



# FINAL MASTER'S THESIS

## Public perception about fashion and beauty influencers

Percepción del público sobre influencers del sector moda y  
belleza

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**Thanks, mum.**

## **ABSTRACT**

Given the growing success of social networks as a mean of communication and advertising, a new figure has born whose concept already appears in some dictionaries: influencer. Influencers are a key tool in the increase of sales of many companies. They are responsible for approaching the target audience of brands to encourage the purchase of their products.

Throughout the present work, the public perception with respect to the influencer of the fashion and make-up sector in particular will be analysed. Given the international nature and breadth of this sector, we will see how the public perceives this information, what their preferences are and, above all, what they get after this process. The main differences between national and international influencers will be mainly highlighted.

## **KEYWORDS**

Influencer – Social networks – Influencer Marketing – Public – Perception – Responsibility - Brands

## **RESUMEN**

Dado el creciente éxito de las redes sociales como medio de comunicación y de publicidad, ha nacido una nueva figura cuyo concepto ya figura en algunos diccionarios: el influencer. Los influencers son una herramienta clave en el aumento de ventas de numerosas empresas. Se encargan de acercarse al público objetivo de las marcas para incitar a la compra de sus productos.

A lo largo del presente trabajo, se trabajará entorno a la percepción del público con respecto a los influencers del sector moda y maquillaje en concreto. Dado el carácter internacional y la amplitud de este sector, se verá cómo el público percibe esta información, cuáles son sus preferencias y sobre todo, qué es lo que obtienen tras este proceso. Asimismo, se realizará hincapié en las principales diferencias que encuentran entre influencers nacionales e internacionales.

## **PALABRAS CLAVE**

Influencer – Redes Sociales – Marketing de influencia – Público – Percepción – Responsabilidad – Marcas

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Topic justification**

Social networks have played a determining part in the development of the internet for many years. Every day, the number of users grows; they are also more willing to share with others a few words, photos, or videos.

Nowadays, the role of social networks has even become more powerful. The considerable number of people who use it every day has been the main reason why social media have begun to have new utilities. Those go beyond sharing posts with friends. A new branch has been born in which tastes or hobbies are shared with strangers, where brands come into play and, of course, influencers.

In my case, I like being up to date on beauty and fashion sectors, therefore, I decided to create an Instagram account less than a year ago. It was dedicated solely and exclusively to dealing with this type of content with like-minded people from all over the world. Those people, like me, had also created their account for this sole purpose. As a striking fact, most accounts (including mines) are anonymous. The only purpose is to share news, tricks, trends, or products of interest as well as visualize the other accounts.

After the continued use of this account, I began to appreciate the standard features of the people I interacted with, which led me to investigate this topic. Most of them were always in favour or against the activity of the influencers, which I found so attractive that I began to consider the possibility of investigating in greater depth.

### **2. Objectives**

The study of this work focuses on the public, attracted by the existence of influencers that promote various brands in the fashion and beauty sector.

In particular, the development of the work will focus on different general and specific objectives.

Specifically, the general objectives are highlighted below:

- To do a review of fundamental concepts that form the basis of the experimental development of the study.
- To analyse the importance of the role of influencers in public from the latter.
- To understand the close relationship between an influencer and the audience.
- Relationship between brands, influencers and consumers.

As for the specific objectives of the study of the topic, the following are found:

- Analysis of public perception based on personal experience.
- To evaluate the repercussion that the influencers of the fashion and beauty sector exert on their followers.
- To know how influence marketing affects the buying habits of consumers.
- To make expert's opinions about influencers visible.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **1. Origin and context of social media at present**

Social networks are such a current phenomenon that their history is not yet too extensive, nor is there a specific date of appearance, since their origin gradually emerged at the same time as the web was developed. Even so, considering the timeline of social networks proposed by Boyd and Allison (2007), the appearance of the first recognized site called Sixdegrees.com was in 1997. It is not a social network that is well-known to the average user of social networks. However, it is closer to the appearance of Fotolog in 2002.

At present, social networks are growing in terms of the number of users who use them not only to establish social relations between them but for other purposes that go beyond that. This phenomenon not only allows us keeping in touch with friends, uploading photos, and commenting videos but also shows and offers the possibility of direct contact with new people. Among the reasons that can be highlighted as a consequence of these new links, it can be highlighted the affinity between users who share tastes or values, which will be analysed later. There is, therefore, no doubt that it represents a new concept of communication.

In this way, social networks can be defined as follows:

Social media is all those tools that allow us to talk, listen, dialogue and interact with other individuals, companies and institutions, those who put us in contact with a community made up of people with interests similar to ours or those of the company we work for; and those that destroy the traditional emitter and receiver scheme and encourage interaction between all users, proposing a new paradigm of communication (Moreno, 2014: 9).

It is essential to highlight a more specific and approximate definition of social networks, such as the one Boyd and Ellison (2008) that define social networks as "web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share connection, and

view and traverse their list of connections made by others within the system." This definition indicates the public or semi-public character to indicate the type of connection that is established between users.

However, according to the Cambridge Dictionary, they are "websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the internet using a computer or mobile phone."

Although there are many definitions for the term social media, they all agree that it is a service that keeps in touch with a considerably extensive network of people.

## **2. Social media as a tool for companies' publicity**

### **2.1.Social media: the most used for online marketing**

The widespread use of social networks has led to the creation of many of them for different purposes and even the duality of their functions, such as Instagram. A social network created to share photos with friends and acquaintances, which is currently also used as a channel of advertising.

As the VP Product Marketing, Lisa Avvocato (2019) states:

"Traditional media has changed. These are media and publications like Vogue, Elle and Manrepeller.com. Traditional media are no longer restricted to printing but contain multiple digital entities online and on social networks. In a comprehensive review of 2018 operations, Glamour magazine announced that it would leave print publications to focus on its digital and video channels." (p.3)

Among the wide variety of social networks that exist today, many stand out for their specific characteristics among numerous brands, which has been the subject of numerous studies. Taking into account Ro's article (2019), where a list of social networks most used for marketing is collected, highlights Facebook in the first position, Youtube in the second, and Instagram in the third place.

Facebook is the dominant social network in the world, as today, according to Mejía (2019), it has more than 2.2 billion users who interact always sharing publications, giving "I like" and commenting. This continuous movement is eye-catching for the brands, as it is a way to create loyal clients.

On the other hand, Youtube stands out, with a reach of more than 1.9 billion users. It represents the best video social network worldwide, and of course, it is also a complete tool for brands, who use it as a video repository to which the rest of social networks lead, according to Mejía (2019). Besides, it is sometimes advantageous for companies to use videos rather than explanatory texts.

The trend towards the use of Instagram as an advertising tool has a significant impact on the sector by this platform. Currently, it has more than 1,000 million users. It is the social network whose growth has been most significant in recent years, since according to Mejía (2019), in two years has doubled its number of users. The closeness of the novel tool called Instagram Stories, characterised by its even more consistent approach and 24-hour duration, has even achieved more success than conventional photos posted on the feed.

Given the previous data, Instagram could stand out as a social network with more influence, not because of the number of users where Facebook is the clear winner, but because of the growing success and impact it is winning.

## **2.2.Influencers marketing: approach of a concept**

Given the growing importance of advertising, experts in the field have sought how to achieve greater effectiveness in the search for channels that put brands in contact with their target audience. Already in 2010, as Brown & Fiorella (2013) said, the social influence scoring platforms began to emerge in an attempt to sort and rank individuals by their perceived influence based on the content and size of their audience. As a result of this phenomenon, many companies have shown interest in certain characters with high power over a very segmented public. In this situation, the person who can reach this target audience prevails over the audience itself.

The ability to influence a group of specific characteristics brings with it the power of persuasion and reaction, the result of which is beneficial to brands. In the words of Brown and Fiorella (2013):

“Influence is a complex and misused term in our world today. At its core, influence is a force created by one person or entity that causes a reaction in or by another. In-plane language, this could be a parent influencing the behaviour of a child [...] or a religion influencing the beliefs and actions of its members.” (p.16)



Therefore, influential marketing can be understood as one that is focused on opinion leaders rather than focusing directly on the target audience of the brand (Hall, 2016). In this way, it is more straightforward and more direct for companies to choose a person who influences an already segmented public than to reach this public through traditional advertising.

This is where social networks come into play, so used by the public and so close, that they have become an indispensable tool for brands.

The increasing development of new technologies has been another factor to consider in the creation of this type of marketing. In this context, the appearance of persons whose influence is decisive in the objectives of the trademarks, which vary according to the type of company, is encouraged. In that case, Hall (2016) proposes two influencer marketing companies types:

“Earned influencer marketing and paid influencer marketing companies. Earned marketing stems from unpaid or preexisting relationships with influencers. For example, Patrón has a ton of influencer advocates for its tequila; these people drink the liquor regularly and endorse the product because they enjoy it. On the other hand, you have the paid arm of influencer marketing, in which brands employ the Kardashians to tweet about their products or services.” (p.5)

Influencer marketing makes people being in direct contact with the brand. The links that are created between the influencer and the public are given previously as a consequence of sharing information of common interest, in this case, beauty and fashion. Taking into account the words of the doctor in Advertising and Public Relations Vilma Núñez, the Marketing of Influencers “is a marketing technique that consists of identifying opinion leaders who can help a brand to connect more naturally and spontaneously with its target audience” (Núñez, 2014).

The use of people as a channel of communication has a highly beneficial effect on the profits of brands, as it improves the credibility and reputation of the brand. The main objective is to generate knowledge and information about the product to encourage its purchase. Among the main reasons that a brand has when choosing this new branch of marketing, we can point out four essential points that Núñez (2014): the greater credibility of the message, the more significant connection between brands and fans, the generation of more experiences than messages and greater credibility of recommendations.

It can be said that social networks have become a working tool for many people, as well as a meeting place for consumers and businesses.

### **3. Agents who take part in the process**

#### **3.1. Influencers**

The concept of influencing already existed several centuries ago. In this sense, the author Gabriel Herrera (2017) points out that an actress named Lillie Langtry, thanks to her facial beauty and repercussion in the press, generated an increase in sales of Pears soap in 1890. On the other hand, the use of the word "influencer" is closely linked in classical terminology, which is known as an "opinion leader".

Even so, the characteristics of the so-called influencers have changed concerning the past, especially in the fashion and beauty world. Many brands have turned to celebrities to work as ambassadors for their brands, either bringing their new collections or positioning themselves within social networks.

These celebrities are people who already stand out in the world of fashion and beauty because of their work, from actress Angelina Jolie to footballer David Beckham, to singer Madonna. A prominent example of this statement is the success that Rihanna provided last year to the well-known Puma brand. During last year's Fashion Week, the singer helped to launch a new brand line that certainly meant a considerable increase in her sales and above all, its market positioning.

However, some people are not so well known who, through the use of social networks, have managed to create a community of people with common interests. On numerous occasions, these unknown people achieve massive success through their content that has made it possible to increase their number of followers sharply. Considering that fact, brands have shown their interest in those people. Usually, they are experts in a particular topic, and they also have communication skills that capture the interest of a broad audience, something that is attractive to brands.

Following Sanz-Marcos words (2017), the influencers are those people who exert a significant influence on the target audience of certain brands that make communications in the digital medium, and more specifically, on social media. In this way, these figures have certain credibility on one or several topics in particular, which, coupled with their

influence on social networks, can become a goal for brands. Thus, companies must consider several factors before deciding to include opinion leaders in their campaigns. Brown (2016) sets out a series of guidelines:

The influencer and future prescriber of the brand must have among its followers a majority of the target audience to which it wants to address. That is, we must keep in mind that the theme of the selected channel fits with our brand and make sure that the majority of its audience matches the age, sex, and country of the target we seek, For this, it is advisable to consult your demographic data through experts or specialized tools. (p. 34)

On the other hand, these opinion leaders have a series of common traits that are raised by Díaz (2017): familiarity, communication skills, and experience. In this way, an influencer must maintain contact with his followers "to answer their questions or receive proposals on important topics", as well as "to know how to transmit using a natural language and to be experts in a particular subject."

### **3.2.Brands**

Brands are the beginning and origin of the process, as they are interested in making their product known and visible to their target audience with the highest possible precision and efficiency.

The number of companies that decide to invest in influencers increases significantly every day, as external influencers are being created every day, and the best way to gain customer trust is by aligning with someone they already trust (Hall, 2016).

Without going any further and according to the report launched by Launchmetrics (2019), 80% of the companies surveyed admit having carried out some campaigns with influencers during last year. In the case of the remaining 20% who claimed not to have worked with these opinion leaders, 62% acknowledge not having made use of this tool due to budget limitations. This suggests that in a future of prosperity for these brands, there would be a high possibility of collaboration with influencers.

As it is stated by Brown (2016), "the strategy for some companies has become essential, not only because of the return on investment they claim to have but also because of the possibilities it offers to make new products known".

The professionals who are in charge of communication and advertising establish the first contact with influencers. To this end, the first step they must take will be to identify the most far-reaching influence of a specific target audience that is common to the interests of the brand.

Their task is to contact the opinion leaders and propose a collaboration. According to Tros (2017), some of the most common techniques can be highlighted:

- Shipping product. Sending a brand's product or products so that the influencer shares it on their networks.
- Sponsored posts are held with bloggers. These agree with the brand to write a post where they promote the product.
- Ambassador of the brand. Several shipments are made over time, but the influencer is asked to mention the brand several times.
- Post guests. When the brand itself has a blog, you can invite an influencer to write about a topic on it.
- Discount code. It creates a custom discount code for an influencer that communicates it via email marketing to your subscriber list or through your social media.

Although there are many more types of collaborations, these are the most frequent, and also, several of them can be used at the same time. However, according to the Launchmetrics study (2019), influencers sometimes prefer monetary compensation over any other type of incentive.

After knowing how to select the right opinion leader, according to Brown (2016), the brand must plan the activity, and therefore "to know the language of influencer, to detail the content you want to transmit, to plan the times and dates of the publication taking into account the times of greatest impact of the channel, to respect in the creativity the style of influencer...". And as a culmination of this phase, the brand must ensure that the content emitted by the influencer is adequate.

Finally, it is necessary to know the impact and the results that are generated from the activity of influencing through specific tools, for which Brown (2016) ensures that it must be taken into account that "the marketing with influencers does not maintain a fixed structure and previously established, but it must be adapted according to the brand and the selected influencer."

What do influencers really contribute to brands? This question can be answered, taking into account the results obtained from the next study launched by Launchmetrics (2019).

The research deals with the wedding of the international influencer Chiara Ferragni, which involved a level of interactions of 5.6M for Dior, 1.5M for Prada, and 1.3M for the famous beauty brand Lancôme.

There is no doubt about the high power of specific influencers to shoot up social media interactions of such relevant brands. In addition to this control over a large number of people, influencers can bring a number of benefits to companies that have been collected by Llorca (2015):

1. They allow you to send more personal and direct messages to the target public, who feels more confident because they know the influencer and gives them credibility
2. [...] messages achieve more significant impact, which is why stronger links are also established with it.
3. Customer confidence is increased.
4. Increasing the chances of obtaining sponsorship.
5. Creating value for a given community and/or increase one's own with like-minded followers.
6. Having an expert opinion.
7. Online positioning through links embedded in the blogs of opinion leaders.

### **3.3. Target public**

When speaking about target public, we mean the final consumer of the product and, therefore, the main focus of the brands. However, in terms of influencers, the target audience is their followers. That is, those people who, for reasons of affinity and/or interest of their content, have decided to press "follow."

Typically, followers are a community of people who share a number of tastes, but who in view of the big brands, represent a precise segmentation of their target audience.

Launchmetrics's report states that, according to professionals interviewed in the fashion and beauty sector, the primary target audience is the Generation Y (or millennial), who are consumers between 24 and 38 years old. They represent approximately 78% of the total public, which is in line with the age at which the use of social networks is more

frequent. In this way, millennials have been and continue to be the primary target audience for the brands of fashion, luxury, and cosmetics.

On the other hand, and particularly in the context of luxury brands, professionals have a particular preference to choose a more extensive audience between the ages of 39 and 53. That is because their economic position will be better than that of young people when purchasing luxury goods.

But, what about Generation Z? According to Launchmetrics (2019), specifically in the fashion industry, 21% of professionals say that people under 24 are their primary target. However, in the cosmetics and luxury industry, it accounts for only 1.6% of its target audience.

#### **4. Influencers testimony and their conexión with the followers**

Marketing, which is carried out by influencers, has squeezed the power of the "mouth to mouth" and the personal relationships with the target audience. The key to these relationships is to develop a real and close conversation between influencers and followers so that the testimony gets high credibility.

This technique is not new, according to the words of Brown (2016) "the use of the testimony of influential people to improve the reputation or credibility of brands was already taking place at the end of the 19th and 20th century when some companies already used the image of actors as testimony for their products". There is, therefore, no doubt that the testimony of specific individuals in a community is so powerful as to achieve a common goal for various businesses.

Nowadays, there is a close link between influencers and their followers, created by the close treatment they receive and which is fundamental to maintaining the loyalty of the public. That is, according to Avvocato (2019), because influencers are continually interacting, so they can drive product conversations in an authentic and trustworthy way, creating lasting relationships with the consumers to whom the brands are directed.

There is a bright idea, which is the relevant capacity of social networks as a visual communication channel, as well as that of influencers and their emotional connection with the public. However, "it is increasingly clear that the consumer does not passively accept the external judgment of influencers: it calls for sincerity and transparency," says

General Manager Zannini (2019). All this is due to the influx of new opinion leaders, which puts into doubt the veracity of their testimony to their public. In this sense, the number of followers is essential, as it determines in some way the relationship with the opinion leader.

During the study conducted by Launchmetrics (2019), it was determined that given the question "What kind of influence do you consider more effective for your brand"? The response was disconcerting, as 45.5% are those with between 10,000 and 100,000 followers, compared to other groups with more than half a million or several million followers. This is a fact that is undoubtedly linked to the closeness of the influencer with the public, because this type of opinion leaders, can respond to their followers more closely and create something essential: commitment.

## **EXPERIMENTAL FRAMEWORK**

### **1. Methodology**

A previous bibliographical review of influencer marketing and its relationship with brands and opinion leaders has been necessary to know the context in which the experiment is carried out.

Besides, as a final part and link to the current issue, the relationship between influencers, brands and the target audience has also been discussed. Consumers are at the core of the work, as they directly receive the impact of this new marketing technique and therefore, their perception of this technique will be analysed.

After a brief but profound revision on numerous concepts, techniques and phenomena related to influencer marketing, we can proceed to the experimental study.

### **2. Experimental design**

Firstly, to carry out the study, a form has been developed for social media users who consume influencers content from the fashion and beauty sector.

The form has been created using Google Forms, a tool that made it easier to obtain percentages to be subsequently analysed. It has been structured in sections according to the topic to be covered:

1. Presentation of participants (gender, age, academic background).
2. Use of social media. The frequency with which the respondent uses social networks as well as the preferred online platforms to view influencers content.
3. Influencers and their content. Questions are proposed regarding the participant's specific interests while displaying content from opinion leaders. This section discusses the public's perception of national and international influencers and their reasons. In addition, the respondent values those aspects that considers essential in the figure of an influencer as well as those that he carries out.
4. Buying products. In this section the respondent is analysed as a consumer of products that promote influencers. Questions such as the frequency of purchase and the degree of influence exerted by these opinion leaders when purchasing fashion and beauty products will be analysed.



5. This section is related to the personal experience of each respondent in terms of their emotions and feelings regarding the consumption of influencers content.

6. The last question of the questionnaire is available to each of the participants, as a way of thanking them for their participation and also giving them a voice. This is an interesting and somewhat "extra" part since they are given complete freedom to express their opinion and personal situation.

After recruiting a considerable number of responses to the questionnaire, the data is extracted and analysed so that the analysis of the project can be organised and even linked and developed. During this analysis, a series of graphs are used to provide visual support to show the data at first sight.

### **3. Data collection**

In a personal way, unrelated and casual to the realisation of this work, I decided to create an anonymous account on Instagram about fashion and beauty one year ago. The aim was to share content and information resulting from my knowledge of the sector, and above all, to be in direct contact with a highly segmented community. They are people who, like me, share a taste for this area, as well as influencers related to the subject.

Thanks to the help of the nearly 500 followers of this account and the true collaboration that defines them, it has been very attainable to reach the 90 answers. Although it takes a long process, a lot of people have decided to collaborate by completing the survey but also sharing it in their Instagram profiles and Whatsapp groups.

The process of their collaboration has been through Instagram, a tool that has made it easier to describe and disseminate the survey. Through the so-called "stories", I previously communicated the need to publish a form as well as its purpose. The response from the community was incredibly positive, which led to the elaboration of the questions and their subsequent dissemination through the "stories" and private messages. Therefore, the public surveyed responds to several common characteristics necessary for the conduct of the survey. Thus, in a matter of a week, 90 responses have been obtained, a considerable number to begin the study analysis.

The information required for this analysis is personal, given the private nature of some issues. Therefore, its anonymity is reflected in the introduction of the form to obtain the most accurate and sincere results possible.

On the other hand, and due to the nature as mentioned above, the data has been obtained by using a tool of Google through which it can be designed and structured a battery of questions with their respective answers, so that only one or more options have to be selected, or the participant will be in charge of writing it manually. This questionnaire is designed so that it can only be answered once per person to avoid double participation.

The anonymity of the form has been essential, and above all, motivating for the successful participation of consumers, who have answered with remarkable sincerity and few questions have remained unanswered.

The survey consists of 26 questions in total, some of them with an option to mark between a series of pre-established options and the others with space to be filled out. For questions asking to select a number from 1 to 5 according to the intensity of the question, the meaning is as follows:

1 = Never

2 = Hardly ever

3 = Sometimes

4 = Almost always

5 = Always

The wide range of options offered by choosing between 5 values is a way of extracting more accurate data at the moment when it is necessary to average some values.

#### **4. Data analysis**

##### **4.1. Presentation of the participants**

The performance of the participants in the opening of the study, since in this case an exact figure is needed, corresponding to a person who uses social networks and also consumes content from the fashion and beauty sector.

It is interesting to know the most basic features, so only 4.3% of the respondents belong to the male gender. There is no doubt that the fashion and beauty sector is very defined by the presence of women, even though the image of men is gradually being introduced, especially in the beauty sector.

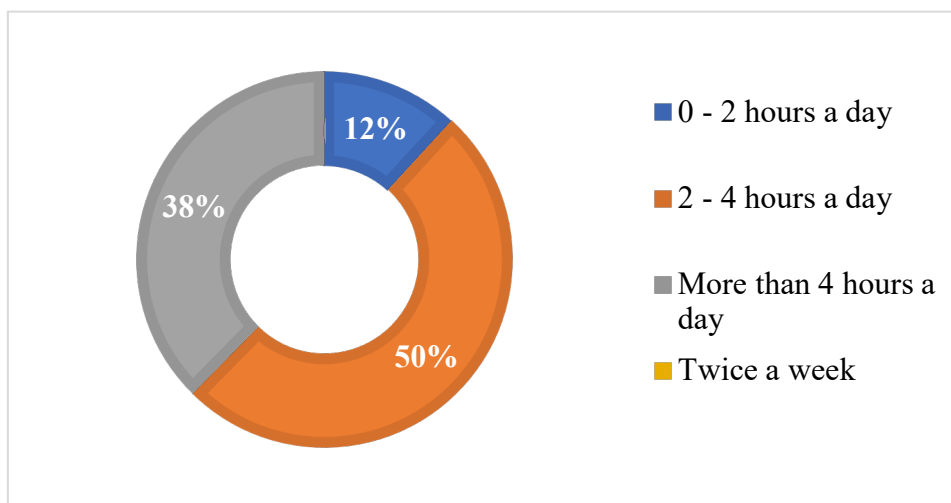
Concerning age, the majority of persons correspond to people aged between 19 and 35 accounts which represent 86%. They belong to the Generation Y or millennials and coincidentally coincide with the Launchmetrics studio that has been analysed before.

Of all those surveyed, 86% had a university or higher education, compared with 21.5 % with secondary education and 8.6 % with primary education.

#### 4.2. Use of social network and influencers

The absolute majority of people surveyed use social networks, but each of them spends a different amount of time on them. The frequency of their use can be seen below.

*Chart 1. Frequency of use of social networks*



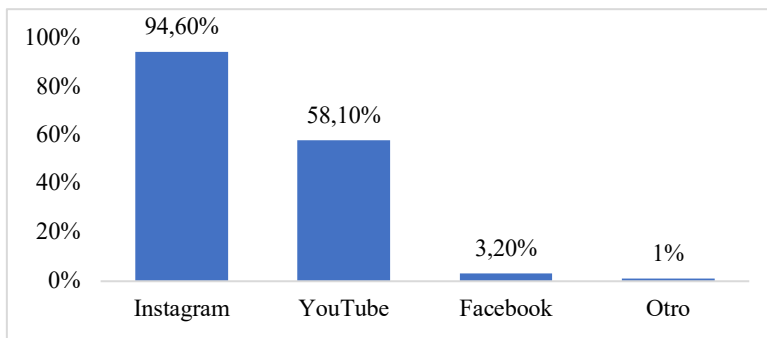
*Source: own elaboration*

Precisely 50% of the sample surveyed coincide in using social networks between 2 and 4 hours every day, followed by 38% who claim to dedicate more than 4 hours a day. It is striking that only 12% spend less than two hours a day and that none of the respondents spends a single day without using social networks.

About the question about the knowledge of the figure of influencers, 100% of those surveyed know this term and more than 95% claim to follow opinion leaders in their social networks, which is decisive for the development of the rest of the questionnaire.

Regarding the consumption of content created by influencers, a question appears about what the user's preferences are when viewing this content. Each of the platforms offers a series of different tools for sharing and creating information, so below, you can see which are preferred by the consumer.

**Chart 2.** *User preferences while visualising influencers content*



*Source: own elaboration*

Almost 95 out of 100 people show a clear preference for Instagram as the best social network for this kind of content. YouTube is followed by 58% of people who support this platform highlighted by its high visual impact through videos. Currently, these are the social networks most used to promote brands, as Instagram stands out for the proximity of "stories" and careful photos on the feed. On the other hand, YouTube offers more detailed and explicit information through visual materials.

As the last question in this block, respondents are asked to reflect on the time they spend on social networks interacting with their friends and family as opposed to viewing the content of interest related to influencers.

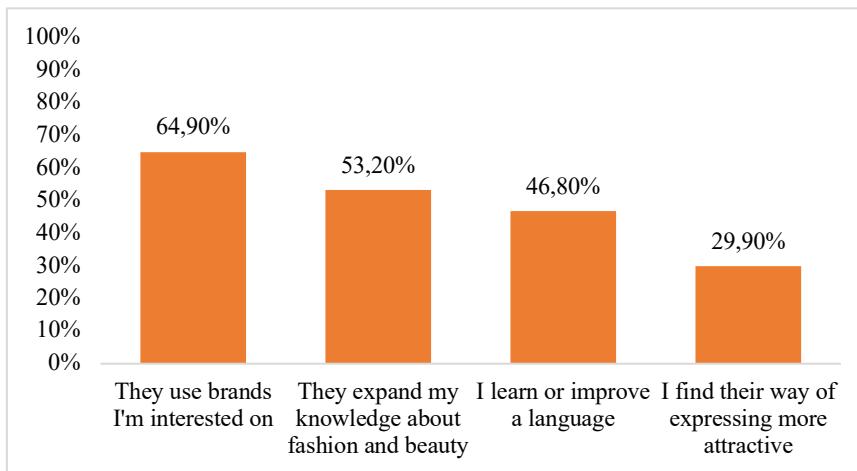
As a result, more than half of respondents agree to spend half of their time on each of these purposes equally, and almost 30% say they spend 75% of their time viewing opinion leaders' content versus only 25% for social purposes.

### **4.3.National and international influencers**

In a sector as full and international as that of fashion and beauty, the influencers stand out for their full extension. There are thousands of people who share their looks every day through their social networks.

77.4% of those surveyed say they follow foreign influencers on their social networks. Below there is a list of the main differences they find when deciding on a Spanish speaking opinion leader or someone who is beyond our frontiers.

**Chart 3.** Answers to the question “What do you value of international influencers against national influencers?”

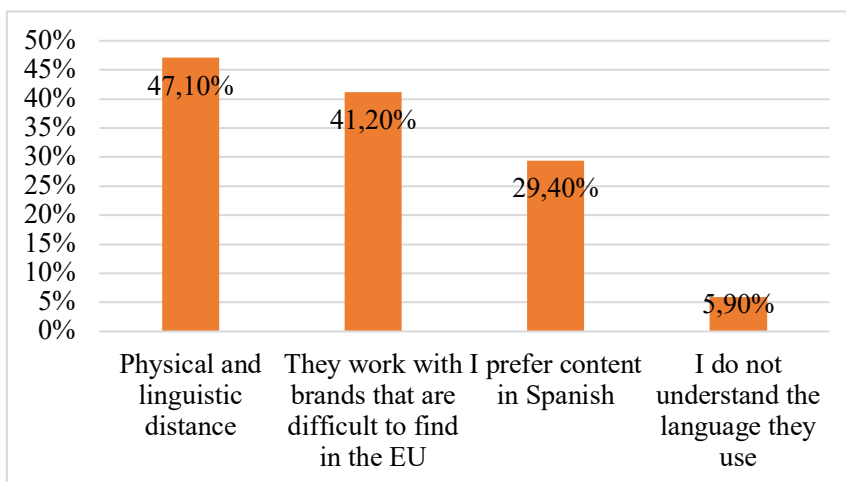


Source: own elaboration

The reason that almost 65% of respondents follow international influencers is that they are motivated by a purely entrepreneurial nature. The most useful tool a global influencer can provide for the public is the contact with brands of interest.

On the other hand, 22.6% of the participants indicated that they did not follow any international influencers since as it can be seen in the graph below, 47% took into account the physical and linguistic distance to these people. 41% also indicated that these opinion leaders work with brands that are difficult to find or acquire from Spain.

**Chart 4.** Answers to the question “Which are the reasons that make you not to follow international influencers?”



Source: own elaboration

In this contents block, there is a question of free answer where the respondent is asked to suggest an influencer of a national and an international character. There is a wide variety of responses, but if the most frequent answer is taken, it could be said that the most appointed opinion leaders at the national level are:

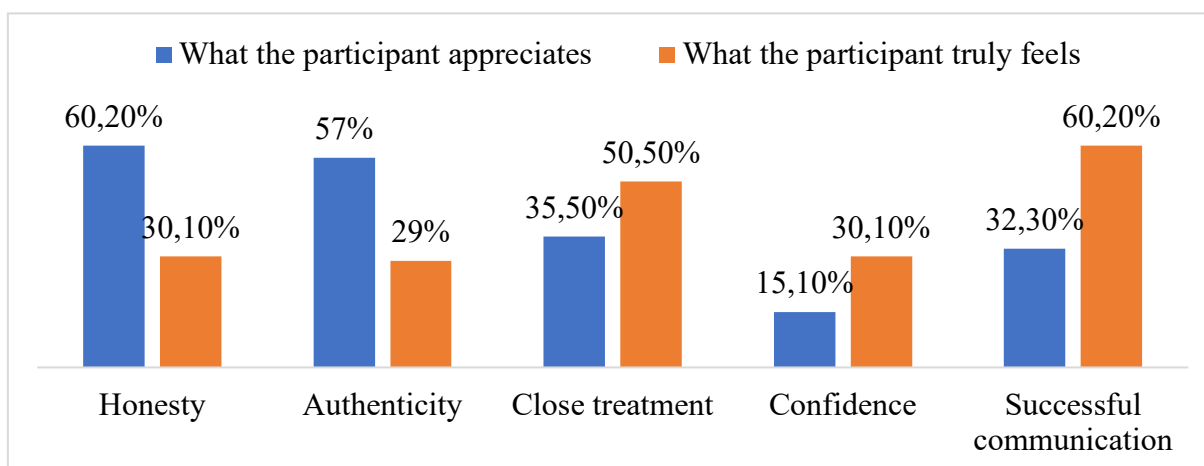
**Table 1.** *Influencers most mentioned by participants.*

	<b>Fashion</b>	<b>Beauty</b>
<b>National</b>	Rocío Osorno (@rocio0sorno)	Marta Bel (@heyratolina)
<b>International</b>	Chiara Ferragni (@chiaraferragni)	Rosy Mcmichael (@rosymcmichael)

*Source: own elaboration*

On the other hand, and in a more direct way, two points are raised referring to those aspects that the interviewee's value of the influencers and those that they transmit to them. It is necessary to show both graphs together to appreciate the differences that mark the public perception of this subject.

**Chart 5.** *Valuation about these principles that influencers should transmit and the reality from the survey respondent's view*



*Source: own elaboration*

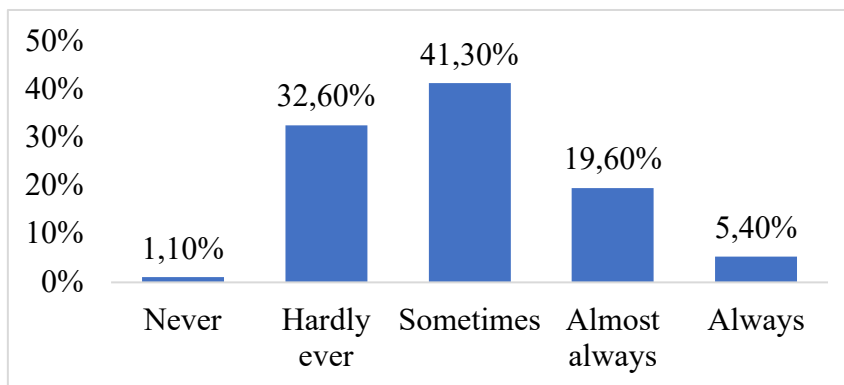
The participant's value in a significant way if the opinion leader is honest and authentic in his or her testimony; however, what they perceive is the good oratory and close treatment with the spectator. In this way, the values that show the sincerity and honesty of the opinion leader are kept in the background because what they put into practice is the close, clear and understandable public recruitment.

#### 4.4. Purchase of fashion and beauty products through a influencer recommendation

Although a clear idea has been reflected throughout this work, it is that the influencers are workers who are responsible for increasing the sales of a particular company or brand. In this content block, the results provided by their activity are analysed from the perspective of the consumers, that is to say, their followers.

Before beginning to analyse the results of your work exercise, it is necessary to ask an initial question about the degree of credibility that the opinion or testimony of an opinion leader has for the public. They are shown in the graph below:

**Chart 6.** *Answers about the credibility level an influencer has when giving an opinion about a product*



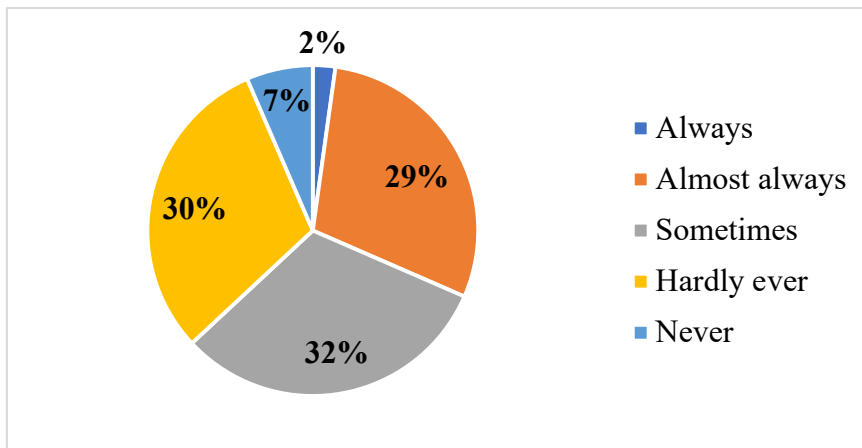
*Source: own elaboration*

There are more than 33% of participants who has a negative opinion about the truthfulness of a leader's opinion. However, there is a majority corresponding to 41% who say that sometimes yes and other times not. If one chooses to analyse both extremes, it can be seen that there are 1% who never believe the testimony of the influencers compared to 5.40% who have full confidence in their speech.

The confidence degree the followers have is a decisive tool when analysing the impact that certain fashion and beauty campaigns will have because it is what entails a consumer deciding to buy or not.

Therefore, there is a graph below where it can be seen how an influencer recommendation can persuade their followers.

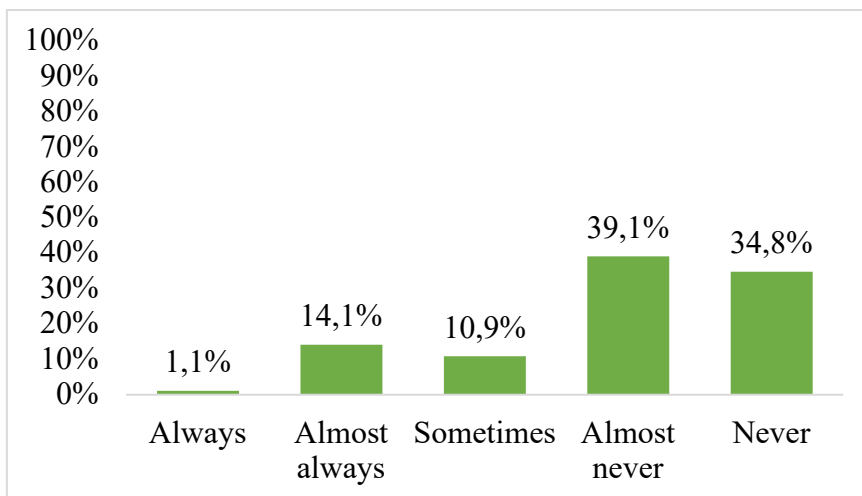
**Chart 7.** *Frequency of purchase by an influencer recommendation*



Source: own elaboration

The most representative issue of the graph is that the highest percentages are among the three core values "almost always", "sometimes", "hardly ever". These data indicate the high degree of persuasion exerted by influencers on the public since a significant majority buy products due to an influencer's recommendation.

**Chart 8.** Answers to "If an influencer strongly recommend a product, do you buy it?"



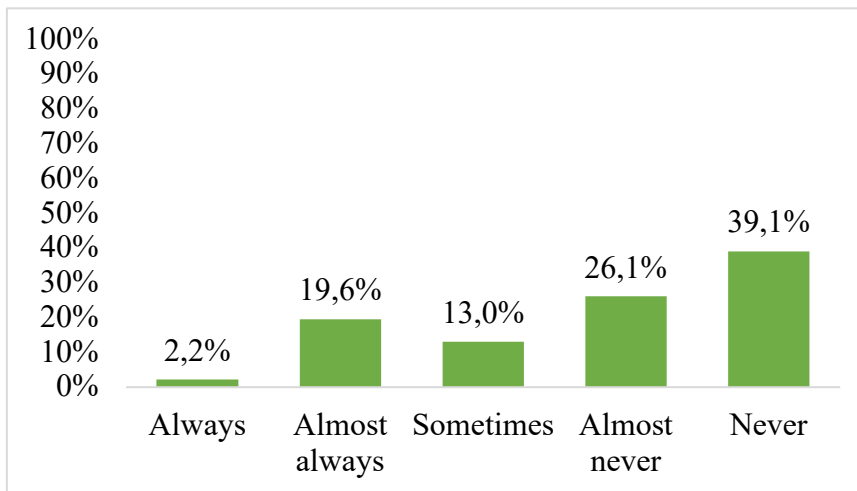
Source: own elaboration

However, concerning the question above, public answers are totally different. In this case, the majority of respondents decide not to buy a product which is recommended with a huge insistence.

In addition, influencers have much to do with compulsive purchases by consumers, as they are a frequent loudspeaker that calls for the purchase of products. In that way, it can be found the following answers.



**Chart 9.** Answers to the question related to the frequency of purchasing something that not would be bought only because a discount/code was offered by an influencer



Source: own elaboration

The results of the question are noteworthy if they are compared with the previous question, so in this case, the chance of success by including promotional discounts is higher. It should be noted that almost 20% of respondents would be encouraged to buy something they already have just for the benefit of a discount.

Finally, and as a way of closing this content block, it would be useful to know the degree of consumer satisfaction concerning purchases made by influencers recommendations. It is interesting to know if this public has had a positive experience with their purchases, or if not, it has been a waste of money.

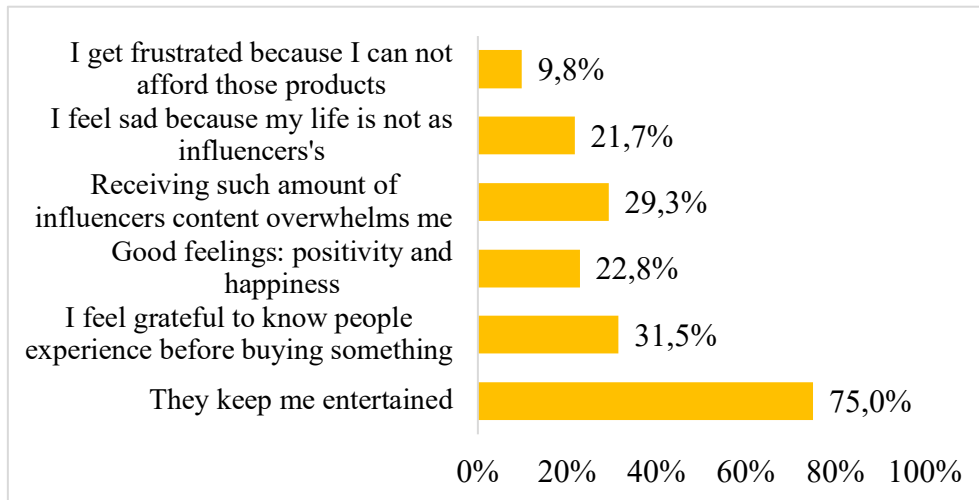
Thus, according to the 92 answers obtained in the question "Have you ever been disappointed with the quality of a product recommended by an influencer?", it is determined that 72.8 % of participants have felt disappointed with the acquisition of a product of this type. Only 27.2% had no bad experience with respect to purchases recommended by opinion leaders. However, of all respondents, a 98.9% majority said they were aware that fashion and beauty influencers promote products through collaborations with brands.

#### **4.5. Personal experience**

This section is the last part of the totality of the survey and the most personal one, since it collects the individual opinion of each one of the surveyed, as well as personalized contributions.

The following graph shows a range of emotions and sensations, both negative and positive in order to determine the reaction of the public to the stimulus of the influencers.

**Chart 10.** *Answers about emotions and feelings while visualising influencers content.*



*Source: own elaboration*

In general, positive values about the content and activity of influencers are predominant, so 75 % claim to be useful as a method of entertainment and almost 32% feel grateful to know a person's opinion before buying a product. In this way, it could be affirmed that the activity of the opinion leader is supported by the followers, because they get what they want.

However, the opinion of a significant minority cannot be ignored, as almost 30% say they feel overwhelmed with so much advertising and almost 22% say that it is sad to constantly visualise a life that is ideal and different from their own.

A free answer question is then posed where the respondent can justify the reason for his or her previous choice. In this way, it can be collected five of these more than sixty contributions:

-Subject 1: "I feel that in the case of the YouTubers that I follow, I'm listening to a friend who advises me what to buy and what not to."

-Subject 2: "I'm not satisfied while constantly seeing cosmetic products or clothing that I can't afford."

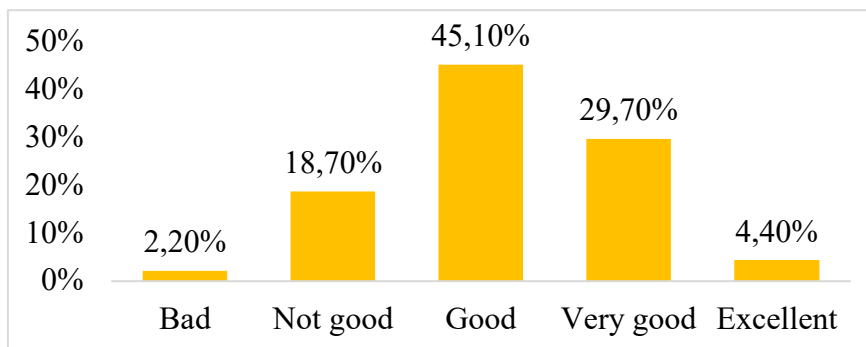
-Subject 3: "It's true that my reality and his/hers are very different, but it's great to be able to have a small evaluation of a product from someone who understands it and has tried different brands and shapes."

-Subject 4: "The world of beauty is not as before lately, now summing it all up in one sentence is: BUY IT."

-Subject 5: "It seems contradictory, but the content that they show sometimes entertains me, but others displease me because their reality is not the same as mine, but you have to be aware of it."

After knowing the opinion of some survey respondents, a question is raised about the evaluation of their experience with influencers at both a personal and general level. Thus, the following graph is obtained:

**Chart 11.** *Valuation of the personal experience about influencers*



*Source: own elaboration*

In general, the respondent's experience tends to be positive, as the most point to the values that indicate this trend. More than 30% is between the options "Very good" and "Excellent" while 20% is in the values "Bad" and "Not good". It is striking that the majority of respondents prefer to place themselves in a neutral zone and not decline towards either of the other two poles.

Finally, by way of closing this block and the analysis of results, a question is proposed in which absolute freedom is granted to raise any anecdote or comment. It was the question with the lowest response rate, but the 24 people who decided to answer it did so extensively. Here are some of them:

- Subject A: "I follow some influencers by the content of fashion, beauty, decoration, but by way of entertainment, they do not exert an influence on me when it comes to buying

products, for example. I consider that the credibility is so low in a lot of cases, that if I am interested in a product and they advertise it, I don't buy it anymore. Maybe it's very radical, but I think that in the end, the great majority do it for money and not for recommending a product."

-Subject B: "We must be guided by our judgment and not by the judgment of others or the majority. We should not idealise anyone simply by seeing them on screen, and we must remember that their job is to show novelties, but only we are responsible for exaggerated consumerism."

-Subject C: "Regarding the discussion on influencers and consumerism, I have to make a plea for influencers because (without being an influence, far from it) the big blame is on the public who don't know or can't discern where the limit is or/and control consumerism. That is to say, the influencer is doing his or her job, and it is the responsibility of the public to use the head and decide if it is worth or not. I also feel that it is the followers's responsibility to know what kind of influencer to see. In conclusion, we must educate ourselves – from my point of view - to see influencers as entertainment and help in deciding a purchase, not as an excuse for consumerism or to accumulate stuff."

-Subject D: "In general, I trust more on the opinions of micro-influencers because they seem more real, less economically conditioned."

This point is focused on possible avenues for the development of this topic in the future so that those common aspects can be highlighted, and a new branch of research can be created.

## CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this thesis was to provide public perception of influencers in the beauty and fashion area. The principal theory about this process has been previously explained, which is linked with the study results. Those results have made it possible to visualize what people think, and also, what they feel about this kind of marketing.

The presence of the influencer is striking for the public, which is grateful for having an expert opinion on the matter, handy, especially in beauty products. Besides, the facility provided by the Internet to establish contact with international influencers has been widely exploited by consumers. This international character has been fundamental both for the growth of the brands and for the public. They obtain several benefits in comparison with local influencers. Having the opportunity to oppose the opinion of people with other nations is a highly valued factor, as they put in knowledge new brands and above all, new trends or advice.

Advertising through social networks is very close to followers, who want to create a relationship with that leader with whom they share tastes. However, this relationship that is created, contrary to public perception, is not highlighted by the authenticity and sincerity of the influencers. In this matter, the public is aware that the role of the opinion leader is really characterised by a correct communication with the receptors and a close treatment that favours trust.

Despite the high level of influence exerted on the public, they know that behind the screen, there is a whole business world. An essential sample of people has ever felt deceived, as the testimony of influencer was not entirely true. In this way, many people can shop wisely versus others who recognise that they sometimes fall into the hands of compulsive shopping.

Besides, the influencers are not only a showcase for products and novelties, but also show the public their personal life, which is typically characterised by luxury, travelling, shopping. In response, the public's opinion is not entirely positive, as one party acknowledges to feel frustration at life completely unapproachable.

It is necessary to be aware that these figures represent a reality which sometimes not entirely sure and other times considerably idyllic, but it is nothing new. Human beings have been continuously subjected to be a participant in other people's lives and ideals in

the form of programmes or realities, but this does not mean that we should fall into frustration.

In short, the figure of the influencer is created to make the followers purchase in a personalised and experimental way with the product. Their particular closeness with the public is an essential tool that can be both positive and negative for it. However, it is our task to appreciate the experience they bring us and not fall into irresponsible consumption.

### **1.1. Avenues for future research**

The very topical nature of the subject dealt with throughout this work makes it easier to take it further. To this day, influence marketing is still being experimented with, and not even all companies dare to include this tool in their campaigns. For the same reason, not even the public has been studied as such. There are numerous questions concerning its perception that can be valued and also useful for the knowledge of companies and consumers.

One of the issues of interest for the future refers to the compulsive purchase. It is due to such a close influence that it can end up being prejudicial to the consumer on an economic and psychological level.

On the other hand, I consider it essential to continue the study based on the search for tools and techniques that, on the one hand, contribute to the brands and help the consumer. The reason is simple and is that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the massive abuse of advertising on social networks as well as credibility and trust in these brands.

Brands must have a series of tools that intervene when it comes to achieving their goals with the minimum negative impact on the consumer. On the other hand, the consumer must learn to be aware of reality and to be able to make decisions in the most rational way possible.

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## APPENDIX

### 1.1.Of the survey : free answers

#### 1.1.1. Could you propose an international and national influencer? 93 answers

No

Si

Belen Hostalet / ffranzzy

Ratolina y Key Rique

Ratolina

Roció Osorno

Mycrazymakeup y mannymua

Nacional: Neferu Beautyy Internacional: Kathleenlights

Snukiful

María Pombo y Kylie Jenner

Rocío Osorno y chiara Ferragni

De España @AuronPlay, internacional me gusta @wuzg00d

María Valero (nacional)

María Pombo como influencer nacional y Alice Campello como internacional

Espanol - no, Internacional - Roxi, Amber Scholl, Mia Maples, Natalie Taylor

Itziar Aguilera/ Chiara Ferragni

Rocio Osorno y Kylie Jenner

Nina Urgell, Clara Berry

Oto vans

La vecina rubia

Ana F. Padilla / Chiara Ferragni

Kylie Jenner, Anabel.mua

herrejón, marina yers

Cariatydes

Isa p y Kim kardashian

Nacional: oto vans

Claucienfuegos y Soph X

Crisbelleza(españa) MytziCervantes (mexico)

Marta del canal Ratolina y Tati del canal LifeGlamGuru

Goty Makeup y Andrea Matillano

Gotymakeup (nacional) y RosyMcMichael (internacional)

Ratolina y Jordan Lipscombe

Ratolina y Rosy Mcmichael
Ratolina RosyMcMichael
Patricia Ridet/ Rosy McMichael
Paula Echevarría Chiara Ferragni
Gala González y Olivia Palermo
Gotymakeup
Lilia Cortés, Mytzi Cervantes
Ratolina y james charles
Ratolina y GlamLifeGuru
Nacional -gotymakeup internacional- Rosymcmichael
Ratolina y Mariana Zambrano
Dirty closet y Manny mua
MycrazyMakeup y Shane Dawson
María Pombo. Extranjeros no caigo ahora
Lucia Castells
Maria Pombo / Corinna Randazzo
Marikowskaya de Cuenca y Lola liner americana
Nacional Ratolina e internacional, Roxy Mcmichael
SandraRClemente. Bretman Rock
Mery turiel/ Olivia Palermo
Alessaberry (españa) y Rosy Mc Michael (internacional)
Nacional Ratolina. Internacional Rosy McMichael
Murias.love y skinkarma
Ratolina / Rosy McMichael
Monica Vizuete,Rosi McMikel
Lovely Pepa / Sincerely Jules
Ratolina como nacional, Rosy mcmichaele como internacional.
Ratolina y RosyMcMichaell
Dianina xl (España)
Marykovskaya (España) Ninguna (internacional)
Monica Vizuete/Khaterina Light
Goty Makeup y Rosy McMichael
Dianina XL
ratolina
Si. 1 mycrazymakeup 2 rosymcmichael

Gotymakeup3/Rosy McMichael

Ester Carpes y Linda Halbert

Dulceida o Paulagonu y Desi Perkins

Rosy Mcmichael

Anabel.mua

Itziar Aguilera y Chiara Ferragni

Sí

Sí. Aretha la galleta y Emitaz.

Aretha la galleta (Nacional)Romy (internacional)

Jon kortajarena , Alice Pagani

Dulceida, chiara ferragni

Goty makeup/jackie Hernández

Tirsa Garpa (España) Sara Underwood (EE.UU.)

nacional ninguno, internacional jeffree star

Nacional: ratolina nacional no se

español: pelayo

de España rocio osorno

### 1.1.2. Could you justify your previous reponse? 69 answers

Although many justify that they don't work with brands they don't like, for me the credibility they have when promoting a sponsored product is null or low.

No

It makes me aware of new products

I prefer to see how the products look before I buy them.

I am not satisfied to constantly see cosmetic products or clothing that I cannot afford.

I feel that in the case of youtubers that I personally follow, I am listening to a friend who advises me what to buy and what not to.

Instead of reading a product report as before, use social media and influencing to learn more about a product.

It frustrates me to see that they live from nothing

It's a way to hang out and entertain and also to disconnect.

I'm angry that they make a living off followers who don't give a damn.

I like to watch makeup tutorials

I like to learn new tricks for makeup, hairstyles, combinations of clothes, etc.

Sometimes I find them funny, sometimes I find out about new things that are interesting, or give good advice about makeup etc.

I think they have fake lives

It's true that my reality and yours are very different, but it's great to be able to have a small evaluation of a product from someone who understands it and has tried different brands and shapes.

Most of the content I see is for entertainment, 70% of the products I can't buy today. So I don't see it for buying interest, but for fashion interest.

I am entertained to see publications on influencers although many times, never better said they make up the reality, but only for offering a position or canon of life to follow.

I find it unnatural to try to sell everything you wear/have

They make me not to be bored

I don't know

I like seeing products before buying them

They try to show an ideal world

I'm on par.

I only see them when I have free time, I don't think they are always sincere and I don't trust them 100%.

Seeing youtube and instagram makes me happy and compensates me even if sometimes I can't buy everything I'd like.

It's a constant bombardment of novelties and "ansia viva."

It's a hobby for me, but I don't let them influence me.

Ultimately the world of beauty is not like before, now summarizing everything in one sentence is: BUY IT.

Some of them look like a teletienda and have lost their essence.

Before buying a product I like to see reviews to make sure it is a good product. I also like to watch YouTube videos to entertain me even if I'm not going to buy any of the products.

Because they transmit the content in a different way

They're a divertimento, not a referent.

Because so I can know if that product can work on my skin.

They save me money if they're not good products.

For me, it's a hobby.

I consume content of influencers content when I am bored

It distracts me but many times the campaign bombardment is too much.

I like the content they generate, although many times they don't sell reality. I already have an age, I know, but I feel sorry for people who pay attention and believe everything unconsciously.

It entertains me.

I'm interested in the world of cosmetics in general, and makeup in particular, so I like to know what other people think about it (whether large influencers or micro influencers).

I like who I follow, I have criteria and I see the scams and I adore that their recommendations work for me! 98% of times approx.

It's my hobby.

I love the world of beauty and watching videos or images of them where they talk about products helps me know them better

I follow the girls I believe in and they convey positivity to me.

It entertains me to spend time seeing what they do, what their style is like, they provide me with ideas for outfits or make-ups.

Being my daily YouTube medium, I tend to see the videos of influencing them as entertainment of my choice (and not the TV), so I don't get overwhelmed or frustrated if they show something I would like to buy because I think a lot about what to spend my money on and that makes me watch the videos more relaxed without the need to have a notebook next to me.

.

I like to see it but if they upload a lot of brand content it gets boring.

Beauty content entertains me because it's something I'm passionate about, but in turn, it gets heavy when it's based solely on advertising brands. I notice very much the difference between quality content, made to the liking of the influencer in question, and sponsored content, paid for by a brand (in that case, it just so happens that everything you present in your videos/blogs/Instagram is very good).

I believe that very few are credible, the rest are false and only move for economic interest.

I am an adult and I have my own personality so that I can consciously enjoy content.

Negative emotions are not among my answers, as I don't see unnecessary dramas. If I don't like something, I stop following it. Nor do I believe 100% everything I see or hear, I prefer to try for myself. And I'm aware that my life is different, because that's the way it has to be, so it doesn't cause me frustration. You have to be aware of what you are and what you have, and be happy for the successes of others, help those who need it. And if

someone does things wrong, then act accordingly out of respect. If we don't like something, we say goodbye. Make things simple. (I tried to make it brief, sorry)

I do not believe the opinion of anyone who receives money for teaching me something, I see him for seeing something or seeing colors in the skin simply

It entertains me to see the content but sometimes the promotion of a product extends too much in time and is very repetitive.

It entertains me and I like visually how the post and photos are cared for.

The life of the influencer gives me depression :)

They entertain me because they make me disconnect and reflect on other topics such as the environment, creativity (as is the case of Itziar Aguilera) or sport and health (cocosants and Carlos Ríos). It doesn't frustrate me to see it and if at any moment it does I will stop following them or being interested in their networks. I am also aware that this is not his real life.

I see what they show me I am entertained but it doesn't mean that I'm going to buy it or listen to them

It seems contradictory but the content that they show sometimes entertains me but others displease me because their reality is not the same as mine but you have to be aware of it.

### **1.1.3. Would you like to add anything? Be free! 24 answers**

I follow some influencers by the content of fashion, beauty, decoration, but by way of entertainment, they do not exert an influence on me in terms of buying products, for example. In fact, I consider that the credibility is so low in many cases, that if I am interested in a product and advertise it I do not buy it anymore. Perhaps it is very radical, but I think that in the end the great majority do it for money and not for recommending a product.

No

Sometimes I have bought something that I have later regretted, but in general what I have bought on the recommendation of the influences I like has been useful to me.

It is true that we manage with all their draws and constant updates in the world of beauty but if you follow the appropriate or those that most interest you personally by the types of products you usually buy and promote, is a great advantage because you can know new products and discounts at the moment. It is very useful.

no

.

I really liked the survey!

I don't like the false life they lead. They show us a dream life that most of us can't have, especially young people. Sometimes I feel helpless and angry that they are people who achieve many things without much effort.

Since I discovered youtube and instagram I don't watch TV and I have more beauty products than clothes.

We should be guided by our own judgment and not by the judgment of others or the majority. We should not idealize anyone simply by seeing them on screen and we must remember that their job is to teach novelties but only we are responsible for exaggerated consumerism.

I think there are influencers who don't deserve at all the number of followers or fame in general. On the contrary, there are others that deserve much more fame and recognition for their content and effort among other factors.

I've had a lot of fun doing the survey.

Although I follow many influences, I generally rely more on small accounts that don't do that.

In general I rely more on the opinions of micro-influencers to seem more real, less economically conditioned.

They don't make you buy, the money is yours and you spend it because you win it, if they jump off a bridge, would you do it too?

Regarding the debate on influencing and consumerism, I have to break a lance in favor of influencing because (without being an influence, far from it) the big blame is on viewers who do not know or can not discern where the limit is or / and control consumerism. That is to say, the influencer is doing his job and it is in the spectator that lies the responsibility of buying with his head. I also feel that it is the viewer's responsibility to know what influences to see. In conclusion, those of us who see influencers must educate ourselves - to my understanding - in seeing influencers as entertainment and/or help in deciding a purchase, not as an excuse for consumerism, nor to accumulate things.

I think they should not have so much makeup when there are people who can not afford and then all that is impossible to spend it because it is too much could do more draws or things like that, because all that many end up throwing it new.

Accounts should be motivated with fewer followers but who are sincere and do very well what 'celebrities influence' they think they do.

We're all human, don't forget that. Neither empathy nor respect. I add this because lately I see a lot of people complaining about the influences and the whole story, forgetting that they are the ones who let them be like that, or that they themselves are like that. I find it hypocritical and annoying. They complain, but they actually do similar things. You have to think for yourself, and act accordingly. Don't get carried away by others, in general, not just by influencers.

I like to see what they recommend and for example if it's a perfume, obviously I don't just buy it, I'm curious, and I go to a perfume shop to see what it smells like.

It's a bit of a rotten world, people who have millions of admirers and their money basically comes from advertising passed off as genuine opinions. A farce, and on top of that they are examples to follow for their supposedly ideal lives.