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The Influence of TikTok on Consumer Behaviour: An Analysis of How TikTok Influencers Affect Generation Z' Consumption in the Wellness Sector

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the researchers deeply examine the dynamics of social media's influence on Generation Z's consumer behaviour. The research question, "To what extent are Generation Z's purchase behaviour for wellness products influenced by TikTok digital influencers?" aims to measure the degree to which this influence occurs by applying quantitative research methods.

Two main objectives guided the research: a) To conduct a comprehensive Literature Review, analysing published work on Gen Z, their consumption of wellness products, and the dynamics of influence on the social media platform TikTok among content creators, consumers and brands, and b) To conduct an online survey, exploring how TikTok influencers and their posts promoting wellness products and brands influence Gen Z consumers' purchasing behaviour towards wellness products.

By applying a descriptive research design and qualitative survey approach with a sample of 131 participants, of which mostly were Gen Z, the researchers confirmed both hypotheses: 1) TikTok influences Gen Z consumers' purchasing intentions in the wellness niche and 2) TikTok influencers directly influence Gen Z consumers' purchasing decision process. From the sample population, 85.3% affirm that they have had the intention to purchase wellness products in the past, based on a TikTok influencer's recommendations. In contrast, 81.5% of participants said they had already purchased a wellness product based on the recommendation of a TikTok influencer.

INTRODUCTION

The consumption of products and services in the wellness industry has increased substantially in the past years, especially after the pandemic of covid 19 when consumers grown in appreciation for health and well-being. Generation Z is known to be the leading in the consumption behaviour shift towards wellness, and as frequent users of social media platforms such as TikTok, this demographic is often exposed to content from influencers that talk about and endorse wellness-related products and trends. Therefore, influencer marketing sponsorships are a growing strategy used by brands targeting this age group.

Renowned scholars in the social sciences have pointed out that psychological and social variables frequently influence consumer behaviour. Cialdini's (2007) theory of persuasion, for example, says that influence drives behaviour, which justify the significance of TikTok influencers in customer decision-making. Similarly, social media platforms such as TikTok let people connect with others, which is well explained by theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943).

While the influence of social media in consumer behaviour is a given, there was a gap of knowledge combining the specific variables: Generation Z, TikTok social media platform, and the wellness industry. This research report aims answer the question: To what extent are Generation Z's purchase behaviour for wellness products influenced by TikTok digital influencers? Measure this influence and understand this phenomenon is relevant because influencer marketing has become a very important source of profitability and can be a powerful tool for an effective marketing strategy.

This study's objectives are a) To conduct a comprehensive Literature Review, analysing published work on Gen Z, their consumption of wellness products, and the influence dynamics on the social media platform TikTok among content creators, consumers, and brands; and b) To conduct an online survey exploring how TikTok influencers and their posts promoting wellness products and brands influence Gen Z consumers' purchasing behaviour towards wellness products.

This research utilises a descriptive methodology, employing an online survey to collect data from a sample of 131 participants, the majority of whom are members of Generation Z. The results of this research can provide marketing departments in companies who target this group

with useful data that will help in the development of strategies that will effectively engage Gen Z customers through influencer marketing.

The document's structure is as follows: Chapter 1—Literature Review—will define important concepts, define the wellness industry, explain Gen Z behavioural traits, and discuss influence and purchase decision theories.

Chapter 2 will explain that the methodology chosen is descriptive and provide rationales for why this methodology was chosen, highlighting its benefits over others. It will also define sample size, fieldwork, and procedures.

Chapter 3 is the data analysis, which discusses survey answer results by section of sample characterisation, social media usage, intention of purchase, and decision of purchase. The chapter also provides overall findings, limitations, and recommendations. The document ends with a comprehensive conclusion, the reference list, and the appendices.

CHAPTER 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

This literature review will explore published work on the influence of TikTok on Gen Z's consumer behaviour and understand how brands and influencers can affect purchase decisions for this consumer group on TikTok. The concepts relevant to this research project will be defined, to contextualise the reader on recurrently appearing terminologies and support the exploration of the theme studied. By comparing theories about the concept of *influence* and investigating publications about Generation Z's purchase behaviour for wellness products, this work seeks to provide valuable insights and the basis for the next stages of this research process.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

1.2.1 Social Influence Theory

Social influence is a concept studied by many psychologists and social scientists over the years. It refers to how individuals change their behaviour or opinions because of social interactions and pressures (Parsons, 1963). Cialdini (2007) considers it as a broad concept that can be analysed from various angles and define influence as “the art of persuasion”, defending that humans' brain uses shortcuts or rules of thumb to make decision-making easier. This way, the brain unconsciously suggests that many decisions that are influenced by external factors are natural and expected behaviours (Cialdini, 2007).

Cialdini (2007) presents influence in six principles: reciprocity, scarcity, authority, commitment, liking, and social proof. Analysing social media trends through the lenses of Cialdini's principles, it is possible to see clear links: the first noticeable is the principle of Social Proof. This principle says that individuals are likely to follow the lead of similar others (Cialdini, 2007). If an authority figure such as a celebrity or industry expert endorses a TikTok trend, it can gain more traction.

In addition, the Liking principle says that people are more influenced by whom they like (Cialdini, 2007), making relatable and likeable TikTok influencers more impactful in the audience.

Lastly, the Consistency principle suggests that once people engage with a trend, they are more likely to engage with similar trends in the future because people feel the urge to be consistent with their choices (Cialdini, 2007) implies that a user is more likely to interact with a content just because they have interacted with some similar content before.

1.2.2 Purchase Decision Process Theory

Armstrong & Kotler (2017) define the five steps consumers go through in the buyer decision process: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision and post purchase. According to Armstrong & Kotler's theory (2017), the evaluation of alternatives step consists of purchase intention and purchase decision, in which stage social media influencers play a significant role in both consumers' purchase intention and decision process (Gentele & Persson, 2022).

At this stage consumers are comparing product quality and price, evaluating the need and desire (WARC, 2023); the contact with Social Media Influencers content can directly impact their decision (Becker, 2023), as SMIs often showcase product features, create reviews, and expose consumer to alternative brands and products that they might not have previously considered.

1.3 Contextualisation and Definitions

1.3.1 Social Media Marketing

According to Appel et al. (2020), Social Media refers to a range of online platforms that allow users to connect and share content. Cataldo et al. (2021) state that these platforms have transformed how individuals communicate, connect, and share information in the digital age. It has allowed people and businesses to connect worldwide, share ideas, and create online communities (WARC, 2023) while acting as an instrument in moulding public opinion and mobilising people for various social and political causes. Wong (2024) points out that globally, 4.9 billion people use social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and X - formerly Twitter.

The emergence of social media has profoundly influenced consumer behaviour and marketing strategies (Appel et al., 2020). Advertising on social media platforms – Social Media Marketing - has quickly become an efficient online promotional tool (Alves et al., 2016). It can benefit businesses (Infante & Mardikaningsih, 2022) by allowing them to target specific demographics

and markets with more personalised and focused marketing strategies (Pant et al., 2020). Through Social Media Markwebsite andsses apply a combination of strategies at potentially low cost, and achieve an array of objectives (WARC, 2023) such as building brand awareness, driving traffic to their website, and increasing sales.

1.3.2 Social Media Influencer

Harrigan et al. (2021) define Social Media Influencers – SMIs, as individuals who create content for social media platforms and engage many followers with their shared ideas. Brands sponsor their content, and their digital presence is recognised as an authority in some niches (Reilly, 2022), hence there is an array of ways in which influencers can impact the sales of products or services (Tee et al., 2023) as they have the potential to quickly disseminate any message across large numbers of people, using credibility built and maintained throughout the time (Muntinga at. al, 2011).

1.3.3 TikTok: Trends and Viral Content

TikTok is a social media platform that allows users to create short videos and share content from their smartphones (Gisonna, 2024). It is a widely popular platform, with more than 4.5 billion app downloads globally, establishing it as one of the most successful apps in history (D’Souza, 2024). Statista (2024) states that the TikTok is accessible in more than 150 countries and supports 50 languages.

The application generates short videos lasting 15 seconds, which play in a loop until the user moves on to the next. Its diverse range of features, such as algorithmic recommendation, scrolling, and interactive elements, offers an irresistible platform for users to create and enjoy captivating content (Samsuar et al., 2023). It is undeniably an entertainment hub that keeps users hooked with its addictive nature (Wu, 2023).

Viral content refers to content that spreads fast on social medias reaching a large number of individuals (WARC, 2023). This effect refers to the possibility that a publication, video, photo, or material may become known due to some inevitability (Krink, 2021). A publication goes viral when it generates many likes, engagement (i.e. comments) and many clicks to share. The algorithm also elevates popular publications by suggesting it to more people. This content is usually a piece of media that reflects society’s latest interests, consumer behaviour trends, or a specific demographic’s current interests (Park, 2021). It can be a video on TikTok, for example,

posted by a micro-influencer that gains relevance quickly through shareability and becomes a viral trend.

1.3.4 Generation Z's Consumer Behaviour

Kotler (1965) defines Generation Z as individuals born between 1997 and 2009. What distinguishes this generation from all others is that its members were born immersed in technology; compared with the previous generation, Gen Z uses their phones the most (GWI, 2023). This constant exposure to technology generates significant changes in the individual's behaviour and, as a result, their consumption patterns (Katz et al., 2021).

Gen Z is known as a generation that cares about environmental issues, seeks authenticity, and advocates for the causes they care about (WARC, 2023). Their consumption behaviour includes choosing environmentally conscious brands and preferring ethically sourced products (Global Web Index, 2024).

Generation Z prefers to produce and consume their own content without the need for intermediaries (Mary Anna Eon, 2023). Hence, Social Media Influencers are a relatable source of information for this demographic, making traditional advertising no longer effective for this audience (Drenik, 2023). Approximately 64% of consumers say they prefer to consume honest videos that reflect reality rather than highly produced advertising content (Explainly, 2022).

Savanta Research (2021) reveals that Gen Z has shifted focus from the idea of a “beautiful body” towards a “strong, not skinny body,” emphasising the generation's interest for wellness and self-care. This generation appreciates the connection between mind and body, seeking more long-term and holistic solutions to wellness. One in each four Gen Z practices meditation (State of the Youth Nation, 2019).

According to TikTok Insights (2024), 58% of Gen Z TikTok users leverage the platform to research and discover more about products and brands, while they are also more likely to discover a product through a suggested video than through a search engine. In the last year, 60% of Gen Z TikTok users in the UK purchased a product after seeing it on the platform. In all ways, Gen Z individuals live in an interconnected world. According to an EY Cultural Insight study (Deloitte, 2023), they are the drivers of the movement around wellness, with physical and mental health among their top priorities (Merriman, 2022) (Intel, 2023).

1.3.5 The Wellness Industry

The wellness concept refers to an active health promotion by including lifestyle changes and the individual's search for a sense of “feel good” (Callaghan, 2021). By pursuing wellness, individuals seek increased awareness of nutrition and food quality, reduce stress levels, integrate physical activities in daily life, observe, and improve mental health (WARC, 2023). The Global Wellness Institute (GWI, 2023) defends that wellness represents a significant value system that individuals apply to their everyday lives to pursue health, happiness, and life satisfaction.

According to GWI (2023), the wellness industry was evaluated at \$5.6 trillion in 2022 and encompasses a group of sub-industries such as physical activity, healthy eating, nutrition, weight management, preventive medicine, alternative medicine, mental wellbeing, beauty and personal care, wellness tourism and wellness real state (Rappaport, 2023), of which beauty and personal care occupy the position of largest category, at \$1.8 trillion (GWI, 2023).

After the pandemic of Covid-19 in 2020, consumer behaviour shifted, with a higher level of consumer interest in and need for wellness-related products and services in the past years (Bloomberg, 2023). All around the world, the industry has grown to levels higher than pre-pandemic (GWI, 2023). Not only products but wellness practices such as aromatherapy, gardening, and meditation are trends observed in consumer behaviour and have been popularised in social media in the past two years (Euromonitor, 2023).

Social media reflects real-time consumer behaviour changes. The Euromonitor Consumer Behaviour report (2022) appointed three top trends in health in 2022 as “mental wellbeing,” “getting enough sleep,” and “having a healthy immune system.” These trends can be observed across social media over the past two years and are a recurrent subject content among the most popular TikTok influencers.

1.4 Literature Review Conclusion

The examined resources point to *influence* as a force that ignites behaviour and proves its strong relation to the dynamics observed in the social media landscape, and in social media marketing, especially observed in the relationship of influencers led content with Gen Z consumption. A

big part of the marketing to this generation centres around knowing what their wants are then offering meaningful solutions.

While SMIs are believed to help or influence others for positive change (Nadkarni, 2018), SMIs may lack professional expertise or formal education (Engel et al, 2024), and oftentimes are pursuing commercial interests regarding the product they are advertising (Wellman, 2023). Understanding these dynamics and uncovering the degree of influence involved in the decision-making process of consumption is crucial for effective marketing planning and strategies.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodologies chosen for this research project will be outlined, as well as the detailed rationales behind the choice of research strategy that best fit this study purposes, the secondary and primary research methods, chosen tool, sample population and procedures that made this work possible.

2.2 Research Method

2.2.1 Research Design Strategy

The primary goal of this research is to explore the dynamics of influencer marketing on consumers and measure the occurrence of this phenomenon. This research employed a quantitative approach for its methodology, which was preferred over the qualitative method.

Unlike qualitative methods that focus on theory building, quantitative methods prioritise theory testing. As a result, a descriptive research design was selected the best way since it allowed to acquire a thorough knowledge of How TikTok Influencers in the Wellness Sector Affect Generation Z' Consumption.

I. Descriptive Research

Descriptive research according to McCombes (2019), provides detailed descriptions of a phenomenon or population. Unlike other methods, it focuses on what, where, when, and how, rather than why. This approach yields specific and in-depth information about the characteristics being studied.

Descriptive research is utilised for the following purposes:

- Describes the features of a certain population or phenomenon.
- While it does not provide explanations for the shown occurrences, it might serve as a starting point.
- The descriptive research seeks to depict "accurately" the facts and occurrences of a given reality.

II. Exploratory Research

According to Tegan George (2021), exploratory research is undertaken to study an issue that is unclear, understudied, or otherwise poorly understood. This form of research serves the purpose of filling in the gaps that typically arise in studies. In general, exploratory research employs more flexible approaches, avoiding the use of specific patterns or particularly complicated samples; the goal is to acquire knowledge rather than generate statistics Stebbins (2001).

Reasons not to use this survey methodology:

- Interviewers and interpreters should be well-trained.
- Analysis can be difficult and subjective, posing a considerable risk of interpretation bias.
- Due to time restrictions and a lack of control over factors, the researchers opted not to use this methodological type.

III. Causal Research

Causal research According to DJS Research (2015), is experimental and statistical in nature, and it can be conducted under the researcher's supervision in a laboratory or in the field with minimum modification. The main sources of information that contribute to the effectiveness of

the causal inquiry process are the formulation of research questions that can establish the relationship between the variables and test the hypothesis. However, experiments can provide more reliable information by ensuring that the explanations of the occurrence are acceptable.

Reasons not to use this survey methodology:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is challenging to get at the proper conclusion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A cause-and-effect relationship may occur by accident and be mistakenly identified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the cause and impact variables.

2.2.2 Primary and Secondary Research

I. Secondary Research

Secondary Research is sometimes referred to as "documentary research" and is the synthesis of information and data collected from various sources. Periodicals, books, scholarly articles, government statistics, and census results are all available. This type of data may be useful for a variety of purposes, including providing an overview of a market and showing consumer patterns (Bhat 2019). For this study, a literature review was used, leveraging theoretical basis from Kotler & Armstrong (2017) explanation of consumer behaviour under the *Purchase Decision Process* and Robert Cialdini's (2017) understanding of the concept *Influence*. These theories were contrasted it with current social media marketing dynamics observed by scholars and published in recent academic papers from Marketing journals and databases such as WARC, The World Advertising Research Centre. The literature review also explored the wellness industry, through reliable sources such as the Global Wellness Institute, and brought insights into the generation Z, the target population for this study.

II. Primary Research

Primary research involves the original collection and analysis of data not previously available. According to Driscoll, D. (2010), this process allows researchers to create their own datasets

tailored to specific research questions. The flexibility of primary research enables researchers to adapt methodologies to their unique objectives. The resulting findings contribute new and potentially ground-breaking insights to scholarly discourse. Primary research can encompass both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, offering a diverse range of approaches to knowledge generation.

2.3 Research Tool Selected

The researchers in this study chose to use a questionnaire method for their primary research and conducted a literature review as secondary research to enhance their comprehension of the topic.

I. Survey Method and Measurement Tool

Questionnaires are versatile tools commonly used in research as survey methods and measurement instruments. Questionnaires, like surveys, collect data on specific variables from multiple people for direct comparison. Questionnaires can reveal demographics, emotions, behaviours, and thoughts.

Creating and conducting questionnaires online has various advantages. Online questionnaires are cost-effective, reach a broad audience quickly, offer convenience for both researchers and respondents, and allow potential issues with response capture to be quickly identified and addressed.

For researchers, the decision to carry out questionnaires online is driven by the benefits of virtual data collection, which ensures that data can be collected efficiently while maintaining quality.

II. Field Work

Online surveys are effective for gathering quick feedback as they can be distributed widely and instantly over the internet, reaching many participants simultaneously. The responses are automatically recorded and can be tabulated and analysed in real time, streamlining the process of data collection and interpretation. Online surveys bypass time-consuming stages like scheduling, moderation, transcription, and analysis, resulting in a quicker turnaround from dissemination to insights. Additionally, online surveys eliminate the need for physical presence, reducing the logistical constraints and costs associated with focus groups and interviews.

Lastly, online surveys provide a sense of anonymity and privacy for participants, which can encourage more honest and candid responses compared to face-to-face interactions.

A self-administered questionnaire with 27 questions was created using Google Forms, a free tool, to collect data for this research. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents via WhatsApp from March 19th, 2024, to April 4th, 2024.

III. Population and Sample Selection

According to (A. S., 2023), a population refers to an entire collection of individuals with distinct characteristics, while a sample is a smaller subset selected from the population.

The target population for this study, Generation Z, is considered a vital target market for consumer companies. Generation Z is digitally proficient and active on social media, which allows them to influence trends and brand preferences (Fathinasari et al., 2023)

Kotler (2021) states that Generation Z includes people born from 1997 to 2009. This group is known for its natural affinity with digital technology, having grown up in a world where the internet and social media are integral parts of daily life.

IV. Sampling

The sampling frame comprises units that represent the target population and from which the sample is chosen. This group specifically encompasses the population to be invited to participate in the study. The sampling method is closely linked to the attributes of the sampling frame, as it serves as a foundation for selecting the sample (Turner, 2020).

This research is focused on the feedback of 131 individuals belonging to Generation Z. The study utilised a probabilistic sampling technique, ensuring that the samples were selected randomly. Survey participants were chosen using simple random sampling, where every person in the population had an equal opportunity to be selected. Simple random sampling is cost-effective and straightforward, as it removes any bias from the sample selection process (Horton, 2024).

V. Quantitative Data Collection Instrumentation

Quantitative data were collected through an online survey divided into four distinct sections: (I) Sample Characterisation, (II) Social Media Usage, (III) Purchasing Intention and (IV) Purchasing Process.

As the name suggests, the first section aims to characterise the sample and understand its demographic characteristics. The second section aims to evaluate the participants' usage of social media and how they navigate it, focusing on TikTok and the areas of interest they most search for. The topic of digital influencers and branded social media was also heavily addressed. The third section, Purchasing Intention, aims to understand the motivation and desire of consumers when browsing social media and viewing publications from both digital influencers and brands.

By evaluating the consumers' Purchasing Process, we aim to determine whether participants have made a wellness product purchase after viewing it on social media or based on subsequent recommendations. This data will help us understand the impact of social media on consumer behaviour.

VI. Procedures

The influence of social media, specifically TikTok, has on consumers during the purchasing process of wellness was analysed through an online questionnaire using the Google Forms platform, which was sent via WhatsApp to the groups: 'DBS marketing 3rd year', 'DBS Marketing', 'DBS business group', 'Girls who plan ahead 🚀' and '☕ Café com Marketing 💡'.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand the impact of social media on consumers' purchasing intentions, which, in turn, will influence the purchasing process. It also aims to understand the different techniques used on social media, the type of publication brands use, and how this influences other consumers.

The questionnaire was designed to answer the necessary questions regarding the outlined objectives. The questionnaire was primarily composed of closed and multiple-choice questions, which allowed for more objective, quick, and agile responses. However, we also included four

open, short-answer questions to provide more in-depth insights. The groups of questions that served as the basis for preparing the questionnaire were the use of social media, purchase intention, and the purchase process.

CHAPTER 3: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected from the questionnaire and the literature review will be evaluated to determine whether the findings of the primary and secondary research are correlated. The quantitative part of our investigation takes centre stage. Our primary goal is to decode consumers' perceptions of brands' social media platforms, with a particular focus on TikTok. TikTok's unique format and popularity among Generation Z make it a significant platform for our research. To achieve this, we designed an online questionnaire, a key tool in our research process.

We are going to investigate whether the data collected from the questionnaire will support the research objectives and identify the differences and similarities among the research discoveries. In this section, we are also looking to find out if the research hypothesis will be supported or refuted. The questionnaire specifically explored *How TikTok Influencers in The Wellness Sector Affect Consumer Behaviours and Purchases*, with a focus on Generation Z.

I. Sample Characterisation Analysis

A quantitative online survey was conducted involving 131 participants between the ages of 15 and 56, the majority of whom were female - 52.7% (69 respondents). Most of the participants were Gen Z. Out of the total participants, 82 were 27 years old or younger, which accounted for 62.59% of the total sample. The remaining 48 participants were over 27 years of age, comprising 36.64% of the total sample.

The survey results show that 20.8% (27 respondents) are students only, 43.8% (57 respondents) are either full-time or part-time employed only, and 33.1% (43 respondents) study and work. The remaining 2.3% (3 respondents) are unemployed.

Out of the total survey participants, 126 are consumers of wellness products, accounting for a percentage of 97.7%.

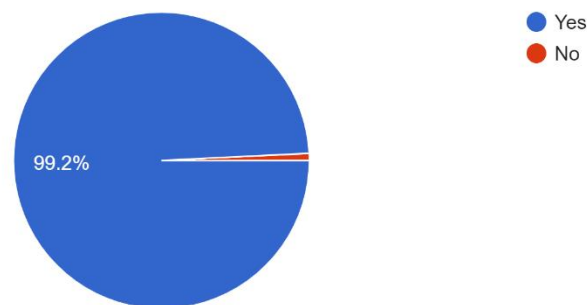
II. Social Media Usage Analysis

The quantitative analysis allowed us to understand the consumers' perspective regarding the use of social media and how it influences their purchasing intention and consequent purchasing process for wellness products.

We started by asking if the respondents used social media, and 129 out of 130 respondents said yes. Next, the respondents were asked which social media they used the most. Most participants (83.1%) stated that they use TikTok. When asked which social media they use most, 59.5% of participants answered TikTok, followed by Instagram, which was the second most used social media by respondents, accounting for 33.9% of responses. See below.

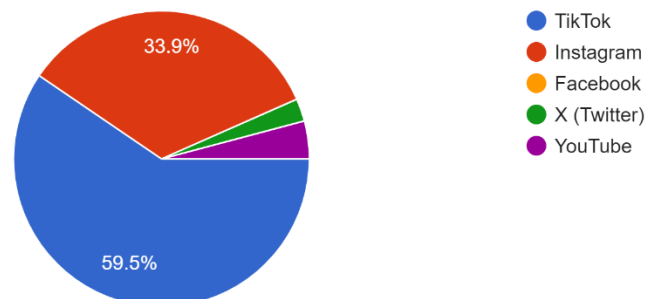
6. Do you use Social Media?

130 responses



9. Which Social Media do you use the most?

121 responses



In addition to this data, we also sought to understand whether research participants use TikTok as a search engine. 95 respondents said yes, totalling 79.8%. When asked which type of content

they are most interested in when browsing social media, 46.6 % of people selected the "Beauty, Makeup, Skin Care" category.

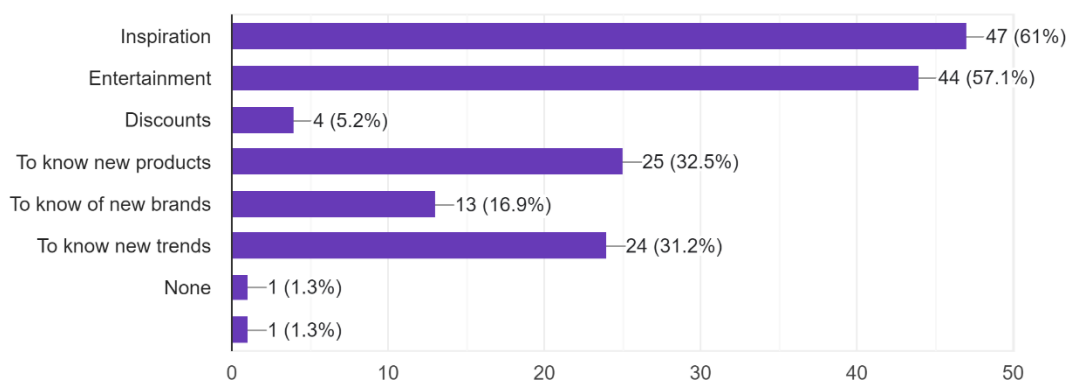
Out of the 130 respondents, 129 were active social media users. Among these, 93 were consumers of wellness products, 67 followed digital influencers, and 49 specifically followed digital wellness influencers. This analysis reduced our research's sample size, leaving us with a total of 49 subjects.

As the literature review suggests, these digital influencers hold significant authority in their respective niches (Reilly, 2022). When asked about the two digital influencers they follow in the wellness niche on TikTok, some names stood out and were mentioned repeatedly. Dixie D'Amelio (@dixie), Ezme Lily (@ezmelilyyy), Addison Rae (@addisonre), and Bianca (@bianca) were each mentioned twice by the respondents. Three of these digital influencers have another aspect in common. In addition to the content niche, they are mega-influencers — Dixie, Addison, and Bianca—with more than 1M followers on TikTok. While Ezme Lily is considered a macro-influencer, as she has more than 50K followers and less than 1M.

One interesting aspect to explore is consumers' motivation when following digital influencers, and understanding why this happens. This was a multiple-choice question, and the chart below shows how often each answer was chosen by the subjects who responded to the questionnaire. The reasons that most motivate consumers to follow influencers on TikTok are inspiration (61%) and entertainment (57.1%).

16. Why do you follow influencers on TikTok? Note: Please select a maximum of 3 options.

77 responses



To compare digital influencers and wellness brands, we asked about consumers' interest in following wellness brand accounts. The results showed that only 7.7% of the respondents who use TikTok follow wellness brands, while 32.5% follow wellness influencers. However, 42.7% follow both influencers and brands within the wellness niche. Evidence was found that TikTok users prefer to follow digital influencers directly and obtain information from that source rather than through the cosmetic brands' accounts.

Out of the 117 respondents, we found that 20 do not follow any digital wellness influencers or wellness brands, leaving us with 97 subjects.

III. Purchasing Intention Analysis

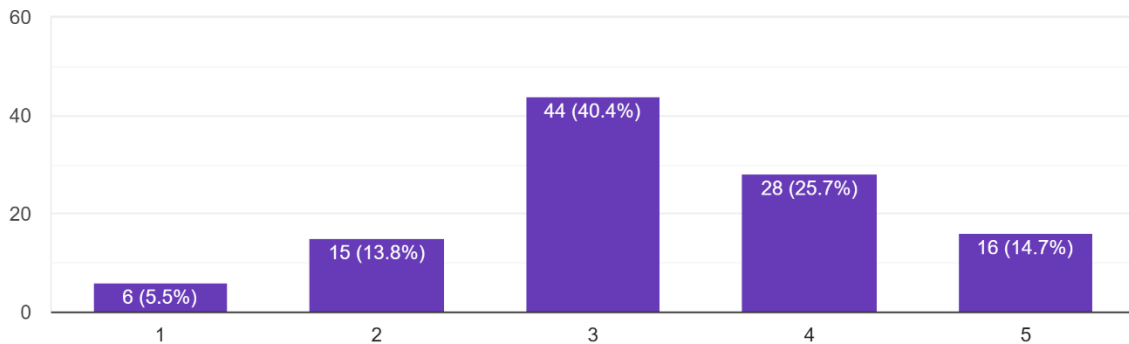
To understand how purchasing decisions are made, we need first to understand the consumer's purchasing intention. This intention drives the consumer to make a decision, and it comes before the actual purchasing process takes place (Rezvani et al., 2012).

The goal was to determine if the individuals had experienced a desire to purchase a wellness product after seeing it on TikTok. 85.6% of the participants responded positively. Afterwards, they were asked if they wanted to buy a wellness product because an influencer recommended it on TikTok, to which 85.3% responded affirmatively once again.

The only question with an answer on the Likert scale also refers to how much the respondents feel influenced to buy a wellness product when they see an influencer they follow advertising it and how the subjects classify it from 1 (Very Little) to 5 (A lot). The majority, 40.4% of respondents, said they felt medium influenced, followed by 25.7% who said they felt more influenced, while 14.7% said they felt a lot influenced by it. Check the chart below.

20. When you see a video/photo content of a wellness product on sales from an influencer you follow, how much do you feel influenced to buy it? Rate from 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot).

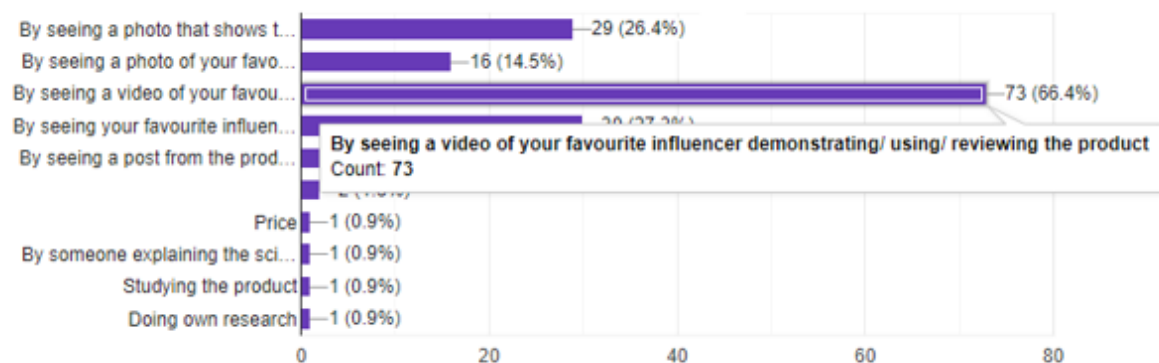
109 responses



Given consumers' preference for following digital influencers and allowing themselves to be influenced, we wanted to determine how they feel more inclined to buy a wellness product. Consumers are most inclined to buy a product after watching a video of their favourite influencer demonstrating, using or reviewing the product. See below.

21. How do you feel most comfortable purchasing a wellness product? **Note:** Please select a maximum of 2 options.

110 responses

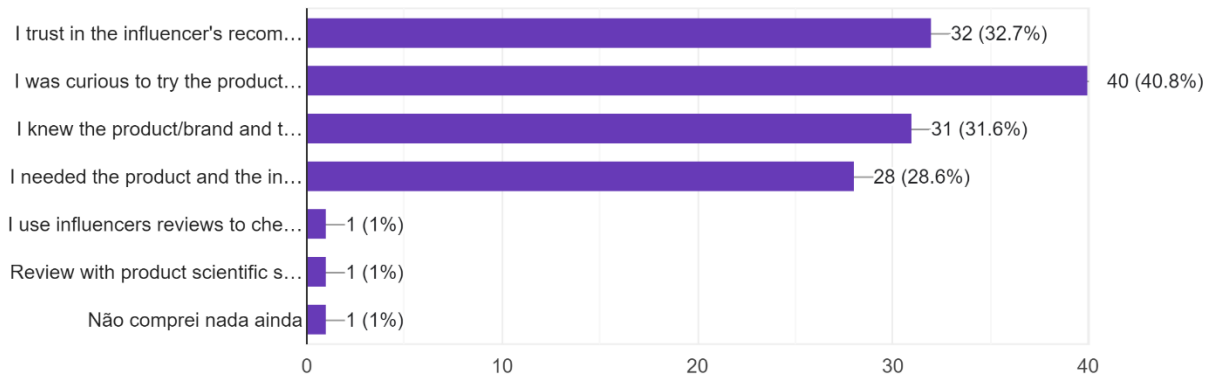


IV. Purchasing Process Analysis

After analysing the purchase intention and the purchase process, it is determined how many respondents made a purchase after intending to buy it based on a recommendation/view on TikTok—81.5% of consumers say they have already purchased a wellness product recommended by digital influencer on TikTok.

When asked why they made the purchase, 40.8% answered they were curious to try the product the influencer recommended, and 32.7% said they trusted the influencer's recommendation, thus reinforcing their desire to buy — acting as validation. See below.

23. Why did you purchase? Note: Select a maximum of 3 options.
98 responses



Findings

The quantitative results obtained will be crossed with the literature review presented previously to validate the research data and hypothesis.

We could evaluate from the online survey that the intention to purchase a wellness product is influenced by viewing content on TikTok - 85.6% of participants said they wanted to buy a wellness product because they've seen it on TikTok, confirming Hypothesis 1.

In the past, it was widely believed that social factors such as reference groups, family members, and social class played a major role in shaping consumers' purchasing decision process. However, in recent times, a new social factor has emerged that is believed to have more influence on consumers than before. This social factor is none other than social media, as suggested by Kotler & Armstrong (2017) in Principles of Marketing. According to data collected, 81.5% of consumers have purchased a wellness product based on the recommendation of a TikTok influencer, confirming Hypothesis 2. This highlights the power of digital influencers in positively influencing consumer purchase decisions.

The analysis of the collected data also allowed us to share that consumers prefer to follow wellness products and services through digital influencers, allowing a closer connection than

through the brands themselves. Quantitative analysis shows that the opinions shared on TikTok and by digital influencers significantly impact consumer decision-making. Influencer partnerships are undeniably crucial in today's business landscape, but they must be carefully considered and studied before entering them.

According to the literature review, including Cialdini (2007), Gomez (2019), Reilly (2021), and Tee et al. (2023), social media has a significant influence on consumer behaviour. Consumers spend a considerable amount of time online, particularly on social media platforms such as TikTok, for not only entertainment but also inspiration and information. Our survey results indicate that 52.9% of participants spend 3-5 hours browsing social media. Advertising on social media, particularly through digital influencers, plays a vital role in driving consumer purchasing intentions and persuading them to purchase.

Limitations

As with any research, there are limitations and obstacles that need to be considered. In the case of our quantitative study, the age range of the participants is a significant factor. Initially, our focus was on Gen Z, who were born between 1997 and 2009 and are currently between 15 and 27 years old. However, the ages included in the questionnaire range from 15 to 56. Although this deviation from our target age group may seem problematic, we believe that exploring a wider age range, such as Millennials and Generation X, could provide different and valuable insights that would be relevant to our work.

Another limitation of this study is that the questionnaire items related to Generation Z should have been more precise. Although efforts were made to formulate the questions correctly to be appropriate for Gen Z, some uncertainties could still be found in the wording and expressions of some items once questions weren't explicitly targeting Gen Z consumers but consumers as a whole. Additionally, it is possible that the responses of the respondents differed because, in some questions, we can notice evasions and different numbers of responses from one question to another, which could compromise the accuracy and reliability of results.

Age was not the only limitation that was felt. Another limitation was gender. Most respondents in the quantitative analysis were female (52.7%). This means that the analysis did not provide a complete perspective on the wellness behaviour of male consumers (34.4%). Even though wellness is predominantly associated with females, it is important to remember that wellness

and well-being are unisex and for everyone. Today, a large percentage of men also purchase wellness products and are influenced by social media.

Recommendations

Addressing the limitations presented in the research would be beneficial in future investigations. It is recommended that the questionnaire needs to be improved to represent Generation Z more accurately, capture their traits and preferences more precisely, and ensure the validity of the overall research.

In addition to that, one possible approach could be to conduct a qualitative investigation using in-depth interviews. This would allow a deeper understanding of how TikTok influencers influence individuals' purchasing behaviour and intentions. By gaining a better understanding of these factors, it may be possible to improve the feasibility of conducting qualitative investigations in this area.

CONCLUSION

According to our research, Generation Z is increasingly interested in well-being and is turning to TikTok for wellness-related content. This trend has surprised some, but TikTok has become a primary source of wellness products and advice due to its popularity among younger demographics. TikTok users seek immersive experiences and quickly absorb content before moving on.

Our study reveals a staggering statistic: a significant portion of TikTok's audience, particularly those who follow their favourite influencers, are influenced to make purchases. More than 81.5% of respondents admit to being digitally swayed into making purchases. Hashtags like #wellness and #beauty act as signposts, guiding users to content creators who share reviews and recommendations, thereby shaping a generation's consumer habits.

Our findings underscore the importance of authenticity in Gen Z's decision-making process. Credibility, product value, and brand alignment are crucial factors, indicating a strong preference for authentic content. Influencers wield significant power in driving purchases and gaining followers by maintaining authenticity, a key element for successful influencer marketing.

The study has limitations as it only focuses on Generation Z. Therefore, future research across different age groups must assess whether similar behaviours persist. Despite limitations, influencer marketing proves effective, fostering trust and expanding brand reach.

Future studies could explore how wellness brands partnering with influencers impact sales and engagement within specific niches. Qualitative research via interviews could offer deeper insights into consumer motivations.

Understanding influencers' influence on purchasing decisions remains complex due to the evolving nature of social media platforms and consumer behaviour. Nonetheless, the insights from this research provide valuable guidance for brands targeting Gen Z via TikTok influencer marketing.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - Questionnaire

How TikTok Influencers in the Wellness Sector Affect Consumer's Behaviours and Purchases.

This questionnaire was developed as part of the research to prepare the capstone project for the bachelor's degree in Marketing at Dublin Business School. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Barbara de Oliveira, Isabella D'Almeida, Kaúlle Vilas Boas and Reuel Mota, supervised by the lecturer Juan Fravega.

This questionnaire aims to understand the impact of the social network TikTok on the intention to purchase wellness products and the different techniques used on the TikTok accounts of wellness brands that influence the purchasing process and consumer behaviour.

All data collected in this questionnaire is confidential and will be only used to complete this academic study. Your participation is voluntary, and you can disengage during any course of the process. Your responses will be kept anonymous.

Completion time: approximately 5 minutes.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT

By clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that: *

- you have read the above information
- you voluntarily agree to participate
- you are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

- Agree
- Disagree

I. Sample Characterisation

1. You are:

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Other

2. How old are you?

Your answer _____

3. What is your current occupation?

- Student
- Part-time employed
- Full-time employed
- Student + part-time employed
- Student + full-time employed
- Unemployed

4. What is your weekly average salary?

- I don't have a salary
- <€254
- €254 - €381
- €382 - €508
- >€509

5. Are you a wellness product consumer (mental & physical health, beauty & cosmetics & skin care, nutrition & supplements)?

- Yes
- No - If you selected this option your survey will end here. Thank you!

II. Social Media Usage

6. Do you use Social Media?

- Yes
- No

7. Do you use TikTok?

- Yes
- No - If you selected this option your survey will end here. Thank you!

8. How many hours do you spend, on average, on your mobile accessing Social Media?

Note: For an accurate answer, you can check how many hours per day you spend on your mobile device and each app.

For iOS: Settings > Screen Time > See All App & Website Activity > Show Categories > Social

For Android: Settings > Digital Wellbeing & Parental Controls

- 0-2 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 6-8 hours
- > 8 hours

9. Which Social Media do you use the most?

- TikTok
- Instagram
- Facebook
- X (Twitter)
- YouTube

9. Which Social Media do you use the most?

- TikTok
- Instagram
- Facebook
- X (Twitter)
- YouTube
- Other: _____

10. Do you use TikTok as a search engine for information, tips and hacks?

- Yes
- No

11. What type of content do you enjoy the most on TikTok? **Note:** Please select a maximum of 3 options.

- Fashion, Outfits
- Beauty, Makeup, Skin Care
- Health, Wellness
- Lifestyle, Routine
- Travel, Mini Vlogs
- Sports, Gym, Fitness
- Food, Recipes

12. Do you follow any influencer on TikTok?

- Yes
- No - If you selected this option go straight to question 17

13. Do you follow any influencer, on TikTok, who creates wellness content?

- Yes
- No - If you selected this option go straight to question 16

14. Tell me two influencers that you enjoy the most on the wellness niche (mental & physical health, beauty & cosmetics & skin care, nutrition & supplements) on TikTok.

Your answer _____

15. How many followers do the two wellness influencers you enjoy the most have?

Rate as

Nanoinfluencer (1K to 10K followers)

Microinfluencer (10K to 50K followers)

Macroinfluencer (50K to 1M followers)

Megainfluencer (> 1M followers)

Your answer _____

16. Why do you follow influencers on TikTok? **Note:** Please select a maximum of 3 options.

Inspiration

Entertainment

Discounts

To know new products

To know of new brands

To know new trends

Other: _____

17. Which are the wellness brands you enjoy the most on TikTok?

Your answer _____

18. On TikTok, which type of account interests you the most to follow?

Influencers on the wellness niche

Brands on the wellness niche

Both

I don't really follow this content

III. Purchasing Intention

19. Have you ever wanted to buy a wellness product because you've seen it on TikTok?

Yes

No

20. Have you ever wanted to buy a wellness product because a influencer recommended on TikTok?

Yes

No - If you selected this option your survey will end here. Thank you!

21. When you see a video/photo content of a wellness product on sales from an influencer you follow, how much do you feel influenced to buy it?
Rate from 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot).

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very little	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	A lot

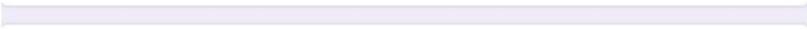
22. How do you feel most comfortable purchasing a wellness product? **Note:** Please select a maximum of 2 options.

- By seeing a photo that shows the product
- By seeing a photo of your favourite influencer using the product
- By seeing a video of your favourite influencer demonstrating/ using/ reviewing the product
- By seeing your favourite influencer recommending the product
- By seeing a post from the product's brand
- Other: _____

IV. Purchasing Process

23. Have you ever bought a wellness product because an influencer recommended on TikTok?

- Yes - If you selected this option, ignore question 26
- No



24. Why did you purchase? **Note:** Select a maximum of 3 options.

- I trust in the influencer's recommendation
- I was curious to try the product the influencer recommended
- I knew the product/brand and the influencer recommendation reinforced my desire to buy it
- I needed the product and the influencer recommendation reinforced my desire to buy it
- Other: _____



25. After you purchased the product, it met the expectations created by the influencer?

- Yes
- No

26. When you watch an influencer's content and wait to purchase the product. Why don't you buy it straight away?

- Elevated price
- I don't need the product at the moment
- I don't relate with the brand
- The advertising wasn't captivating enough
- Other: _____

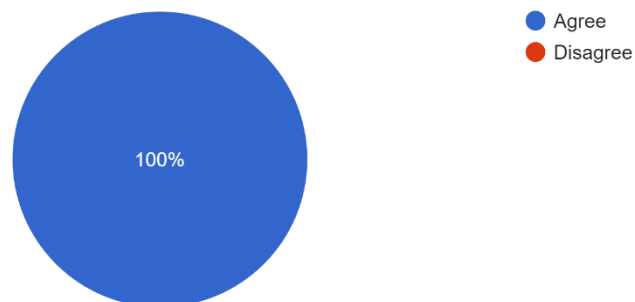
27. Why didn't you complete the purchase of the product recommended by the influencer? **Note:** Select a maximum of 3 option.

- Elevated price
- I don't need the product
- Don't relate with the brand
- The advertising wasn't captivating enough
- Other: _____

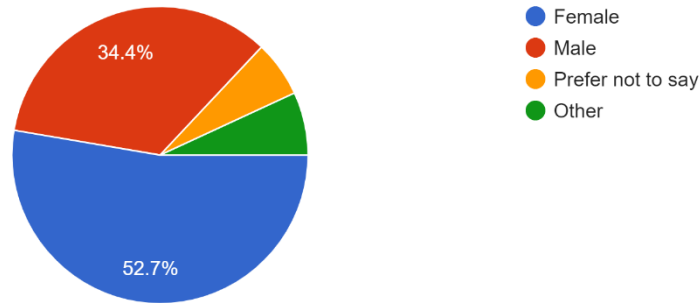
Thank you!

Appendix B – Questionnaire Responses

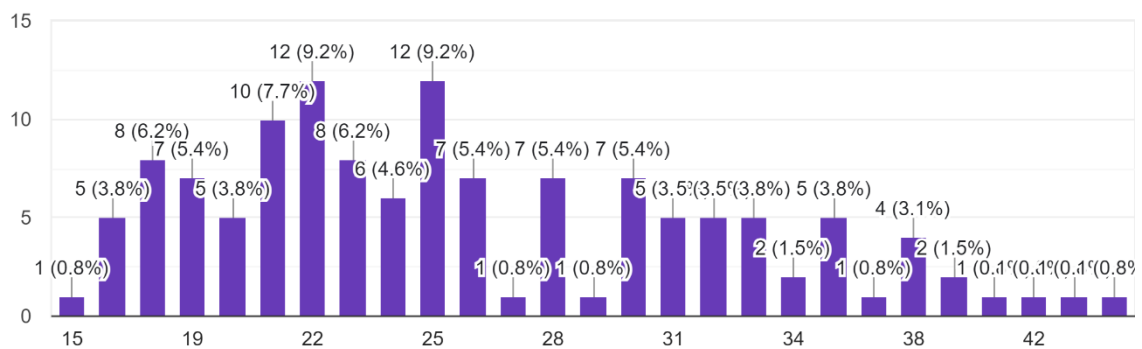
By clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that: • you have read the above information • you voluntarily agree to participate • you are at le...e participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.
131 responses



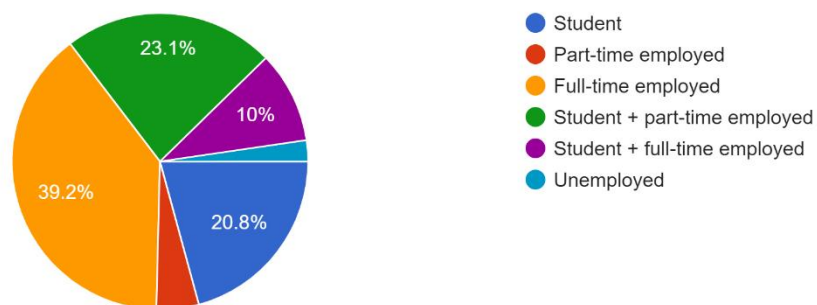
1. You are:
131 responses



2. How old are you?
130 responses

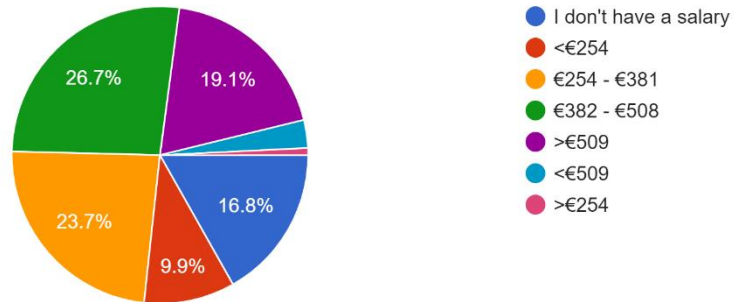


3. What is your current occupation?
130 responses



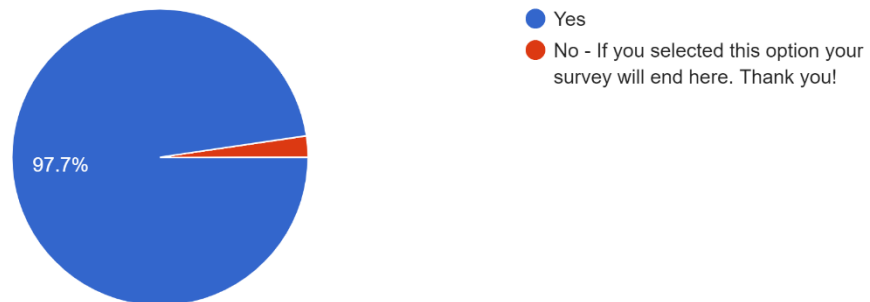
4. What is your weekly average salary?

131 responses



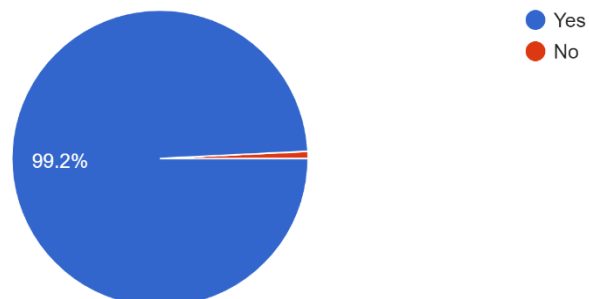
5. Are you a wellness product consumer (mental & physical health, beauty & cosmetics & skin care, nutrition & supplements)?

129 responses



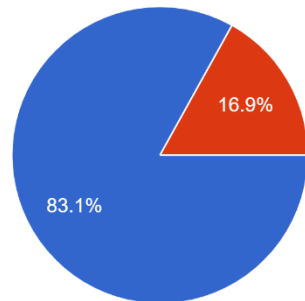
6. Do you use Social Media?

130 responses



7. Do you use TikTok?

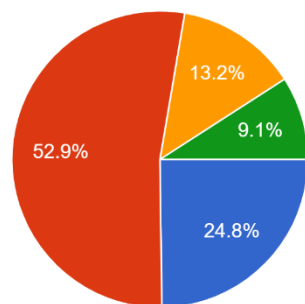
130 responses



- Yes
- No - If you selected this option your survey will end here. Thank you!

8. How many hours do you spend, on average, on your mobile accessing Social Media? Note: For an accurate answer, you can check how many hours ... Settings > Digital Wellbeing & Parental Controls

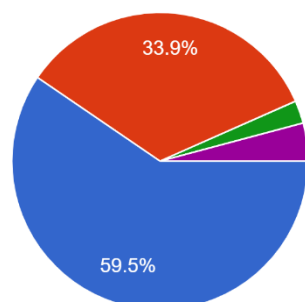
121 responses



- 0-2 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 6-8 hours
- > 8 hours

9. Which Social Media do you use the most?

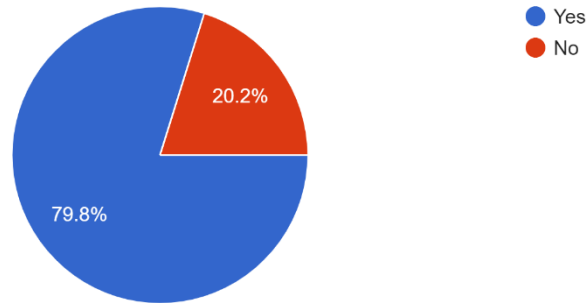
121 responses



- TikTok
- Instagram
- Facebook
- X (Twitter)
- YouTube

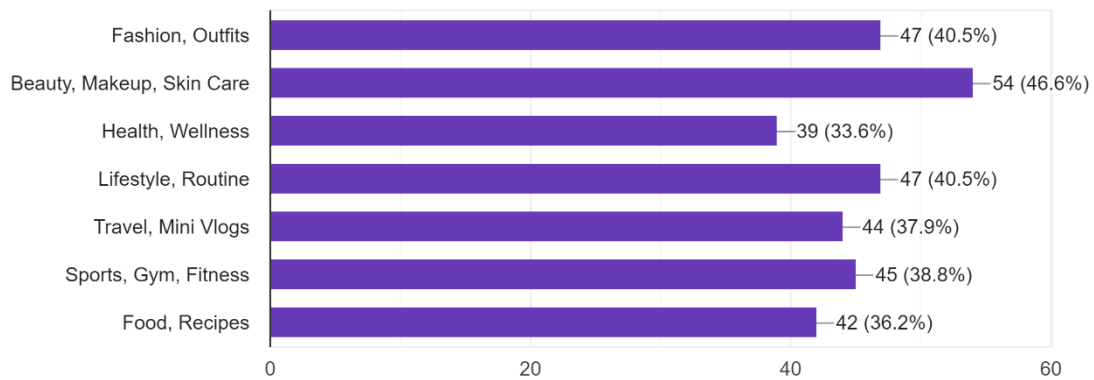
10. Do you use TikTok as a search engine for information, tips and hacks?

119 responses



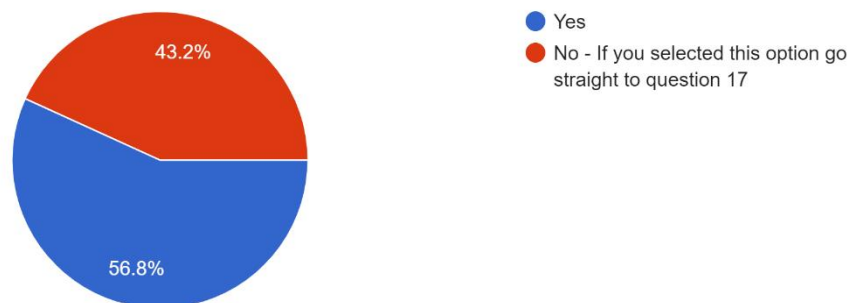
11. What type of content do you enjoy the most on TikTok? Note: Please select a maximum of 3 options.

116 responses



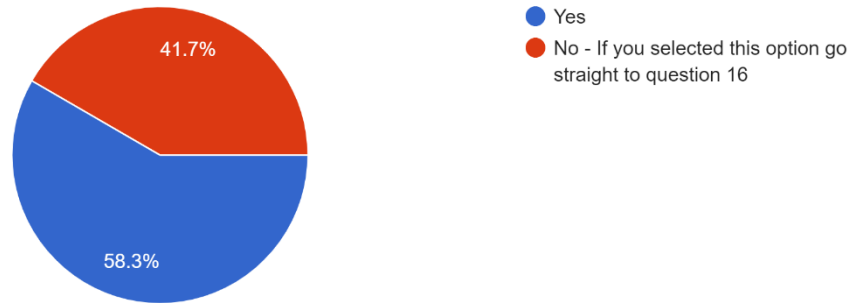
12. Do you follow any influencer on TikTok?

118 responses



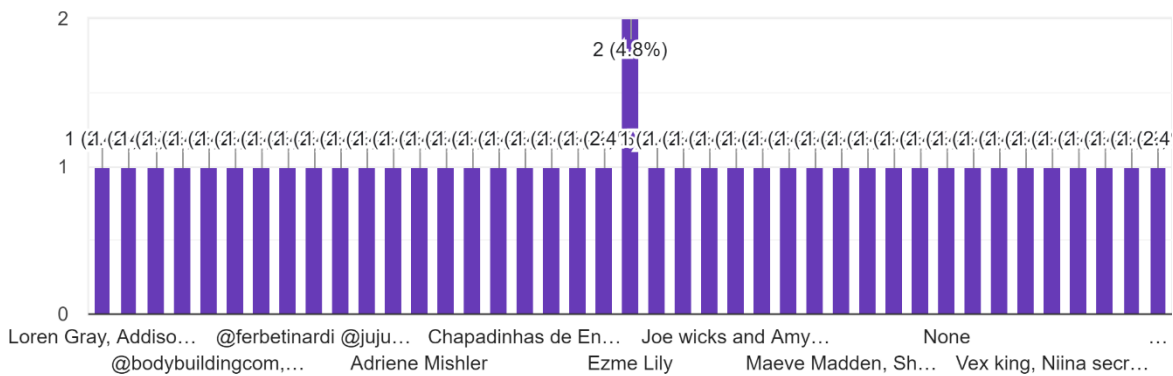
13. Do you follow any influencer, on TikTok, who creates wellness content?

84 responses



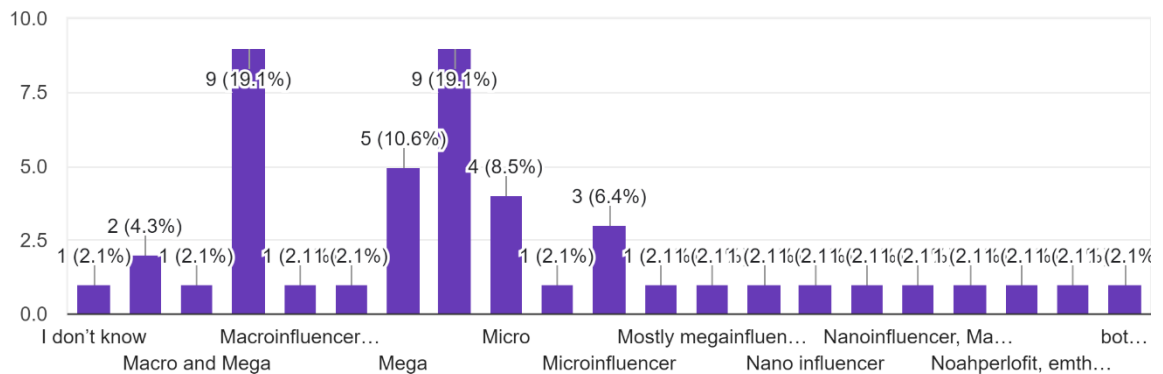
14. Tell me two influencers that you enjoy the most on the wellness niche (mental & physical health, beauty & cosmetics & skin care, nutrition & supplements) on TikTok.

42 responses



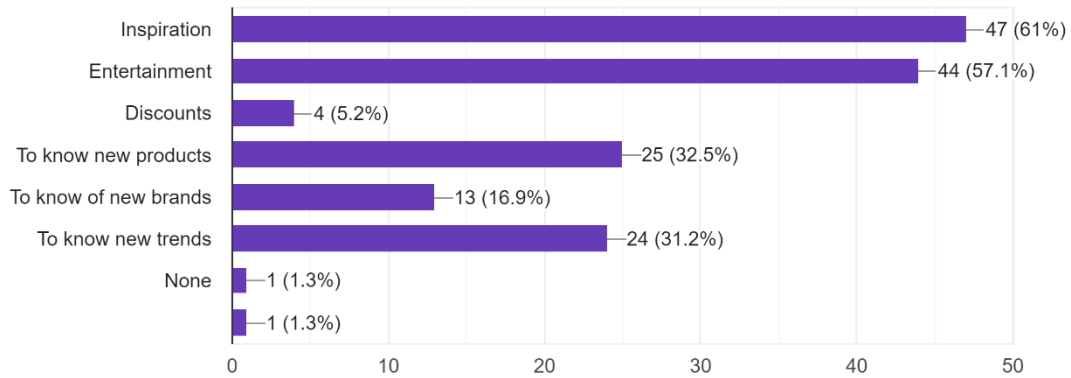
15. How many followers do the two wellness influencers you enjoy the most have? Rate as Nanoinfluencer (1K to 10K followers) Microinfl...K to 1M followers) Megainfluencer (> 1M followers)

47 responses



16. Why do you follow influencers on TikTok? Note: Please select a maximum of 3 options.

77 responses



17. Which are the wellness brands you enjoy the most on TikTok? 88 responses

The North Face

Adidas

N/A

Fenty Beauty

Fenty beauty

Rituals

Drunk Elephant

Corsx

Rare

Nike

All

None

I don't know

No particular brand

Cosrx, food wellness brands

Sculpted By Aimee

Don't follow brands

Growth

None

I don't follow any brand

Cera ve, la roche posay, ordinary

Calm, Headspace

I don't really follow specific brands

myprotein, gymshark

I don't have any specific one, but what catches my attention is about makeup and skin care products

Holland Barrett, Rituals

I don't following on TikTok, but I following on Instagram

Nina Secrets

Skin1004 (skincare)

Fenty Cosmetics

Adidas

I don't follow it on tik tok

sheen

Adidas n Nike

be kind industries

Kylie Cosmetics

Fenty

Sculpted By Aimee

Gymshark

Olay, Lululemon

Clean and clear

Vital proteins

CeraVe, The Ordinary

Aveeno, N7

CeraVe, La roche posay

myvitamins, N7

Joe wicks

Tisserand essential oils

Lululemon

Headspace

The Ordinary, Vichy

Totalpass

Growth Supplements , Myprotein

Fenty

Rare Beauty

My Protein, Bulk

Rare, Fenty

REM by Ariana Grande

Human Race

Fenty, Rare

The body shop, CeraVe

Soap Glory. fenty, nike

Don't recall any specific brand

Farm

Rare Beauty

Maybelline, Vichy

Zara

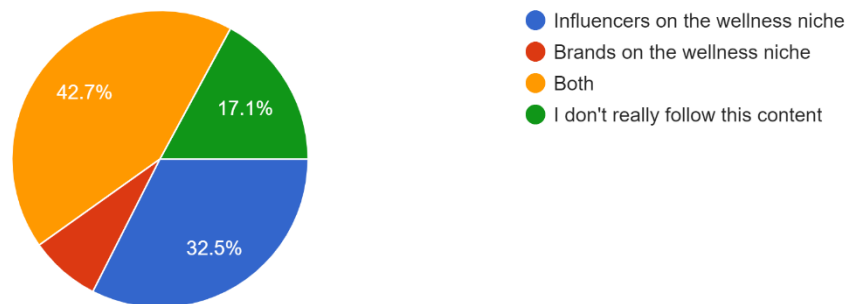
Rare beauty

Loccitane, maccosmetics

e.l.f , Too Faced

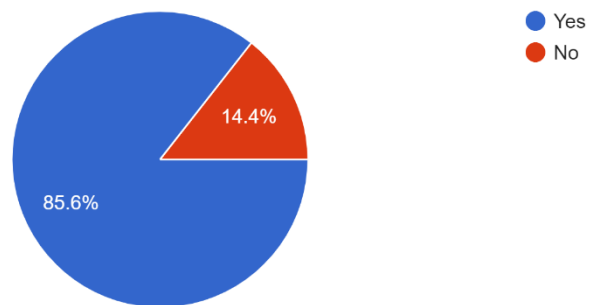
18. On TikTok, which type of account interests you the most to follow?

117 responses



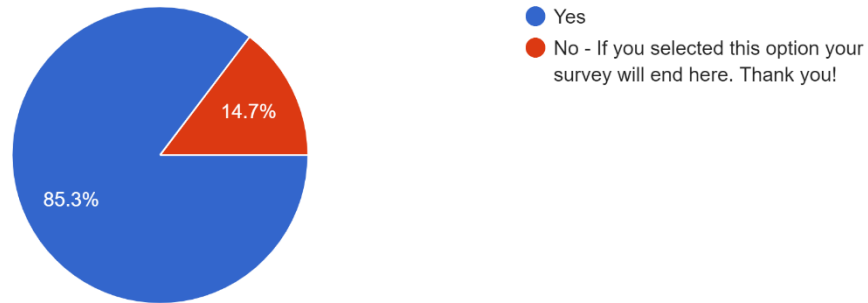
19. Have you ever wanted to buy a wellness product because you've seen it on TikTok?

118 responses



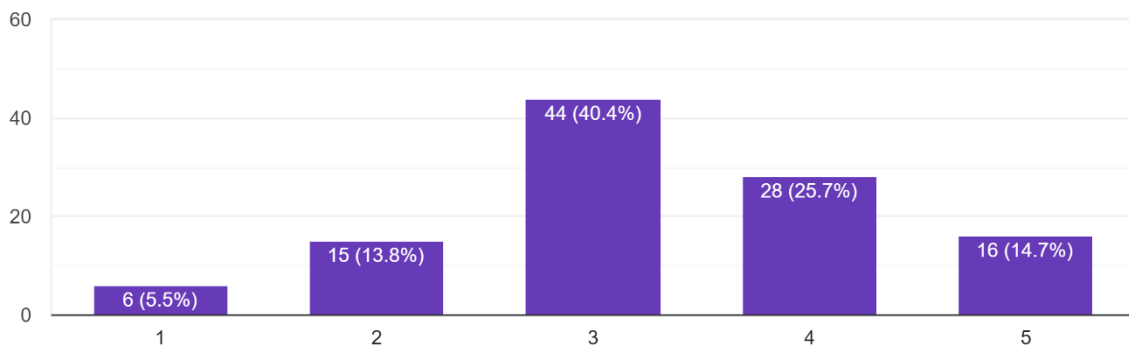
20. Have you ever wanted to buy a wellness product because a influencer recommended on TikTok?

116 responses



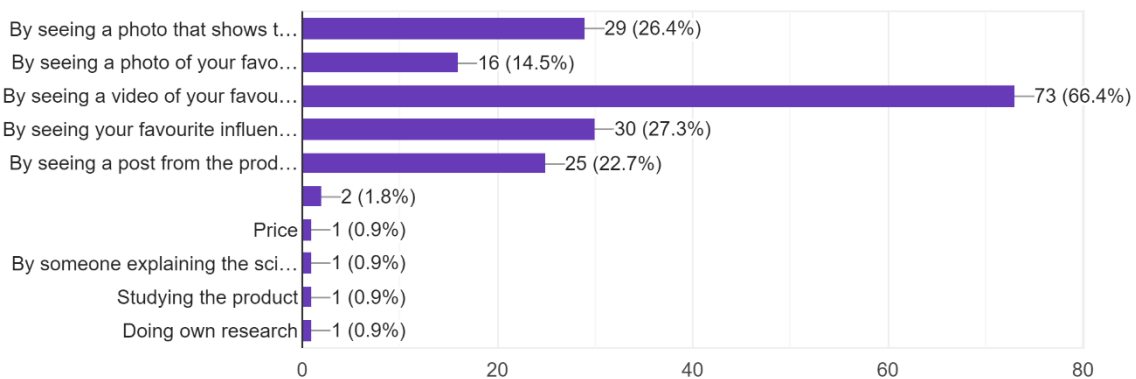
21. When you see a video/photo content of a wellness product on sales from an influencer you follow, how much do you feel influenced to buy it? Rate from 1 (very little) to 5 (a lot).

109 responses



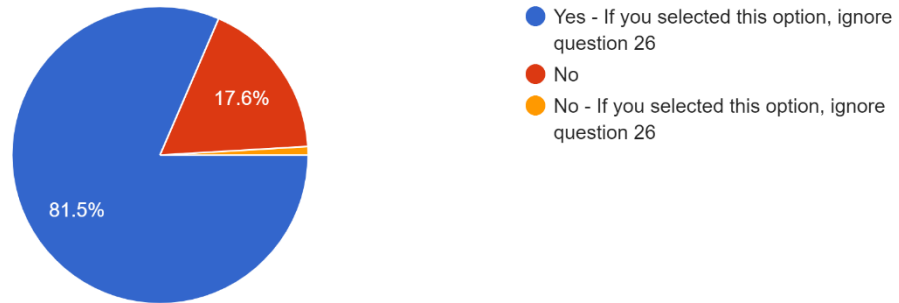
22. How do you feel most comfortable purchasing a wellness product? Note: Please select a maximum of 2 options.

110 responses



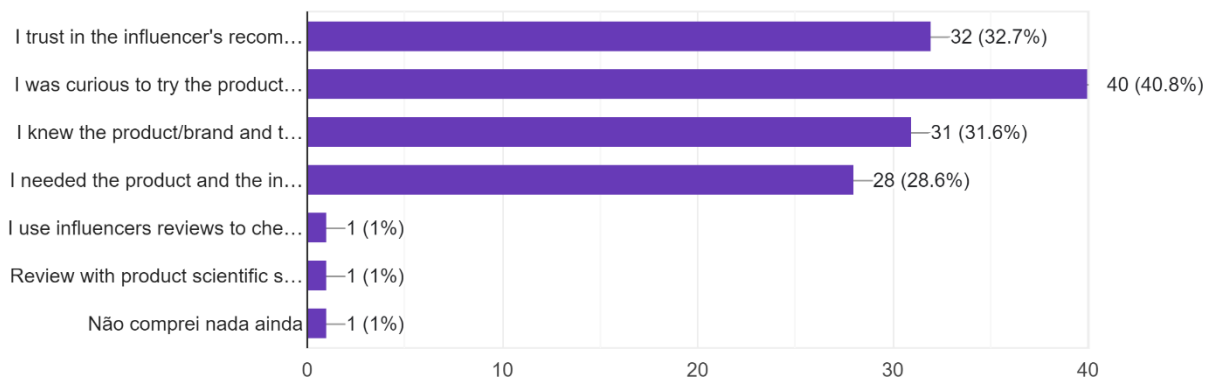
23. Have you ever bought a wellness product because an influencer recommended on TikTok?

108 responses



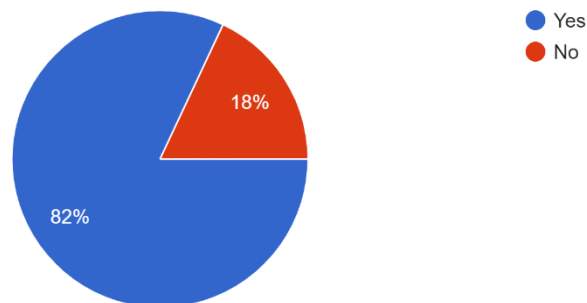
24. Why did you purchase? Note: Select a maximum of 3 options.

98 responses



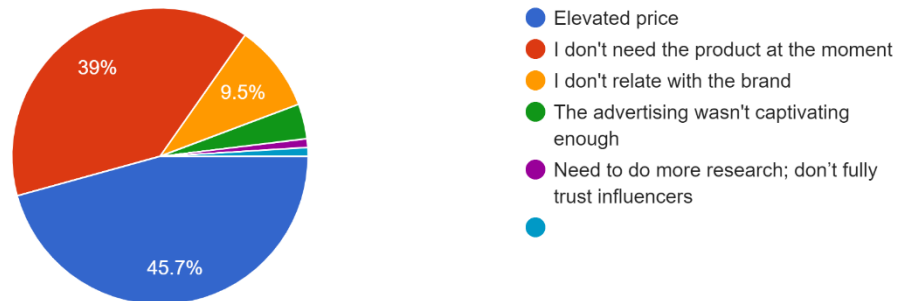
25. After you purchased the product, it met the expectations created by the influencer?

100 responses



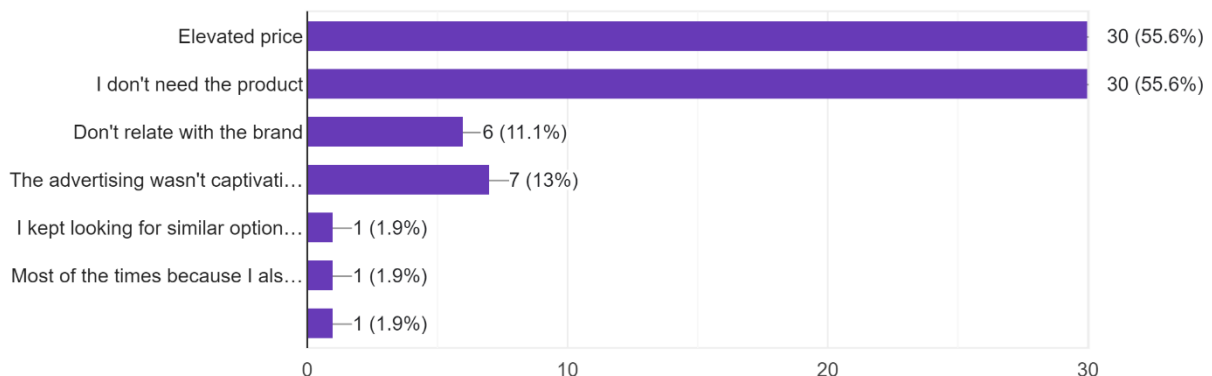
26. When you watch an influencer's content and wait to purchase the product. Why don't you buy it straight away?

105 responses



27. Why didn't you complete the purchase of the product recommended by the influencer? Note: Select a maximum of 3 option.

54 responses



Appendix C – Group Meetings Minute

- In-person group meeting with supervisor Juan Fravega – 22.01.2024**

All group members were present.

The supervisor read our research proposal paper and came to the meeting with observations.

We discussed the theme in length and decided to change the research question, narrowing down the theme and focusing on one target audience and industry.

At this point, the group already has a WhatsApp group chat where the research project is discussed in ongoing conversations, besides the meetings mentioned below:

- Online group meeting 11.02.2024**

All group members were present. The group got together to discuss the research theme one more time, objectives, and actionable steps based on Supervisor instructions.

- **In-person group meeting 19.02.2024**

Present Barbara, Reuel and Kaulle

Research Question and Objectives defined. Divided Lit. Review between the group.

- **Online group meeting with Supervisor 06.03.2024**

Present group members: Reuel and Barbara

The group presented a Literature Review chapter to the supervisor and discussed important points regarding the direction of the research study.

- **12.03.2024 email correspondence with Supervisor**

Isabella has created the survey questionnaire. It was sent to the supervisor via email, he answered with some feedback, asking for improvements in a few questions, but otherwise approved the questionnaire.

The requested improvement was made, and the survey is ready and out now on 18th March.

- **Online group meeting 07.04.2024**

All group members were present.

We received 131 answers to the questionnaire, so we can start the analysis.

Word count is too high; we needed to reduce the Literature Review chapter from 3500 words to approximately 1500 words.

Next actions: Isabella starts the analysis of survey results. Barbara and Reuel are writing a Methodology chapter, and Kaulle is doing the edits on Lit. Review.

- **In-person group meeting with Supervisor 09.04.2024**

Present group members: Isabella and Kaulle

The team asked questions regarding data analysis and clarified points about presentation guidelines. Isabella will finish the chapter on data analysis and findings.

- **Online group meeting 10.04.2024**

All group members were present.

The group defined the talking points of each team member, in the presentation CA_3 as follow:

Kaule

Introduce the theme and research question

Statement of the Problem (background) and Research Objectives

Lit. Review main points and theories

Barbara

Research Design

Chosen Methodology and why, compare with other methodology available

Survey method and measurement, Field Work, Sampling, Procedures

Bella

Data Analysis

Research Findings

Reuel

Limitations

Recommendations, Application of Results

Final Considerations

Furthermore, the group defined the next steps:

- Barbara will create the presentation document
- Reuel will create the report conclusion
- Kaule will create the report's introduction and abstract
- Isabella will finish the analysis of the results, with an application of the points discussed with lecturer