I search for beauty
productreviews



I buy beauty products because of influencers recommendations



14- Imagine you are about to buy a beauty product and you are looking at a review of the product. Whose opinion would you value more? *

- ☐ Celebrity with a verified account
- ☐ Influencer with a verified account
- ☐ Influencer with a certain amount of followers (more than 10k)It
- ☐ makes no difference.
- ☐ Other : _____

15- What kind of influencer content would you be interested in: *

- ☐ Reviews
- ☐ Tutorials
- ☐ Product price
- ☐ Discounts
- ☐ Other: _____

16- Have you ever had any negative experience when buying a product recommended by an influencer? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

17- If yes, please tick in the box representing the reason behind your negative experience.

- ☐ Higher price
- ☐ Lower quality
- ☐ A different looking product compared to the one mentioned by the influencer the
- ☐ product doesn't have the same effects as the ones the influencer mentioned
- ☐ Other: _____

18- Age (in years) *

- 18 and below ☐
- ☐ 19-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65-74
- ☐ 75 and above

2. 19- Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

20- On which devices do you use internet? *

- ☐ Smartphone
- ☐ Laptop
- ☐ Desktop
- ☐ Other: _____

21- What is your current employment status ? *

- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Seeking opportunities
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Still studying
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other: _____

22- What is your household annual income? *

- ☐ Less than 25 000\$
- ☐ 25 000\$ - 50 000\$
- ☐ 50 000\$ - 100 000\$
- ☐ 100 000\$ - 200 000\$
- ☐ more than 200 000\$
- ☐ Other: _____

23- What is your highest level of education ? *

- ☐ Some high school
 - ☐ High school
 - ☐ Bachelor's degree
 - ☐ Master's degree
 - ☐ Ph.D or higher
 - ☐ Trade school
 - ☐ Other: _____
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