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Force-ing intentions

A quantitative study of public brand communication on social media and its impact on behavioral intentions in young adults

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Bachelor's thesis



Thank you!

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate how brand communication can be used by public organizations to affect young adults' behavioral intentions, and if brand communication on social media can contribute to building positive brand attitudes. The study focuses on the authority The Swedish Armed Forces and how young adult's attitudes and intentions towards enrolling in Swedish Defense Conscription are affected by brand communication on social media. The thesis applies a positivistic approach and is built on an analysis of collected data from a quantitative survey questionnaire. Based on previous research and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), two theoretical models were created to show the expected relationship between the variables and the hypotheses. The results show statistically significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables of the two models. It was found that part of the behavioral intentions could be explained by brand attitudes, brand community norms, and brand knowledge and that social media exposure had a positive impact on brand attitudes. However, it was shown that brand community norms had a negative effect on behavioral intentions. To summarize, the study contributes to the research field of strategic communication by showing a relationship between brand communication and the intentions towards enrollment in public organizations, as well as showing the importance of social media in the creation of brand attitudes toward public brands. Lastly, suggestions for future research are presented to find new perspectives and get a deeper understanding of the subject.

Keywords: behavioral intentions, Theory of Planned Behavior, young adults, public brand communication, brand attitudes, social media communication, employer branding

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Sammanfattning

Denna studie syftar till att undersöka hur varumärkeskommunikation kan användas av offentliga organisationer för att påverka unga vuxnas beteendeintentioner, samt om varumärkeskommunikation på sociala medier kan bidra till att bygga positiva varumärkesattityder. Studien fokuserar på den svenska myndigheten Försvarsmakten och hur attityder och intentioner att genomföra värnplikten påverkas av unga vuxnas varumärkeskommunikation på sociala medier. Studien har en positivistisk utgångspunkt och bygger på analys av data insamlad genom en kvantitativ enkätundersökning. Baserat på tidigare forskning och teorin om planerat beteende (TPB), skapades två teoretiska modeller för att påvisa det förväntade sambandet mellan studiens variabler och hypoteser. Resultaten visar statistiskt signifikanta samband mellan studiens oberoende och beroende variabler i de båda modellerna. Det visade sig att stor del av beteendeintentioner kan förklaras av varumärkesattityder, varumärkesgemenskapsnormer och varumärkeskunskap, samt att exponering för varumärkeskommunikation på sociala medier hade en positiv inverkan på varumärkesattityder. Däremot påvisades det att varumärkesgemenskapsnormer hade en negativ effekt på beteendeintentioner. Sammanfattningsvis bidrar studien till forskningsfältet inom strategisk kommunikation genom att påvisa ett samband mellan varumärkeskommunikation och intentionerna att söka sig till offentliga organisationer, samt vikten av sociala medier i skapandet av varumärkesattityder gentemot offentliga varumärken. Avslutningsvis presenteras förslag på framtida forskning utifrån andra perspektiv för att fördjupa förståelsen av ämnet.

Nyckelord: beteendeintentioner, Teorin om Planerat Beteende, unga vuxna, offentlig varumärkeskommunikation, varumärkesattityder, sociala medier, arbetsgivarvarumärkning

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

In recent years there has been a change in the public sector where more public organizations have been undergoing an increasing modernization and marketization. The trend is also known as new public management, a phenomenon that refers to how the public sector has started to draw on market-oriented principles to increase efficiency (Hood & Jackson, 1991). The changed environment in public organizations has also led to significant changes and adaptations in public communication, and an increasing focus on marketing and branding (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012; Zavattaro, 2021). Brand communication has thereby also become a priority for public authorities (Fredriksson, 2021). The Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) is an authority that early adapted to this rise of public brand communication, and as of 2012, they were awarded for their employer brand-building campaigns (Försvarsmakten, 2013). Elin Lidén, marketing project manager at the SAF highlights that since public communication often does not capture attention, the authority's brand communication is especially important to reach the public and by doing so raise awareness, engage and create credibility (Personal communication, 2024 April 11).

The marketization of public communication also means an increasing use of social media platforms by public authorities, including the armed forces, since these platforms offer great possibilities for communicating organizational brand messages (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). The SAF is present on Facebook, Instagram, X, Linked-In and Youtube, with the purpose of facilitating dialog with the public and informing about the authority's mission (Försvarsmakten, 2024a). Social media communication is also specifically important when trying to reach young people, since 98 percent of those born in the 21st century use social media platforms every day (Andersson et al., 2023). According to E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) social media platforms, Instagram in particular, are important to the SAF when trying to reach young adults. What is particularly interesting when it comes to public communication is that 98 percent of this group uses social media channels as their primary source of information about societal news (Andersson et al., 2023). Young people's digital habits place new demands on social actors and authorities, including the armed forces, especially in today's turbulent world.

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, 33 percent of the Swedish population has increased their news consumption (Andersson et al., 2023). The increased threat against Sweden's security changed the conditions for the SAF and its brand communication, as the demand for information about military operations intensified (E. Lidén, Personal communication, 2024 April 11). The demand for more information about the armed forces is especially apparent for young adults, since all Swedish youths, men and women, could potentially be enrolled in the Swedish Defense Conscription (SDC), namely Sweden's military ground training. In 2018 mandatory conscription was reinforced, meaning that all youths could be drafted the year they turn 18 (Försvarsmakten, 2024b). With the threatened security situation, the number of young adults that will complete the conscription will amount to 8 000 people, which is an increase of 30 percent compared to the previous year (Regeringskansliet, 2024). The increasing number of young adults completing the SDC also means that more young adults will be forced to do so against their will (Öbrink, 2024). However, it is still of great importance to enroll people in the SAF who want to be a part of the organization. As E. Lidén describes it: "Even though people are conscripted, we still want to bring in those individuals who are best suited, both in terms of qualities and motivation." (Personal communication, 2024 April 11, translated by researchers).

1.2 Problematization

As the arena for public communication is changing, with more public organizations starting to draw on marketing principles from the private sector, the use of brand communication has become beneficial to reach organizational goals. However, branding of public organizations, armed forces included, is more complex than branding of private corporations which calls for extensive understanding of the implications of strategic communicative efforts in this context. The armed forces are furthermore unique organizations with a complicated relationship with the public, especially young adults, as they depend on their enrollment in the organization. Building strong relationships with this group is therefore crucial to reach organizational objectives.

E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) states that one of the main reasons people do not want to enroll in the SDC is due to the feeling of not belonging, even though the organization aims to communicate about their strive for diversity and positive outcomes of enrolling in military ground training. Therefore, there is a need to understand how the

authority can communicate to affect young adults' intentions to enroll in the organization. Research has been done concerning the impacts of communication on young adults' intentions to apply for jobs in the private sector, as well as how strategic communication is profitable for public organizations. However, little to no research has been done on how brand communication on social media can be used to impact behavioral intentions, specifically in the public sector. Moreover, increased knowledge is needed about how *young adults'* behavioral intentions can be affected by social media brand communication. As young adults have a high presence on social media platforms, it is of great relevance to understand how such platforms can be used by public authorities, including the armed forces, to influence the group.

1.3 Research questions and aim

This thesis aims to examine behavioral intentions amongst young adults and how public brand communication on social media impacts these intentions. By applying The Theory of Planned Behavior this thesis intends to investigate which determinants affect young adults' behavioral intentions towards enrollment in military ground training. Further, the objective is to study how public brand communication on social media affects brand attitudes amongst this generation. To address these issues and gain a deeper understanding of behavioral intentions and armed forces' social media communication, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- 1. How can public brand communication increase young adults' behavioral intentions toward enrollment in public organizations?
- 2. How does public organizations' social media communication contribute to building brand attitudes amongst young adults?

2. Previous research and theory

This section presents previous research within the field of study, as well as the theoretical background of the study. To begin with, behavioral intentions will be introduced, followed by a thorough overview of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Further, research within public brand communication will be presented, and aligned with characteristics of the TPB model. Lastly, the study's two theoretical models are introduced and discussed.

2.1 Behavioral intentions

In the field of strategic communication, understanding human behavior is a cornerstone since the aim of communication instances often is to affect individuals' behaviors. However, researching human social behavior is complex since it is influenced by several factors such as previous experiences, personality traits, and interests (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Therefore, the behavioral *intentions* towards performing a behavior need to be investigated to be understood, predicted and influenced. E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) states the importance of communication in the recruitment of new personnel in the armed forces, and how communicative initiatives may inspire and motivate young adults to voluntarily enroll in the SDC. Furthermore, Söderlund and Östman (2005) highlight the importance of studying behavioral intentions, rather than the behavior itself and mean that even if behavioral intentions do not always lead to a behavior, they can still give us vital information about groups and individuals.

Behavioral intentions show an individual's likelihood to perform a certain behavior, and even though young adults do not fully enroll in public organizations, the organizational goal is to strategically communicate to engage, inspire, and affect behavioral intentions toward enrollment. When people have strong behavioral intentions, there is also a higher probability that they will execute the actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). An individual's behavioral intentions can be expressed through statements such as being willing to, expecting to, or planning to engage in a certain behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Ajzen (1991) assumes that these complex systems of behavior can be predicted through an individual's attitude, subjective norm, perceived control, and behavioral intentions and that they all depend on whether the outcome of performing the behavior is positive or negative for the

individual herself. The arguments led to the development of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which will be applied in this thesis (Ajzen, 1991).

2.2 Theory of Planned Behavior

As mentioned in the previous section, explaining human behavior is complex. Therefore, in the hope of understanding how to predict behavior and examine behavioral intentions, Ajzen (1991) developed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The TPB is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), but as an extended version, it focuses on the behavioral intentions to a certain behavior of an individual. The behavioral intentions represent how willing and ready people are to perform the behavior in question. The general rule regarding the TPB is that the stronger the behavioral intentions are, the more likely the behavior is to occur (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB consists of three determinants of behavioral intention; attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

Attitude towards a behavior refers to the level of a positive or negative connotation towards the desired behavior. People's attitudes are based on their behavioral beliefs associated with specific characteristics related to the object of attitude (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) states that the subjective norm includes external and social pressure to fulfill a certain behavior, and it is influenced by normative beliefs, namely the approval or disapproval from family and friends. The normative beliefs also refer to the chances of the acquaintances performing the behavior themselves (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Perceived behavioral control concerns if the desired behavior is easy or difficult to perform, and is based on an individual's control beliefs. The control beliefs represent an individual's perceived likelihood and probability of succeeding with the planned behavior. The beliefs are influenced by several aspects such as the internet, previous experiences, friends and family, and personality traits (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The determinants, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control, can either affect intentions alone, or together. Ajzen (1991) states that sometimes only one determinant can be enough for an individual to perform the behavior, and other times all three factors play a part. By understanding how these determinants affect behavioral intentions, it can be understood how they can be used to predict and induce a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

The TPB is originally a model that visualizes the relationship between beliefs and behavior, and it is used within the area of behavioral social science. Since the origin of Ajzen's (1991) theory, the TPB has been used in different contexts and applied to different sciences. However, there is no obvious connection between the TPB and strategic communication, and how communication may impact the determinants of the theory.

2.2.1 Application of theory

To investigate young adults' behavioral intentions this study will apply the TPB. Chu et al. (2016) argue that the theory has been used across several academic fields and applied in different contexts when studying intentions and behavior. Gibson et al. (2007) further exemplify how the theory can be used when examining behavioral intentions in the context of young adults and enrollment in the armed forces. Since this thesis aims to examine which factors affect the intentions towards enrolling in military ground training, the TPB framework is most relevant. However, this study also focuses on strategic communication, more specifically brand communication, which is not a focus in the theory. Therefore, the theory has been further developed, and reconstructed to contribute to answering the research questions and align with the purpose of the study. In this study, the TPB will be developed by inserting brand communication characteristics into the theoretical model. The model is based on the original pillars of the TPB; attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. However, each determinant has been developed based on brand communication research. By doing so, this study contributes to the field of strategic communication by exemplifying how brand communication can impact behavioral intentions, specifically among young adults. Thereby a wider understanding of how psychology and behavior are linked to strategic communication is created, which adds to the existing research on how public organizations can predict, affect, and change behaviors to reach organizational goals.

2.3 Public brand communication

As previously discussed there is a notable link between behavior, behavioral intentions, and communication. Brands and brand communication play an important role in shaping human social behavior, which is important for both private and public organizations to keep in mind. The meaning of brands is created through marketing communication, and one could argue that brands would be non-existent without communication since it assigns them a role of

importance (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). The mission of a brand is to give information about the organization, and therefore the mission of brand communication is to communicate that information, create meaning by raising brand awareness, and affect brand attitudes (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). Even though brands are often associated with the private sector, branding, and brand communication in public authorities have become more common, as previously mentioned (Zavattaro, 2021). The purpose of branding in the public sector is however somewhat different and does not solely focus on financial goals, as is most often the case in private organizations. Branding of public organizations also aims towards social and political goals, as well as building loyalty amongst the public (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012; Zavattaro, 2021).

Eshuis and Klijn (2012) argue that this change in public communication is a symptom of today's digital and mediatized society and the overflow of information that comes with it. To reach the public in this climate, new actions and means of communication are needed, and branding offers a unique possibility to do so. Brands can add additional value and create associations and emotions towards public organizations in a way that is hard to do with traditional governmental communication which is often characterized by rational political arguments and policy. Since public authorities are complex, branding and brand communication also offer a possibility to simplify and conceptualize these organizations in a way that the public understands, which in length can enhance loyalty and contribute to stronger bonds to the organization (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012).

2.3.1 Brand attitude

When discussing organizational brand communication, brand attitude should be considered a central aspect. Brand attitudes refer to the perceptions and associations individuals have of a specific organization (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). These attitudes are a result of what people know about and associate with the brand. Therefore, the way organizations communicate about their brand is essential in creating and shaping brand attitudes. To create strong and positive brand attitudes, organizations have to strive to communicate in a way that creates positive perceptions and associations with their brand (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). Since stakeholders' perceptions are at the center of brand attitudes, it is important to understand these stakeholders to create a strong brand. When it comes to public organizations, the subject of stakeholders is more complex since they operate in what Eshuis and Klijn (2012) call a "multi-actor environment" (p. 31). Public organizations are often

subject to matters of public debate and have stakeholders consisting of large groups of if not all of, society. Therefore, many different types of people are involved in constructing meaning and attitudes toward public organizational brands (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012).

In environments with various stakeholders, it is important to construct coherent brand messages to create positive perceptions of a public organization's brand, and this can be done through brand communication (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012; Leijerholt et al., 2019). Having positive perceptions of the organization, namely positive brand attitudes is crucial since it affects individuals' intentions to identify with and engage with the organization, for instance, their intentions to apply for a job within the organization (Sivertzen et al., 2013). A central part of organizational reputation in the context of peoples' intentions to apply for a job is also the employer brand, and employer brand attitudes (Silva & Dias, 2022). Employer branding is an organization's efforts to create positive associations towards the organization as an employer (Rosenbaum-Elliot et al., 2018). Individual's employer brand attitudes also have a noticeable impact on their intentions to apply for a job. Thang and Trang (2024) propose that young adults, more specifically Generation Z's, intentions to apply are affected by the organization's employer brand, as well as the overall organizational reputation. Therefore the authors highlight the importance of working with brand communication, especially on social media platforms, to create a positive organizational reputation, and a strong employer brand and thereafter attract the right people and reach organizational goals (Thang & Trang, 2024).

A strong employer brand is also crucial in the recruitment of personnel to the armed forces. Kaur and Shah (2022) highlight the importance of creating an image of the armed forces as an "employer of choice", namely that people voluntarily choose to join the organization. In line with Kaur and Shah (2022), Lievens (2007) also argues for the value of employer branding in the armed forces, more specifically European armed forces. Since many European armed forces have voluntary military ground training, it is of great relevance for armed forces to create positive employer brand attitudes to still recruit personnel. Working with employer branding in the armed forces can strengthen loyalty and identification with the organization, which also contributes to the recruitment of individuals who fit the organization (Kaur & Shah, 2022).

In our application of the TPB model, the factor attitude will be referred to as brand attitudes, since brand attitudes and employer brand attitudes will be an added layer to the determinator. Research from Sivertzen et al. (2013), Silva and Dias (2022), and Thang and

Trang (2024) suggest a correlation between brand- and employer-brand attitudes and intentions to apply for a job. Further, research from Lievens (2007) shows the importance of employer brand attitudes when attracting military personnel. The theoretical background therefore supports a combination of the behavioral attitude with brand- and employer-brand attitude.

2.3.2 Brand community norms

As previously discussed, public organizations exist in an environment with multiple different actors. Thereby, the meaning of public organizational brands is constructed in a community of a large number of people. Eshuis and Klijn (2012) describe that this environment means that interactions in so-called brand communities play an important role in constructing public organizational brands. When a brand has a strong brand community, individuals have strong relationships with the brand, and with other people who are invested in the brand (McAlexander et al., 2002). Members of the brand community are engaged in brand activities which increases their knowledge about and passion for the brand, which thereafter also results in intentions to use or recommend the brand to other people (Kumar & Nayak, 2018). The argument that strong brand communities result in intentions to recommend a brand goes in line with arguments from McAlexander et al. (2002) who suggest that when customers care about the brand they will also advocate for the brand in other communities. Community members advocating for the brand is particularly important to consider since individuals often rather listen to other members of the community, rather than marketing professionals. Therefore, organizations must acknowledge communication between community members when discussing brand communication (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012).

When individuals are part of a brand community they tend to be more loyal towards the brand and act in a way that goes in line with the values of the organization. Mitchell (2023) argues that brand communities can also have a positive relationship with peoples' intentions to volunteer for an organization since people who have a relationship with a brand will feel like they are volunteering because it goes in line with their values. Further, Gibson et al. (2007) highlight the influence of community when it comes to enrollment of young adults in the military, and argue that parents are a key factor in shaping behavioral intentions amongst this group. The argument is based on the fact that parents' attitudes have a significant impact on young adult's attitudes towards an organization as an employer. Furthermore, McAlexander et al. (2002) propose that brand communities, and the strong

relationships with brands that the members of these communities entail, also mean that individuals typically are more forgiving for potential mistakes and wrongdoings of the organization. To create strong brand communities organizations need to create shared experiences for stakeholders. McAlexander et al. (2002) suggest that this can be done through marketing communication since marketing communication strengthens individuals' relationships with the brand and thereby also contributes to strengthening the brand community (McAlexander et al., 2002).

Arguments from McAlexander et al. (2002) and Kumar and Nayak (2018) explain the importance of brand communities and how they form strong relationships and contribute to people recommending the brand to others. Furthermore, Gibson et al. (2007) highlight how communities influence young adults' behavioral intentions in enrollment processes. These findings go in line with Ajzen's arguments regarding subjective norms and how the influence of one's community impacts behavioral intentions. Therefore, subjective norms will be referred to as brand community norms due to an added aspect of individuals' relationships to the Swedish Armed Forces' brand.

2.3.3 Brand knowledge

An important aspect of organizational brand communication is that people are aware of the brand and know what the organization works with. Awareness and knowledge about a brand are especially important in the context of public organizations since these organizations operate in an environment with complex processes and a high degree of information overflow (Eshuis & Klijn, 2012). Therefore, the concept of brand knowledge is essential for public authorities. Brand knowledge can be defined from two dimensions; brand awareness and brand image. According to Keller (1993), brand awareness is related to an individual's recognition of the brand in different environments, while the brand image is composed of an individual's association with the brand regarding the brand's values, personality, and characteristics (Keller, 1993).

The importance of brand knowledge is highlighted by Sudhana et al. (2023), who argue that knowledge and awareness about a brand, have a significant impact on intentions towards enrollment in education. When people are aware of what the education in question entails, prospective students are more likely to enroll. What is particularly important in this process is knowledge about what resources are required by individuals in the enrollment. When individuals perceive that their own resources and self-image are enough to enroll in

education, they are more likely to do so. Therefore, Sudhana et al., (2023) suggest that it is important for educational brands to try and avoid misconceptions about the brand and create high brand awareness. Understanding behavioral intentions is further important when trying to recruit and enroll personnel. In the context of enrollment of young adults in the armed forces, Gibson et al. (2007) suggest that youths' intentions to enroll are correlated with previous experience with the organization, such as visiting the website or talking to people within the organization.

The suggestions from Sudhana et al. (2023) and Gibson et al. (2007) go in line with Ajzen's (1991) arguments regarding how perceived behavioral control positively affects behavioral intentions. However, the presented previous research adds a perspective of brand communication to the dimensions of perceived behavioral control, as well as a valuable perspective of intentions toward enrollment in education. Therefore, the determinator perceived behavioral control from the TPB model will be referred to as brand knowledge. By combining brand knowledge with perceived behavioral control, the application of the TPB will examine young adults' knowledge about the SAF, along with their perceived behavioral control to find out more information about the organization.

2.4 Social media brand communication

Building strong brands and positive brand attitudes requires strong and effective communication. Organizations therefore need to strategically communicate on the right brand distribution channels to reach the organization's stakeholders and get their message across (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2018). Signh et al. (2022) argue that social media platforms can play a significant role in brand communication and in shaping brand attitudes. Social media communication enables the organization to spread awareness and knowledge about the brand to a large number of people. Through social media platforms employers can also create a positive image of the organization, which is important since organizational reputation plays a significant role in peoples', and more specifically young adults', intentions to apply for a job (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Exposure to content from organizations on social media thereby plays an important role in attracting potential employees to organizations (Carpentier et al., 2019). Individuals who are being exposed to an organization's social media content will get more positive brand attitudes, and their intentions to spread positive "word-of-mouth" will increase.

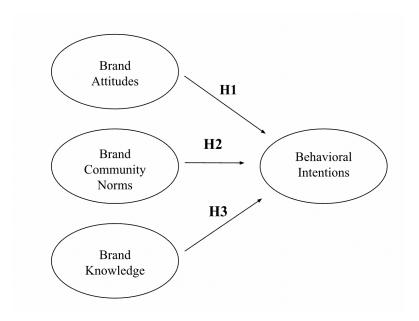
When it comes to public brand communication, the interactive nature of social media platforms can offer great advantages when building a strong and unified brand. Eshuis & Klijn (2012) argue that brands are created through interaction between the organization and its stakeholders and that this process is even more tangible in public organizations. Since public organizations have a widespread target group that consists of all kinds of people in society, many different actors are shaping the meaning of the brand. The correlation between social media communication and building positive brand attitudes, as previously mentioned by Signh et al. (2022) is also highlighted by Marhareita et al. (2022) in the context of public authorities. The argument is largely based on the fact that positive brand attitudes seem to be strongly associated with brand awareness. When people have previous experience and knowledge about an organization they are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the brand. Therefore, Marhareita et al. (2022) argue that exposure to organizations' social media content has a positive relationship with brand attitudes since it can play a big role in increasing knowledge about the brand. Through social media platforms, organizations can repeat their messages and interact with their stakeholders, thereby creating positive connotations and associations with the brand.

The use of social media in the armed forces can often be seen as contradictory since armed forces are largely considered closed and formal institutions, and social media platforms have an open and informal nature (Geraldes, 2020). However, the informal and open nature of social media platforms serves an important function for armed forces. Moehlecke de Baseggio and Schneider (2020) highlight that armed forces are directly dependent on public trust and legitimacy and that this can be built through interactions with the public on social media platforms. Using social media communication is also beneficial for reaching the younger generation and for the recruitment of new personnel to the armed forces (Moehlecke de Baseggio & Schneider, 2020).

2.5 Theoretical models

Our application of the TPB is shown in Model 1. Further, since this study also aims to study brand communication on social media an additional model, model 2, has been created. This model builds on previous research on brand- and employer-brand attitudes, and how these can be created through social media communication. Model 2 adds an additional level to our understanding of the SAF's brand communication, and will further be used in the analysis of the variable brand attitude in model 1.

Model 1

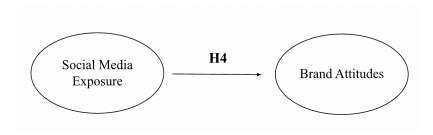


H1: Young adults' brand attitudes to the Swedish Armed Forces will be positively associated with their intentions towards enrolling in military ground training.

H2: Young adults' brand community norms of the Swedish Armed Forces will be positively associated with their intentions towards enrolling in military ground training.

H3: Young adults' brand knowledge about the Swedish Armed Forces will be positively associated with their intentions towards enrolling in military ground training.

Model 2



H4: Exposure to The Swedish Armed Forces' brand communication on social media is positively associated with brand attitudes amongst young adults.

3. Method

In this section, the study's methodological choices are presented. First, the scientific approach and research design are presented, followed by a description of the sampling strategy and the participants of the study. Thereafter the measurement instrument, namely the construction of the survey questionnaire, is explained. The variables are further introduced, followed by a description of the data analysis, including a presentation of tests for reliability and multicollinearity. Lastly, a reflection of ethical considerations is included.

3.1 Scientific approach and research design

This thesis aims to investigate behavioral intentions amongst young adults and how brand communication on social media impacts these intentions. To do so, a quantitative research design was chosen. Wrench et al. (2013) argue that quantitative research and analytical surveys are particularly suitable in social science when examining behavior and attitudes, and therefore it was the appropriate method for this study. A questionnaire was created to gather statistical information about the target group (Wrench et al., 2013). Since this study's first model is based on the TPB, the questionnaire was inspired by a framework from Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) on how to construct a survey measuring planned behavior, which will be further discussed in section 3.3.1.

Since this study's purpose is to research the underlying factors of young adults' behavioral intentions and brand attitudes, it is assumed that these intentions and attitudes exist in reality and are a consequence of former reasons such as beliefs, attitudes, and experiences (David & Sutton, 2016). The scientific approach to this thesis is thereby positivistic, and based on the ontology that reality is objective and exists independently from our findings (Bryman, 2011). The positivistic approach also means that reality is seen as measurable and knowledge is found by collecting objective empirical data, where the researcher relies on evidence. Quantitative data will be collected through an online survey, and the study advocates a deductive research approach where hypotheses rooted in previous research are being tested, to state something about reality (David & Sutton, 2016). According to 6 and Bellamy (2011), the main objective of social research is to make inferences. As this thesis is an observational study it aims to make both descriptive and explanatory inferences. Descriptive inferences are fundamental before conducting the research any further. The study

will then aim to explain the behavioral intentions and brand attitudes and how they are impacted by other factors, which will be done by presenting the correlation between variables and drawing explanatory inferences (6 & Bellamy, 2011). Furthermore, to facilitate the understanding of reality and to more easily present the relationship between reality and theory, the variables were inserted into 2 models, (Eliasson, 2022). According to Eliasson (2022), scientific models are used to explain reality, and they can either be accepted as a proper representation or rejected and developed further.

As the thesis adopts a deductive approach, hypotheses were formulated as a result of previous research and then tested to investigate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, to see if the formulated statements turned out to be accurate (Wrench et al., 2013). In the data analysis, the hypotheses were tested and it was established whether the hypotheses could be supported or rejected. If a hypothesis is rejected the null hypothesis needs to be accepted. The null hypothesis is the hypothesis that assumes that there is no relationship between the variables and can be seen as the opposite of the study's hypothesis (Wrench et al., 2013). It is crucial to test if the relationship between variables is statistically significant to be able to either support or reject the hypothesis. In social sciences statistical significance is achieved if a relationship presents a p-value below 0.05, meaning that there is a 95 percent chance that the relationship did not happen by chance (Bryman, 2011).

3.2 Sampling

3.2.1 Sampling method

When researching a large population, as this study does, one must make a sample out of the larger group. The sample must be representative of the population's characteristics to generalize the results of the study to the larger population (David and Sutton, 2016). The population for this study is young adults born in 2006, who are turning 18 this year and thereby could be called to complete military ground training in Sweden, namely the SDC (Plikt- och prövningsverket, n.d). Since this group consists of 110 000 young adults (Plikt-och prövningsverket, n.d), it was not possible to reach the entire group, and a sample was made. The participants were collected through convenience sampling, meaning that they were chosen based on their availability to the researchers (Wrench et al., 2013). Due to the scope of this study, and the limited time frame, convenience sampling could be justified. However,

the sampling method can be considered biased as it does not involve equal opportunities for every member of the population to participate in the study. Convenience sampling could thereby result in difficulty in generalizing the study's results in a larger context (Bryman, 2011). Therefore, it was also important to collect as many respondents as possible, since a larger sample increases the ability to generalize the results (Trost & Hultåker, 2016). Wrench et al., (2013) also argue that when studying a specific group, in this case, young adults born in 2006, convenience sampling can be useful.

The sample consisted of high school students born in 2006, from a number of Swedish high schools. The survey was distributed via email to teachers who thereafter shared the survey with their students to complete during class. To make the sample more representative of the population, high schools from different Swedish counties were chosen to participate. What should also be mentioned is that the sampling method had non-probability aspects, because the specific high school classes that participated were chosen solely by the teachers. The fact that the survey was conducted in a classroom environment was also beneficial considering the risk of external lapse. Fowler (2013) argues that lapse is generally very low when students complete surveys in a classroom environment. However, since the researchers were not present during the survey implementation and some teachers chose to share the survey on their online student platform, lapse may have occurred.

3.2.2 Participants

Due to high interest from the contacted teachers, the survey ended up having 478 respondents. A few teachers wanted more than one class to participate, and some forwarded the survey to other interested teachers. After removing 34 participants who were not born in 2006, 39 respondents who had not received, or did not know if they had received muster information documents, and four respondents who stated "other" as their gender, the final number of studied respondents was 401. The four respondents who answered "other" as their gender were counted as lapse since they were not considered to be a representative group. They were therefore excluded from the dataset to facilitate the upcoming analyses. However, what should be considered in the sampling process is also response rate and lapse. Fowler (2013) argues that lapse is generally very low when students complete surveys in a classroom environment, thereby minimizing the risk of external lapse. However, since the researchers were not present during the survey implementation and some teachers chose to share the survey on their online student platform, lapse may have occurred.

The sample size is further important to consider in terms of representability. Wrench et al. (2013) note that to be able to generalize the results on the population the sample should represent the whole population in terms of characteristics. A bigger sample size also usually has a better representation of the larger population. Therefore, it was important to get as many answers as possible, as well as diverse respondents. 39.2 percent of the studied respondents were from Skåne County, 20 percent from Stockholm County, 16.5 percent from Kalmar, and 10 percent from Jönköping. The remaining 14.3 percent are from other Swedish counties (Appendix 11). Due to the geographic location of Lund University and the researchers' own background in Skåne and Stockholm, more respondents were able to be collected in these areas.

Out of the final studied respondents, 58.1 percent were female and 41.9 percent male (Appendix 7). Gender was a relevant descriptive variable in the study since the armed forces traditionally is a male-dominated organization. Therefore it was surprising that the majority of the respondents were female. However, this might be a result of the topic of the study and the fact that most of the teachers who were interested in participating in the study were teachers in social sciences, which is a female-dominated high school program in Sweden (SCB, 2016). It was however very interesting to get an extensive female perspective on the matter since the SDC first became mandatory for women in 2018 (Försvarsmakten, 2024b). E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) also highlights that The SAF has increased its focus on communicating with women since women are less interested in doing military service than men.

3.3 Measurement instrument

3.3.1 Survey design

Since the purpose of this study was to examine intentions and attitudes amongst a group, in this case, young adults, it was most suitable to conduct a quantitative survey (Tufte, 2011, chapter 5). More specifically, the data collection was done through a self-administered internet-based survey. It is important to consider the design of the survey since it has a significant impact on the validity and reliability of the study (David & Sutton, 2016). The survey was created using an online questionnaire service and consisted of a total of 32 questions. All questions in the survey were closed questions, meaning that the respondents

were given a set of options to choose an answer from (Fowler, 2013). Closed questions are valuable for researchers since they generate direct data, simplify the analysis process, and can lower the risk of lapse. However, closed questions do not give respondents a chance to explain their thoughts and opinions further (Fowler, 2013). If this study had a bigger time frame it would be valuable to include open questions and give respondents a chance to further develop their answers, especially since the topic of this study may raise emotions amongst the studied group.

The survey was constructed in Swedish, although the thesis provides English translations for all survey questions (Appendix 1). Due to the age of the survey population, we could not assume the English level of the participants and therefore chose to translate the survey. Translating the survey was important to increase the chance that all participants would understand the questionnaire, thereby also improving the validity of the study, namely that the study measures what it intends to measure. However, if the questions were to be wrongfully translated in the operationalization it could negatively impact the validity as well (Wrench et al., 2013). To make sure that linguistic differences, such as differences in wording, were taken into consideration a fair amount of time was spent on the translation of the survey. The translation of the survey was done by the researchers. Translating the survey ourselves was possible due to advanced English skills and native Swedish skills. To improve the precision and thereafter the validity even further native English speakers could have reviewed the survey (Wrench et al., 2013). However, due to the scope of this study, this was not possible.

To begin with, a filter question was included to exclude respondents who were not part of the sample frame, more specifically not born in 2006. If respondents answered "No" to the filter question the survey ended. Including filter questions is important for the external validity of the study since they help make sure that the right respondents answer the survey and contribute to the results (David & Sutton, 2011). After the filter question, two questions about demographic variables were involved, regarding the gender and geographic location of the respondents. These questions were measured by nominal scales since this is most appropriate when dealing with descriptive statistics (Wrench et al., 2013). Further, two nominal questions were included in the last part of the survey, regarding the respondents' intentions towards enrolling in the SDC. The questions were if they had received information about mustering, and if they were going to muster, and the given options were "Yes", "No" and "Don't know".

Since the aim of this thesis is to measure whether brand communication has an impact on behavioral intentions or not, the questionnaire was inspired by the TPB survey instructions of Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) regarding behavioral intentions. However, since TPB in this thesis has been further developed, the instructions have been used as an inspirational framework in the development of the survey. The research questions were operationalized into multiple Likert scales, as recommended by the TPB survey instructions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The questionnaire for this study used assumptions regarding intentions and a disagree-agree scale, and to ensure reliability, more than two questions were asked regarding the respondent's behavioral intentions (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Since the model for this study does not include the actual behavior, questions regarding if the respondents "have considered enrollment", "plan to enroll" or "have thought about enrollment" were asked. The presented operationalization of our developed model of TPB needed to be thorough since it had a significant impact on the study's validity (David & Sutton, 2011). David and Sutton (2011) argue that one thing that can strengthen the validity when working with survey design is to use a previously used set of questions since these questions have been tested, and re-tested multiple times. In this survey, the questions were not directly taken from previous research, however, they were inspired by previous studies on brand communication, and based on Fishbein and Ajzen's recommendations (2010).

3.3.2 Pilot Study

To guarantee reliability of the thesis, a pilot study was made. Reliability ensures that the measurement instrument are consistent over time, and by testing the survey before conducting it with the actual population, the strength of the survey can be improved (Wrench et al., 2013). The pilot study aimed to assess the quality of the survey, whether the questions were understandable, and if they could contribute to answering the research questions. Hence, the pilot study also helped ensure the validity of the study, namely that the survey measured what the researchers intended to measure (Wrench et al., 2013). The wording may seem specific and clear to the researcher, but it is crucial that the respondents find the structure and content of the survey understandable. Therefore it is also important that the sample for a pilot study consist of at least 5-10 percent of the actual survey population, since it will contribute to a more realistic understanding of the group's perceptions of the survey (Wrench et al., 2013). Since the actual population of the survey was intended to be 200 respondents, the population of the pilot study was 20 Swedish high school students born in 2006. Further, 12

people from Stockholm and 8 people from Skåne, 6 men and 14 women completed the pilot study, to ensure a difference in gender and geographical location in the pilot study as well.

When conducting a pilot study, it is of relevance to do so under the same conditions as intended for the actual survey, in this case in a classroom environment (Wrench et al., 2013). However, this was not possible in this study, since it has a limited time frame. Instead, the survey was distributed through a so-called snowball method, meaning that the survey was sent to contacts to the researchers, who then shared it with their friends (Bryman, 2011). The survey was sent digitally through email and text messages, and feedback was received through text messages and phone calls with one respondent. Feedback after a pilot study is important to strengthen the reliability of the study (Wrench et al., 2013). After receiving feedback, the description of the survey was extended, one question was rephrased and one word was put in bold to clarify the meaning. The respondents of the pilot study were also asked to report how long it took them to complete the survey. Since the length of the survey has a significant impact on people's willingness to participate, it was valuable to gather this information to include in the information sheet about the survey and in the emails to the teachers (Fowler, 2013).

3.4 Variables

To answer the research questions, and test the study's hypotheses, the relationships between different variables will be studied. A variable can have different values and attributes depending on the specific aspects of the study (Wrench et al., 2013). In the following sections, this study's dependent-, independent- and control variables will be presented. The independent variables and control variables will be used to explain changes in the dependent variables.

3.4.1 Dependent variables

The study's dependent variables are *behavioral intentions*, for model 1, and *brand attitudes* for model 2. Both dependent variables were measured through several survey questions, which was specifically important in the application of the communicative layer of the TPB model. The dependent variable behavioral intentions were measured through three survey questions (Appendix 2). Two of these questions regarded intentions toward enrolling in SDC, and one of the questions focused on intentions toward identification with the brand. Further,

brand attitudes were measured through four survey questions regarding attitudes towards the SAF, attitudes towards working within the organization, namely employer brand attitudes, and attitudes towards enrolling in the SDC (Appendix 3). In the data analysis, the dependent variables were recoded into indexes including the different survey questions regarding behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. Index variables were used since they can help create a summarized representation of a complex phenomenon by using various variables combined (Trost och Hultåker, 2016). When constructing index variables it is important to ensure that the variables are structured the same. Since the survey was based on Likert scales from 1-5, where respondents evaluated whether they *disagreed* or *agreed* with a statement, the variables did not require manipulation or re-coding before being composed in the indexes (Djurfeldt et al., 2018).

3.4.2 Independent variables

The independent variables are firstly the determinants from model 1, namely *brand attitude*, *brand community norms*, and *brand knowledge*. Secondly, *social media exposure* is the independent variable in model 2. Index variables were also constructed with the independent variables. As previously mentioned the brand attitude variable is used both in models 1 and 2, contributing to a link between the models and a deeper understanding of the subject of study. The brand attitude variable is discussed in the section above (3.4.1). Brand community norms were composed of 2 variables (Appendix 4). One variable measured perceived brand attitudes amongst individuals' acquaintances, and the second one measured what perceived attitudes acquaintances had to the SAF as an employer. The brand knowledge variable was composed of eight questions regarding knowledge about the brand, as well as questions regarding perceived behavioral control to find out information about the brand, two of which focused on social media (Appendix 5). Further, exposure to social media content from the SAF was made into an index of three variables (Appendix 6). The variables included whether respondents had seen content from the SAF, often saw content from the SAF, and if they followed the SAF.

3.4.3 Control variables

Control variables were also included to deepen the understanding of the underlying factors contributing to brand attitudes and behavioral intentions amongst young adults. The control variables were gender and geographic location. Univariate analyses were made using the control variables to visualize the distribution of these demographics (Appendix 7 & 11). The

distribution of the control variables is presented in section 3.2.2. Further, bivariate analyses were made to understand if the demographic variables affected the dependent variables. To enable bivariate analyses involving gender, dummy variables were created to manipulate the variables into numerical values (Treiman, 2009).

3.5 Data Analysis

When the data had been collected it was analyzed in the statistical program SPSS Statistics Version 29. Before resuming the analysis, the data set was cleaned of answers that were not relevant to the subject of the study. Participants not born in 2006 were excluded since they were not part of this study's population. Furthermore, participants who had not received muster information documents were excluded from the study since the study aims to investigate young adults who may be enrolled in the SDC. The data cleaning process also excluded the participants who indicated "other" as gender, since they ended up only being four of the total respondents. After cleaning the data, the variables were categorized into index variables and analyzed separately and in relation to each other.

To better understand the collected data, descriptive analyses were first conducted. By analyzing descriptive statistics, it is possible to explore the variation of the statistics and present the central tendencies (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). The bivariate analyses that were conducted in the study were simple regression analyses between the independent variables "gender" and "geographical location" in relation to behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. Furthermore, a Pearson's correlation test, as well as a simple regression analysis was made between the independent variable "social media exposure" and the dependent variable "brand attitudes" of model 2. Model 1 was analyzed through a multiple regression analysis, to test the strength of the relationships between the variables included in the model.

3.5.1 Reliability analysis

To make sure that the index variables were reliable, their relationship to each other was tested before constructing the indexes. The reliability testing was done by analyzing Cronbach's alpha. If the reliability test shows a Cronbach's alpha between 0.7 and 0.9 the variables can be combined, ensuring that they do not measure too different or similar aspects (Trost och Hultåker, 2016). When analyzing Cronbach's alpha of behavioral intentions and brand attitudes it was found that they were both reliable. The behavioral intention index had a

Cronbach's alpha of 0.872, and the brand attitude index showed a value of 0.819. When computing the variables for the brand community norms index, one variable had to be removed to get a reliable index. The removed variable was whether or not the respondents' acquaintances followed the SAF on social media. The variable was intended to add the perspective of social media communication to the aspect of brand community norms. However, it turned out not to measure the same thing as the other two questions in the index which resulted in the low Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, this question was removed from the index, which resulted in a reliable index variable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.751. The brand knowledge index was measured as reliable and showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.810. Further, exposure to social media content from the SAF was made into an index of three variables. The exposure to social media content index variable had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.723 and was thus reliable.

Figure 1: *Reliability analysis of index-variables*

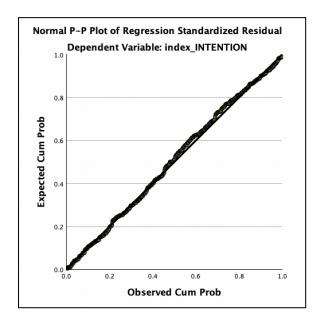
Index variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Attitude	0.819
Brand Community Norms	0.751
Brand Knowledge	0.810
Behavioral Intentions	0.872
Social Media Exposure	0.723

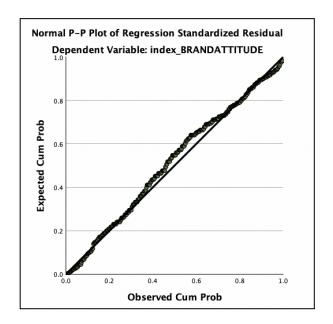
3.5.2 Normality test in regression

When conducting regression analyzes it is important to consider the normality in the residuals in the dependent variables in the models. Therefore, normal probability tests were done, on both dependent variables, to see if the residuals were evenly distributed around the mean. If this is the case the dots in the plot will be observed along the diagonal line (Pallant, 2011). In both plots (Figure 2-3) the points are relatively close to the line, meaning that normally distributed residuals were identified. The plot for brand attitude has a small deviation from the line between 0.4 and 0.7. However, the deviation is small enough to assume that it will not affect the analysis.

Figure 2: *Normal P-Plot, Behavioral intention*

Figure 3: *Normal P-Plot, Brand attitude*





3.5.3 Multicollinearity test

To test for multicollinearity in the MRA in model 1, namely in the hypothesis testing of H1-H3, a Pearson's correlation test was made. The correlation test was run to ensure that none of the relationships between the different independent variables were higher than 0.8. In that case, the model could be a victim of multicollinearity, meaning that independent variables are correlated internally or to one another. Multicollinearity might arise if the independent variables affect one another too much. If this happens the results of the MRA cannot be trusted (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). By running a Pearson's correlation it was discovered that the variables did not show collinearity (Appendix 17), since none of the variables showed a correlation higher than 0.8 (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). All of the correlations were statistically significant (p < 0.001).

Figure 4: *Pearson's correlation, testing for multicollinearity*

Index variables	Brand Attitude	Brand Community Norms	Brand Knowledge
Brand Attitude	1	0.506*	0.540*
Brand Community Norms	0.506*	1	0.303*
Brand Knowledge	0.540*	0.303*	1

^{* =} p < .001

Since a correlation table does not always show multicollinearity, a collinearity diagnosis was further run to visualize the collinearity tolerance and variance influence factor (VIF) (Appendix 16). According to Djurfeldt et al. (2018), the VIF should be below 2.5 to ensure that the variables do not have collinearity with one another. Moreover, the tolerance should be higher than 0.1 and preferably measured as high as possible (Pallant, 2010). The collinearity diagnosis showed that all tolerance levels were over 0.1 and VIFs of 1.728, 1.343, and 1.418. Since all VIFs were under 2.5 this indicates that there was no issue with multicollinearity in the TPB model.

Figure 5: *Multicollinearity test with tolerance and VIF*

Index variables	Tolerance	VIF
Brand Attitude	0.579	1.727
Brand Community Norms	0.743	1.346
Brand Knowledge	0.707	1.415

3.6 Ethical Considerations

When conducting research it is essential to consider the ethical aspects and implications of one's study. The most basic form of ethical consideration is to have consent from the participants of the study (Bryman, 2011). Consent to this study was given in two steps. Firstly, the teachers gave consent to let their students participate in the study, which is essential when conducting research in a classroom environment (David & Sutton, 2016). Secondly, the students themselves gave their consent to participate in the study when filling out the survey. What should be considered is that since the population of this study is young adults born in 2006, not all of the respondents have turned 18, which can have implications in matters of consent. However, according to the Swedish Ethics Authority children over 15 years old are considered mature enough to give consent to participating in survey research without the involvement of their parents. It is on the other hand crucial that respondents under 18 years old get a thorough description of the study they are participating in and are aware of what their participation means (Etikprövningsmyndigheten, n.d.).

The importance of information is also highlighted by Bryman (2011) who states that all respondents should know the purpose of the study and how their answers will be used. Since the survey was distributed through email the space and opportunity for information about the survey was limited. To ensure as much transparency as possible the survey included a thorough description of the study and the teachers were briefed with an even more in-depth description. Further, both the teachers and students were given contact information to the researchers if questions arose, or if they wanted to get access to the final paper. It is also important that all participants know that it is voluntary to participate in the study (Bryman, 2011). The fact that participation was voluntary was also communicated via email to the teachers and then explained thoroughly in the description of the survey. However, what should be noted is that we are unaware of how the study was presented to the students in the classroom environment and therefore cannot guarantee that the teachers were clear about the fact that the study was voluntary.

The fact that the study was conducted in a classroom environment could have some implications. For example, the respondents may be subject to so-called "social desirability bias", meaning that they might alter their answers in a way that suits the norm (Wrench et al., 2013). Wrench et al., (2013) however highlight that the most important treatment for this phenomenon is that the respondents are anonymous, which was the case in this study. Ensuring anonymity was also important in relation to confidentiality. It is important to ensure confidentiality in research, meaning that the researchers should make sure that the study's participants can't be identified in the results (David and Sutton, 2016). Since the teachers chose which classes would participate, the specific classes and students were unknown to the researchers. Further, neither the specific schools, nor cities that participated in the study were presented. The information about anonymity, but also confidentiality, was communicated both to the teachers and through the survey description to the students. It must be communicated to the participants that confidentiality is ensured since it increases the validity of the study when respondents feel safe to answer the survey honestly (Wrench et al., 2013).

4. Results and analysis

The results section will begin with descriptive analyses, including analyses of control variables, as well as of the individual index variables. Further, regression and correlation analyses are presented and the formulated hypotheses are tested. Thereafter, an interpretation of the data in relation to previous research and theory is included.

4.1 Descriptive analysis

To test the theoretical models and the hypotheses, descriptive statistics will be analyzed to explore the data and pave the way for the multivariate analysis. By conducting bivariate analyses with the control variables in relation to the dependent variables, as well as univariate analyses with a comparison of means in the independent variables of the two models, a better understanding of the data will be created. Understanding the data is important before moving further with regression analyses (Bryman, 2011).

4.1.1 Effects of control variables on behavioral intentions and brand attitudes

Gender was analyzed in relation to the behavioral intention index and brand attitude index through compared means (Appendix 8). Regarding behavioral intentions, as showcased in Figure 6, males had a mean of 9.26 out of 15, while females had a mean of 6.74. However, the male proportion had a standard deviation of 4.06, while the female had a standard deviation of 3.58. A higher standard deviation means that the expected value is more unevenly distributed around the mean of the group (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). The means for the brand attitude index, showcased in Figure 7, were 17.42 among females and 18.76 among males, which indicates that the differences between the groups were quite low.

Figure 6: Means table, Gender, and behavioral intentions

Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	N	Highest value of index
Female	6.74	3.58	233	15
Male	9.26	4.06	168	15

Figure 7: Means table, Gender and brand attitude

Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	N	Highest value of index
Female	17.42	4.25	233	25
Male	18.76	4.68	168	25

Due to the difference in means, further analyses were made to examine the impact of gender on the dependent variables. A bivariate analysis in the form of simple regression analysis was used to test if the change in the dependent variables was a result of gender, or an effect of other aspects (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). To do so, the gender variables were recorded into numerical values in the form of dummy variables (Treiman, 2009). The coefficients showed a negative statistically significant relationship between females and their intentions with a t-value of -6.547 (p<.001), and a positive relationship (t=6.547) between males and their intentions towards enrollment (p<.001). Additionally, It was found that the relationship between females and brand attitudes also had a negative statistically significant relationship (t=-2.984) (p=.003), and males had a positive relationship (t=2.984, p=.003). However, this coefficient was not as strong as the intentions.

The regression between gender and the dependent variables also showed Pearson's R-square, the determination coefficient, which can tell us the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in percent (Bryman, 2011). Since this study uses a smaller sample size, the Adjusted R-square will be used, due to the fact that the R-square tends to give a high value when analyzing smaller samples (Pallant, 2010). The adjusted R squares were 0.019 between gender and brand attitude and 0.095 between gender and behavioral intentions, which indicates that 1.9 percent of the variance in brand attitudes, as well as 9.5 percent of the variance in behavioral intentions, can be explained by gender. These results are however relatively low, which indicates that other independent variables may be responsible for the change in behavioral intentions and brand attitudes.

The county variable was investigated along with the brand attitude index and behavioral intention index to see the means of brand attitudes and behavioral intention around Sweden (Appendix 12). However, what should be acknowledged is that only the means of the four counties with the most respondents are included in the analysis since the remaining counties only had a few respondents. Therefore, the results regarding the comparison of means cannot say anything about the total impact of the county on the dependent variables.

What can be observed on the other hand is that the means of the counties with the most respondents had minimal differences. The brand attitudes in Skåne were 17.94 of the maximum 25. The mean in Stockholm county was 18.76, in Kalmar 16.25, and in Jönköping it was 19.07 (Appendix 12). The means of behavioral intentions were 7.93 out of 15 in Skåne, 8.75 in Stockholm, 6.36 in Kalmar, and 7.62 in Jönköping (Appendix 12). The relatively high score in Skåne and Stockholm further had a standard deviation of 4.16 (Skåne) and 3.97 (Stockholm). The results show that, at least in the four biggest county groups, geographic location had minimal impact on behavioral intentions and brand attitudes since the means are relatively alike.

4.1.2 Descriptive analysis of determinants in theoretical models

Descriptive statistics for the different variables in the theoretical models are presented in Figure 8 below. The behavioral intention index had a mean of 7.8, and since the highest value was 15, it can be observed that the behavioral intentions were relatively neutral. However, the variable had a high standard deviation (3.98). The brand attitude index had a mean of 17.98. Compared to the highest value of 25 this mean was relatively high, although the standard deviation (4.48) was also high. The brand community norm index also had a high mean (6.85 out of 10), and a standard deviation of 1.68. The brand knowledge index showed the highest mean compared to its total (30.15 out of 40). On the other hand, the standard deviation was also relatively high (5.37).

Figure 8: Descriptive statistics for the variables in Model 1

Index variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Lowest value	Highest value
Brand Attitude	17.98	4.48	5	25
Brand community norm	6.85	1.68	2	10
Brand knowledge	30.15	5.37	8	40
Behavioral intention	7.8	3.98	3	15

The mean of the social media exposure index had the lowest mean of all the index variables compared to its maximum value. The mean was 7.07 out of 15, which speaks for exposure being low within the population. However, two of the variables within the index showed noticeably lower values than the third, which could be an explanation for the low mean and high standard deviation of 3 (Appendix 14-15).

Figure 9: *Descriptive statistics for the variables in Model 2*

Index variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Lowest value	Highest value
Brand Attitude	17.98	4.48	5	25
Social media exposure	7.07	3	3	15

Interpretation of descriptive statistics

By analyzing the relationships between the control variables and the dependent variables it was found that county had a minimal impact on the difference in means. Furthermore, due to the unevenly distributed results not much can be said about the impact of means. However, this was to be expected due to the fact that every young adult in all counties has the same demands regarding enrollment in the SDC. Further, the SAF has military bases all over Sweden (Försvarsmakten, 2020) and enrollment in the SDC therefore does not require a bigger effort from young adults in specific geographic locations. What was observed on the other hand was that gender did have an effect on behavioral intentions in model 1. Females' intentions were found to be low, whilst males' intentions were higher compared to the neutral value. Further, the regression analysis showed that gender could explain parts of (9.5%) behavioral intentions. The fact that gender did affect behavioral intentions is important to keep in mind when discussing the results of the following regression analysis. The impact of gender on behavioral intentions might be an effect of the relatively new inclusion of women in the SDC, and the fact that military organizations are traditionally male-dominated. The results also go in line with E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) statements about how women are less interested in doing military service in comparison to men. However, the high standard deviations also suggest a difference within the groups, indicating widespread behavioral intentions across both women and men. Brand attitudes showed minimal difference in means across the genders, and the regression analysis showed that only 1.9 percent of the change in brand attitudes could be explained by gender.

When analyzing the means of the index variables in model 2 it can be observed that young adults have a low social media exposure to content from the SAF. The low exposure is interesting since E. Lidén (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) highlights the importance of social media communication when reaching young adults. Further, the low exposure speaks for a deeper understanding of whether exposure has impacted brand attitudes, as

suggested in previous research since these proved to be relatively high amongst the group. The relationship between social media exposure and brand attitudes will be analyzed further in section 4.4. Lastly, it was found that all the independent variables in model 1 had a high mean since the respondents generally answered more than 3 on each Likert scale from 1-5. The results thereby indicate that young adults have positive brand attitudes towards the SAF, positive brand community norms as well as high brand knowledge. However, since the mean for behavioral intentions was relatively neutral it can also be assumed that young adults in general have limited intentions towards enrolling in the SDC. These findings speak for a deeper understanding of the link between the determinants and behavioral intentions towards enrolling in military ground training, which will be carried out in the following section through a multiple regression analysis.

4.2 Multiple regression analysis

To test the study's first model a multiple regression analysis (MRA) was made to analyze how much of the change in intentions was a result of brand attitudes, brand community norms, and brand knowledge (Bryman, 2011). MRA takes several variables into account and is therefore important in most social science research since it often deals with complex phenomena that can seldom be explained by one simple variable (Treiman, 2009). In the MRA, the standardized beta coefficients, t-value, and p-value were analyzed to measure the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and if this relationship was statistically significant. Further, the Adjusted R-Square was analyzed in the MRA to measure in percentage how much of the change in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables (Bryman, 2011).

The table below visualizes the multiple regression analysis for model 1 (Figure 10). The analysis showed an Adjusted R-square of 0.626, which indicates that the independent variables in the model can explain 62.6 percent of the effect in the dependent variable behavioral intention. Further, the variance analysis of the ANOVA test shows that the test is statistically significant (p<.001), namely that the effect of brand attitudes, brand community norms, and brand knowledge on behavioral intentions did not happen by chance (Appendix 16).

Figure 10: Coefficients for dependent variable, Index Behavioral Intentions

Index variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	Significance
Brand Attitude	0.786	19.567	<.001
Brand Community Norms	-0.154	-4.342	<.001
Brand Knowledge	0.124	3.424	<.001

4.3 Hypotheses testing, model 1 (H1-H3)

4.3.1 Effects of brand attitude on behavioral intentions

The multiple regression analysis shows a relationship between brand attitude and behavioral intentions. The standardized coefficient beta (β) is 0.786, which indicates that a change of 1 in brand attitudes results in an increase of 0.786 in behavioral intentions (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). Furthermore, the t-value was 19.567, proving a strong positive relationship between brand attitudes and behavioral intentions. Since this relationship was statistically significant (p < .001), it can be assumed that the empirical data supports H1.

Interpretation of results

Since H1 could be supported by the data, it can be assumed that young adults' brand attitudes towards the SAF impact their intentions towards enrollment in the organization. The results therefore go in line with research from both Sivertzen et al. (2013) and Silva and Dias (2022) who both suggest that positive brand attitudes correlate with higher intentions to apply for a job within an organization. As Ajzen (1991) states, attitudes toward a behavior resonate with behavioral intentions, which could also be found to be true in the results of this study. It further resonates with arguments from Lievens (2007) regarding the strong impact of brand attitudes in recruitment processes in European armed forces. Additionally, brand attitudes were shown to be the determinant in model 1 that had the biggest effect on behavioral intentions amongst young adults. The strong impact of brand attitudes might be an effect of the characteristics of the generation, and what Thang and Trang (2024) propose regarding how Generation Z's intentions to apply for jobs are largely rooted in their brand- and employer-brand attitudes. The alignment of the empirical findings along with previous research and theory strengthens the support for the first hypothesis.

4.3.2 Effects of brand community norms on behavioral intentions

Concerning the effects of brand community norms on behavioral intentions, the regression analysis showed a negative standardized coefficient beta (β) of -0.154, meaning that a change of 1 in brand community norms leads to a decrease with 0.154 in behavioral intentions. The results also show a negative t-value (-4.342) which confirms, contrary to the predictions, the negative relationship even further. The negative relationship was also found to be statistically significant (p<.001) which argues for the empirical findings not aligning with H2. Therefore, the null hypothesis, namely that there is no positive relationship, is supported.

Interpretation of results

Since there was no positive effect of brand community norms on behavioral intentions amongst young adults, the results also contradict Ajzen's (1991) theory that subjective norms affect behavioral intentions. It further contradicts arguments from Mitchell (2023) who suggests that brand communities can have a positive relationship with peoples' intentions to volunteer to an organization. In fact, the results show that even though the brand community norms generally were high amongst the group, as shown in the descriptive analysis, they did not positively impact behavioral intentions towards enrollment in the organization. The results thereby further contradict Kumar & Nayak's (2018) arguments about how strong brand communities lead to higher intentions to engage with the brand. What should be acknowledged is that the brand community norms index only consisted of two survey questions, due to the previously discussed (section 3.4.1) difficulty in creating a reliable index with the variable. Therefore, the variable might not include enough aspects of the brand community norms to fully understand its impact on behavioral intentions. Therefore, based on the empirical findings of this study, support for hypothesis two cannot be found. Our findings also speak against Eshuis and Klijn's (2012) thesis that brand communities are important to consider in public brand communication, and rather speak of the importance of other factors when aiming to affect behavioral intentions amongst young adults.

4.3.3 Effects of brand knowledge on behavioral intentions

The results show a positive effect of brand knowledge on behavioral intentions. The positive standardized coefficient beta (β) of 0.124 indicates that a change of 1 in the brand knowledge determinant affects young adults' behavioral intentions with 0.124. Further, the relationship

had a t-value of 3.424 and a p-value of <.001, showing a positive statistically significant relationship between the variables. Thus, it can be assumed that based on our findings, H3 is supported. However, this effect is noticeably smaller than the positive effect of brand attitudes.

Interpretation of results

Due to the support for H3, it can be assumed that brand knowledge about the SAF is positively associated with young adults' behavioral intentions towards enrollment in the organization. The positive impact of brand knowledge goes in line with research from Sudhana et al. (2023), who highlight the link between knowledge and awareness about a brand and peoples' intentions towards enrollment in education. Furthermore, Gibson et al. (2007) suggest the importance of previous knowledge about an organization in young adults' intentions to enroll in the armed forces. A link between Suhana et al. (2023), Ajzen's (1991) theory, and the results of this study could also be observed regarding perceived behavioral control. In line with Ajzen's (1991) determinant perceived behavioral control, Sudhana et al. (2023) argue that when people know what enrollment entails, they are more likely to perform the behavior. These tendencies could be found in the results of this study as well which further indicates that the third hypothesis can be supported. What should be mentioned is that even though brand knowledge had a significant effect on behavioral intentions, the impact was much smaller than the effect of brand attitudes. The relationship was shown even though brand knowledge was the determinant young adults reported the highest scores on. Due to the high security threat level in the world, and the fact that all included respondents had received muster information documents, high brand knowledge is not unexpected.

4.4 Hypothesis testing, model 2 (H4)

4.4.1 Effects of social media exposure on brand attitudes

To test H4, the relationship between exposure to content from the SAF was tested in relation to brand attitudes. By running a Pearson's correlation test, to see to what degree the numerical independent and dependent variables co-varied, it was found that there was a statistically significant correlation (p<.001) of 0.378 (Appendix 18). The results thereby show that social media exposure does correlate with brand attitudes. However, the correlation coefficient, Pearson's r, is quite low which indicates that the correlation is relatively low. If

the variables do not have a co-variance Pearson's r will be 0, and if they have a complete variance it will be 1 or -1. Therefore the correlation is stronger the closer Pearson's r is to 1 or -1 (Djurfeldt et al., 2018).

Further, it was investigated if the variation that was observed in the dependent variable, brand attitudes, could be explained by the independent variable social media exposure. Therefore a single regression analysis was made (Djurfeldt et al., 2018). The regression (Appendix 19) showed an unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.564, meaning that a change of 1 in social media exposure leads to a change of 0.564 in brand attitudes. Djurfeldt et al. (2018) argue that in regression analysis with only one independent variable the unstandardized beta coefficient should be used. It can also be observed that the regression has a t-value of 8.164 and a p-value of <.001 presenting a statistically significant positive relationship between social media exposure and brand attitudes. The regression also shows an Adjusted R-square of 0.141 which indicates that 14.1 percent of the change in brand attitudes can be explained by exposure to social media content. Thereby, it can be assumed that the empirical findings support H4.

Figure 11: Coefficients for dependent variable - Index Brand Attitude

Index variable	Unstandardized Coefficients Beta	t-value	Significance
Social media exposure	0.564	8.164	<.001

Interpretation of results

As the results supported H4 it was shown that exposure to the SAF's social media content had a positive effect on young adults' brand attitudes. The finding aligns with previous research from Sighn et al. (2022) and Carpentier et al. (2019) who both state that exposure to social media content contributes to positive brand attitudes. Further, the findings confirm Marhareita et al.'s (2022) claims that this correlation is true in public organizations as well. What should be mentioned on the other hand is that since the exposure rate was low, it is to be expected that brand attitudes also are affected by other factors to a large extent, which can explain the low value of the Adjusted R-square. Furthermore, this study does not take into account what type of content the respondents had seen from the SAF, which could have impacted the results. The SAF is also an organization that is present on other social media

channels than their own, especially due to the current security situation. Therefore, we cannot be sure that the content the respondents have seen was content posted on the SAF's own social media channels. However, even though the correlation and the determination coefficient were low, the empirical findings, supported by findings in previous research, still provide evidence in line with the fourth hypothesis. The findings thereby prove E. Lidén's (Personal communication, 2024 April 11) point that social media platforms are important when aiming to reach young adults.

5. Discussion and conclusion

In the last section of the thesis, the results and analysis will be discussed. The findings from the previous section are analyzed in relation to previous research within the field. Further, a critical discussion of alternative explanations of the results is included. Finally, this study's contributions to the field of strategic communication are presented, followed by a discussion of relevant topics and suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion

As discussed in the previous sections both models showed statistically significant relationships between the independent and dependent variables and caused part of the changes in behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. By testing the theoretical models, empirical data in line with previous research was found. When studying the determinants of behavioral intentions in model 1, it was found that both brand attitudes and brand knowledge had a statistically significant impact on intentions. However, contrary to previous beliefs and previous research the outcome of model 1 also showed a negative statistically significant relationship between brand community norms and behavioral intentions. The negative relationship contradicts Ajzen's (1991) theory that subjective norms are positively associated with positive behavioral intentions, as well as arguments from Mitchell (2023) and Kumar & Nayak (2018) who argue for the impact of strong brand communities on intentions towards involvement with a brand.

The positive impact of brand attitudes and brand knowledge on intentions goes in line with parts of Ajzen's (1991) TPB model and the argument that attitudes and perceived behavioral control positively affect behavioral intention. The findings also align with previous research from Sivertzen et al. (2013) and Silva and Dias (2022), who both highlight how positive brand attitudes have a positive impact on intentions. Further the results also align with findings from Sudhana et al. (2023) and Gibson et al. (2007) who suggest that knowledge about an organization positively affects intentions to enroll in the organization. However, since brand knowledge was high, yet still had limited impact on behavioral intentions, one could argue that the findings contradict previous research as well. Ajzen (1991) argued that the *more* positive perceived behavioral control, the *higher* intentions, and it was also assumed based on previous findings on brand communication that the *more*

knowledge one has about the brand, the *higher* intentions toward enrollment. Therefore, one could argue that high brand knowledge does not necessarily have to result in behavioral intentions towards enrollment, but could actually result in the contrary. The findings might be a result of the increased security threat level and its impact on the SDC, which may rather draw people from wanting to join the organization.

The independent variable brand attitudes were proven to have the greatest impact on behavioral intentions, compared to the other determinants of model 1. As Ajzen (1991) states regarding the TPB, sometimes one determinant has a stronger effect on the behavioral intentions, which was shown to be the case in this study as well. Another reason for the strong impact of brand attitudes may be due to the preferences of young adults, and the characteristics of Generation Z. As previously mentioned, Thang and Trang (2024) state that to attract Generation Z to an organization, brand attitudes are essential. The findings of the study align with this argument and further speak for the importance of building strong brand attitudes in public brand communication when trying to affect young adults' behavioral intentions. The results of the study further showed that brand attitudes amongst the generation can, to a degree, be built through social media brand communication, as suggested by Thang and Trang (2024). The findings in model 2 showed a positive statistically significant relationship between exposure to social media content and positive brand attitudes, thereby aligning with previous research from Sighn et al. (2022) and Carpentier et al. (2019) who speak for the positive effect of social media exposure on brand attitudes. Since Marhareita et al. (2022) further suggest that this positive effect is apparent for public organizations as well, these findings provide valuable insights into how public organizations can build strong brand attitudes by using social media. The findings also confirm Moehlecke de Baseggio and Schneider (2020) reasoning regarding how social media platforms are valuable for armed forces when trying to reach young people.

Since the empirical findings speak for the positive impact of brand attitudes when trying to affect young adults' behavioral intentions, and the positive impact of exposure to social media content on brand attitudes, it can be assumed that there could be a correlation between social media exposure and behavioral intentions. However, this cannot be proven by our models alone and needs further research to establish statistical evidence of a potential relationship between the two. Applying this type of model was too complex for the scope, time frame, and resources of this thesis. Furthermore, as this thesis aims to contribute with a new perspective on how brand communication on social media can impact behavior, this

study applies a new, untested way to use the TPB model. The researchers themselves have therefore been in charge of the operationalization of the brand communication characteristic, which could have implicated the survey questionnaire and thereafter the variables in the models. However, since both theoretical models proved statistically significant relationships, the results still speak of the relevance of using the models constructed in this thesis.

What should be acknowledged is that it cannot be assumed that the independent variables included in the theoretical models are the only causes of behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. In all social sciences, it is important to consider that the phenomena being studied are complex and have several causes that are difficult to measure with a simple model. Furthermore, since this thesis applies a positivistic approach it leaves little room for deeper interpretations of the underlying causes of the respondents' answers. Therefore it could be argued that this study adopts a far too narrow perspective of what influences young adults' behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. It was also shown in the results that the models could only explain parts of the change in the dependent variables, and the control variables further proved the impact of factors outside of the theoretical models.

As previously discussed, the findings of this study show how public organizations can use brand communication to reach organizational goals. However, the results of this study cannot fully be applied and generalized to all public organizations. The studied organization, the Swedish Armed Forces, is a highly complex organization, working with unique operations that differ from other public authorities. The behavior studied is also unique since enrollment in the Swedish Defense Conscription cannot fully be compared to enrollment in other types of education or jobs. Moreover, the aspect of mandatory conscription further complicates the applicability of this study, since it might have impacted the behavioral intentions. When aiming to generalize the results of this study the current security situation should also be taken into account, as it may be a factor that provides alternative explanations to the results. It should therefore be further acknowledged that external factors could have impacted specifically the behavioral intentions towards enrollment in the SDC. Including more control variables, apart from gender and geographic location, would thereby be valuable to get a wider understanding of these factors. What should also be mentioned on the other hand is that results regarding the control variable gender might further implicate the generalizability of the results to other public organizations. Since the Swedish Armed Forces is a male-dominated organization and armed forces, in general, are associated with

traditionally masculine attributes, it can be assumed that the impact of gender on behavioral intentions is an effect of the characteristics of the organization.

5.2 Conclusions

The aim of this study was to broaden the knowledge regarding how public organizations can use brand communication to affect behavioral intentions amongst young adults, and by doing so contribute to the field of strategic communication. Further, the aim was to understand how social media brand communication can contribute to building public brand attitudes among young adults. By analyzing the results of the study the empirical findings can contribute to answering the study's following two research questions: "How can public brand communication increase young adults' behavioral intentions toward enrollment in public organizations?", and "How do public organizations' social media communication contribute to building brand attitudes amongst young adults?". Based on the theoretical framework, combined with previous research on brand communication, four hypotheses were constructed regarding how public brand communication can impact behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. By applying brand communication characteristics to Ajzen's (1991) already-existing TPB model, and creating a new model investigating the impact of social media exposure on brand attitudes, two new theoretical models represented the expected relationship between the variables.

The empirical findings along with previous research showed that the study's first, third, and fourth hypothesis could be supported. The findings also showed that brand attitudes had the strongest impact on behavioral intentions. However, the empirical findings did not support the second hypothesis and thereby contradict the previous research regarding the relationship between brand community and behavioral intentions. The study further showed that geographic location had little to no impact on both behavioral intentions and brand attitudes. Gender also proved to have a minimal impact on brand attitudes, but did on the other hand have an effect on behavioral intentions. To summarize, both theoretical models were shown to have statistically significant relationships with behavioral intentions and brand attitudes, thereby providing evidence that public brand communication *can* help influence young adults' behavioral intentions and shape brand attitudes amongst this group.

5.3 Contributions and further research

Considering the rise of new public management and the marketization of public organizations, it is of great relevance to study the impact of brand communication initiatives for public authorities, which this study contributes with valuable perspectives on. This study also contributes to the observed knowledge gap regarding how young adults' behavioral intentions can be affected through communication, specifically in the context of public organizations. Furthermore, this thesis has contributed to knowledge about the relationship between strategic communication, more specifically brand communication, and the performance of a certain behavior. By developing the Theory of Planned Behavior with brand communication pillars as determinants of behavioral intentions, the thesis has contributed with a new perspective on how to predict and change behavior using communication. Thus, this study fills an observed knowledge gap within the field and provides new insight into how public organizations can use brand communication to reach organizational goals.

As previously mentioned in the section above (5.2) there are implications to the generalization of this study, due to the complexity of both the organization and behavior being studied. To be able to generalize the findings in a wider context, further research is needed on how behavioral intentions can be affected by public brand communication in other types of public authorities and enrollment processes. Further, it should be acknowledged that young adults' behavioral intentions in this study were quite low which calls for a deeper understanding of the underlying factors causing this. To do so, a qualitative research design would be valuable to draw interpretive inferences and understand the reasoning behind young adults' behavioral intentions toward enrollment in the armed forces and how these intentions have been affected by public brand communication. Moreover, further research is needed to understand what triggers behavior in young adults in other public organizational settings. Despite the implications of the generalizability of this study to any type of public organization, this study can, however, provide valuable insights for other armed forces, especially European armed forces. Again, considering the current security situation in the world, more military forces are in need of personnel, and thereby this study can be a resource on how public brand communication can be used in recruitment processes.

What was found in this study was that social media exposure had a significant impact on young adults' brand attitudes and that brand attitudes had a significant impact on behavioral intentions. More in-depth research is however needed on how exposure to social media communication can affect behavioral intentions. Moreover, it is of interest to further investigate how public organizations can work with social media communication in terms of content or favorable communication channels. Since the digital climate as well as the conditions for communication is changing, organizations, including public authorities have to change along with it. However, by providing valuable insights into how brand communication can be used in the public sphere, this study can be of great use within the field of strategic communication and show an *example* of how public organizations can strive towards "force-ing intentions".

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Appendix

Appendix 1 - Survey questionnaire

Hi!

We are Sara Hellström and Matilda Rydin and we study Strategic Communication at Lund Univerity. We are currently writing our bachelors thesis about how armed forces communicate on social media to young adults. Therefore we are now contacting you, who is born in 2006 and have received muster information documents this year. By answering the survey you will contribute with valuable insights for our study.

The survey takes around 5-10 minutes to answer and participation is voluntary. You will of course be anonymous and all the answers will be compiled into a group analysis, meaning that no individual answers will be called upon. By answering the survey you approve that your answers will be used in the analysis.

If you have any questions or want to get access to the finalized report, please contact us!

Mail: ma1807ry-s@student.lu.se

Thank you for your participation!

* = Filter-question

Part 1: Who are you?

1. Are you born in 2006? *

Yes/no

2. What gender do you identify with?

Female/Male/Other

3. Where do you live?

*Roll down list of all Swedish counties

Part 2: The Swedish Armed Forces (SAF) on social media

To what degree do you agree with the following statement?

4. I have	seen cor	tent from	n the SA	F on so	cial med	ia		
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree		
5. I often see content from the SAF on social media								
Don't agree								
2 3.1 1 4.8. 22	•	_		•		1-9.00		
6. I follov	v the SA	F on soc	cial med	ia				
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree		
7. People that I care about follow the SAF on social media								
Don't agree								
3						3		
Part 3: Wha	it is yo	ur attit	tude to	the SA	AF?			
0 What:	a *******	anaral at	tituda ta	tha CAI	79			
8. What i <i>Negative</i>	-					Positive		
reguiive	1	-	5	,		Toshive		
To what degree	e do you	agree w	ith the f	ollowing	z statem	ent?		
9. I think						4		
Don't agree	I	2	3	4	3	Agree		
10. I feel like people around me have a positive attitude to the SAF								
Don't agree				_				
11. I think			_			4		
Don't agree	I	2	3	4	3	Agree		
12. I feel li	ke peop	le aroun	d me hav	ve a posi	tive attit	tude to the SAF as an employer		
		2		-	5	Agree		
13. I think					5	4		
Don't agree	I	2	3	4	3	Agree		
14. I think	my valu	es go in	line wit	h the SA	F's valu	es		
Don't agree	-	-						
15. I feel li								
Don't agree	I	2	3	4	3	Agree		
16. I can fi	nd out i	nformati	on abou	t the SA	F if I wa	nt to		
Don't agree					5			
-								
						AF on social media		
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree		

Part	Part 4: What is your attitude to the SDC?							
18	3. What is	your at	titude to	enrollin	g in the	SDC?		
	ive	-			-		Positive	
To wh	To what degree do you agree with the following statement?							
19). I would	have be	een prou	d to say	that I ha	d comp	leted the SDC	
Don't	agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree	
). I have f agree						ed or will complete the SDC Agree	
	O							
	l. I have f <i>agree</i>			•				
Don i	ugree	I	2	3	4	J	Agree	
22	2. I feel lil	ke I kno	w what t	the SDC	entails			
Don't	agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree	
23	R I feel lil	ke I kno	w what i	it would	take of	me if Le	nrolled in the SDC	
	agree							
							_	
	1. I can fo							
Don't	agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree	
25	5. I feel lil	ke I can	find out	informa	ition abo	out the S	DC on social media	
	agree					5		
24	26. I think I would have been able to manage completing the SDC							
	o. I think l <i>agree</i>						Agree	
Doni	agree	1	2	3	,		ngice	
			_					
Part	5: Your	intent	tion to	enroll	in the S	SDC		
	7. Have yo o/Don't kn		ed muste	er inforn	nation do	ocument	s?	
20	2 A ma viav		to musto	~ ?				
28. Are you going to muster? Yes/No/Don't know								
To what degree do you agree with the following statement?								
	29. I can imagine being part of the SAF organization Don't agree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree							
20111		-	-	-	,	-		

30. I have	30. I have though about enrolling in the SDC								
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree			
31. I coul	d imao	ine enro	lling in 1	he SDC					
J1. 1 cour	u iiiag	ine cino	iiiig iii (
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree			
32. I plan	to enro	oll in the	SDC						
Don't agree	1	2	3	4	5	Agree			
	_	_							
Thank you for your participation!									

Appendix 2: Index Behavioral Intentions

Variables	Survey Question
INT1	I have considered enrolling in the SDC
INT2	I plan to enroll in the SDC
INT3	I could imagine myself being a part of the SAF

Index variable	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
INDEX_INTENTION	INT1-INT3	0.872

Appendix 3: Index Brand Attitude

Variable	Survey Question
BA1	What is your attitude towards SAF
BA2	I think SAF is a good organization
BA3	I think SAF seems like a good workplace
BA4	What is your attitude towards enrolling in SDC
BA5	I would be proud to say that I have completed SDC

Index variable	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
INDEX_BA	BA1M2-BA5M2	0.819

Appendix 4: Index Brand Community Norms

Variables	Survey Question
COM1	My peers have a positive attitude towards SAF
COM2	My peers have a positive attitude towards SAF as an employer

Index variable	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
INDEX_BRCOM	COM1-COM3	0.751

Appendix 5: Index Brand knowledge

Variables	Survey questions	
KNOW1	I believe that I know what SAF works with	
KNOW2	I can find out more info about SAF if I want to	
KNOW3	I can find out more info about SAF on SoMe if I want to	
KNOW4	I believe that I know what SDC entails	
KNOW5	I believe that I know what it would take of me to enroll in SDC	
KNOW6	I can find out info about the SDC if I want to	
KNOW7	I can find out info about the SDC on SoMe if I want to	
KNOW8	I believe I would manage the SDC	

Index variable	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	
INDEX_BRANDKNOW	KNOW1-KNOW8	0.810	

Appendix 6: Index Social Media Exposure

Variable	Survey Question
EXPO1	I have seen content from the SAF on social media
EXPO2	I often see content from the SAF on social media
EXPO3	I follow SAF on social media platforms

Index variable	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	
INDEX_EXPO	EXPO1-EXPO3	0.723	

Appendix 7: Descriptive statistics, Gender

GENDER

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	168	41.9	41.9	41.9
	Female	233	58.1	58.1	100.0
	Total	401	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 8: Table of means, Gender/Brand attitude and Gender Behavioral intention

Report						
index_INTENTION						
GENDER	Mean	N	Std. Deviation			
Male	9.2619	168	4.06863			

233

401

Keport						
index_BRANDATTITUDE						
GENDER Mean N Std. Deviation						
Male	18.7619	168	4.68944			
Female	17.4206	233	4.25420			
Total	17.9825	401	4.48522			

Appendix 9: Regression analysis, Dummy Gender/Brand Attitudes

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.148 ^a	.022	.019	4.44156	

a. Predictors: (Constant), GENDER=Female

6.7468

7.8005

Female Total

$ANOVA^a$

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	175.620	1	175.620	8.902	.003 ^b
	Residual	7871.257	399	19.727		
	Total	8046.878	400			

a. Dependent Variable: index_BRANDATTITUDE

Coefficientsa

Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95,0% Confiden	ce Interval for B		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	18.762	.343		54.751	<.001	18.088	19.436
	GENDER=Female	-1.341	.450	148	-2.984	.003	-2.225	458

a. Dependent Variable: index_BRANDATTITUDE

 $b.\ Predictors:\ (Constant),\ GENDER = Female$

Appendix 10: Regression, Dummy Gender/Intentions

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.311 ^a	.097	.095	3.79570	

a. Predictors: (Constant), GENDER=Female

$\mathsf{ANOVA}^{\mathsf{a}}$

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	617.504	1	617.504	42.860	<.001 ^b
	Residual	5748.536	399	14.407		
	Total	6366.040	400			

a. Dependent Variable: index_INTENTION

b. Predictors: (Constant), GENDER=Female

Coefficientsa

		Unstandardize	d Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			95,0% Confiden	ce Interval for B
Mode	I	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	9.262	.293		31.627	<.001	8.686	9.838
	GENDER=Female	-2.515	.384	311	-6.547	<.001	-3.270	-1.760

a. Dependent Variable: index_INTENTION

Appendix 11: Descriptive statistics county

COUNTY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Blekinge	1	.2	.2	.2
	Halland	2	.5	.5	.7
	Jönköping	40	10.0	10.0	10.7
	Kalmar	66	16.5	16.5	27.2
	Kronoberg	16	4.0	4.0	31.2
	Örebro	11	2.7	2.7	33.9
	Östergötland	9	2.2	2.2	36.2
	Skåne län	157	39.2	39.2	75.3
	Södermanland	1	.2	.2	75.6
	Stockholms län	80	20.0	20.0	95.5
	Värmland	18	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	401	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 12: Table of means, County/Brand attitude and County/Behavioral intention

Report										
index_INTENTION										
Var bor du?	Mean	N	Std. Deviation							
Blekinge	11.0000	1								
Halland	10.0000	2	7.07107							
Jönköping	7.6250	40	3.93985							
Kalmar	6.3636	66	3.39518							
Kronoberg	7.4375	16	3.66913							
Örebro	9.1818	11	3.68288							
Östergötland	8.6667	9	3.93700							
Skåne län	7.9363	157	4.16130							
Södermanland	9.0000	1								
Stockholms län	8.7500	80	3.97619							
Värmland	6.6111	18	3.91286							
Total	7.8005	401	3.98937							

Report										
index_BRANDATTITUDE										
County	inty Mean N Std. Deviat									
Blekinge	24.0000	1								
Halland	21.0000	2	2.82843							
Jönköping	19.0750	40	3.48909							
Kalmar	16.2576	66	4.54486							
Kronoberg	17.6875	16	3.96180							
Örebro	18.0000	11	5.40370							
Östergötland	21.0000	9	2.73861							
Skåne län	17.9427	157	4.58851							
Södermanland	15.0000	1								
Stockholms län	18.7625	80	4.23142							
Värmland	17.0000	18	5.30261							
Total	17.9825	401	4.48522							

Appendix 13: Descriptive statistics, Index variables

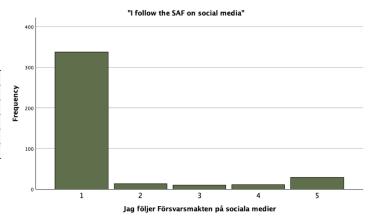
Descri	ptive	Stat	istics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
index_INTENTION	401	3.00	15.00	7.8005	3.98937
index_BRANDATTITUDE	401	5.00	25.00	17.9825	4.48522
index_BRANDCOMMNOR MS	401	2.00	10.00	6.8504	1.68302
index_BRANDKNOWLEDG E	401	8.00	40.00	30.1546	5.37411
index_EXPOSURE	401	3.00	15.00	7.0773	3.00774
Valid N (listwise)	401				

Appendix 14: Frequencies, Follow the SAF on social media

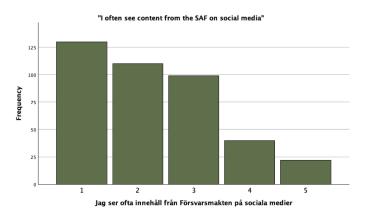
"I follow the SAF on social media"

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	338	84.3	84.3	84.3
	2	13	3.2	3.2	87.5
	3	10	2.5	2.5	90.0
	4	11	2.7	2.7	92.8
	5	29	7.2	7.2	100.0
	Total	401	100.0	100.0	



Appendix 15: Frequencies, Often see content from the SAF on social media

"1	"I often see content from the SAF on social media"												
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent								
Valid	1	130	32.4	32.4	32.4								
	2	110	27.4	27.4	59.9								
	3	99	24.7	24.7	84.5								
	4	40	10.0	10.0	94.5								
	5	22	5.5	5.5	100.0								
	Total	401	100.0	100.0									



Appendix 16: MRA, Model 1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.793 ^a	.629	.626	2.43932

a. Predictors: (Constant), index_BRANDKNOWLEDGE, index_BRANDCOMMNORMS, index_BRANDATTITUDE

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4003.770	3	1334.590	224.289	<.001 ^b
	Residual	2362.270	397	5.950		
	Total	6366.040	400			

a. Dependent Variable: index_INTENTION

$Coefficients^{a} \\$

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95,0% Confiden	ce Interval for B	Collinearity	/ Statistics
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-5.060	.759		-6.670	<.001	-6.551	-3.569		
	index_BRANDATTITUDE	.699	.036	.786	19.567	<.001	.629	.770	.579	1.727
	index_BRANDCOMMNOR MS	365	.084	154	-4.342	<.001	530	200	.743	1.346
	index_BRANDKNOWLEDG E	.092	.027	.124	3.424	<.001	.039	.145	.707	1.415

a. Dependent Variable: $index_INTENTION$

Appendix 17: Multicollinearity test

Correlations

		index_BRAND ATTITUDE	index_BRAND COMMNORMS	index_BRAND KNOWLEDGE
index_BRANDATTITUDE	Pearson Correlation	1	.506**	.540**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001
	N	401	401	401
index_BRANDCOMMNOR	Pearson Correlation	.506**	1	.303**
MS	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001
	N	401	401	401
index_BRANDKNOWLEDG	Pearson Correlation	.540**	.303**	1
E	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	
	N	401	401	401

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

b. Predictors: (Constant), index_BRANDKNOWLEDGE, index_BRANDCOMMNORMS, index_BRANDATTITUDE

Appendix 18: Correlation, Model 2

Correlations

		index_EXPOSU RE	index_BRAND ATTITUDE
index_EXPOSURE	Pearson Correlation	1	.378**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	401	401
index_BRANDATTITUDE	Pearson Correlation	.378**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	401	401

^{**.} Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 19: Regression analysis, Model 2

Model Summary

Model R		R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.378 ^a	.143	.141	4.15703	

a. Predictors: (Constant), index_EXPOSURE

$ANOVA^{a}$

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1151.795	1	1151.795	66.651	<.001 ^b
	Residual	6895.083	399	17.281		
	Total	8046.878	400			

a. Dependent Variable: index_BRANDATTITUDE

Coefficientsa

		Unstandardize	d Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	13.990	.531		26.330	<.001
	index_EXPOSURE	.564	.069	.378	8.164	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: index_BRANDATTITUDE

b. Predictors: (Constant), index_EXPOSURE