



SCHOOL OF  
ECONOMICS AND  
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# The Power of Reputation

A qualitative study on the impact of influencers' perceived reputation  
towards makeup brands

by

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# Abstract

**Title:** The Power of Reputation: A qualitative study on the impact of influencer perceived reputation on makeup brands

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**Keywords:** influencer marketing, brand reputation, human brands, social media influencers

**Thesis purpose:** This research aims to broaden a knowledge on how influencer's reputation may shape views and opinions women between the ages of 21 and 30 years old have towards makeup brands.

**Methodology:** Qualitative methods were applied in this research. The data was gathered through ten semi-structured interviews.

**Theoretical perspective:** This study is based on an inductive approach, thus the empirical data is observed first, then the patterns were found and after that, a theory was developed guided by a conceptual framework. Hence, the phenomenon of social media influencers within the field of makeup is explored.

**Empirical data:** The data was collected through ten semi-structured interviews with Swedish women between 21 and 30 years old and analyzed using thematic analysis method.

**Findings/conclusions:** The reputation of the social media influencer impacted the views and opinions the participants had when it concerned a personal brand or a non-personal brand that was not known by them. The results of this research show that in order for the social media influencer to have a positive impact on consumers' views and opinions towards a makeup brand, the influencer must have certain characteristics.

**Practical implications:** Social media influencers can help in the process of brand communication as they have a personal connection built on trust with their audience. However, brands should be aware that influencers' reputation may impact the way customers see the brand, either positively or negatively. It is important for brands to determine whether a transfer of social media influencer reputation occurs for them or not since this can benefit their social media advertising strategy.

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# 1 Introduction

The introduction chapter will introduce the reader to the concepts of social media advertising and the influencer phenomenon, after that the problematization of this research is stated. Next, the purpose and research question of this study are presented and are followed by the contribution.

## 1.1 Background

Nowadays, social media has replaced traditional media outlets, such as newspapers and television, as the main source of information (Abidin & Ots, 2015). With this change, new opportunities and challenges for companies rose – brands are no longer shaping the market instead customers are. Due to the shift in communication, brands can increase customer commitment, brand attitude, and trustworthiness among their consumers through social media platforms (Becker, Nobre & Kanabar, 2013; Dijkmans, Kerkhof & Beukeboom, 2015). As a result, they are focusing more and more on social media platforms to acquire new customers, as this is the main outlet to reach them (Booth & Matic, 2011).

Consumers, on the other hand, tend to find information about the products they are interested in on social media platforms and review websites, instead of offline sources (Dijkmans, Kerkhof & Beukeboom, 2015). They rely mostly on their friends' and family members' opinions, as well as other customers' views about the products instead of information available on the companies' websites (Booth & Matic, 2011; Dijkmans, Kerkhof & Beukeboom, 2015; Woods, 2016). Therefore, with the rise of advertising through social media, a new type of celebrity endorsement has caught the attention of many brands, called influencer marketing.

Agrawal (2016), describes social media influencers (SMI) as online personalities with a large number of followers across one or more social media platforms. Influencer marketing, on the other hand, is a relatively new area of research (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017)

that gained a lot of attention in the recent years, especially after becoming the buzzword of the year 2016 (Morrison, 2016). Even though it is a relatively new concept, influencer marketing has many definitions. Sigala (2017), describes influencer marketing as “the practice of identifying individuals who have influence over a target audience” (p.94). Whereas Sudha and Sheena (2017), explain influencer marketing as a process of identification of individuals who have an influence over a specific audience, in order to be a part of a brand's campaign towards increased sales, reach or engagement. Therefore, for this research we define influencer marketing as a way an individual can influence other consumers through diffusion of endorsement and information (Sigala, 2017). There has still not been a lot of research regarding how influencer’s reputation shape the opinions and views customers have towards the brands these influencers endorse, as majority of articles written about this topic try to grasp the role of influencer marketing, how it is going to shape the future of marketing or how to create a successful influencer campaign (Agrawal, 2016, Adweek, 2015, Reynolds 2016, Westwood, 2017, Wong 2014).

According to Schivinski and Dąbrowski (2014), user-generated content, such as influencers' posts on social media platforms, can have a positive impact on the brand attitude of consumers. Moreover, brand ambassadors or endorsers who engage customers in the brand’s discussion have a direct impact on the company’s brand reputation (Booth & Matic, 2011). Oxford Dictionary defines reputation as “the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something.”. As customers are more loyal to the brands with good reputation, companies need to be careful with who they associate themselves with (Eccles, Newquist & Schatz, 2007). Choosing a brand endorser with a bad reputation may result in revenue decrease, lower company value or higher marketing costs in the future, to say the least (Reviewpoint, n.d.). Therefore, it is really important for brands to choose an influencer who not only can fit the brand’s target group, but also has a good reputation, as it can have an impact on how customers behave towards the brand.

Social media influencers are defined as figures who have built their presence online and are seen as trustworthy spokespeople for the brands (Abidin, 2016; De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017). In addition, these people would have a following in a range from a few thousand to over a million followers, and Instagram has been found as one of the most popular platforms to follow social media influencers (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). According to Voorveld, van Noort, Mutinga, and Bronner (2018), consumers consider advertising on Instagram to be more engaging and inspiring, compared to any other social media platform,

such as Snapchat or YouTube. Moreover, it has been shown that word-of-mouth is the single most important way to communicate and reach out to customers (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Weiss, 2014). However, the extensive part of communication has moved to the online world over the past few years, as the traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) transformed into electronic-word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). eWOM communication can take place, for example, through online discussions or blogs and is argued to be easier accessible for its users than traditional WOM (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). Since social media influencers are considered a more credible source of eWOM, compared to other sources of information, brands often employ them to promote their products on social media (Dijkmans, Kerkhof & Beukeboom, 2015; Freberg, Graham, Mcgaughey & Freberg, 2011; De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017; Sudha & Sheena, 2017). In addition, social media influencers can be considered a person whose reputation may be reflected and transferred onto products or brands (Miller & Allen, 2012). Grant McCracken (1989) was the first to create, with his 'Meaning Transfer Model', a model showing how meaning can be transferred from a celebrity to the product and from the product to the consumer. In his model, McCracken proposes that the impact the endorsements have relies upon the meanings the celebrity transfers in the endorsement process (McCracken, 1989). The transfer model consists of three different stages. Stage 1 concerns the way the celebrity is seen by the consumer, considering the consumer's cultural context. In Stage 2 of the process, the meaning is transferred from the celebrity to the product when the celebrity is involved in advertising the product. In Stage 3 the meaning given by the celebrity to the product affects the consumer. Therefore, the researchers decided to look into one particular industry that uses social media influencers to promote their brands and products the most - makeup industry (Burke, 2017), as this industry is worth over \$532 billion globally and continues to grow (Sheppard, 2019).

## 1.2 Problematization

As social media phenomena are constantly evolving, brands have acknowledged that their online presence plays a significant role in reaching new customers and retaining the old ones (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Therefore, the employment of social media influencers has become one of the most successful ways to promote products (Booth & Matic, 2011). In consequence, an ever-increasing amount of research investigates the importance of social media for brands.

As social media influencer personality may reflect customers' views about the brand, it is crucial to make sure that they correspond to what the brand stands for. Moreover, previous research showed that consumers have great trust in the electronic word-to-mouth advertisement, which includes advertising done by social media influencers (Bughin, 2015; Nielsen, 2012). According to Zietek (2016), brands tend to select their influencers based on whether they estimate that they fit with the brand or not. Brands that do not understand what their audience cares about may have trouble choosing the right influencers for their endorsements, and as a result, fail in their marketing efforts (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). Therefore, influencers need to meet several requirements before becoming brand endorsers. It is important that they align with the brand's personality because if this is not the case, consumers will get confused and surprised when they see the advertisement (Doss, 2011).

Although the importance of using the most suitable influencer for the brand has been emphasized in the previous research, there is a possibility that even though there is a perfect match between influencer and brand, the endorsement does not add value to the brand. Exploring social media users' views of influencers could be relevant for marketers and brand managers, as consumers buy more products when influencers develop credibility and trust in their relationship with the advertised product and indicate that they would use that specific product (Erdogan, 1999; Ohanian, 1991; van der Waldt, van Loggerenberg & Wehmeyer, 2009). Moreover, research showed that social media influencers' posts reflect more positively on customers compared to traditional celebrities' endorsements (Jin, Ryu & Muqaddam, 2018). The theoretical importance of researching this topic is not only limited to justifying the usefulness of social media influencers' marketing but also to gain better knowledge about how different reputation perceptions can impact brands.

### 1.3 Purpose and research question

This research aims to broaden a knowledge on how influencer's reputation may shape views and opinions women between the ages of 21 and 30 years old have towards makeup brands. This was initially a point of interest due to the lack of research on the subject but also, because both of the researchers believe that this research may be valuable for companies which want to boost marketing efficiency, especially those in the retail industry. This industry involves a lot



of global firms who spend a lot of money on marketing, as social media influencers play a significant role in it.

According to Ohanian (1991), in order to be able to communicate a message effectively the source needs to be credible, trustworthy and attractive in the eyes of the customer. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that may transfer with the influencer's reputation to the views and opinions these women have towards makeup brands.

As this study researches the views and opinions, it is also important to understand what these mean. According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.), opinion is 'a judgement about someone or something'. Views, on the other hand, are described as 'a way a person thinks about certain things'. Therefore, for this research, opinions and views will be connected to the mental connection and thoughts people create between influencer's reputation and makeup brands these influencers endorse. Consequently, this research aims to answer the following research question:

*How does influencers' reputation impact young Swedish women views and opinions towards makeup brands?*

## 1.4 Aimed contributions

Young Swedish women between the ages of 21 and 30 years old are the research group of this study. This group is especially interesting, as 44.2 percent of its overall population are active users of social media, with the majority of it being women between the ages of 18 and 34 years old (NapoleonCat, 2020).

The beauty and personal care market in Sweden is expected to grow 4.4 percent annually by 2023 (Statista, 2019b). Therefore, the Swedish market is an interesting one for makeup brands, especially when it comes to social media marketing. As stated above, there is a noticeable gap between influencer marketing and reputation theories, which needs to be investigated, since Swedes spent over \$1,982 million on the beauty and personal care market in 2020 alone (NapoleonCat, 2020). Even though the relation between social media influencers and their

effect on brands has been previously researched, the phenomenon has gained more importance in recent years as the use of social media advertising has increased (Dijkmans, Kerkhof & Beukeboom, 2015; Freberg et al., 2011; De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017; Sudha & Sheena, 2017).

Practitioners could benefit from the insights that this research offers as it can contribute to a more informed, efficient, and effective communication between consumers and brands. The researchers believe that a better understanding of how views and opinions connected to a perceived reputation may impact brands and their advertising will benefit practitioners in terms of the brand communication process and building marketing strategies.

For academics, a better understanding of Swedish female consumers will be achieved in relation to how the reputation of a social media influencer is shaped by these women's views and opinions, and how the reputation of an influencer reflects on makeup brands that social media influencers promote. Further, a better understanding of the ways in which social media influencers endorsements are evaluated and interpreted is offered. This will contribute primarily to social media advertising and reputation literature in relation to the Swedish female consumer.

## 1.5 Outline of the thesis

The first chapter of the thesis focuses on the background of the makeup industry and the phenomenon of social media influencers followed by the problematization regarding online endorsements that can be found on social media platforms. This part will serve as a foundation for the next chapters of this thesis. The second chapter will provide existing literature and research conducted over the years in relation to our researched topic. This chapter will end with the introduction to the conceptual framework.

The third chapter will discuss the methodology that has been used in this research process and data analysis. The fourth chapter will present the findings discussed in the fifth chapter. The final chapter will include conclusions, theoretical implications, limitations followed by the suggestions for future research.

## 1.6 Chapter summary

The introduction chapter has outlined the background and problematization of this study that highlighted the gaps in previous research. It also presented the main research question: *How does influencers' reputation impacts young Swedish women views and opinions towards makeup brands?*. This chapter presented the purpose and aimed contributions of this thesis. In the next chapter, the literature review relevant to the study will be presented.

## 2 Literature Review

The following chapter provides insights into the concepts relevant to this research. The chapter begins with a review of existing literature about social media advertising and social media influencers and celebrities. This is followed by the introduction of human brands and reputation. Next, it goes into explaining what reputational risk and corporate reputation are. The chapter ends with a review of Swedish customers.

### 2.1 Social Media Advertising

Marketing and media are interconnected and depend on each other; media relies on advertising revenues, whereas advertisers try to reach their consumers through media (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2016). The rapid growth of social media brought new opportunities for brands to connect with their consumers (Burke, 2017). Zahoor and Qureshi (2017, pp. 47) define social media as “the usage of web-based and mobile technologies to create, share and consume information and knowledge without any geographical, social, political or demographical boundaries through public interaction in a participatory and collaborative way”.

It is estimated that nowadays, around one-third of the world’s population is active on social media (Zahoor & Qureshi, 2017; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In the past, media used to be a one-way street with a linear communication process between brand and consumer, however, Web 2.0 made it possible for companies to interact directly with the customer (Goyal, Dhyani & Rishi, 2013). According to Labrecque, Vor Dem Esche, Mathwick, Novak, & Hofacker (2013), Web 2.0 empowers the consumer by giving them the possibility to access and share information. This changed the status quo between brands and consumers giving the consumer more power (Ekstam & Bjurling, 2018).

Social media consumers shifted their search for information to electronic word-of-mouth sources (e.g. review sites, social platforms) (Gruen, Osmonbekov & Czaplewski, 2006). In

addition, back in 2012 Nielsen conducted a survey amongst 28.000 internet users which showed that the participants had great trust in word-to-mouth advertising; 92 percent said to trust friends and family, and 70 percent reported trusting online reviews (Nielsen, 2012). For that reason, companies decided to change their strategies, from traditional advertising to social media advertising (Booth & Matic, 2011).

### 2.1.1 Social Media Influencers and Celebrities

Brands in all branches have been using celebrity endorsement for many years now (Cavill, 2018). It is one of the most popular advertising strategies. According to McCracken (1989, p.310), a celebrity endorser is: “Any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement.” Celebrity endorsement is a form of advertising in which the brand uses a well-known person who is recognized by a certain group of people in order to promote a service, brand, or a product (Hennayake, 2017). Brand communication messages that are delivered by famous personalities tend to create a higher appeal, recall, and attention in the environment where there are a lot of different advertisements promoted by non-celebrities (Davies & Slater, 2015).

With the rise of advertising through social media, a new type of celebrity endorsement has caught the attention of many brands called influencer marketing. Influencer marketing is a marketing strategy that uses online opinion leaders to drive customers’ brand awareness and purchasing decisions (Brown & Hayes, 2008; Scott 2015). Agrawal (2016), describes social media influencers as online personalities with a large number of followers across one or more social media platforms.

The term social media influencer refers to people who became famous via their online media presence, unlike traditional media celebrities that got famous due to their acting, singing, or playing sports (Khamis, Ang & Welling, 2016). In comparison to celebrities, influencers are people who become online celebrities by creating content online (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Those non-traditional stars share a deeper connection to their audience because consumers identify with them on a more personal level, where in many cases they try to imitate them and their lifestyle (Tran & Strutton, 2014). However, social media influencers may also have a negative impact on their followers. When people compare themselves to influencers they may experience

an upward social comparison phenomenon. Even though it can have some benefits when it comes to inspiring people to be more like the person they look up to, it results mostly in feeling inadequate and insecure (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; Marsh & Parker, 1984). Chea (2018) found that a negative emotion could possibly arise when an individual realizes they are not able to reach the same standard of life as the social media influencer.

The uniqueness of social media influencers is manifested by the way they interact with their audience in a more intimate setting rather than mainstream movies and TV (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). In marketing social media influencers are often classified in one of the four categories according to their range: mega-influencers, macro-influencers, micro-influencers, and nano-influencers (Alassani & Göretz, 2019). Mega-influencers can be considered celebrities online as well as offline (Foxwell, 2020). These kinds of influencers have over one million followers on their social media platforms (Foxwell, 2020). Therefore, their content has the potential to reach a massive audience very quickly. Macro-influencers tend to be professional creators with passion for one, particular subject and they know their target audience well (Foxwell, 2020). These influencers have 100 000 to 1 million followers (Foxwell, 2020). The most common influencer type today is micro-influencer. This type of influencers are people between 10 000 and 100 000 followers (Foxwell, 2020). Micro-influencers are even more specialized than macro-influencers, thus they are considered to be more trustworthy to their audience, compared to macro-influencers (Foxwell, 2020; Gupta & Mahajan, 2019). The last type of influencers are nano-influencers. These are people with an audience that is smaller than 10 000 followers (Foxwell, 2020). Nano-influencers are individuals who impact their local community (Foxwell, 2020). Even though their following is rather insignificant compared to macro-influencers their influence on their audience is potentially huge, as they are seen more as a friend rather than a big celebrity that is out of reach (Foxwell, 2020). It has been found that, while the macro-influencer has more followers, the micro-influencers has a higher commitment (Alassani & Göretz, 2019).

Previous research has shown that posts by social media influencers have a more positive impact on the consumer than posts by traditional celebrities as they are seen as more trustworthy, reflect more positive on the endorsed brand, and have a stronger social presence (Jin, Ryu & Muqaddam, 2018). This could be the reason that the use of influencer marketing has become a trend in social media advertising.

According to Jacques Bughin (2015) from McKinsey & Company, adverts placed by social media influencers can be seen as electronic word-to-mouth advertising. In their research Bughin highlights, just as Nielsen (2012), that this type of advertising is highly effective in reaching out to customers. Influencers use social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to share content promoting brands through their personal lives (Freberg et al., 2011). For this reason, consumers feel a connection towards the influencers, they can identify with them, and therefore, research has found that the purchase intention is higher when it comes to endorsements done by influencers (Tran & Strutton, 2014). Thus, many brands use them to endorse their products and act as human brands in order to increase their visibility online (Han & Ki, 2010; Ketchen, Adams & Shook, 2008; Kim, Choe & Petrick, 2018). As a result, a number of social media influencers also create their own brands, which are seen as ‘real’ and relatable, thus they can become more compelling to buy things they promote (Jin, Muqaddam & Ryu, 2018). Moreover, it has been found that celebrity endorsements are most likely to influence young women (Barton, Koslow & Beauchamp, 2014; Francis & Hoefel, 2018).

### 2.1.2 Influencer credibility

According to Hass (1981), perceived credibility of an influencer is connected to how an individual perceives the influencer’s recommendations as believable, unbiased and truthful. Moreover, previous research showed that credibility of an influencer, and effectiveness of its message depends on the level of expertise and trustworthiness that the influencer has (Hovland, Janis, Kelley, 1953; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Ohanian, 1990). Therefore, when the information comes from a credible source, it may influence beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviours through internalization process, which occurs when receivers of the message embrace the source of information in regards to their personal value structures and attitude (Erdogan, 1999). According to Ohanian (1990), source credibility is used to draw attention to the positive characteristics of an influencer that affect customer’s attitude. Thus, companies noticed that using endorsers with high credibility may benefit their marketing strategies (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

Ohanian (1990), came up with three constructs to measure the effectiveness of influencers endorsements by looking at their level of expertise, trustworthiness and perceived

attractiveness. According to Daneshvary and Schwer (2000), expertise is one of the most important components for endorsement to be successful. A level of expertise can be defined as “the degree to which the endorser is perceived to have the adequate knowledge, experience or skills to promote the product” (van der Waldt, van Loggerenberg & Wehmeyer, 2009, p. 104). Therefore, the expertise of the influencer is not important until consumers perceive it to be (Erdogan, 1999). Trustworthiness, on the other hand, can be described as “the honesty, integrity and believability the endorser possesses” (van der Waldt van Loggerenberg & Wehmeyer, 2009, p. 104). In addition, trustworthiness is also defined as the degree of confidence customers have towards influencers’ intent to convey the assertions they consider most valid (Ohanian, 1990). Therefore, influencer trustworthiness can be noticed when customers consider them to be dependable, reliable, sincere, honest or trustworthy (Ohanian, 1990). The last measure that impacts the effectiveness of influencers’ endorsements is attractiveness of an influencer (Ohanian, 1990). According to Erdogan (1999), attractiveness is connected to positive opinions a person has that entails not only a physical attractiveness, but also other characteristics, such as personality or athletic ability. A study conducted by van der Waldt, van Loggerenberg and Wehmeyer (2009), showed that influencers who are perceived as more attractive are more likely to lead the purchase intent for customers. In addition, attractiveness has also been proven to be a crucial factor for developing effective messages for brands (Schlecht, 2003). However, some researchers admit that influencers’ attractiveness may only be significant if the product enhances the attractiveness of its user. Thus, the attractiveness of an influencer is noticeable when consumers perceive them as attractive, beautiful, elegant or sexy (Ohanian, 1990).

## 2.2 Human Brands

A brand can be described as “*A name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them which is intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*” (AMA, 2008 p. 9-10). Every brand has its own unique image, which is shaped by customers’ perceptions of the brand. Therefore, the main purpose of any brand is to create a positive image in its customers’ minds (Heding, Knudtzen & Bjerre, 2009). However, even though customers are the ones who perceive a brand, marketers are the ones that influence the way they see it through communication.



If the brand is understood as the set of associations individuals identify with the products of a seller, then a human brand can be understood as the set of associations people have towards a particular person (Parmentier & Fisher, 2012; Keller, 1993). A human brand can be described as a person who is a subject of marketing, as well as inter-organizational or interpersonal communication (Parmentier, Fisher & Reuber, 2013; Close, Moulard & Monroe, 2011). The strongest focus in the literature about human brands has been on the brand's image and reputation. It has been proven that brand image allows us to identify, profile, and differentiate human brands from other, rival brands (Herbst, 2003). In order to be a successful human brand, it is crucial to be congruent with the customer's desired or actual self-image, since it enables the identity with the brand on the interpersonal level (Herbst, 2003). In addition, the studies have confirmed that famous people can be seen as brands, as they possess brand features and additional associations (Thomson, 2006).

### 2.2.1 Brand Attitude

Brand attitude represents advantages that can be provided by a product or a service, and how it can be used in terms of competitiveness in price, product usage and brand personality (Hankinson & Cowking, 1993). Each brand consists of functional features, emotional appeal, symbolic values, which can be delivered and communicated in the product or service experience (Cambridge, 2002). However, as doing research to collect certain attributes of products is time-consuming, many consumers rely strictly on the product brand or its endorser as an important source of information (Ward & Lee, 1999). Furthermore, the first step towards the positive brand attitude is to convince consumers that the user effects and features that are being communicated about the product are correct. However, functional features are not the only ones that can affect consumer attitudes as word-of-mouth communication influences brand attitude as well (Bone, 1995; Hatch & Schultz, 2003). Hence, negative usage of word-of-mouth communication may result in an unintended impact on consumers' perceptions towards a brand (Park, Lee & Han, 2007; Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003). Nevertheless, once a positive brand attitude is attained, potential consumer interest and an increase in purchase intention can be observed (Hatch & Schultz, 2003). With that in mind, a positive attitude towards influencers may impact a consumer's response to the brand or product they endorse. In addition, the

reputation of the influencer plays a significant role in the way people react to endorsements, as it can affect the way they see the brand.

## 2.3 Reputation

According to the Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.), reputation is “the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something”. Therefore, the reputation of the brand endorser may impact the reputation of the brand itself. According to Milinski (2016), a person’s reputation is updated whenever members of a social group get new information about the person’s social interactions. Not only people have a reputation, organizations, and brands also have a reputation. Hannington (2011) defines organizational reputation as the responses the organization has to questions relating to the characteristics of the organization, this can vary per market. Hannington (2011) highlights that when it comes to brands the reputation is how you are perceived and seen by stakeholders, media, and your environment.

There are many reasons why maintaining a good reputation is crucial for brands, as the perception of the public image of the brand predicts its success (Fombrun, 1996). Therefore, a brand with a positive reputation will attract new customers and is able to charge more for its services and products (Keh & Xie, 2009). Additionally, a brand with a good reputation tends to lessen customers’ uncertainty towards the brand, and as a result, they are more loyal (Aghekyan-Simonian, Forsythe, Kwon & Chattaraman, 2012).

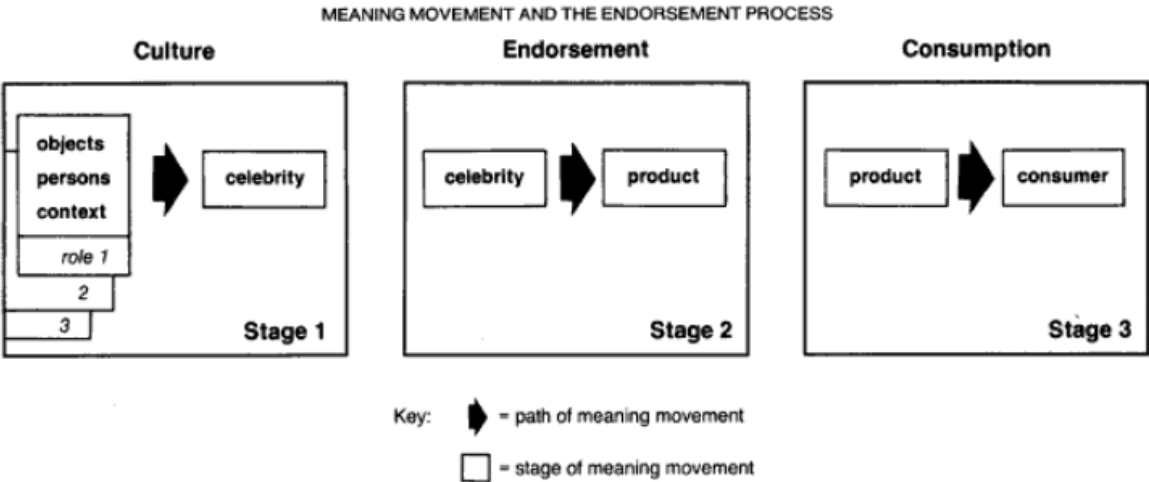
### 2.3.1 Reputation Transfer

The loss of reputation may affect positioning, competitiveness, trust, and loyalty people have towards the brand (Aula, 2010). Furthermore, choosing the right person to endorse the brand could shape or protect a brand’s reputation (Booth & Matic, 2011). Therefore, brands ask famous individuals to endorse their brand since they have ‘celebrity equity’, which can be transferred to the brand (Louie, Kulik & Jacobson, 2001). However, this transfer of ‘celebrity equity’ can have negative consequences for the brand when the endorser is to be involved in an undesirable event (Louie, Kulik & Jacobson, 2001). After the connection between celebrity and brand is formed, the negative information on the celebrity endorses may reflect on the endorsed

brand through the link that has been established between the two factors (Till and Shimp, 1998). Till and Shimp (1998) found in one of their experiments that there is a strong effect of negative information about the endorser when there is little connection between the brand and the celebrity. However, they also found when the brand and the celebrity have a lot in common, negative information about the celebrity will not have a significant effect (Till & Shimp, 1998). It is important to note that this experiment concerns a fictional brand that was unknown for the consumer, so this does not necessarily mean that the same finding counts for established brands.

According to McCracken (1989), celebrity has an impact on how customers perceive the brand. He created a three stage model (Figure 2.1.) in which he emphasizes that celebrity has an impact on all three stages. In the first stage celebrities are offering lifestyle meanings and different kinds of personalities that normal people cannot. In the second stage, brands need to choose the right celebrity to endorse their products. These brands should also make sure that the advertisement will transfer the meanings and personality from celebrity to the product. In the third stage, the meaning and personality of the product transfers to the customer who bought it. According to McCracken (1989), celebrities who are associated with a certain role or personality are the most effective celebrity endorsers. Without it, they could not bring clear and explicit meanings to the products they endorse to customers. Therefore, if the brand decides to employ a celebrity endorser, it is crucial to find one who can transfer their desired characteristics to their products.

Figure 2.1 McCracken's Meaning Transfer Model (1989)



## 2.4 Swedish Customers

Due to the rapid development of social media platforms, younger generations who are their primary users, are becoming more and more exposed to online advertisements (Maurer & Wiegmann, 2011). In Sweden, social media usage increased over the past decade, as the share of users grew from 28 percent in 2010 to 65 percent in 2019 (Statista, 2019a). Moreover, Instagram was one of the most popular social media platforms, with over 4 910 000 users in Sweden alone, which accounts for 44.2 percent of its entire population and women between the ages of 18 and 34 are the largest user group of Instagram with 1 110 000 users (NapoleonCat, 2020). In addition, about 80 percent of social media influencers use Instagram as their primary social media platform for sharing the sponsored content, which makes it the most popular platform for brand collaborations (Chernev, 2019). Therefore, this makes Instagram the most suitable platform to base the research about Swedish influencers on.

Globally, women in their twenties are the main target group for the majority of the makeup industry (Hanbury, 2018; Whitehouse, 2016; Burke 2017). Disposable income has increased in Sweden over the past few years, which resulted in Swedes shifting their spending from clothing and footwear to beauty products (Euromonitor, 2019). Swedes spent over \$1,982 million on the beauty and personal care market in 2020 alone, with an expected annual growth of 4.4% by 2023 (Statista, 2019b). As a result, makeup brands are increasing their online presence, where the implementation of social media campaigns is crucial to keep their branding, marketing, and public relations intact. In addition, social media and influencers have become growing forces for establishing marketing strategies for specific consumer groups (Euromonitor, 2019). This makes it an interesting market in terms of brand opinions and views Swedish women have as there is not a lot of research done regarding Swedish consumers' perception of influencers' reputation, and how it impacts their views on brands.

## 2.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the literature that is relevant to this research, focusing primarily on topics regarding social media advertising, social media influencers, human brands, and

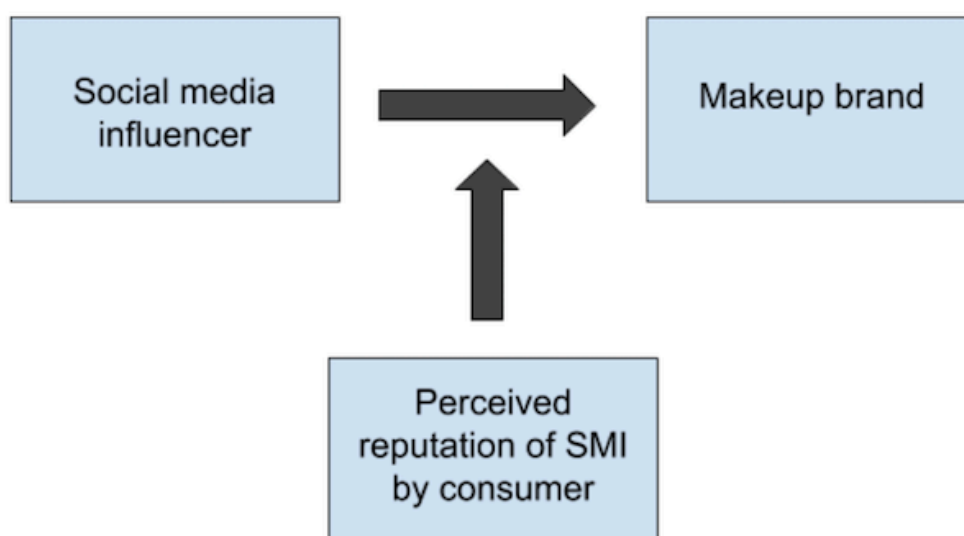
reputation. These topics were described separately, however, they were strongly connected as they help in understanding the aim and the main question of this study. The literature review contributed to shaping researchers' ideas on how to conduct the study and identify remaining gaps in the field of influencer marketing. This chapter helped create the conceptual framework for this study and it will be presented in Chapter 3.

### 3 Conceptual Framework

In the following chapter, the conceptual framework has been presented. The framework conceptualized the research question based on the previously known models and literature. The conceptual framework will be used as a guide throughout the thesis.

Based on the reviewed literature, a theoretical framework (Figure 3.1) has been developed in order to facilitate the understanding of how the perceived reputation of the influencer can impact views and opinions young Swedish women have towards makeup brands. This framework will act as a foundation for the structure of the empirical part of this thesis and its analysis. In addition, we have used McCracken’s Meaning Transfer Model and influencer marketing phenomenon as a theoretical lens for this research. This framework allows us to understand and analyze the empirical data and it aims to help us identify the phenomena and explain the research question of this thesis.

*Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework*



### 3.1 Social media influencer

Social media influencer is a relatively new term that is described differently by academia (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). Lou & Yuan (2019) define a social media influencer as ‘an online persona who reached celebrity status through social media, who has a large following base on which this persona has a certain level of influence’. It is argued that social media influencers are primarily determined through their number of followers. However, they are also differentiated from celebrities as they are known for being ‘regular people’ who earned the ‘celebrity status’ through the content they post online (Agrawal, 2016; Lou & Yuan, 2019). For this research, it is essential to understand what the consumers, the research participants of this study, defined as a social media influencer, since there are several definitions to this fairly new term. The prerequisites someone has to fulfill to be an influencer are a personal topic. Therefore, it is important to find out what the term social media influencer means for the individual consumer.

### 3.2 The perceived reputation of SMI by consumers

Previously reputation was defined as “the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone or something” (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.). Within this research, we do not want to focus on the general reputation that a social media influencer might have but on the opinions of individual consumers about this influencer. To distinguish the terms we refer to the individual consumer’s opinion as ‘perceived reputation’. We conceptualized this component based on Stage 1 of McCracken’s (1989) Meaning Transfer Model. He argues the cultural context of the consumer gives meaning to the celebrity. In his research McCracken looked into the transfer process of meanings, however, he wondered how these meanings are formed and proposed this question as to future research. We consider this question in our research. This study investigates the factors which determine the perceived reputation of the influencer - how opinions and views about them are formed.

The researchers looked at how perceived reputation about the influencer is formed and how this impacts the attitude towards the brand. In this framework, the social media influencer and the makeup brand are connected (see Figure 3.1) through the transfer of the perceived reputation

of the SMI. What a consumer thinks about social media influencers has an effect on this consumer's opinion about the makeup brand. This corresponds with Stage 2 of McCracken's Meaning Transfer Model, where meaning given to the celebrity is transferred to the endorsed product. McCracken (1989) questioned how these meanings were transferred.

### 3.3 Makeup brand

The last component of the framework contains the makeup brand. In this study, the researchers focus on makeup brands since this branch of brands is active in social media campaigns and known to use influencer marketing (Euromonitor, 2019). Regarding this component, a few aspects have to be considered. First, one can distinguish between two types of brands: personal brands and non-personal brands. Personal brands can be owned by influencers, whereas non-personal brands are not directly connected to influencers through (part-)ownership, their relationship is constituted by paid endorsement. Personal brands in contrast to non-personal ones allow the consumer to relate to the brand on an interpersonal level (Herbst, 2003). A personal brand can build a strong relationship with the consumer (Rampersad, 2008). As this factor could influence the impact of the perceived influencer reputation on the two types of brands, this distinction is taken into account in the analysis of the collected data.

Secondly, the relationship the consumer already had with the brands before the endorsement of a social media influencer can be of importance when researching the transfer of reputation from influencer to brand. It is possible that when there is no relationship between the brand and consumer, it is more likely for a transfer of reputation to appear. Till and Shimp (1998) found that the impact of negative information about the endorser was more apparent when there was little knowledge about the brand and vice versa. However, this was only tested on a fictional brand. This study gives the opportunity to look at established brands and see how an already existing relationship between consumer and brand will give the same results.

In order to gain a nuanced understanding of the phenomenon shown is the conceptual framework, it is essential to conduct an empirical study.



## 3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed the conceptual framework of this study. It has outlined two main actors, social media influencers and makeup brands. The conceptual framework implies that the perceived reputation of the social media influencers endorsing a makeup brand has an impact on the views and opinions the consumer has about the makeup brand. An empirical study on the topics presented in the framework is needed to investigate the research question.

# 4 Methodology

This chapter presents the philosophical position it takes and what methods are used. The research design, data collection process, and data analysis are discussed. The chapter also goes into more detail on why certain methods were used compared to other methods available. The quality of the study will be evaluated at the end of the methodology.

## 4.1 Research Approach

In order to conduct this study, it was necessary to collect data from Swedish consumers. In the following section, it will be explained how the data was properly collected according to the research philosophy of the researchers and the chosen research design.

## 4.2 Research Philosophy

Researchers make assumptions based on the way they look at reality or about the development of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). Made assumptions unavoidably shape the design of the research (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, it is important to understand the philosophy of the researchers. It is essential to understand ontology and epistemology that shapes the researcher's understanding of the world and their research. The ontology describes the philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality, epistemology is the theory of knowledge (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018).

#### 4.2.1 Ontological Considerations

The term ontology comes from the Greek term ‘on’ which means ‘being’ and ‘logos’ which stands for ‘theory’ (Delanty & Strydom, 2003 cited in Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2018). There are four different categories in which ontologies can be categorized when conducting research: realism, internal realism, relativism, and nominalism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). The ontological consideration chosen for this research is relativism. According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Jackson (2018), a relativist ontology accepts that social entities are socially defined and experienced differently by different people, depending on their social context. They state that there are many perspectives and therefore there is no single reality. We will conduct the thesis with a relativist ontology. The relativist point of view looks at the views and opinions young adult females have towards influencers and the brands they are endorsing. The subjects of this research are social actors from different social contexts, and therefore it can be assumed that their interpretations will differ. A relativist philosophy will explain the interpretations of the subject of this research.

#### 4.2.2 Epistemological Considerations

As mentioned previously the epistemology concerns the theory of knowledge, but it also looks into the different ways of enquiring about the physical and social worlds (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). There are two contrasting views within the philosophy of epistemology: positivism and constructionism (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). The epistemological consideration used in this research is constructionism.

From a constructivist perspective, reality is socially constructed and is given meaning by people in their daily interactions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). The constructionist approach aligns with this research because it is assumed that societal reality is verified by people instead of objective and external factors (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). As stated in the ontology this research looks at the different perspectives from social actors, the different experiences that people have are being considered (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019). As this research is focusing on the impact of influencer reputation on young adult females, the constructionist epistemology seems to be a logical choice. The researchers, in this case, are engaged constructionists since they are participants in the social system they are

studying, which means they are engaged with the subjects of their research (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). For this research, an inductive approach has been used, which is intended to understand a meaning in complex data through the development of summary themes from the raw data (Thomas, 2003).

### 4.3 Research Design

In order to investigate a main research question, a research design was created.. However, our view on the individual's perspective of an influencer is a subjective matter. Therefore, by following the philosophical approach that was introduced earlier, a qualitative research approach was adopted to research this phenomenon. The qualitative approach can be characterized as focusing on understanding the way the social world is interpreted by people (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Unlike quantitative research, this approach allows us to seek insight information about individual perspectives towards a phenomenon (Burns & Burns, 2008), such as their opinions about influencer endorsements and influencer reputation. In order to explore the topic, semi-structured interviews were carried out allowing us to see how interviewees would behave within their own context, as it is one of the major characteristics of the qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014).

### 4.4 Data Collection Process

When collecting relevant data it is crucial to gather the proper amount of participants. The sample size and the most appropriate method of data collection can help to understand the phenomenon that is researched (Mason, 2002). This section presents the data collection process and its phases.

Firstly, in February of 2020, a pilot study was conducted where four interviews with women between the ages of 16 and 30 was performed. The purpose of the pilot study was to assess the suitability and relevance of the research, in terms of the amount and depth of the responses interviewees delivered. The pilot study research topic was different from the thesis' one: *"How does celebrity reputation impact Generation Y and Z female's perspective of the brand and their*

*pre-purchase behavior?*”. Hence, interviewing women from two different generations and a broader age group was justified. The reason why only four women were interviewed is that after the fourth interview the researchers noticed that interview questions were not working in terms of what they wanted to discover, and in terms of their objectives. Our pilot study focused primarily on how celebrity reputation affects customers' perspectives on brands, which gave us the first insight on influencers’ culture and its effect on people's views about it. The pilot study demonstrated that the research question and interview questions needed to be changed.

After the researchers re-evaluated their previous research and came to the conclusion that researching women who are Swedish would benefit the Swedish academia and makeup brands which would like to gain more insights into that market and its customer’s cultural background and their views.

#### 4.4.1 Sample Selection

The first step in the process of collecting data is deciding on the most appropriate sample strategy (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). For this thesis, two different sampling strategies were combined. First, the researchers used the purposive sampling method, the participants were selected based on the criteria of gender, age, and nationality (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). Second, the snowball sampling strategy was used starting with one participant from the researchers’ network who met the criteria for inclusion in the study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). This participant was asked to name others who would be suitable for the research.

In order to decide which age group would be the most eligible for this study, the researchers decided to compare two data statistics - the main target groups for makeup companies and the biggest group of social media users in Sweden. The main target group for the majority of makeup brands is women in their twenties (Hanbury, 2018; Whitehouse, 2016; Burke 2017). In addition, the biggest Instagram user group is women between the ages of 18 and 34 years old, which accounts for 44.2 percent total Instagram users in Sweden (NapoleonCat, 2020). Therefore, to get valuable information for this study, this research included ten participants in total – females between the ages of 21 and 30 years old, as this age range was common for both data statistics. Data collection was stopped when many similar views and opinions started to be

repeated by the participants, and almost no new information could be acquired from the interviews. All of the participants have Swedish nationality and currently live in Sweden.

As stated before, the sample chosen for this research are females between 21 and 30 years old, since they are active there. It was decided to conduct the interviews in English, since none of the researchers spoke fluent Swedish. Therefore, it was of great importance that the selected sample group was able to understand and express themselves in English. Therefore, the selected sample had to have at least a B2-level in English. As everyone that took a part in this study was enrolled at university at the moment of participation, it was confirmed that they had B2-level English, as all students entering a Swedish University are required to have the basic Upper Secondary School English B / English 6 level which is equivalent to B2-level English.

#### 4.4.2 Interviews

There are many ways how an interview can be conducted, however we have decided that semi-structured interviews are the most fitting option for this study. A semi-structured interview is a conversation where there are no predetermined answers, however, it is not completely unstructured either (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

The semi-structured interview method allowed us to observe participants' overall behavior, which is one of the key instruments of doing qualitative method research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Therefore, the decision on why the semi-structured interview approach was pursued has a number of reasons. Firstly, by interviewing people individually we were able to gain an understanding of participants' views and opinions, even though this required more time than, for example, conducting interviews in the focus groups (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Moreover, as the perceived reputation of an influencer and the impact this has on the brands these influencers are endorsing are seemingly personal topics, focus groups were not the most suitable way of allowing the interviewees with a chance of sharing their opinions freely (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Therefore, this design allows us to research the topic.

### 4.4.3 Preparations

An interview guide was constructed to serve only as a guideline for the interviewers. It was expected that participants would answer them freely and the conversation would flow by itself. Therefore, not all of the questions listed in the Appendix 1 were always used to gather responses from participants of the study. These questions were used as follow-up questions if interviewers felt like something should be elaborated on more. Before conducting the interviews the questions were evaluated and tried on three random individuals, who were not a part of this study, to check if they were clear and relevant for this research. Therefore, the interview guide with questions was corrected and updated in accordance with the received feedback.

The respondents were contacted personally through communication platforms, such as WhatsApp and Facebook. Facebook was considered to be the most appropriate platform to find respondents since it was easy to analyze the gender, nationality, and the year of birth of people and get in contact with them. Before contacting the respondents, the researchers checked if the participants were active users of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Snapchat, to make sure that once they will be asked social media related questions about it they will be able to answer them. Since the use of social media is crucial to come in contact with social media influencers, something where our research is based on. Before conducting the interviews with the selected participant, each of them was given a consent form (Appendix 2), stating the research objective and destination of the gathered data. The participants had to give their consent by signing the form in order to be part of the research. The forms were emailed to the participants due to the social distancing measures, a scanned copy was to be emailed back to the researchers.

The interview was divided into five parts - general questions, makeup, social media, influencers, and reputation. Going from basic and general questions to the more detailed ones. Therefore, the opening questions were related to interviewees' demographics, such as age and occupation. This part would allow us to acquire a basic overview of the participants' lifestyles.

The next part focuses on general knowledge of participants' makeup usage and about the industry. The interviewees would answer questions regarding their monthly spending on makeup and how often they wear it. This will allow us to analyze their relationship with makeup.

The following part touches upon social media platforms and participants' usage of it. It goes into understanding why participants use social media platforms, how much time they spend on it daily, and what kind of content they enjoy the most. It will give us the opportunity to research participants' relationships with social media platforms and their content.

The next part investigates participants' knowledge of current social media influencers and goes deeper into researching their opinions about them. The next part of the interview was a PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1) of four Swedish influencers who endorse makeup brands - Kenza Zouiten-Subosic, Bianca Ingrosso, Therese Lindgren, and Isabella Lowengrip. The researchers chose only Swedish influencers based on previous literature. It states that social media influencers share a deeper connection with consumers when there is a level of identification with their lifestyle (Tran & Strutton, 2014). Therefore, as participants of this study are Swedish women, the researchers decided that it was more likely to identify with Swedish influencers' lifestyle the most. Moreover, these four influencers were chosen based on the number of their followers as well as their high engagement rate in Sweden (Tan, 2019; Sweden HK, 2019), as well as them being previously mentioned during the interviews for our pilot study. During the PowerPoint presentation, interviewees will have to describe how they view each social media influencer and share their thoughts about them. In addition, endorsements of makeup brands by social media influencers will be shown. Some of these influencers also own makeup brands, therefore, both influencers endorsing non-personal and personal brands will be presented.

In the last part of the interview, we tried to draw a conclusion from all the already attained information. It focused on how the perceived reputation of a social media influencer can change the way participants see the brand this influencer endorses. In addition, as semi-structured interviews allow a flexible interview approach, if something was not clear or needed to be elaborated on more, the researchers asked additional questions.



#### 4.4.4 Conduction Process

After going through the preparations it was time to start conducting the interviews. According to Rowley (2012), an interview concerning personal topics takes more time than an interview about impersonal topics. The topic of this thesis is personal, and therefore we decided to give the participants time to reflect and consider their answers. The interviews lasted averagely about 60 minutes. Each interview was conducted by two researchers, one researcher took the lead, while the other researcher was able to assist, take notes, and encourage a nice flow to the interview. All interviews were conducted over Facebook's video conference platform available on Messenger.

Facebook Messenger gave the researchers the opportunity to conduct the interviews from a distance. The researchers made sure that technical issues were limited during online interviews. Various video call platforms were tested in order to distinguish which one was the most suitable for this study. Facebook showed the best results in these tests and also had the advantage that since we reached our participants mostly through his platform we knew they already were users of the platform and knew how it worked. If the video call would lose quality, the possibility to change to Skype was available. However, if for some reason the internet connection itself would have been a problem, the interview could have been continued through a phone call. If only one of the two researchers would appear to have technical problems the interview would proceed with only one researcher there.

At the beginning of each interview, one of the interviewers would briefly explain the structure of the interview and the purpose of the study to give the interviewee more clarity of what was going to happen and make them feel more relaxed. The participants were reminded they would be recorded. Before the interview started the participants were asked if they had any more questions regarding it. After these questions were answered it was time to start conducting the interview. The different parts in the interview were introduced with a short introduction, to prepare the interviewee for every section. Near the end of the interview, a PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 1) was shown to the participant by the screen sharing option of the video call platform. The participants were asked if they could see the PowerPoint properly before moving on to the questions since the images shown in the PowerPoint were of great importance to answer the questions correctly. When the interview was completed, participants were given a chance to ask questions or comments and were thanked for cooperation.

## 4.5 Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was chosen as an appropriate choice of data analysis when looking into people's views and opinions from qualitative data, such as interviews and interviews' transcripts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In addition, this method can be used in identifying, analyzing, describing, organizing, and reporting themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is useful when it comes to highlighting similarities and differences, generating unanticipated insights, and examining the perspectives of different participants (Braun & Clarke, 2006; King, 2004). After careful consideration, we have decided that Braun and Clarke thematic analysis would be the most appropriate choice for our study, as it could help us discover relevant findings and patterns that could help us answer the research question. The thematic analysis consists of six phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

1. Familiarizing yourself with data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

In the first phase of the analysis, interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed using the Amberscript programme by the researchers. After that, the authors read each interview two or three times in order to get familiarized with what each participant said. It allowed us to start noticing repetitive words, for example *inspiring*, *genuine*, *down-to-earth*, and *authentic* which were related to feelings interviewees associated with certain influencers they were following or cared about. The repetitiveness of these words enabled us to see patterns of responses that would transform into potential themes in the analysis later on.

Next, coding was performed by dividing certain quotes into groups that could potentially answer the main question of the research (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In order to do that the researchers decided to use the Nvivo programme which allows to organize and code potential themes from the interviews. Overall, the researchers created four main themes with 45 codes in total which served as an extension to the main themes and can be found in Appendix 3. The

codes consist of data extracts with similar views and opinions which were used for deeper analysis in the next phases of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

When all the interviews were coded and all the relevant data had been organized, it was time to detect the main themes which we wanted to outline in the analysis. While discussing, reading, and coding the empirical findings similarities and patterns were identified. Once the main findings were filtered by the authors of this thesis, the main themes were created in order to present the empirical data in a structured way.

## 4.6 Quality

It is important to evaluate the quality of the research in order to ensure the relevance of the study for others (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). In order to ensure the quality of the study, the reliability, validity, and transferability of the research will be described in this section.

### 4.6.1 Reliability

Reliability relates to the presentation of the collected data, which should be done in a way that clearly showcases the consistency of findings and its repetitiveness (Bryman & Bell, 2015). In this research, the focus is on perceived reputation Swedish women have on social media influencers and its result on their views and opinions towards makeup brands has been researched. The researchers provided a literature review based on previous findings. Participants mentioned several similar statements that allowed the researchers to compare them and align with existing literature in order to ensure the reliability of the study. However, not all findings were covered in previous literature therefore, the comparison could not always be made.

Internal reliability relates to a situation where there are more than one researchers and the agreement on their observations needs to be agreed on (Bryman & Bell, 2015). For this study, both researchers were present at all interviews which were recorded on tape and listened to

afterward. This gave a possibility to discuss and agree on what findings were found and analyzed later on.

#### 4.6.2 Validity

The validity of research in qualitative methods determines how truthful the research results are (Joppe, 2000 cited in Golafshani, 2003). According to Wainer and Braun (1998), validity is a construct of initial concepts and questions that determine which data should be gathered and how it should be gathered. What is strengthening the validity of this thesis is that there have been ten interviews with additional questions (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). This allowed the researchers to see the patterns and similarities in the answers participants gave. Consequently, misunderstandings that could have occurred while interpreting the data, have been limited to the minimum.

#### 4.6.3 Transferability

According to Cohen and Crabtree (2006), transferability relates to an ability to apply research findings to another context, unrelated to the conducted research. In this study, the transferability was enhanced by providing a description of how the data was collected, who were the participants of this study and how the data was interpreted. However, in this study it has been chosen to use non-probability sample designs, which makes it impossible to say if the sample can be applied and generalized upon a larger population (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

### 4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a detailed outline of how the data was gathered. It has discussed the adaptation of research philosophies and the data collection process. A two-step process of data collection has been discussed and described and it was followed by further explanation of how participants of the study were chosen. This chapter provided information on why the semi-structured interview method was the most suitable for this study. Braun and Clarke's (2006)

thematic approach framework has been acknowledged and applied to the study. The next chapter discusses the findings that were gathered based on the conducted interviews.

# 5 Findings

In this chapter of the thesis, the findings of the interviews will be presented. The main findings will be divided into seven themes which will be described in the following paragraphs. The themes will cover topics connected to opinions about social media influencers, their reputation, and the impact the reputation has on makeup brands. These findings will provide the data that is needed to answer the research question. In Chapter 5 the findings will be discussed and connected to literature.

## 5.1 Social media as an information source about makeup brands

In today's society, social media plays a significant role in creation or formation of brand image and its products (Lee, Lee, Taylor & Lee, 2011). Therefore, social media is a great source for gathering information about particular products or brands these days (Bartosik-Purgat, 2016). According to participants, platforms like Instagram or YouTube are the ones they choose when it comes to researching makeup products. In addition, some interviewees acknowledged that they no longer watch television, and thus social media has become the main source they use to see advertisements about makeup.

**Participant 4:** *I think back in the days, you saw a lot of commercials on TV but now I think it is from Instagram or something like that where people are posting stuff. I think it looks good on them. And then I want to try it and put it on my little shopping list. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*

**Participant 9:** *I would say YouTube. I watch makeup vlogs there. But also Instagram and blogs but mostly YouTube (...) when I'm about to buy something, then I always do*

*research before. So I go to YouTube and I search for a product and then I watch some vlogs about it to see what others say about it as well.” (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

However, some participants emphasized that in order to fully trust the brand they need to hear several opinions about it and conduct their own research. The participants mostly look for information on electronic word-of-mouth sources.

**Participant 2:** *I feel like I would need other people to talk about the brand or that I've tried the brand and to talk about in order for me to be totally convinced about the brand. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

One participant mentioned that she uses a special app on her phone to research the origins and ingredients of the products before buying them.

**Participant 3:** *I have an app and you use it to see where the product has been produced and for how long it has been on the shelf. I try to use that one actually because I looked up a documentary on YouTube about certified products. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*

She later elaborated on how the makeup industry uses a cheap labor force in third world countries, and that was something that she did not want to support. Therefore, getting makeup from certified sources was an important issue for her.

A common trend that was noticed among many interviewees was that social media influencers are just one of many reasons people considered while buying makeup products. They explained that influencers are just a “push” to buy something they previously saw or saw a review of. Moreover, some participants have been made aware of the product by influencers and then looked for additional information later on.

**Participant 9:** *I think I would have bought it anyway because I was into that product. Maybe she gave me another push to buy it. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

**Participant 4:** *I think with that product, I bought it because she promoted it a lot on her Instagram and after that, a lot of other people also promoted it. So I said, “OK, this*

*is some really good stuff". And then I read up on it and it got some good reviews.*  
(Interview, April 28, 2020)

These quotes indicate that participants do not trust only one opinion maker, but rather a number of those. They need to receive several confirmations before looking at the product up and making their own decision whether to buy it or not. Overall, participants of the study had a positive attitude towards makeup endorsements they see and interact with online. The only condition that needs to be met was that the influencer that promoted a product was previously known and liked by the interviewee.

## 5.2 The term “social media influencer”

Overall, the participants understood how the term ‘social media influencer’ was meant by the researchers of this study which was based on the literature review. The respondents often stated that they consider an influencer as someone who has an influence which could be anyone from friends to celebrities. However, the level of influence the social media influencer has is based on factors such as followers and engagement, frequent posts, level of inspiration, and promotions.

They have to reach a certain level of success. In the following quotes, it can be seen that an influencer is generally seen as someone who has a particular type of influence on someone else, yet that is not how the respondents associate the term influencer.

**Participant 1:** *I think the name influencer is established now that I know the difference. It's a working title. It's like my friends influence me, but they're not influencers. So I get a discrepancy between the word and the verb of influencing.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 2:** *I mean, they don't necessarily need to be famous on Instagram, because that is often how I associate influencers, either bloggers or Instagram or as famous.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 3:** *When we hear the word influencer, it's not something many people call themselves, often you have to be recognized as an influencer. But everyone is one in a way.* (Interview, April 28, 2020)



The term ‘influencer’ was somewhat explained differently by the respondents, where some highlighted the number of followers as a factor to be an influencer, whereas others thought the engagement was a more important.

**Participant 2:** *So an influencer is someone that has 500.000 followers or more and has a relationship with their followers. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

**Participant 7:** *I would say that an influencer is someone that has a relatively large following. (Interview, April 30, 2020)*

**Participant 6:** *People could have like 50.000 followers, but two comments so that is not an influencer, I would say. It's someone who engages with followers and if they actually do something. If people would comment or share. I don't think that followers are that important to be an influencer. Obviously, it is important to be an influencer but if you don't engage with your followers then it doesn't matter. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

Apart from the number of followers and level of engagement, the importance of posting frequently is mentioned by some of the participants.

**Participant 2:** *Someone that posts a lot, daily I would say. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

**Participant 10:** *So I consider someone being an influencer when they post content frequently, first of all, that's one requirement. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

Most participants recognize someone to be an influencer when their content is “inspiring”. They want to be inspired by the influencers and feel a certain level of admiration.

**Participant 2:** *they can inspire you with their style or shop things they wear. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

**Participant 4:** *Someone that posts inspirational pictures, I would say. Someone that makes me press the save button on Instagram, maybe to store like for my own. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

An influencer is known by the respondents to promote certain products, sometimes it is seen as a job.

**Participant 5:** *Influencer for me is a person, regardless of how many followers they have. But as a person, that's for the exchange of money, distributing products and services on their social media accounts, and promoting them. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

**Participant 8:** *I was thinking that someone is doing it for a kind of job. (Interview, May 1, 2020)*

### 5.3 Influencer transparency is valued

Another finding the researchers noticed was a relationship participants had with social media influencers. Respondents were not asked about the relationship per se, but the findings were interpreted from the data. Interviewees value influencers' transparency about social issues, as well as sharing their lifestyle. The content of the influencers' posts is an important part of the interactions participants have with influencers. The content they are interested in varies, some participants mentioned that they care about environmental issues, therefore they mention sustainability and veganism, some other participants mentioned that they care about influencers' personal life.

**Participant 1:** *They're open and personal and they talk about things like mental health issues or where you can find the coolest vintage clothes. So I like those kinds of things. For example, I follow these twins that cook vegan food, and they talk about sustainability. That's also quite new in terms of being an influencer. It's maybe not the first thing you think about when you say the word influencer like sustainability or important issues. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

**Participant 6:** *Because they are very transparent. They really let you inside their personal life, like their career life. They basically show you everything from what they ate for breakfast that day. They really treat all their followers, not like fans, but they kind of make you feel like you're one of them (...) So they really like a family, I would say. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

However, some interviewees did not relate to the influencers on such a deeply personal level as the others, but they rather follow them for purely aesthetic reasons, such as nice clothing or interior design. Moreover, a few respondents mentioned that influencers lower their self-esteem.

**Participant 4:** *I just follow them because I think they have nice outfits and a nice interior in their homes. I can't personally relate to them. I follow them because of the content they post.* (Interview, April 28, 2020)

**Participant 2:** *I know that if I start looking at some Victoria's Secret models then I go into another account and maybe it's a bad cycle, looking at girls that are so beautiful. So you just want to puke. I've tried to break those kinds of bad habits that have resulted in me using social media so much less.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

This shows that even though participants like content that is aesthetically pleasing, they might end up feeling insecure. Consequently, some participants, like Participant 2, use social media less.

When it comes to trust participants have towards influencers, the researchers noticed that interviewees needed to like the influencer first, before building trust in them. If the influencer is considered authentic or has a big following base it is more likely that participants trusted them.

**Participant 1:** *It takes quite a while until I feel like I can identify with someone and trust that person. So I do have to follow a person for quite a while until I trust them.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 10:** *I think, first of all, because they have a big following base. I think that was the first thing why I started trusting them. But then, for example, I've tried several series recipes, I've ordered stuff that Leyglow has recommended and I really find them so good. It was not just a hoax, it's really good. So that makes me trust them more.”* (Interview, May 5, 2020)

**Participant 7:** *I don't trust her because she always posts collaborations. (...) Are they [influencers] telling you about the product because they actually believe in the product? Do they actually like it or is it because they get paid to do so?"* (Interview, April 30, 2020)

## 5.4 The importance of influencer's reliability

The participants were asked how they form their opinion about influencers. In the evaluating process, several factors were brought up by the respondents. Factors that were often mentioned were regarding their content on several social media platforms, opinions of their social network, and the brands they align themselves with.

**Participant 5:** *I would say through YouTube if I see them on YouTube with their vlogs, I'm like, "oh, my God. That's not how I thought you were on Instagram." On Instagram they're perfect. And then I see them on YouTube. And it's also much from their general reputation. Family, friends. How much they're distributing products, what kind of products they're selling or promoting.* (Interview, April 29, 2020)

**Participant 3:** *I just collect everything I know of the person and I have associations to the person, their behavior, what they say, what other people say about them and I look at the news.* (Interview, April 28, 2020)

When Instagram profiles were shown and the participants were not familiar with the shown influencers in the profile, they were asked to give an opinion based on what they saw on the profile. It happened twice that Therese Lindgren was not recognized, the following was said about her by these two participants.

**Participant 2:** *A typical influencer. You can see it with the pictures when she [Therese] sits there and the latest picture, typical product placement. She's also this type of influencer that I don't really like. I don't know her, but my first impression of her is: "I need to look fabulous* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 10:** *So unnatural and so many collaborations, who sits like that in the kitchen and who looks at bathtub products like that? It's just too fake.* (Interview, May 5, 2020)

As can be seen in the quotes of the participants the first impression of Therese Lindgren was not positive. The influencer was judged on the promotions visible on her profile. She was evaluated by her looks, which the participants found unnatural.

Lastly, when participants were asked about what they thought their friends' think about certain influencers were, it corresponded with their own opinions about these influencers. For example, when Participant 3 was asked about what she thought of influencer Kenza Zouiten, she said: "I think she's beautiful. And I think she's funny, too. She uploads things on YouTube and she is being herself. So I have a positive feeling about her" (Interview, April 28, 2020). Later on, she was asked how her friends feel about Kenza and the participant said the following: "I know that a lot of people follow her and when I'm with my friends we would only say positive things about her. Right now, I think people view her as this loving mom, someone who's like fresh. Trendy. Happy" (Interview, April 28, 2020). There was often a corresponding answer found between the own opinions of the participant and their expectations about the opinions of others.

In the interview, participants were asked which influencer they are familiar with and what they think about them.

**Participant 1:** *Because they are kind of open and talk about things that other people may be not talking about and they're creative. They are a little bit in the forefront and not just doing the same thing as everyone else.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

This participant thinks positively about the influencers she follows. According to her, the influencers differentiate themselves from others using their creativity and uniqueness.

**Participant 6:** *I really like them. I feel like I really look up to them and I wish to be like them someday. I think they are like my role models.* (Interview, April 29, 2020)

Participant 6 feels a high level of admiration for the influencers she is following. They inspire her to be like them in the future.

**Participant 10:** *Well, I like them and I'm interested in not only the content but also their lives and what they are like. I was surprised, for example, to know that the skincare girl*

*was a schoolteacher. And I like it when the food girl, Siri when she posts about her kids. So I like them for many reasons and they're content, that's one. But I also like that I can connect to them. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

Participant 10 highlights that the reason for following these influencers goes further than only the posted content, she is interested in the life of the influencer. This information about the lifestyle of the influencers gives the participant context to connect with.

**Participant 2:** *I love her because she is so down-to-earth. She's really just herself. She shares everything. (...) I find her really natural. She changed her nose because she broke it. So that is obviously a reason, but she hasn't done it with her lips or face, et cetera, which I find nice because there are a lot of influencers that are unnatural, with huge lips, fixed faces, and fake lashes. That is not something that convinces me. And she has a nice style. She has a really good bond with her family, which I love. I just feel I can relate to her in some way. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

Just as Participant 10, Participant 2 connects to the lifestyle of the influencer. She also states that she finds it important for an influencer to be natural in their appearance. The participant has negative opinions about other influencers who used plastic surgery to enhance their looks.

However, some of the influencers who are followed are not liked by the participants. As mentioned above, the negative characteristics of influencers are confirmed by these participants. So does Participant 3 mentions not liking the fact that an influencer she follows does not look natural in her pictures. Whereas, Participant 5 highlights that she does not like a certain influencer because she does not feel connected to the lifestyle of an influencer.

**Participant 3:** *Sometimes I feel like cognitive dissonance comes towards following Bianca Ingrosso, for instance. She has been promoting bad ideals and she has been confronted about it. For instance, she retouched her photos and you can absolutely see her stomach didn't look the way that it was presented. So sometimes I get quite upset when I follow those influencers. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*

**Participant 5:** *I don't like her because her lifestyle is not very aligned with my lifestyle. So it's very different. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

## 5.5 Similar opinions about presented Swedish social media influencers

In the last part of the interview, four different Swedish beauty influencers were shown to the participants: Kenza Zouiten, Bianca Ingrosso, Therese Lindgren & Isabella Lowengrip. The participants were asked what they think about shown influencers. What was interesting is that those influencers were generally perceived and described in the same way by the participants. Kenza is seen as *'pretty'*, *'nice'* and *'a loving mom with a cute baby'*. All of the participants were familiar with Kenza and most of them grew up following her blog, therefore they feel a connection with her even if her lifestyle is not aligned with the lifestyle of the participants anymore.

**Participant 6:** *I think she's very popular because she's a mom now. So that was good for her brand, I think. But also, she's really nice to look at. I mean, who wouldn't like her?* (Interview, April 29, 2020)

Bianca Ingrosso was very well known among the participants, not only from her Instagram and YouTube accounts but also because of her famous family and the reality show she is in with them on Swedish television. She is described by the participants as *'funny'*, *'stupid'*, *'outspoken'*, and *'beautiful'*. However, not everyone was positive about her looks which sometimes is seen as unnatural. Moreover, a lot of interviewees mentioned that they do not agree with the statements she makes.

**Participant 3:** *I think she's very funny. She's very outspoken. Sometimes I feel like she has strong opinions about things, that she actually isn't informed of. She's on her family TV program that she's a part of. And also she sometimes promotes unrealistic beauty ideals by retouching her photos a lot. And I don't appreciate that.* (Interview, April 28, 2020)

Therese Lindgren is an influencer whom not all participants were very familiar with, some respondents have heard of her but knew only little about her. These participants had less positive opinions about Therese compared to the participants who did know much about her. The participants who knew Therese better described her as *'real'*, *'nice'* and *'open about mental health'*.

**Participant 3:** *I think she's someone who's really happy, someone who's down-to-earth, and someone who has an easy time connecting to others. She always shares her stories and her thoughts. And I admire that a lot. I have only heard people talking good and positive things about her. That she always feels joyful and she feels what we call "real". She talks a lot about mental health problems. And that was the way that she connects this to her followers in the first place. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*

Whereas participants who did not know much about Therese were not always positive about the influencer, they did not always trust her and see her as 'fake'.

**Participant 5:** *I think I've been on her profile once or twice. So I don't really know her. But I know that so many people don't like her. I think it is because of her lifestyle on YouTube. It is very clickbait-y. She has promoted a brand and then it turned out that it was a fake brand or it was a fake discount, but she's been in some scandals before anyways. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

The last influencer discussed was Isabella Lowengrip, who is mainly described as 'successful', 'an entrepreneur', and 'fake'. Isabella Lowengrip was known by all respondents, many had followed her from the beginning of her career as a blogger. She is communicating her success excessively and therefore does not fit the Swedish 'jantelagen' (staying humble) principle according to some participants. It is mentioned by the participants that Isabella has been in several scandals. The participants' opinions are really split, and many participants cannot really make up their minds about her.

**Participant 4:** *I think that she is different from the other ones because she is inspiring because she started so many companies. I think she's inspirational in many kinds of ways. I know that some people think that she's a little bit too much, that she's a little bit annoying. She's not that Swedish in the sense of jantelagen. Again, she's really like promoting herself. How successful she has been. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*



## 5.6 The lack of impact influencer reputation has on established non-personal makeup brands

In the next part of the interview, the participants were shown pictures of influencers in which they were endorsing different makeup brands - personal and non-personal. During this process the researchers noticed that the interviewees reacted differently when shown an endorsement of personal brands owned by influencers, and non-personal brands where the influencer was only endorsing a product.

**Participant 10:** *Depends if it's their own brand or if it's not. When it's not their own, like with Kenza and Yves Saint Laurent, it doesn't affect me that much because her image does not affect the image of the brand. But when I see Lowengrip or CAIA cosmetics then it's very connected to the influencers. If I feel positive towards them then I feel more positive towards the brands or vice versa. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

When it was a non-personal brand that was already well established, participants did not see an impact on the way the brand was viewed when the brand was being endorsed by an influencer. The participants highlighted that since they already had a relationship with the brand, the endorsing influencer would not bring anything new to the table.

**Participant 4:** *Because I don't see the connection between her and the brand. I think YSL already has a really strong personality. YSL has so much character, the brand itself. So I don't really see why Kenza is bringing something better to the brand actually. (Interview, April 28, 2020)*

**Participant 9:** *No, I don't think it has an impact on me, maybe it's because I know the brand that well. I've heard about it so much and I have a lot of products from them. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

**Participant 10:** *The thing is, I don't think N7 has anything to do directly with her, just because they collaborate with her. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

## 5.7 The impact of social media influencer reputation on personal makeup brands

In this section of the interview, it concerned personal brands where an impact of influencer reputation on the makeup brand was found. The impact of influencer reputation on the makeup brand can be either positive as negative. A positive affect was found among the participants when the influencers were trusted and they were promoting or endorsing products on their social media profiles.

**Participant 2:** *I would say that she is very famous for being beautiful and I think that her brand has a good reputation because of that. She is good with the beauty things and she looks good. She's beautiful and has nice makeup. And then if she has her own brand, it gets even more trustworthy. That brand reflects her beauty. (Interview, April 27, 2020)*

**Participant 6:** *I would say yes because it is very simple and minimalist. It's pretty, she is pretty also. I think I like the design. I like the colors. I mean, she has a good sense of fashion and I think that reflects on the product. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

**Participant 9:** *I know that she has a big interest in makeup. I know she's a big beauty junkie and she just loved makeup for so many years. She has another label called iBianca. She's selling like laptop cases and natural cases and whatever. And I would never buy something from that brand because I don't see her having a passion for this stuff. But since I know she loves makeup and she has done it for several years, then I could buy something from her. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

Not only the trustworthiness of the influencers causes a positive effect on the way the brand is viewed, but also the connection the influencer has with the brand (Abidin, 2016; De Veirman, Cauberghe & Hudders, 2017). When the participant believes the influencer has a relationship with the brand and the brand is really important to them the influencer's reputation reflects positively upon the brand.

**Participant 1:** *One of the biggest YouTubers in Sweden is Therese Lindgren. She started her own line with makeup and makeup removers, like those kinds of facial products. Well, I just wanted to try it out because she's a really nice person and I think she puts a lot of thought into what she sells because that's her own line, her own baby.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 10:** *She's so connected to the brand, you see her in a lot of the marketing of the brand. And it's her, you know, she picks out all the colors like she told a lot about it in the podcast about when she was at the factory in Italy where they make the makeup. She's like: "oh, my God, I'm coming with this amazing new shade that I picked out." You know, she talks very personally about the makeup, that it's her favorite, her everything. So it's super connected to her, I would say.* (Interview, May 5, 2020)

But most importantly, the influencers had to have a good reputation in the eyes of the participant to transfer this good reputation to the brand they are endorsing. The influencers have to be liked and the participant wants to be able to identify with them.

**Participant 1:** *I would say the influencer's reputation changes the way I feel about a brand. it's about influencing me and inspiring me, then I like to feel inspired by the person I like. I want to identify with the brand or the person, the person, and the brand that I buy.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

When an influencer has a bad reputation participant view this will also reflect negatively on the personal brand. All participants agreed that they were not interested in buying products from a brand they connect with an influencer they do not like.

**Participant 1:** *Kenza has a brand called IVYREVEL, and I was really into that brand when she was a little bit cooler, like a few years ago. But now I would never buy from it because I don't like her. I wouldn't buy products that are hers. I would buy a piece of Kenza if I would buy that product.* (Interview, April 27, 2020)

**Participant 5:** *If I went to Ahléns and I really want to have a new eyeshadow and I would not know about where it originates from. Then I could definitely buy it. But since*

*I know it's from Bianca's own private label I would not buy it. (Interview, April 29, 2020)*

**Participant 8:** *I don't really like the brand, but it's because I don't like her. I think that's affecting me. I don't really consider her trustworthy, that's why. (Interview, May 1, 2020)*

**Participant 9:** *I haven't tried any products from her. Some of them are supposed to be good, it is just me being evil. I don't want to support her brand. I think that her reputation really acts out on the product. (Interview, May 5, 2020)*

## 5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter presents the key findings collected through interviews. Seven key themes were identified and presented. A discussion about these findings can be found in the following chapter, where the findings will be explained and compared to the literature.

## 6 Discussion

In this chapter, the findings will be discussed and analyzed. The data will be discussed based on the existing literature around the phenomena. The chapter is structured based on the most relevant topics and findings.

### 6.1 Social media as an information source about makeup brands

Social media is displayed to be the primary information source for the participants about makeup brands. This finding aligns with previous literature stating that traditional platforms like television and magazines have been replaced by YouTube and Instagram (Gruen, Osmonbekov & Czaplewski, 2006). Researchers found that in Sweden the use of social media has grown massively, especially the platform Instagram has increased in popularity (Statista, 2019a; NapoleonCat, 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). The participants of this study stated to prefer Instagram over other social media platforms, therefore, the literature is confirmed by this study.

Another finding is that the participants were not satisfied with only one source of information about a makeup product. Additionally, they looked for confirmation about the quality of the product on several electronic word-of-mouth sources. According to the literature, the reason for this is that consumers have great trust in online reviews and opinions of friends and family (Nielsen, 2012). This statement is supported by this research, however many participants also emphasized having these feelings of trust towards social media influencers that gave information about the products.

In order for this influencer to be trusted there had to be an established positive relationship between the participant and the influencer. Tran and Strutton (2014) found that when a connection with the influencer is formed the purchase intentions towards the endorsed brand

are higher. This research found that, although the purchase intention can be higher by the endorsement of a trusted social media influencer, the participants still feel the need to confirm the information given by the endorsing influencer. The function of the influencer for participants is to make them aware of certain products or helping them confirm the thoughts they already had about the product. This shows only a connection with the influencer is not enough on its own to persuade the consumer to buy a product, additional information often required to convince the consumer of the product quality.

## 6.2 Participants feelings towards social media influencers

The researchers noticed that some participants reacted negatively to some social media influencers that have been shown to them. It was due to a fact that their content did not resonate with their own lifestyle, or it made them feel insecure in some way. This resulted in them spending less time on social media or unfollowing these influencers. Most of the participants who reacted negatively towards particular influencers or their content did not mention to envy the social media influencer. However, Chea (2017) believed that a negative emotion could arise when an ordinary individual realises they are not able to reach the same standard of life as the social media influencer. Although the participants did not admit to envy the influencers in any way, the negative emotion would still arise in the form of insecurity. According to literature this phenomenon can be called upward social comparison (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; Marsh & Parker, 1984).

In addition, participants have admitted that even though they no longer engage with certain influencers as they used to, they like to stalk them on social media to see what they are up to these days. It shows a clear interest in influencers' lifestyle even though it is not reflected by following them. It may be happening due to the fact that both participants and influencers' lives and preferences have changed over time, including their interest in the content they want to see on social media. Therefore, this research argues that once a connection between a social media influencer and an individual is built, they are always viewed as some kind of friends or family, even when the individual does not connect the influencer's lifestyle anymore. The tendency on why the individual can see an influencer as a friend can be explained through Granovetter's theory of 'tie strength'. It states that the intimacy and emotional reactions are crucial to build a

relationship with people in our lives (Granovetter, 1973). Influencers share their intimate moments with their following through their media platforms, therefore Granovetter believes that it can trick people's brains to believe influencers are a part of an individual's life. So it could be presumed that social media influencers' recommendations almost have the same impact on us as recommendations coming from friends or family.

### 6.3 Opinions about influencers

As previously mentioned, Instagram and YouTube are some of the most popular social media platforms among young Swedes. The findings of this study showed that participants form their opinions about the influencer based on what they see on their social media profiles. They are drawn to the content that leaves them feeling inspired. Moreover, many participants stated that influencers that they follow are "*beautiful*". According to Ohanian (1990), attractiveness of an influencer may enhance product attractiveness in the eyes of a consumer, as those kinds of influencers are considered to be more credible and trustworthy. Other researchers agree with this finding, stating that appearance is an important factor in opinion formation and can be important while evaluating the opinions customers have about the brand as it makes it stronger (Aaker, 1997; Bendisch, 2013). However, the researchers found out that in cases where the influencer was not known to participants prior to the interview, influencers were judged based on their appearances and content they post. If there was extensive use of promotions found on the profile, the participants reacted negatively to the influencer. This indicated that not only the appearance of the influencer is important, but also the type of content they share and brands they already align themselves with.

The next finding was related to the way participants view an influencer compared to what they think their friends thought of that person. It was discovered that the majority of interviewees shared the same opinion about social media influencers as their friends. It may suggest the participants' opinions were influenced by their friends. If their friends had a negative opinion about an influencer, their own opinion was reflected by it. This finding aligns with the research of McCracken (1989) about the transfer of meaning in celebrity endorsements. In his research, he found that the cultural context of an individual impacts the meaning given by the individual to the celebrity. The surroundings of the individual, like friends, can be considered cultural

context and therefore, some similarities between the research of McCracken and the findings of this study can be found.

Opinions of social media influencers can be generated through influencer posts and endorsements. The findings showed that positive opinions about influencers were connected to certain characteristics these people had. Firstly, participants needed to feel a deeper connection between themselves and an influencer. Participants wanted to be inspired while looking at these people and gain something in return. According to participants, positive opinions about social media influencers were connected to the inspiration they gave to participants, their creativity, and overall interest in their life. Without it, their opinion was not as positive as those with the characteristics mentioned above. The researchers found out that participants found that the lifestyle content was considered more interesting than endorsements influencers do. Once again, it indicates that having a more in-depth connection to the influencer can impact the way participants form their opinions. It aligns with previous research, as Tran and Strutton (2014) state that influencers share a deeper connection with their followers, because consumers identify with them on a more personal level.

## 6.4 The impact of the social media influencer reputation on the makeup brands

The empirical results suggest that the social media influencer's perceived reputation can impact the views and opinions towards the makeup brand being endorsed. McCracken (1989) suggests with his Meaning Transfer Model that when meaning has been given from the consumer to the celebrity, there is also always a meaning transferred from the celebrity to the brand. However, the findings of this study show that this transfer of meaning does not necessarily always occur when it comes to social media influencers; the level of impact depends on several factors.

The data showed that there was a difference in terms of impact between personal and non-personal brands. Individuals think that non-personal brands and the influencers are two separate entities with both their own reputation. Whereas, personal brands owned by the endorsing influencers are closely connected to each other. Therefore, it has been found that in most situations the impact of influencer reputation is more noticeable when it concerns a personal brand. When it occurs to non-personal brands the researchers discovered that the impact is



generally little, however, there are some exceptions. The findings suggest that when it comes to non-personal brands where the individual has no opinion of, the perceived reputation of the social media influencer impacts the way the makeup brand is viewed by the individual.

The researchers found that in order for the social media influencer to have a positive impact on the makeup brand, the influencer must have certain characteristics. Erdogan (1999), argues that expertise of an influencer is not important until the customer considers it to be. Therefore, it was found that social media influencers have to be seen as an expert in the area of makeup in order to be trusted and have a positive impact. Without this characteristic the influencer was not seen as a trustworthy person, which resulted in participants not wanting to buy the products they endorsed. Secondly, social media influencers need to have some sort of connection to the brand. The consumer has to see that the brand is important for the influencer. Therefore, there has to be a visible connection between the endorsed brand and the influencer. When the influencer is highly involved with the brand he or she is endorsing, the makeup brand is more likely to be trusted. All of these observations fall in line with Ohanian (1990) research in which he measured how different levels of expertise, trustworthiness and attractiveness impact the effectiveness of influencer's endorsement.

Lastly, the participants need to feel positive towards the influencer. Herbst (2003) stated that in order to have success as a human brand it is crucial to connect to an individual's desired or actual self-image since this gives the consumer a sense of identification with the brand. This corresponds with the statements the participants of this study made. Even though Herbst (2003) only mentions the success of the human brand itself, this research implies that a good relationship between the individual and influencer is also of great importance for the brand being endorsed by the influencer.

A negative impact of influencer reputation can occur when an influencer has a bad reputation in the eyes of the individual. Previous literature states that after a connection between a celebrity endorser and the brand is formed, negative associations with the endorser can have negative outcomes for the brand (Louie, Kulik & Jacobson, 2001; Till & Shimp, 1998). This study agrees with this statement, however, as mentioned before, this is mostly only the case for personal brands of the endorser and unknown non-personal brands. In the experiment conducted by Till and Shimp (1998) they found that negative information about the celebrity endorser has a strong effect when there is a connection with both, the brand and celebrities. They found out that there was a smaller effect when there was a strong connection with the celebrity and brand (Till and

Shimp, 1998). However, this experiment was only conducted based on a fictional non-personal brand.

The researchers of this study concluded that when negative information concerning an influencer endorsing a non-personal brand comes to light, this only has an impact when the customer does not know the brand or had little information about it prior to the interview. When it concerns negative information about a social media influencer endorsing their own personal brand, they are so strongly connected that this impact is always apparent. Thus, participants are not interested in buying these products due to the negative feelings towards the influencer. This is due to the mental connection created between these two entities that corresponds with one another. This has been confirmed by Louie, Kulik and Jacobson (2001), who found out that negative opinion about the influencer can have a negative impact on the brand.

## 6.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed how the findings presented in Chapter 5 contributed to the deeper understanding of how the perceived reputation of influencer affects views and opinions Swedish women have towards makeup brands. It was common to check out social media influencers for tips and inspiration about makeup products. Moreover, the type of content these influencers shared on social media reflected the way they were perceived by the participants of this study. This chapter has highlighted that in order to be a trusted social media influencer a strong bond has to be created over many years. Results showed that having a more in-depth connection to the influencer can impact the way participants form their opinions. The empirical results suggest that the perceived reputation of social media influencers can impact the views and opinions towards the makeup brand they endorse. The reputation of an influencer can impact different types of brands these influencers are promoting. This is all depending on the connection between the makeup brand, influencer, and consumer as the reputation of the social media influencer impacts the views and opinions participants have when it concerns a personal brand or a non-personal brand that are not known by them.

# 7 Conclusions

This chapter presents the conclusion of this research. First, the research outcomes answering the research question are explained. Second, it will discuss both practical and theoretical implications that can be taken away from the study. Lastly, the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research will be provided.

## 7.1 Conclusions

This thesis is focused on the influencer phenomenon and transfer of influencer reputation towards brands. The research uses qualitative methods supported by semi-structured interviews to gather more data about the social media influencers phenomenon. After the data was collected, seven themes were derived discussing the main findings of the thesis.

This study aimed to broaden knowledge on how influencer's reputation may shape views and opinions women between the age of 21 and 30 years old have towards makeup. Several conclusions could be drawn from this research.

Firstly, it became clear that the social media influencer's reputation can reflect on the makeup brand social media influencers are endorsing in several situations. The study found that there is a difference in terms of impact between personal and non-personal brands. When it concerned a brand the participant already had prior knowledge about, the social media influencer endorsing the brand had little to no impact on the way they viewed the brand. It is argued that there is only a transfer of perceived reputation towards the makeup brand when it concerns personal brands and non-personal brands with no previous connections due to the relationship between the makeup brand, social media influencer, and the consumer.

Secondly, the type of opinion or views that are transferred towards the makeup brand depend on the connection between the consumer and the social media influencer. In order for an influencer to be liked, people need to feel a positive connection with the influencer and be

inspired by their lifestyle. Moreover, the study found that it is important for consumers to identify with the influencer. In some cases influencers who are liked are seen as family or friends, therefore they are considered a trustworthy source of information. However, individuals react negatively to the influencer when they try to perceive this ideal lifestyle, hence those influencers have little to no trust among individuals and cause unfollowing them online.

Lastly, the findings of this study discovered that the opinions about social media influencers are formed and shaped based on the promotions they do, their appearances, the content they post, and their friends' opinions about them.

## 7.2 Theoretical Implications

The obtained results of this study give a better understanding of the influencer phenomenon and the impact it can have on views and opinions towards makeup brands.

Moreover, where previous literature focused primarily on traditional celebrity endorsement, this thesis could serve as a starting point for academics researching influencer endorsements in relation to reputational studies.. This study provides knowledge of how the reputation of social media influencers can impact views and opinions people have towards makeup brands. Within the literature about the influencer phenomenon little information on opinion-forming of the consumer was available, therefore this research is one of the first to touch upon this topic. Furthermore, the findings of this study were consistent with the existing literature on how consumers identify with their influencers in a positive way. From a theoretical standpoint, the research outcomes are confirming the already existing literature about consumer-influencers identification.

The research found that the relationships individuals have already established with brands may impact whether there is a transfer of reputation from the social media influencer towards the brand or not. However, most literature is primarily focused on the influencer-brand fit and not on the actual impact the influencer's perceived reputation could have on the brand. This study researched the possible value an influencer could bring to the brand. Therefore, this research adds a new dimension to literature where we should not only look if the reputation of a brand

and social media influencer align, but also if there is actually a mental connection between both entities.

### 7.3 Practical Implications

There are several practical implications that were identified throughout this study. Firstly, this research states it is important that social media influencers need to build a strong relationship with its following that is based on trust and identification with an influencer. Secondly, the empirical data suggests that social media influencers can help in the process of brand communication as they have a personal connection built on trust with their audience. Hence, influencers and marketing specialists can increase their communication process directly by building these connections. However, brands should be aware that influencers' reputation may impact the way customers see the brand, either positively or negatively. Lastly, this research provides valuable insights regarding the reputational transfer process through social media influencers to brands. This study concluded that the transfer of reputation is only applicable to personal brands and non-personal brands when a person has limited knowledge about the brand. Therefore, it is important for brands to determine whether such a transfer of reputation occurs for them or not, since this can benefit their social media advertising strategy.

### 7.4 Limitations of the study

This research was conducted during the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, which caused several limitations. As stated previously we had to conduct the interviews online via Facebook Messenger video conference platform since the social distancing measures made it impossible to meet the respondents face-to-face. Since we conducted the interviews with the camera on, we were able to see the participant's facial expressions, which allowed us to observe their emotions and see their gestures. Although, we think that meeting someone in person brings a different type of 'connection' to the interview which we would have preferred. The second limitation of interviews through video call are digital problems which could occur during the conversation (ex. bad connection, delays, etc.). Even though we did everything possible to make sure the interviews went smoothly, problems like these occurred to some extent. Lastly, as the

researchers were not able to conduct interviews physically together, as they were located in Poland and the Netherlands, there was a lack of personal contact. It could have resulted in miscommunications and interfering with each other's sentences while conducting interviews. However, as the researchers agreed on the way interviews were conducted prior to their execution, these problems were limited to the minimum.

Another limitation of this study is that we, as researchers, are biased on the topic since we are females between the ages of 21 and 30 with an interest in the makeup industry. Our subjective opinions could possibly shape the research and affect the reliability of the study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2018). Therefore, we analyzed the gathered data separately before its validation. We were aware of the bias problem, thus we were careful with making any assumptions.

The researchers acknowledge the risk of a potential language barrier that could occur during the interviews. As the participants of this study are all Swedish and for most of them English is their second language, thus there is a chance that some things may be misinterpreted or misunderstood. This can limit their ability to fully express their feelings and thoughts and may impact the study.

The lack of relevant literature also impacts this study as previous research based on social media, personal branding, and reputation is not generally based on Sweden and Swedes statistics. However, there has been some research conducted within Sweden and Scandinavian countries which has helped the researchers in giving an overall insight into the field of study.

Lastly, the snowball sampling method could potentially have limitations. The recommendations of participants on selecting the sample could be biased, since the characteristics of the suggested participants may overlap. Therefore, this sampling method was combined with the purposive sampling strategy, selecting participants on preset criteria, to decrease the possibility of a bias in the data.

## 7.5 Future Research

This research has offered great insights into the way the perceived reputation of social media influencers can impact views and associations young Swedish women have towards makeup brands.

Academics should consider taking an opportunity to further discover how opinions about social media influencers are being formed but also look into how relationships between influencers and customers are being built. This would require more socio-psychological analysis as it might be applied to other social groups and industries as well.

Practitioners can consider looking more into relations between influencer and brand as those can give more understanding of how that connection may impact the brand in either a negative or positive way. It is worth looking into this aspect, as it was discovered that opinions about brands can be strongly connected to the way customers perceive an influencer. In addition, there are still a lot of things that are unexplored in terms of Swedish women and their relationship with makeup brands. It is suggested that expanding the knowledge about how the connection of views and opinions and influencer reputation impact brands and their advertising can benefit the practitioners in terms of brand communication and marketing strategies.

Future researchers should also consider researching how the perceived reputation of a social media influencer may impact other industries, for example, fashion or sports industry. It is also recommended to conduct quantitative methods research, as it may discover new patterns and data unavailable to gain through qualitative methods presented above. All of these suggestions could provide new, interesting data to the area of social media advertising and influencer marketing fields.

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# Appendix 1

## **GENERAL QUESTIONS:**

1. *How old are you?*
2. *Where are you from?*
3. *What is your occupation?*

## **MAKEUP:**

4. *Do you use makeup? Why yes/no?*
5. *If yes: what kind of makeup products do you use?*
6. *What makeup brands do you use (and why those brands)?*
7. *How much money do you spend on makeup monthly?*
8. *Is makeup important to you?*
9. *How often do you wear makeup?*
10. *Where do you buy your makeup products from?*
11. *Where do you get information about makeup products/brands? Why there?*
12. *Where do you see makeup commercials/ads?*
13. *Do these ads you see on ... influence you in some way? Do they convince you to buy the product?*
14. *Do you think it is the best platform to reach you? Why?*
15. *What do you think of the other advertising platforms?*

## **SOCIAL MEDIA:**

16. *Do you use any social media platforms? If yes, what kind. If not, why?*
17. *Are you active on social media? / How do you use social media platforms?*
18. *When did you start using social media platforms?*
19. *What is the reason you use social media?*
20. *How much time do you spend on average per day on social media?*
21. *When do you use social media platforms during the day? / In what circumstances do you use social media platforms?*
22. *Which social media platform do you prefer to use? Why that one?*
23. *What content you're most drawn to and why?*
24. *Do you follow any brands on social media?*

## **INFLUENCERS:**

25. *When do you consider someone to be an influencer?*
26. *Do you know any influencers? Who do you know?*
27. *Do you follow any influencers online? Who do you follow and on what platforms?*

### ***If yes:***

28. *What do you think about these influencers? Why?*
29. *Do you trust the influencers you are following? Why yes/no?*
30. *What content do these influencers post?*
31. *What do you think about the content they post?*
32. *Do their opinions have any influence on you? If yes, could you give an example?*

**If no:**

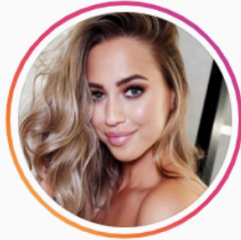
28. *What is the reason you do not follow any social media influencers?*
29. *Did you follow influencers in the past?*
30. *Have you ever seen the profile of an influencer online? If yes, what did you think about this influencer?*
31. *Even if you do not follow influencers, do you still see their content somewhere?*
32. *If yes, what do you think of this content?*
  
33. *Have you ever seen an advertisement on any social media platform?*
34. *If yes: Was there an influencer involved in the advertisement?*
35. *Have you ever seen a social media influencer endorsing a brand?*
36. *When do you think an influencer promotes something? What is your opinion about it?*
37. *What do you think about review videos/posts? Do you find them trustworthy?*
38. *What does speak more to you - a sponsored or unsponsored promotion? Why?*
39. *Why do you think brands use social media influencers to promote their products? Do you think it's working? Why yes/no?*
40. *Do you think influencer endorsements/promotions/advertisements have an influence on you?*
41. *If an influencer would promote something would you consider buying it? Why yes/no?*
42. *Have you ever bought a product endorsed by a social media influencer? If yes/no, why?*
43. *If you ever bought something they have promoted, were you satisfied with it? Why yes/no?*
44. *When you think of a brand using influencers to advertise in the makeup industry, what brand comes to your mind first?*
45. *Why did this brand come to your mind?*
46. *If this influencer would not be endorsing this brand, would it still attract your attention?*


In this part of the interview, we will ask you to look at some social media influencers endorsing makeup brands. We will show you their profile, posts and the brand they are endorsing (Next page)

47. *Do you know this influencer?*
48. *What do you think of this influencer?*
49. *Would you/or do you follow this influencer?*
50. *What do your friends think about this influencer?*
51. *What do you think of the brand(s) he/she is endorsing?*
52. *Do you know the brand(s)? And would you have known it/them if it weren't for this influencer?*
53. *Does the influencer influence the way you feel about the brand?*
54. *Would you consider buying this brand?*

**REPUTATION:**

65. *Has it ever happened that you stopped using a brand because of the influencer?*



kenzas 

[Volgen](#)




5.678 berichten


1,8mln volgers

173 volgend

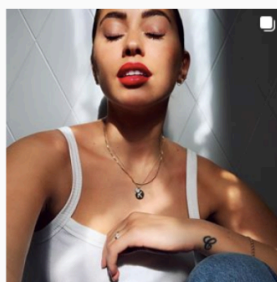
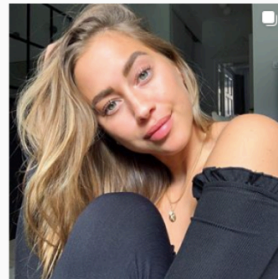
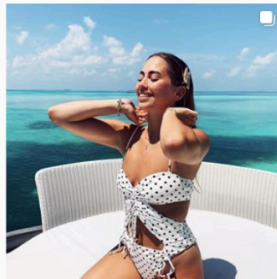
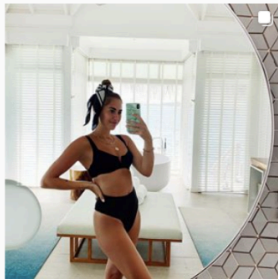
**Kenza Zouiten Subotic**

Digital fashion entrepreneur from Stockholm. SEMA

Co-founder of [@ivyrevel](#) 

Mom to Nikola born June 2019 

My blog [kenzas.se](#) 





**kenzas** • Obserwowanie  
Sponsor: yslbeauty

**kenzas** You know I'm picky when it comes to mascaras but WOW this new one from @yslbeauty called the Curlier Mascara is definitely a new fav. 😍 I also used the Flash Primer under to make the lashes extra long. 🙌 Also on my eyes: Full Matte Shadow no 3. #YSLBEAUTY #CURLPOWER

94 tyg.

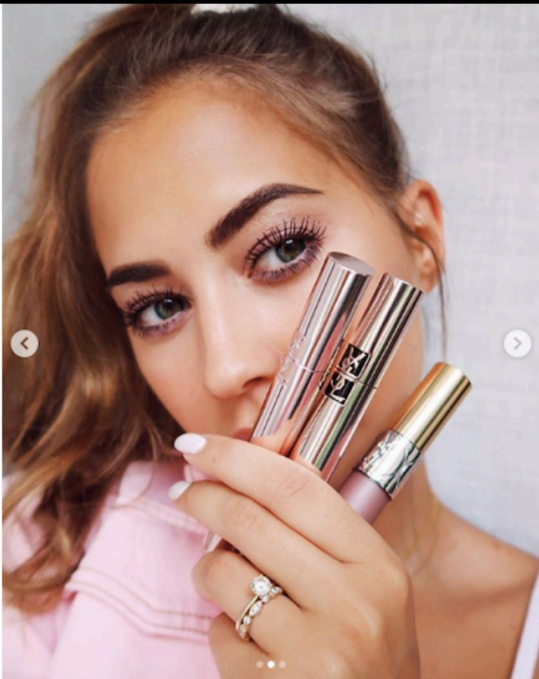
**myra.skincare** Beautiful! 😍 U are so lovely&chic ❤️ Greece loves u!!!

94 tyg. Odpowiedz

Lubią to **plaaaceboo** i **37 953** innych użytkowników

28 CZERWCA 2018

Dodaj komentarz... [Opublikuj](#)



**kenzas** • Obserwowanie  
Sponsor: yslbeauty

**kenzas** You know I'm picky when it comes to mascaras but WOW this new one from @yslbeauty called the Curlier Mascara is definitely a new fav. 😍 I also used the Flash Primer under to make the lashes extra long. 🙌 Also on my eyes: Full Matte Shadow no 3. #YSLBEAUTY #CURLPOWER

94 tyg.

**myra.skincare** Beautiful! 😍 U are so lovely&chic ❤️ Greece loves u!!!

94 tyg. Odpowiedz

Lubią to **plaaaceboo** i **37 953** innych użytkowników

28 CZERWCA 2018

Dodaj komentarz... [Opublikuj](#)





biancaingrosso 

Chatbericht sturen




4.835 berichten

1,1mln volgers

1.840 volgend

**Bianca Ingrosso**

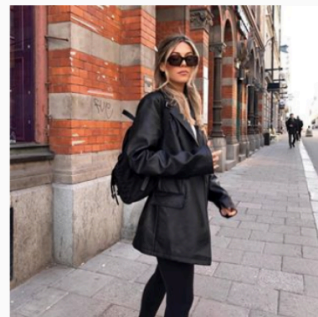
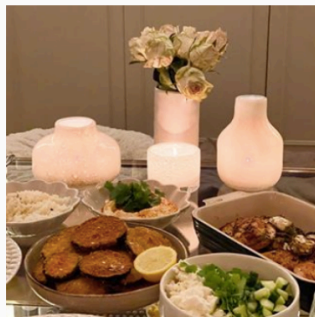
Tv-personality, Entrepreneur, Youtuber & a true lover for food (!!)

 [samarbete@biancaingrosso.se](mailto:samarbete@biancaingrosso.se)

PR: [press@biancaingrosso.se](mailto:press@biancaingrosso.se)

CAIA  [caiacosmetics.se](http://caiacosmetics.se) 

Gevold door hesseborn, sterpinantonio, monicageuze + nog 3





**biancaingrosso** • Obserwowanie ...  
Stockholm, Sweden

**biancaingrosso** Ad for @caiacosmetics Our AMAZING lip pencils 🍷 Soft, creamy, hydrating & vegan 🍷 My faaaaaave color atm is the color Sonoran 📦Get yours only at @caiacosmetics PIC: @vtrports

3 tyg.

**mollyrustas** O M G 🤩🤩

3 tyg. 17 polubień Odpowiedz

Wyświetl odpowiedzi (1)

**bakamedfrida** Wow! 🤩

3 tyg. 17 polubień Odpowiedz

**lovisaworae** Vem e så snvaa

📌

Liczba polubień: 44 847

30 MARCA

Dodaj komentarz... [Opublikuj](#)



**biancaingrosso** • Volgend ...

**biancaingrosso** Ad for @caiacosmetics My first little princess and one of your fave products from @caiacosmetics is BACK on our website 🍷 Link in my bio 🤩 Pic by: @quellglow

1 w.

**camillahamid** Så fin palett 🤩

1 w. 32 vind-ik-leuks Reageren

📌

20.206 vind-ik-leuks



therese 

Chatbericht sturen



650 berichten

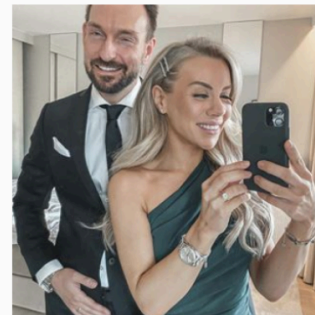
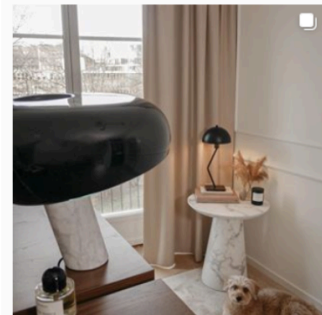
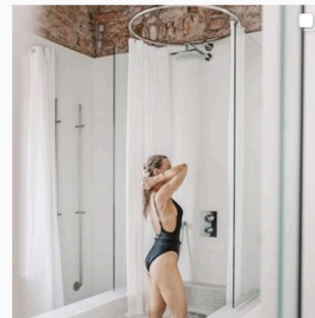
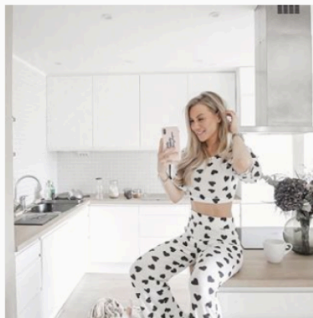
1mln volgers

238 volgend

**Therése Lindgren**

Vegan 🌱 Youtuber och grundare av @indybeautysweden.

Se min senaste video på YouTube [youtu.be/FR5RDviXQGc](https://youtu.be/FR5RDviXQGc) 







therese • Volgend  
Betaald partnerschap met indiebeautysweden

- duvet\_nattis Jag har köpt kittet å de e så fantastisktttt 🍷🍷🍷
- 12 w. Reageren
- wilmadevrij ❤️❤️❤️
- 11 w. Reageren
- almisen0907 När jag köpte den så fanns det bara en sådan typ näsesår och en day crem och en cleansing mosse
- 8 w. Reageren
- justpeachy\_lipgloss Nice ❤️
- 4 w. Reageren

♥️ 💬 📌

biancaingrosso en 27.575 anderen vinden dit leuk

28 NOVEMBER 2019

Een opmerking toevoegen... [Plaatsen](#)



indiebeautysweden • Volgen

indiebeautysweden Om bara fem dagar lanserar vi på Indie Beauty 5 NYHETER!! Kan ni gissa redan nu vad det är? 🍷 #veganbeauty #loveyourself

5 d.

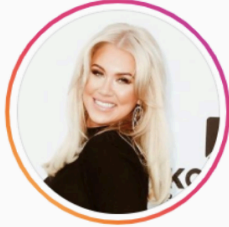
- lindamariie 🍷🍷🍷
- 5 d. 10 vind-ik-leuks Reageren
- kristinaaj92 Gissar hårprodukterna Lyko har på hemsidan 🍷🍷 och hoppas på nytt inom smink typ concealer eller foundation 🍷

♥️ 💬 📌

6.433 vind-ik-leuks

5 DAGEN GELEDEN

Een opmerking toevoegen... [Plaatsen](#)



isabellalowengrip

Chatbericht sturen



5.482 berichten

453k volgers

1.149 volgend

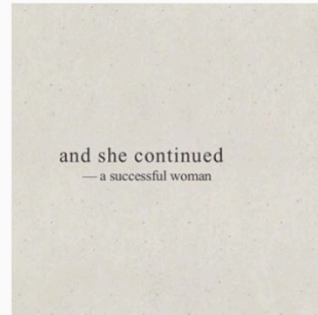
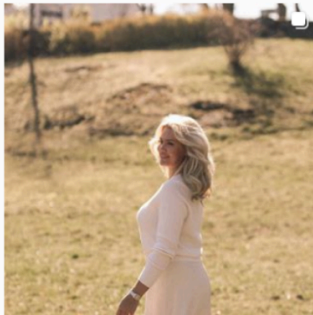
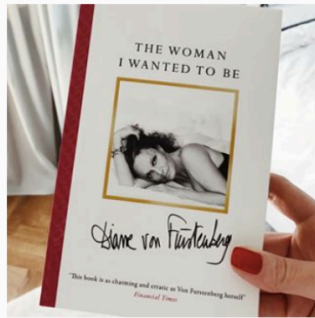
Isabella Löwengrip

Ondernemer

#isabellalowengrip - awarded as the most powerful business woman in Sweden 2018.

Founder of @lowengrip

Gevold door tuasolax, hesseborn, therese + nog 5





**isabellalowengrip** • Obserwuj ...  
Sponsor: goodieboxsw

**isabellalowengrip** • Excited to see what's in @goodieboxsw next beauty box... ✨  
I love discovering new beauty products each month through their monthly subscription, which you can read more about through the link in my bio!  
#goodieboxse #happinessbygoodiebox

37 tyg.



**maskrosbarnmotmiljonen** 🤔🤔  
👍

37 tyg. 1 polubienie Odpowiedz

**susannelarsson21** Fnorma



Liczba polubień: 3 351

5 SIERPŃIA 2019

Dodaj komentarz...

Opublikuj



**lowengrip** • Volgen ...

**lowengrip** • "I love to have sun kissed skin this time of the year, but my skin is sensitive to the sun ☀️ so I use @lowengrip Luminous Bronze - Self-Tan Drops 💧 I mix 2-5 drops in my cream for a personalized tone, sometimes I want more tan, sometimes less (P.S I never go anywhere without my Count On Me - Deodorant - all time favourite products) ✨" - @isabellalowengrip

5 d.



159 vind-ik-leuks

5 DAGEN GELEDEN

Een opmerking toevoegen...

Plaatsen

# Appendix 2



**LUND UNIVERSITY**  
School of Economics and Management

***A qualitative study on the impact of social media influencer perceived reputation on makeup brands***  
***Romee Heijmeskamp & Alicja Szyntar***

Interview Consent Form.

I have been given information about the thesis: “A qualitative study on the impact of social media influencer perceived reputation on makeup brands” and discussed the research project with Romee Heijmeskamp & Alicja Szyntar who is/are conducting this research as a part of a Master’s in International Marketing & Brand Management supervised by Ekaterini Drosou

I understand that, if I consent to participate in this project I will be asked to give the researcher a duration of approximately 60 minutes of my time to participate in the process.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, I am free to refuse to participate and I am free to withdraw from the research at any time.

By signing below I am indicating my consent to participate in the research as it has been described to me. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used for thesis and journal publications, and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Name: .....

Email: .....

Telephone: .....

Signed: .....

## Appendix 3

Name	Sources	References
1. Brand	0	0
1.1 influencer brands	3	5
1.2 Brand knowledge	1	1
1.2.1 knowledge without influencer	9	23
1.2.2 knowledge with influencer	10	26
1.3 Influencer brand fit	0	0
1.3.1 Influencer brand	6	9
1.3.2 Non-influencer brand	8	11
1.4 Mediation of brand relationship through influencer	1	1
1.4.1 Positive effects	6	18



1.4.2 Neutral	6	9
1.4.3 Negative effect	8	21
1.4.4 Reputation has an impact	10	43
1.4.5 Reputation does not have an impact	9	20
1.5 Endorsement from a brand perspective	10	15
2. Influencer	0	0
2.1 Definition of an Influencer	10	12
2.2 Influencer personality	0	0
2.2.1 Influencer is mentioned by the interviewee	10	39
2.2.2 Recognized influencers	10	36
2.2.3 Not recognized influencers	2	2
2.3 Influence of the influencer	0	0
2.3.1 Perceived general influence on consumers	7	8

2.3.2 Influence on the interviewee	7	25
2.3.3 Influencer trust	10	24
2.3.4 Opinion about influencer	10	68
2.4 Influencer content	0	0
2.4.1 Content topics	8	8
2.4.2 Opinions about content	6	10
2.5 Interaction behavior	0	0
2.5.1 Following	9	15
2.5.2 Unfollowing	5	6
2.5.3 Checking without following	6	10
2.5.4 Never followed or checked	6	8
2.6 Endorsements	0	0
2.6.1 Perceived influence	9	12

2.6.2 Motivation of the influencer	4	6
2.6.3 Effect on trustworthiness	9	15
2.6.4 Influence on attitude towards the product	9	19
3. Makeup	0	0
3.1 Makeup brands	10	16
3.2 Product standards	3	5
3.3 Importance of makeup	1	1
3.3.1 Money spent	10	11
3.3.2 Personal factors	10	19
3.4 Information sources	10	20
3.6 Makeup use	10	20
4. Social Media	0	0
4.1 Platforms	10	28

4.2 Type of use	7	12
4.3 Motivation for use	9	25
4.4 Effect of corona on use	6	6
4.5 time spent on social media	10	16
4.6 Following behavior	1	1
4.6.1 Brands	8	9
4.6.2 Content	9	12