Master thesis

Marketing

'Building influencer portfolios based on consumers' self-esteem and materialism'

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Abstract

Increasingly more advertisers are using influencer marketing campaigns. However, research on the motives of consumers to engage with social media influencers (SMIs) is still in its infancy. Therefore, the focus of this study is examining why consumers engage with specific influencers. Understanding this motivational process of SMI consumption is important because this can have an impact on the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns. This study looks at the characteristics of multiple influencers consumers are following: 'influencer portfolios', because consumers typically follow more than one influencer. The aim was to find out if these portfolios differ based on consumers' level of self-esteem and materialism. An online questionnaire with a valid response of 452 respondents was used for this. The results show that not all expectations based on the social comparison theory are accepted. However, it was found that consumers with a low self-esteem (that follow three or more influencers) look for similarity in SMIs regarding their age and gender. For other characteristics it might be the case that they look for aspiration. Since this was still very exploratory, it is interesting to focus further research on socio psychological motives to engage with SMIs, and the role of the social comparison process.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, influencer portfolio, self-esteem, materialism

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The way advertisers reach their consumers has transformed tremendously because of the rise of digital and social media environments. Nowadays, more and more advertisers are using influencer marketing campaigns. This is an advertising strategy which can be defined as connecting brands with online personas, called influencers, that engage with their audience regularly and focus on building trust from their audience (Childers, Lemon & Hoy, 2018). Social media influencers (hereafter SMIs) are posting content on social media in exchange for compensation (Campbell & Grimm, 2018). This compensation could be money but also free products or services (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). A SMI can build relationships with its followers on social media and they inform, entertain and eventually try to influence them (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019). The content posted by influencers gives their followers insights about the brands that they use in their daily life. Some influencers even give direct advice to their followers about what products to use or not to use (De Veirman, Hudders & Nelson, 2019). This is how they play a role in shaping the opinion of consumers about certain brands and products (Chopra, Ahyad & Jaju, 2021).

Influencer marketing is a marketing tactic which is aimed at focusing attention on a brand or a product by creating engaging social media content (Childers, Lemon & Hoy, 2018). Earlier research has found that the use of influencer marketing can have a positive impact on brands. For example, consumers show more positive attitudes towards the endorsed brand, and they feel a stronger social presence when influencers are used (Jin, Muqaddam & Rye, 2019). These positive brand attitudes lead to a higher purchase intention. This is why influencer marketing can provide brands with a sustainable competitive advantage (Trivedi & Sama, 2019). Today, we can see influencers all over our social media channels. Some influencers have access to relatively large audiences, for example the famous Nikkie Tutorials with more than fourteen million followers on social media.

The amount of followers tells us something about the popularity of a SMI and this is used relatively often to classify different influencers (Campbell & Farrell 2020; Kay, Mulcahy & Parkinson, 2020). The amount of followers is seen as an important metric since influencers with less followers are perceived to be authentic and accessible, while influencers with a larger following base gain a higher perceived expertise (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). However, besides the number of followers, there are a lot more characteristics of influencers that could be

important (e.g. their age, gender, the type of content they post), especially when examining why consumers engage with these social media influencers.

These characteristics together can be used to build 'influencer portfolios', which can be used by marketers to improve their influencer marketing strategy. An influencer portfolio can be defined as a set of social media influencers a consumer follows at a particular time. Taking a portfolio perspective means looking at multiple influencers and their characteristics instead of focusing on just a single influencer. This portfolio view has not been investigated in earlier academic work. However, it is relevant to look at a set of SMIs a consumer follows (portfolio) instead of just a single influencer, because this set will be more likely to tell us something about consumers' patterns in following specific influencers, and the effect this could have on the consumer.

Examining why consumers engage with influencers is the focus of this research since consumer's motives are what drives the influencer marketing ecosystem in the first place (Lee et al., 2021). Research on influencer marketing, and more specifically, the motives of consumers to engage with influencers, is still in its infancy (Hu et al., 2020). Earlier studies have focused mostly on examining how influencer marketing impacts marketing performance. Also, there have been some studies that look into motives based on the Uses and Gratification Theory and show that primary motives to follow influencers are information seeking and entertainment (Christensen et al., 2021). However, not much is known about which specific influencers people choose to follow and why they choose these influencers (Lee et al., 2021). It is noteworthy to understand the motivational process within social media influencer consumption, because the effectiveness of different influencer marketing campaigns may depend on this. By understanding why consumers follow a set of specific influencers (influencer portfolio), marketers could better align their communication objectives with the right influencers and also develop content that fits best with the consumer.

Influencer portfolios could differ per consumer and these differences could be based on characteristics of the consumer. This research will focus on the consumer's self-esteem. Self-esteem is the evaluation an individual has of the self (Orth & Robins, 2014). The concept of self-esteem is chosen for this study because it can determine the need for engaging in social comparison (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Chae, 2017; Chau & Chang, 2016), and could therefore be an important motive for following specific influencers on social media which consumers can

compare themselves to. Thus, the focus of this study is to find out more about different influencer portfolios and the role of the consumers' self-esteem in following this specific set of influencers. Therefore, this research is aimed at answering the following question:

How do SMI portfolios of consumers differ based on their level of self-esteem?

Moreover, self-esteem is related to the concept of materialism. Research has shown that someone's self-esteem influences the degree to whether this person is a materialist (Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Park & John, 2011). The concept of materialism refers to the importance someone puts on acquiring money and possessions that show status (Dittmar et al., 2014). Since research has found that materialists depend more on social media influencers (Lee et al., 2021), it is interesting to find out if materialists have broader influencer portfolios than other individuals. Thus, the concept of materialism is also taken into account in this study.

This research will help fill a gap in the literature about influencer marketing. According to Taylor (2020) influencer marketing is going through a renaissance because of COVID-19, and this may hold for a long-term. That is why Taylor (2020) states that there is an urgent need for more research on influencer marketing. Moreover, consumers typically do not follow one influencer but instead follow and engage with multiple influencers. Because of this, it is interesting to look at portfolios. These influencer portfolios are a new concept which has not been investigated in earlier research. Thus, this study contributes to the theoretical knowledge in the field of influencer marketing by looking at multiple influencers someone is following instead of one influencer.

Finding out how different influencer portfolios are built up based on characteristics of the consumer has managerial relevance, because it could enhance the impact of influencer marketing campaigns on the brand. It is known that SMIs hold a clear value for marketers (Lee et al., 2021), however not much is known about the socio psychological motives that drive consumers to follow them. Insights about this could help brands and marketers to understand their (potential) target group(s) and this is valuable for their branding strategies. The effectiveness of influencer marketing may depend on the socio psychological needs that consumers have (Lee et al., 2021). Thus, this research will help to fill gaps in literature and will provide managerial relevance by examining the influencer portfolios of people with different levels of self-esteem.

The rest of this paper consists of the following chapters: first, the theoretical background is explained and hypotheses are formulated (chapter 2). Second, the research method and used measures are described (chapter 3). Third, the data analyzing procedure and results are reported (chapter 4). Finally, this paper will end with a discussion and conclusion, including limitations and suggestions for future research (chapter 5).

Chapter 2: Theoretical background and hypotheses

Social media influencers are often categorized based on their number of followers or engagement rate. However, there are many more characteristics that can be used to distinguish different influencers. Like their age, their gender, celebrity status, and the kind of content they post on social media. Looking into these characteristics and combining them can help to find out more about different 'influencer portfolios', referring to the set of influencers someone follows on social media. This is interesting because consumers can choose who to follow or unfollow at any moment from the thousands of influencers with various interests available (Belanche et al., 2021). Influencer portfolios could differ per person, depending on their self-esteem and degree of materialism. This will be further explained in this chapter.

2.1 Social comparison theory and self-esteem

According to Festinger (1954), people have the internal drive to evaluate themselves. The social comparison theory states that individuals engage in self-evaluation by comparing themselves to others (Festinger, 1954). Through social comparison, individuals collect information to evaluate their characteristics and capacities. This comparison can be either upward or downward. Upward comparison means comparing yourself to someone superior, whereas downward social comparison occurs when you compare yourself with inferior others (Chae, 2017; Vogel et al., 2014).

There are individual differences in the extent to which people compare with others. This is called social comparison orientation (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). One of the main features of social comparison orientation is the relation with negative affectivity and uncertainty of the self, including low self-esteem (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007). Self-esteem can be defined as someone's evaluation of the self. This refers to the extent to which a person believes himself or herself to be worthwhile and competent, commonly conceptualized as the "feeling that one is 'good enough,'' (Orth & Robins, 2014). More concretely, this means that individuals who are insecure about themselves, or feel worthless, are more likely to compare themselves to others than individuals who have a high self-esteem (Chae, 2017; Chau & Chang, 2016). However, because of this comparison these people could feel even more insecure or worthless (Chau & Chang, 2016). People with a high social comparison orientation spend more time on social media and make more social comparisons on social media (Vogel et al., 2015). The study of Vogel et al. (2015) shows that these individuals (implicitly) recognize the opportunities that social media offers for social comparison and therefore use social media more often.

Traditionally, social comparison involves in-person interactions. However, social media opens up new possibilities for social comparison by providing information about others (Chua & Chang, 2016; Vogel et al., 2014). Moreover, people are spending more time at home as a result of COVID-19, which means they are spending more time online and have less social interactions in-person. This could be a reason why people use social media increasingly more for social comparison. Social media users can compare themselves to other social media users, including social media influencers. Lee et al. (2021) noted that consumers look up to SMIs as role models on social media. According to Lou and Kim (2019), this can encourage social comparison. Characteristics of SMIS can be shown in their pictures and posts. For example, the study of Chua and Chang (2016) shows that the use of makeup and the display of expensive material possessions by influencers were considered to be part of beauty by social media users. Social media users could use these sorts of things in the content of influencers to compare themselves to.

2.2 Influencer portfolios:

The tendency to compare yourself with another person decreases when others are too divergent from yourself (Festinger, 1954). Thus, for social comparisons to be made, there must be some similarities between the individuals who compare themselves to others, and the people who they compare themselves to (Chae, 2017). However, the critical dimension does not have to be similar (Crusius, Corcoran & Mussweiler, 2022). The critical dimension refers to what you are comparing, for example wealth, body type or fashion style. That is why upward and downward comparisons can be made with people who are superior or inferior. However, when it comes to more basic attributes - the things people do not compare – like age and gender, people strive for similarity in social comparison (Crusius, Corcoran & Mussweiler, 2022). Thus, there is some 'self-imposed restriction' in the range with which a person compares himself (Festinger, 1954). This is used as a theoretical background for the first five hypotheses described below.

2.2.1 Age and gender of the SMI: Concluding from the literature above, individuals who have low self-esteem tend to engage more in social comparison than individuals with high self-esteem (Buunk & Gibbons, 2007; Chae, 2017; Chau & Chang, 2016). To engage in social comparison these individuals need others who show some similarities with them (Chae, 2017; Festinger, 1954). Moreover, consumers use social media for the purpose of making social comparisons (Lee, 2014). This could be a reason to follow someone on social media. Regarding influencer marketing, it could be the case that individuals (consumers) with a low self-esteem,

tend to follow SMIs who are somewhat similar to them in order to engage in social comparison. Personal information like age and gender are often revealed by SMIs, so this information is available for their followers. The results of Hudders and de Jans (2021) suggest that women perceive themselves to be more similar to the female compared to the male influencer. Thus, for individuals with low self-esteem, who tend to engage in social comparison with people that are similar to them, it is likely that they tend to follow more influencers with the same gender rather than a different gender. This could also be the same for influencers who are in the same age group as the consumer, because consumers feel more similar to them. People with high self-esteem are less prone to make social comparisons. Therefore, they will follow less influencers with the purpose of social comparison, meaning they will probably follow SMIs that are less similar to themselves.

H1: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their influencer portfolio of the same gender as themselves.

H2: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their influencer portfolio which are in the same age group as themselves.

2.2.2 Type of SMI: Campbell and Farrell (2020) and Ouvrein et al. (2021) state that there is one group, called 'celebrity influencers', that can be distinguished from normal influencers. They are influencers who were already famous before they became SMIs. These celebrity influencers have a large following base consisting of more than one million followers (Campbell & Farrell, 2020). Celebrity influencers can be defined as influencers who 'experienced fame and notoriety prior to or independent from the evolution of social media' (Campbell & Farrell, 2020, p3). Celebrity influencers are not the same as mega-influencers, who have the same number of followers. The difference between these two groups is that mega influencers were not celebrities before becoming SMIs and celebrity influencers were already famous. Celebrity influencers are also not completely the same as traditional celebrities. Some traditional celebrities become celebrity influencers because they are endorsing brands (like Selena Gomez, Paris Hilton, and Kim Kardashian), but not all traditional celebrities can be considered as social media influencers.

Consumers perceive social media influencers as more relatable and socially close compared with traditional celebrities (Djafarova and Rushworth, 2017), because ''Social media allows

'average people' to reach the broad audiences once available only to those with access to broadcast media.'' (Marwick, 2015, p.21). However, celebrity influencers are not average people in the first place, because they already experienced fame before they became social media influencers. Therefore, celebrity influencers have more in common with traditional celebrities than other influencers (mega, macro, micro or nano) have. According to the findings of Schouten, Janssen and Verspaget (2019), individuals identify more with influencers than traditional celebrities, feel more similar to influencers than traditional celebrities, and trust influencers more than traditional celebrities. Gräve (2017) also shows that influencers are seen as more similar than traditional celebrities. This can be explained by the fact that celebrities are not perceived as users like anyone else in social media (Gräve, 2017). Thus, individuals with low self-esteem, who tend to use social media to compare themselves to others who feel similar to them, will be more likely to follow less celebrity influencers. Because celebrity influencers were traditional celebrities before becoming SMI, and individuals do not feel very similar to them. People with high self-esteem use social media less for social comparison. Thus, they do not need to follow similar people on social media and therefore will follow more celebrity influencers.

H3: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the lower the number of celebrity influencers in their influencer portfolio.

2.2.3. Number of followers: Because the number of followers is a measure that is used a lot (Campbell & Farrell 2020; Kay, Mulcahy & Parkinson, 2020), it is also interesting to look into the differences that exist in influencer portfolios regarding the following of mega (above 1,000,000), macro (100,000-1,000,000), micro (5,000-100,000) and nano (below 5,000 followers) influencers. Westerman, Spence, and Van Der Heide (2012) found that having too many followers may lead to the perceptions that the social media influencer is preoccupied with gaining more followers. More importantly, a study of Schouten, Janssen, and Verspaget (2020) shows that people trust the lesser-known influencers (both micro and macro) more because they identify more easily with these influencers than with the well-known influencers. Moreover, Vogel et al. (2014) found that people feel more similar to people that have low activity on their social media (e.g. followers and likes). Because individuals with low self-esteem tend to engage in social comparison with people that are similar to themselves, it is likely that they follow lesser-known influencers that do not have a lot of followers because they feel more similar to

them. For individuals with high self-esteem, following similar people in order to engage in social comparison is less common, thus they will follow less lesser-known influencers.

H4: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the lower the average number of followers of the SMIs in their influencer portfolio.

2.2.4 Content posted by the SMI: Next to characteristics of the influencer, characteristics of the content posted by the SMIs can also be important. According to Gross and Wangenheim (2018), four types of influencers can be distinguished based on the content they post: snoopers, informers, entertainers and infotainers. Snoopers are motivated to create and share content and they frequently share insights into their private lives. For instance, what keeps them busy in their everyday life. Informers want to share their knowledge and expertise about specific interests and they want to provide high quality information. Entertainers are motivated to give their followers a good time and focus on creating entertaining content. Finally, infotainers are both driven by sharing information and entertaining people (Gross & Wangenheim, 2018).

The content of the postings of social media influencers can be divided into two broad categories: content about specific interests and content about their daily life (Chae, 2017). Content about specific interests is the kind of content that informers and infotainers post (Gross & Wagenheim, 2018). Individuals with specific interests seek out influencers who can supply practical information that is relevant to them (Chae, 2017). Individuals with low self-esteem, who engage more in social comparison than individuals with high self-esteem, are less interested in information acquisition and informational postings. Because such practical information is less useful for the purpose of social comparison (Chae, 2017).

To engage in social comparison, individuals need information about others. Snoopers and entertainers are mostly likely to post insights into their daily lives (Gross & Wagenheim, 2018). These postings can also include information, but the aim is to show the influencer's personal life (Chae, 2017). For example, vlogs about their day. According to Chae (2017), individuals who compare themselves to social media influencers, are more interested in these posts about the daily life of influencers instead of informational postings. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to engage in social comparison on social media. Thus, they are looking more for posts that contain insights in the daily life of influencers instead of informational postings. For individuals

with high self-esteem, social comparison is less important. Therefore, they need less information about the lives of influencers.

H5: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs they have in their influencer portfolios that post about their daily life (snoopers and entertainers).

2.3 The role of materialism

Individuals that are dealing with low self-esteem and insecurity are more likely to be materialistic, according to previous research (Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Park & John, 2011). This can be explained by the results from Chang and Arkin (2002) that some individuals turn to materialism when they experience uncertainty within the self. This is also related to the results from Schroeder and Dugal (1995) that materialists are more vulnerable to social comparisons since they suffer from internal deficits. Moreover, the study from Lee et al. (2021) found that materialism is an important variable when looking into consumers' motives to follow social media influencers. This is why materialism is also added to this study (and the conceptual model below).

Materialism can be defined as ''individual differences in people's long-term endorsement of values, goals, and associated beliefs that center on the importance of acquiring money and possessions that convey status'' (Dittmar et al., 2014, p.3). It is the importance an individual puts on acquiring and owning material possessions. Materialists think of possessions as an important life achievement and use it as a standard for judging the success of others and oneself (Lee et al., 2021).

Influencers tend to brag about their lives by showing high-end fashion items, expensive holidays and dinners at famous restaurants (Marwick, 2015). Results of the study from Lee et al. (2021) show that materialists depend on SMIs to a higher degree than other individuals, since they seek to enhance their defined self-concepts. Materialists are more likely to; aspire SMIs, perceive SMIs as significant role models, have the desire to connect with SMIs and utilize them for brand information (Lee et al., 2021). Moreover, Koay et al. (2022) state that higher degrees of materialism of consumers lead to a greater willingness from them to trust information provided by SMIs. Thus, social media influencers are more important to materialists than to other individuals. This could mean that materialists follow more social media influencers, thus have broader influencer portfolios.

H6: Individuals with a low self-esteem have more SMIs in their influencer portfolios than individuals with a high self-esteem, and this relationship is mediated by the degree of materialism.

Figure 1: Conceptual model
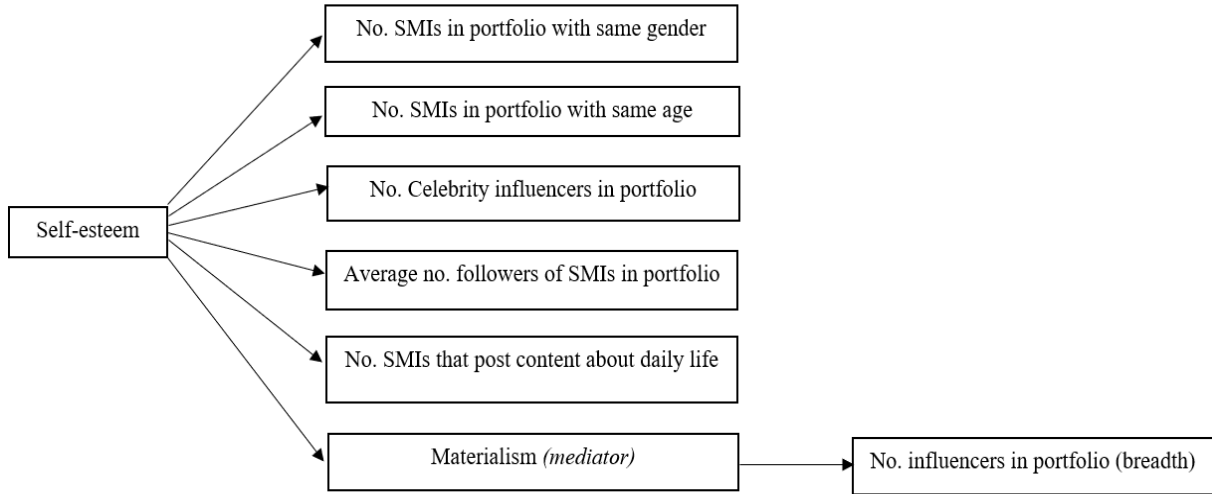
2.4 Additional variable: authenticity

For this study it is important to have a broad perspective when looking at the data. Therefore, another variable is included that seems relevant, although no specific hypothesis can be formulated about this. The reason for this is that research on influencer marketing is still in its infancy (Hu et al., 2020). Research in this field has focused a lot on the concept of authenticity. Authenticity refers to the extent in which someone's actions are being true to one's self and one's own desires rather than behaving according to expectations of others (Moulard et al., 2015). Consumers may question the authenticity of influencers because they receive monetary benefits for endorsing products and brands.

Most studies focus on the impact of authenticity of influencers on consumer behavior (Kapitan et al., 2021; Leung et al., 2022). Research also shows that authenticity, as a more intangible characteristic of SMIs, is a dominant factor for consumers to follow influencers (Lee et al., 2021). However, there is no knowledge on how this could be related to consumers' self-esteem. Thus, this study also wants to find out if there are differences in influencer portfolios when it comes to the authenticity of influencers, based on consumers' self-esteem. This will be discussed further in the discussion section.

Chapter 3: Method

3.1 Procedure and participants

An online survey was conducted during a period of six days in April 2022. The survey was programmed in Qualtrics and distributed through personal networks using social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Whatsapp. This was done together with two other master students who were also studying a topic about influencer marketing. People from all ages, starting from 16 years old, were recruited for this research. The participants were asked to disseminate the questionnaire further in their network, in order to reach more people. This is called a snowball sample (Emerson, 2015). The survey was available in two languages, Dutch and English, so that also people from outside the Netherlands could also participate. The English version of the survey can be found in Appendix J. Three gift cards were raffled among participants to motivate them to finish the whole survey and this was mentioned at the beginning of the survey.

Participants were shown a definition of SMIs: *''An influencer is someone who has access to an audience on social media (YouTube, Instagram, blogs, etc.). Influencers can vary in their degree of popularity (influencers with little to lots of followers and big celebrities). The audience listens to and engages with this influencer on a regular basis (think of liking and sharing posts or commenting on posts). A social media influencer has established credibility in a specific industry and posts content about their area of expertise on a frequent basis.''* After reading this definition, only the individuals who claimed they were following at least one influencer on social media were allowed to participate further. The qualified participants answered questions about the characteristics of the SMIs they are following on social media. The respondents were asked to answer these questions about a maximum of three SMIs that they engage with the most to keep the length of the survey doable. Thus, respondents who claimed to follow three or more SMIs on social media, were shown three question blocks with questions about these SMIs (these questions are explained in 3.2.3). Respondents who follow one SMI were shown only one block with questions to answer about this one SMI, and respondents who said they follow two SMIs filled in two blocks with questions. Next to these questions, participants answered questions regarding their self-esteem, degree of materialism and some socio demographic characteristics.

In total 764 respondents completed the survey. However, 52 of them did not follow any influencers on social media and 260 did not finish the whole survey. These respondents were therefore deleted from the dataset, resulting in a sample size of 452 respondents (N= 452). Of all qualified respondents, 82.3% were female and 17.3.% were male. The remaining percentage (0.4%) are non-binary (or did not want to indicate their gender). While the gender distribution does not represent the general population, we have to take into account that women are highly overrepresented in product categories that dominate in influencer marketing, like beauty and fashion (Lee et al., 2021).

The average age of the respondents was 25.59 years old (16 − 63; SD = 6.62). In terms of nationality, 84.7% of the respondents lived in the Netherlands, followed by the United States of America (5.4%), Germany (4.2%), Belgium (2.9%) and Turkey (1.8%). There were also some countries that were only mentioned by one respondent (0.2%): Kenya, United Kingdom, Portugal, Scotland, and the United Arab Emirates. Most respondents were graduates from the University of Applied Sciences (39.6%), followed by University Bachelor's (21.0%), Community College (17.9%), University Master's (15.5%), High School (5.3%), Elementary School (0.4%) and there was only one respondent with PhD or higher (0.2%).

Table 1: Demographics

Demographics		Frequency N (%)
Age	16-30	393 (86.9)
	31-45	47 (13.1)
	45+	12 (3)
Gender	Male	78 (17.3)
	Female	372 (82.3)
	Would rather not say	2 (.4)
Education	Elementary school	2 (.4)
	High school	24 (5.3)
	Community college	81 (17.9)
	University of Applied sciences	179 (39.6)
	University's Bachelor's	95 (21)
	University Master's	70 (15.5)
	PhD or higher	1 (.2)
Nationality	Dutch	382 (84.7)
	German	19 (4.2)
	Belgian	13 (2.9)
	United States	24 (5.3)
	Other	13 (2.7)
Total		452 (100)

3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Self-esteem: Self-esteem was measured by using the 10-item self-esteem scale by Rosenberg (1965). An example of an item from this scale is 'On the whole, I am satisfied with myself'. All items that are used for this construct are shown in table 2. Respondents could answer on a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Prior research has demonstrated that this scale has a good internal consistency and test-retest reliability. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 were reverse coded, so higher scores indicate a higher self-esteem (α = .86; *M* = 3.50; *SD* = .70).

3.2.2 Materialism: Materialism was measured using five items based on the scale from Richins and Dawson (1992) that has been used in a considerable amount of research. Also here, a 5-point Likert scale was also used that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example of an item from this scale is 'I like to own things that impress people.' All items for this construct are shown below in table 2 (α = .77; *M* = 2.50; *SD* =.78).

Table 2: Measures for self-esteem and materialism

Construct	Items	Scale	Source
Self-esteem	1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. 2. At times I think I am no good at all. 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities. 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people. 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. 6. I certainly feel useless at times. 7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. 9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. 10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	Rosenberg (1965)
Materialism	1. The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life. 2. Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions. 3. I like to own things that impress people. 4. I like a lot of luxury in my life. 5. Happiness can be purchased with money.	1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)	Richins & Dawson (1992)

3.2.3 Influencer portfolio: All measures used for the influencer portfolio are shown in table 3. First, respondents were asked about the number of SMIs they are following on social media to measure the breadth of their portfolio. Eight outliers had to be deleted because it was an open question and there were respondents who filled in extremely high numbers. The data of these

eight respondents were considered as outliers because they were more than three standard deviations away from the mean. After this, the average number of SMIs respondents were following on social media was 9.23 ($SD = 10.311$; $N = 444$). After that, respondents were asked to report the influencers they were following and to answer questions about the gender, age, number of followers, type of SMI, content and authenticity. Together, these questions are used to build portfolios (an example of an imaginary portfolio can be found in figure 1). Before answering these questions, respondents needed to give the name of the influencer they are describing. The name they filled in appeared in the questions that followed, helping respondents to really think about this social media influencer.

Figure 1: Example of an influencer portfolio

SMI 1: Nienke Plas	Female 26-35 years old Not a celebrity influencer Posts content about daily life 500.000 - 1 million followers Scores 4 on authenticity
SMI 2: Kim K	Female 36-45 years old Celebrity influencer Posts content about daily life More than 1 million followers Scores 2 on authenticity
SMI 3: Salaheddine	Male 36-45 years old Not a celebrity influencer Posts informational content 100.000 - 500.000 followers Scores 3 on authenticity

For gender, the question 'what is the gender of this influencer?' was asked and the answer options were 'male', 'female' and 'other (for example non-binary)'. This variable is categorical, which makes it difficult to combine the answers for the multiple SMIs a respondent reported about. Therefore, a count variable was created in SPSS, counting the number of SMIs that have the same gender as the respondent. This ranges from 0 to 3 ($M = 2.20$; $SD = .91$). Here, a score of 0 indicates that the respondent does not follow any influencers of the same gender and a score of 3 means that the portfolio consists only of influencers of the same gender.

For the age of the influencer, age groups were given (*<18 years old*, *18-25 years old*, *25-35 years old*, *35-45 years old*, *>45 years old*), because it was expected that respondents do not know or cannot recall the specific age of a SMI. In order to analyze the hypothesis about this variable, the SMIs that were in the same age group as the respondent were counted in SPSS, resulting in a variable that ranges from 0 to 3 (*M* = 1.04 ; *SD* = .99).

To measure if the SMI is a celebrity influencer the question 'Was this influencer already famous before he/she became a social media influencer?' was asked. Here, some examples of celebrity influencers were given to make this clearer. These examples were also used in the article of Campbell & Farrell (2020): Selena Gomez, Paris Hilton, and Kim Kardashian. Of all respondents, 15.1% answered that they did not know if the influencer they were following was a celebrity influencer or not. These participants were counted as missing for the hypothesis about this construct (*N*=411). The number of celebrity influencers were counted in SPSS. Thus, this variable also ranges from 0 to 3 (*M* = .57 ; *SD* = .83).

The number of followers was measured by asking 'How many followers does this influencer have?'. Since it is highly unlikely that respondents are aware of the specific number of followers, categories were provided instead of an open question. The ranges of these categories are as follows: <10,000 followers; 10,000 - 100,000 followers; 100,000 - 500,000 followers; 500,000 - 1,000,000 followers, and >1,000,000 followers. Categories that are used in other research as well as in practice also start from less than a thousand and end with more than a million (Campbell & Farell, 2020; Mediakix, 2020). Although these categories made it easier for the respondent to answer the question, it was difficult to use this for data analysis because taking an average of this categorical variable would not result in meaningful data. Therefore, the midpoints of the categories were used as values for each response. Here, choosing the value of the last option is somewhat arbitrary since there is no real upper limit. To assess the value of the last option, 25 influencers from the fifth category (>1,000,000 followers) were randomly chosen and their actual number of followers was looked up via social media (Appendix A). The average number of followers of these 25 SMIs was calculated and used as the value for the last option. After this, this variable ranges from 5.000 to 31.530.240 (*M* = 11,534,486.92 ; *SD* = 11,003,749.45). It should be noted that these averages are only estimated values, but are more useful for the purpose of data analysis.

Moreover, there was a check question to get more insights about the accuracy of respondents in reporting the number of followers: 'How accurate do you believe your estimation of the number of followers is?'. For this a 5-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 (not at all accurate) to 5 (absolutely accurate). The data shows that, in general, respondents tend to rate their estimation as accurate ($M = 3.64$; $SD = .95$).

The content posted by the SMI was measured by asking an open question: 'Can you briefly indicate what kind of content this influencer mainly posts?' Here some examples were given: 'cooking videos, explanations about products, vlogs about their day, etc.'. The open questions were coded in the dataset to find out if the influencer focuses mostly on specific content (for example about food, traveling or fashion) or if the influencer is showing followers what their daily life is like. The data of one respondent was counted as missing because this person did not give a valid answer on the open question ($N = 451$). In SPSS, it was counted how many SMIs the respondents were following that post about their daily life. This resulted in a variable ranging from 0 to 3 ($M = 1.77$; $SD = 1.04$).

Finally, the additional variable authenticity was measured by using the scale from Moulard (2015): The SMI 'is genuine', 'seems real to me', 'is authentic'. Here a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was used ($\alpha = .88$; $M = 3.84$; $SD = .62$).

After collecting the data, a random check was done by looking into 10% of all cases (45 cases) to see if respondents answered the questions about the SMI (age, gender, celebrity, number of followers, content and category) correctly. These cases were chosen randomly. Together with the other two master students, each influencer that the 45 respondents were reporting about was looked up to find out if the answers were correct. Social media and Google were used to do this. It was found that respondents were quite accurate in answering the questions. The question that was most difficult to answer was about the number of followers, however only 6% of the cases that were checked gave a wrong estimation of the number of followers.

Table 3: Measures for the influencer portfolio

Construct	Items	Scale	Source	Transformed in SPSS
Number of SMIs	How many SMIs are you following?	*Open question*	n.a.	n.a.
Gender of SMI	What is the gender of the influencer?	Male Female Other (for example non-binary)	n.a.	Count variable: number of SMIs in portfolio with same gender (0 − 3)
Age of SMI	What is the age of the influencer?	Younger than 18 years old 18-25 years old 26-35 years old 36-45 years old Older than 45 years old	n.a.	Count variable: number of SMIs in portfolio from same age group (0 − 3)
Type of SMI	Was this influencer already famous before he/she became a social media influencer?	Yes No I do not know	Campbell & Farrell (2020)	Count variable: number of celebrity influencers in portfolio (0 − 3)
Number of followers of SMI	How many followers does this influencer have?	1) Less than 10,000 followers 2) 10,000 - 100,000 followers 3) 100,000 - 500,000 followers 4) 500,000 - 1 million followers 5) More than 1 million followers	n.a.	1 = 5,000 2 = 55,000 3 = 300,000 4 = 750,000 5 = 31,530,240 These values were used to calculate an average of No. followers of the multiple SMIs in the portfolio.
Content posted by SMI	Can you briefly indicate what kind of content this influencer mainly posts?	*Open question*	Chae (2017)	Count variable: number of SMIs posting content about daily life (0-3)
Authenticity	The SMI is genuine. The SMI seems real to me. The SMI is authentic.	1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree)	Moulard (2015)	An average was calculated for the authenticity of the multiple SMIs in the portfolio.

3.2.4 Control variables: Some sociodemographic characteristics of the respondent were included as control variables, these are: age, gender, nationality, and education. These control variables contribute to the internal validity of a study by limiting the influence of confounding variables and other external variables, allowing to demonstrate correlations between the relevant variables with greater certainty. Thus, at the end of the survey respondents were asked to report their age, gender (*male*, *female*, or *other/do not want to tell*), nationality and education level (1 = *elementary school* to 6 = *postgraduate*). The respondents were asked to fill in their age in numbers ($M = 25.59$; $SD = 6.62$). For nationality, respondents were asked to report their country of residence. This allows for a comparison of the different types of respondents across countries. Since gender, nationality and education are categorical variables, dummy variables were made in SPSS. Because only two respondents did not want to indicate their gender or are non-binary, they were added to the group of males, resulting in a group 'not female'. The group 'elementary school' was also very small and was therefore put together with the group 'high school' and formed the group 'high school or lower education'. Finally, the group 'PhD or higher' was added to the group 'University Master's' and became 'University Master's or higher education'.

Moreover, the platform that the influencer is followed on by the consumer was also included as a control variable. It is relevant to take this into account since various features and characteristics of social media platforms result in different consumer experiences (Voorveld et al., 2018). The question was asked 'On which social media platform do you follow this influencer?', with the answer categories: Instagram, Tiktok, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter, blogs or other. These platforms are relevant for influencer marketing according to Haenlein et al. (2020). However, because this was a multiple response question, the data only made it possible to analyze on how many platforms the respondent is following the SMI, with a minimum of one and maximum of six ($M = 1.64$; $SD = .70$).

Table 4: Measures control variables

Construct	Items	Scale	Source
Age	What is your age?	*Open question*	
Gender	What is your gender?	Male Female Other (for example non-binary)	
Education	What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?	Elementary school High school Community college University of Applied sciences University Bachelor's University Master's PhD or higher	
Nationality	Which country are you from?	*Open question*	
Social Media Platform	On what social media platform do you follow this influencer?	Instagram TikTok Facebook YouTube Twitter Blogs Other	Haenlein et al. (2020)

3.3 Construct reliability and validity

In this study, three constructs were used that consist of more than one item: self-esteem, materialism, and authenticity. The items for authenticity were asked repeatedly in the questionnaire for every influencer the respondent was reporting about. To analyze the reliability and validity of this construct all answers on these questions were combined and an average was computed.

3.3.1 Discriminant validity: A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to determine the discriminant validity of the constructs: self-esteem, materialism and authenticity. All the results can be found in Appendix B. In total 18 items were added to the analysis. An orthogonal rotation was used because not all items correlate. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (herafter KMO) was above the threshold of .5 (.828). Moreover, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be significant ($p < .001$). All communalities were above the threshold of .2. However, results show that there are four factors instead of the expected three factors. Also, two cross-loadings appeared, meaning that not all the items measure the right construct. Therefore, several iterations followed, starting with the removal of SE 4 and followed by the removal of SE 3. After removal of the two items, KMO (.818) and Bartlett's test ($p < .001$) still showed satisfying results and all communalities were above .2. There was a change from four to three factors with a total variance explained of 58%.

The two deleted items were the following statements: 'I am able to do things as well as most other people' and 'I feel that I have a number of good qualities'. A reason that these items loaded on another dimension than the other eight items measuring self-esteem could be that these two items are more about capabilities/qualities. After deleting these items, there was discriminant validity for the three constructs.

3.3.2 Convergent validity: Confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to check if the items correspond with the one-dimensional structure of the construct. First, a PCA was run on the 8 items used to measure self-esteem (Appendix C). Before doing this, two assumptions needed to be checked: linearity and sample adequacy (Hair et al., 2018). Linearity between the items was found because they all have a correlation higher than .3. For the sampling adequacy Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were used. KMO is .892, this is acceptable because it is exceeding the critical value of .5. Moreover, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is significant ($p < .001$). Thus, the assumptions were met and the PCA can be conducted with an Oblique rotation. First, the communalities were checked, all communalities after extraction had a value above .2. Second, the number of factors was determined to be one and the total variance explained was 51%. All factor loadings were above .5. Therefore, no items were deleted and convergent validity was established for this construct.

Second, the analysis was run on the 5 items measuring the construct materialism (Appendix D). The same assumptions as described above were checked. Looking at the correlation matrix, all correlations were above .3, meaning that linearity was found. KMO was .783 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .001$). All communalities are above .2. The factor analysis shows that there is only one factor that explains 53% of the total variance. All items have a factor loading higher than .5. Therefore, there was no need to delete items, proving convergent validity.

Finally, the PCA was run on the 3 items used to measure authenticity (Appendix E). The three items show correlations that are above .3 in the correlation matrix. Moreover, the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test was .725 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .001$). All items have communalities above .2. According to the factor analysis, there is only one factor and this factor explains 81% of the total variance. The three items have factor loadings that are above .5 on this one factor. Thus, for this construct there also was no need to delete any items. The results of these three factor analyses show that there is convergent validity for the constructs self-esteem, materialism and authenticity.

3.3.3 Reliability analysis: Next to conducting factor analyses, Cronbach's Alpha was checked to find out more about the internal consistency of the constructs (Appendix F). There are differences in the minimum value for Cronbach's alpha in existing literature, however most of the time a minimum of .6 is used (Field, 2018). Therefore, an alpha above .6 was viewed as acceptable in this research. Looking at Cronbach's Alpha for the constructs self-esteem (α = .857), materialism (α = .773) and authenticity (α = .876), it can be concluded that they all have an acceptable internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha could not, or barely, be improved by deleting items. Therefore, no items were deleted.

Table 5: Internal consistency and convergent validity

Construct	Original # items	Cronbach's Alpha	# items deleted	Percentage explained variance
Self-esteem	10	.857	2	51%
Materialism	5	.773	0	53%
Authenticity	3	.876	0	81%

3.4 Research ethics

In the beginning of the survey the respondents read a description of the study and then checked the box 'I want to participate' to ensure that they are voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge. Without checking the box the respondents could not proceed. Also, because it was an online survey, respondents could withdraw from the research at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed by immediately deleting the location and IP-addresses of the respondents in the dataset. At the end of the survey there was a closing text to thank the respondents. Here, the e-mail address of the researcher was given so respondents could get in touch if they have any questions or are interested in the results of the research.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Descriptive statistics

It is important to note that there were 36 respondents (8%) who claimed to follow only one SMI on social media and answered the questions about the SMI only one time for this one influencer. 70 respondents (15.5%) followed two SMIs and they answered the questions about these two SMIs. The remaining 346 respondents (76.5%) claimed to follow three or more influencers and were asked the questions about the three SMIs they engage with the most (because this was the maximum, as explained in the previous chapter). This shows that a portfolio perspective can be taken because most respondents (92%) follow more than one influencer on social media.

Descriptive statistics and correlations for each construct are shown in table 6. There are a lot of significant correlations between the constructs. However, most of them are quite small. According to the rules of thumb, correlation coefficients below .3 can be considered as 'little or no correlation' (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003). Therefore, only the correlations that are significant and close to, or above, .3 will be elaborated on here.

First, there is a positive correlation found between the number of celebrity influencers in a consumer's portfolio and the average number of followers of the SMIs in the portfolio ($r = .389$; $p = .000$; $N = 429$). Meaning that celebrity influencers have more followers, which makes sense since they were already famous. Second, the number of SMIs of the same gender correlates with the number of SMIs that post daily life content ($r = .348$; $p = .000$; $N = 451$) and the breadth of the portfolio ($r = .223$; $p = .000$; $N = 444$). Consumers that follow more influencers with the same gender, also follow more influencers that post about their daily life, and they follow more influencers in general. Third, there is a positive correlation between the average number of followers of SMIs in a consumer's portfolio and the degree of materialism of the consumer ($r = .276$; $p = .000$; $N = 452$). This indicates that consumers with a higher degree of materialism have SMIs in their portfolio with a higher number of followers. Finally, a negative correlation was found between the age of the respondent and the amount content about daily life posted by the SMIs ($r = -.236$; $p = .000$; $N = 451$). The older the respondent, the less influencers they follow that post content about daily life.

Table 6: Correlation matrix and descriptive statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
No. SMIs same gender											
No. SMIs same age group	.156**										
No. Celebrity influencers	-.165**	-.151**									
Average no. followers SMIs	-.061	-.144**	.389**								
No. SMIs that post daily life content	.348**	.080	-.065	.040							
Breadth of portfolio	.223**	.106*	-.059	.030	.200**						
Average authenticity SMIs	-.077	-.011	-.018	.066	-.039	.084					
Self-esteem	.042	-.103*	-.095	-.054	-.103*	-.042	.053				
Materialism	-.076	-.060	.187**	.276**	-.047	-.031	-.014	-.102*			
No. Platforms	.048	-.052	-.038	.036	.122**	.147**	.087	-.069	.020		
Age respondent	-.117*	.055	-.028	-.042	-.236**	-.094*	.010	.108*	-.079	-.102*	
Mean	2.204	1.040	.571	11534486.917	1.769	9.230	3.835	3.500	2.504	1.641	25.56
Standard deviation	.907	.994	.830	11003749.446	1.041	10.311	.622	.696	.782	.703	6.62

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

4.2 Assumptions for regression analysis

Before the analyses to test the hypotheses could be conducted, the five assumptions of multiple regression analysis were checked (Field, 2013). These assumptions will be explained below. After this, results of all six hypotheses will be described.

To perform a regression analysis, variables have to be normally distributed. Values for skewness and kurtosis should be between -1.96 and 1.96 (Field, 2018). This criterion was met for all variables. Results are shown in Appendix G. Also, the P-P plots of these variables were checked and show that the data is normally distributed. Concluding, this first assumption was met.

Moreover, variables should be metrically scaled in order to perform regression analysis. The independent variable self-esteem is based on 8 Likert-scale items and is therefore a metrically scaled variable. The mediator (in hypothesis 6) materialism is also based on a Likert-scale. Furthermore, the dependent variables 'No. SMIs same gender', 'No. SMIs same age', 'No. celebrity influencers' and 'No. SMIs that post content about daily life' are count variables, which are metrically scaled. The variable 'No. followers' is an average of the multiple SMIs in someone's portfolio, thus this variable is also metrically scaled. An average was also used for authenticity. Finally, the control variables 'Age respondent' and 'No. platforms' were already metrically scaled. The other control variables 'Gender respondent', 'Education respondent' and 'Nationality respondent' were transformed into dummy variables. This means that this second assumption was met.

The third assumption concerns linearity. Meaning that the relationship between the self-esteem of the consumer and the independent variables should be linear. To check this, Scatterplots were analyzed (Appendix G). The Scatterplot of 'No. followers' shows a linear and horizontal relationship, indicating that this third assumption was met for this variable. Because the other variables are count variables, the scatterplots only show a few data points and linearity could not be assessed. However, since these variables are all normally distributed (first assumption), a regression analysis could still be performed.

The fourth assumption is about multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is undesired because it indicates that independent variables correlate highly with each other (Field, 2018). Although self-esteem and materialism are analyzed separately, a check was done for these two variables. The tolerance value

(1.00) was above the minimum of .2 and the VIF value (1.00) was below 10. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity between these independent variables, therefore this assumption was met.

The fifth assumption that needs to be met is homoscedasticity. Homoscedasticity means that there are equal variances of the residuals (Field, 2018). To analyze this, scatterplots were analyzed. The dots in the scatterplots did not really show a pattern since they were quite spread out on the x-axis. Therefore, this fourth assumption was met.

The final assumption is independence of errors. The Durbin-Watson test tests for correlations between errors (Field, 2018). Durbin-Watson was between 1.5 and 2.5, indicating that there is no serial correlation between errors. The variable number of followers showed a different Durbin-Watson. However, since this variable shows no deviant distributions, a regression analysis could still be performed. In sum, all assumptions for a regression analysis were met.

4.3 Hypotheses testing

After the assumptions were checked, the regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses. For the first five hypotheses and for the additional variable 'authenticity', two models were run for each dependent variable. One model consisted of control variables: number of platforms, age of respondent, education of respondent, gender of respondent and nationality of the respondent. The other model consisted of all control variables and the main variable self-esteem. For the sixth hypothesis, a PROCESS macro (regression) analysis was conducted. All results can be found in Appendix H.

4.3.1 Hypothesis 1: The first hypothesis states that people with lower self-esteem will have a higher number of SMIs in their portfolio that have the same gender as themselves. Overall, descriptive statistics show that most women tend to have only female influencers in their portfolios (66.6%) and most men tend to have only male influencers in their influencer portfolios (67.5%). Thus, in general, consumers tend to follow SMIs of the same gender. A regression analysis was conducted to test the first hypothesis. The results are shown in table 7. Model 1 explained a significant proportion of the variance ($R^2 = .084$, $F(8,443) = 5.094$, $p < .001$). When adding self-esteem (Model 2), results show that this main variable did not explain any additional variance ($R^2\Delta = .003$, $F(1, 442) = 1.357$, $p > .05$). As a whole, the model remained significant ($R^2 = .087$, $F(9,442) = 4.861$, $p < .001$).

This analysis shows that there are some control variables that have an effect on the number of SMIs in the portfolio that have the same gender as the consumer. Age of the respondent has a negative influence on this variable (β = -.013, p <.05). Also, results show that consumers who are not female (β = -.566, p < .001) follow less SMIs of the same gender than female consumers. However, the main variable self-esteem does not have a significant effect on the number of SMIs someone has in his/her portfolio that have the same gender (β = .071, p >.05). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Table 7: *Effect of self-esteem on the number of SMIs in a portfolio of the same gender*

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
No. Platforms	.048	.060	.429	.050	.060	.410
Age respondent	-.012	.006	.054	-.013	.006*	.039
Education: High school or lower	-.160	.185	.389	-.146	.186	.433
Education: Community college	-.223	.118	.059	-.214	.118	.070
Education: University Bachelor	.070	.120	.561	.064	.120	.596
Education: Master or higher	.085	.127	.505	.073	.127	.567
Gender: Not female	-.555***	.110	.000	-.566***	.110	.000
Nationality: Not Dutch	-.171	.126	.176	-.145	.128	.259
Self-esteem				.071	.061	.246
R² (Adjusted R²)	.084	(.068)		.087	(.068)	

* p < .05, ** p <.01, *** p <.001
For education the reference category is university of applied sciences.
For gender the reference category is female.
For nationality the reference category is Dutch.

4.3.2 Hypothesis 2: The second hypothesis states that consumers with a lower self-esteem will have more SMIs in their portfolio that are in the same age group as themselves. Regardless of self-esteem, descriptive statistics show that all age groups tend to follow influencers that are in the same age group as them. To test the second hypothesis, another regression analysis was conducted. The results of this analysis are shown in table 8. The first model explained a significant proportion of the variance (R^2 = .035, F(8,443) = 2.007, p < .05). Adding self-esteem in model 2 explained additional variance ($R^2\Delta$ = .013, F(1, 442) = 5.813, p < .05). This model is also significant (R^2 =.048, F(9,442) = 2.449, p<.05). The analysis shows that there is one control variable that has an effect on the number of SMIs in the portfolio of the same age. Consumers that are not female (β = -.366, p <.01) follow less SMIs of the same age than female consumers. Moreover, the main variable self-esteem has a significant effect on the number of SMIs someone has in his/her portfolio that are in the same age group (β = -.166, p >.05). This indicates that the lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their portfolio that are in the same age group as themselves. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is supported.

Table 8: Effect of self-esteem on the number of SMIs n a portfolio of the same age

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	P
No. Platforms	-.074	.068	.276	-.078	.067	.245
Age respondent	.009	.007	.210	.011	.007	.119
Education: High school or lower	-.122	.209	.559	-.155	.208	.457
Education: Community college	-.211	.132	.111	-.231	.132	.080
Education: University Bachelor	-.110	.135	.416	-.095	.134	.477
Education: Master or higher	-.086	.143	.546	-.059	.142	.681
Gender: Not female	-.391**	.124	.002	-.366**	.124	.003
Nationality: Not Dutch	-.041	.142	.771	-.102	.143	.478
Self-esteem				-.165*	.068	.016
R^2 (Adjusted R^2)	.035	(.018)		.048	(.028)	

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.3.3 Hypothesis 3: For the third hypothesis, it was checked if people with lower self-esteem have a lower number of celebrity influencers in their influencer portfolios. Overall, the results show that there are more consumers that have influencer portfolios with no celebrity influencers at all (65.5%) than influencer portfolios that consist of only celebrity influencers (20.2%). A regression analysis was conducted to test the hypothesis. The results of this analysis are shown in table 9. Model 1 explained a significant proportion of the variance ($R^2 = .058$, $F(8,420) = 2.131$, $p < .01$). In model 2, the independent variable self-esteem was added and did not explain an additional proportion of the variance ($R^2\Delta = .008$, $F(1, 419) = 3.581$, $p > .05$). The second model was significant ($R^2 = .066$, $F(9,419) = 3.278$, $p < .01$). However, the analysis shows that self-esteem ($β = -.111$, $p > .05$) does not have a significant effect on the number of celebrity influencers in a consumer's portfolio. The second model shows only one significant effect; that consumers who are not female ($β = .382$, $p < .001$) follow more celebrity influencers than female consumers. Thus, hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Table 9: Effect of self-esteem on the number of celebrity influencers in a portfolio

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
No. Platforms	-.046	.057	.417	-.050	.056	.378
Age respondent	-.006	.006	.352	-.004	.006	.518
Education: High school or lower	-.075	.173	.664	-.098	.173	.572
Education: Community college	.079	.114	.487	.070	.113	.540
Education: University Bachelor	.068	.113	.552	.078	.113	.490
Education: Master or higher	-.131	.122	.283	-.112	.122	.358
Gender: Not female	.363**	.105	.001	.382***	.105	.000
Nationality: Not Dutch	.262*	.118	.027	.221	.120	.066
Self-esteem				-.111	.059	.059
R² (Adjusted R²)	.058	(.040)		.066	(.046)	

*$p < .05$, ** $p <.01$, *** $p <.001$

4.3.4 Hypothesis 4: For the fourth hypothesis, it was checked if the self-esteem of consumers has an effect on the average number of followers the SMIs in their influencer portfolio have. Another regression analysis was conducted to test this. The results of this analysis are shown in table 10. The first model explained a significant proportion of the variance ($R^2 = .066$, $F(8,443) = 3.882$, $p < .001$). Adding self-esteem (model 2) did not explain a significant additional proportion of the variance ($R^2\Delta = .002$, $F(1, 442) = .841$, $p > .05$). However, this model was still significant ($R^2 =.067$, $F(9,442) = 3.543$, $p<.001$). The results show that respondents that are not from the Netherlands have SMIs in their portfolio with a higher number of followers ($\beta = 4029742.798$, $p < .01$) than respondents from the Netherlands. Furthermore, respondents that are not female have SMIs in their portfolio with a higher number of followers than female respondents ($\beta = 3214801,001$, $p < .05$). However, the analysis shows that self-esteem ($\beta = -688504,418$, $p >.05$) does not have a significant effect on the average number of followers of the SMIs in a consumers' portfolio. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Table 10: *Effect of self-esteem on the average number of followers of SMIs in a portfolio*

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
No. Platforms	676137.240	736927.996	.359	657270.952	737346.832	.373
Age respondent	-76779.465	77888.348	.325	-67542.179	78550.465	.390
Education: High school or lower	-178594.027	2272174.541	.937	-315009.506	2277442.019	.890
Education: Community college	-1751867.169	1442231.058	.225	-1836688.708	1445450.057	.205
Education: University Bachelor	2378397.992	1467966.761	.106	2438134.496	1469673.102	.098
Education: Master or higher	16176.035	1555169.768	.992	131237.251	1560497.738	.933
Gender: Not Female	3110779.300*	1349001.357	.022	3214801.001*	1354000.025	.018
Nationality: Not Dutch	4281748.888**	1542774.459	.006	4029742.798*	1567316.496	.010
Self-esteem				-688504.418	750583.777	.359
R^2 (Adjusted R^2)	.066	(.049)		.067	(.048)	

$* p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001$

4.3.5 Hypothesis 5: The fifth hypothesis states that the lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs that post content about their daily life in their portfolio. To test this, a regression analysis was conducted. The results of this regression analysis are shown in table 11. Model 1 explained a significant proportion of the variance ($R^2 = .123$, $F(8,442) = 7.526$, $p < .001$). Adding self-esteem in model 2 did not lead to a significant change in the explained variance ($R^2\Delta = .006$, $F(1, 441) = 2.878$, $p > .05$). However, this model was still significant ($R^2 = .129$, $F(9,441) = 7.261$, $p<.001$). Results of the analysis show that the control variables number of platforms, age of the respondent and gender of the respondent have a significant effect. If the number of platforms the consumer follows their SMIs on is higher, the number of SMIs that post content about daily life in their portfolio is higher ($\beta = .139$, $p < .05$). The older the respondent is, the lower the number of SMIs that post daily life content ($\beta = -.031$, $p < .001$). Moreover, respondents that are not female have less SMIs in their portfolio that post about their daily life ($\beta = -.592$, $p < .001$). However, the main variable self-esteem does not have a significant effect ($\beta = -.117$, $p >.05$) on the number of SMIs that post about their daily life. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis was rejected.

Table 11: *Effect of self-esteem on the number of SMIs in a portfolio that post daily life content*

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p
No. Platforms	.142*	.068	.036	.139*	.067	.040
Age respondent	-.033***	.007	.000	-.031***	.007	.000
Education: High school or lower	-.143	.208	.491	-.167	.208	.424
Education: Community college	-.177	.132	.180	-.192	.132	.148
Education: University Bachelor	.008	.135	.950	.018	.134	.892
Education: Master or higher	.073	.143	.610	.092	.143	.518
Gender: Not female	-.609***	.124	.000	-.592***	.124	.000
Nationality: Not Dutch	-.158	.142	.267	-.201	.144	.163
Self-esteem				-.117	.069	.091
R^2 (Adjusted R^2)	.123	(.108)		.129	(.111)	

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4.3.6 Hypothesis 6: The final hypothesis argues that self-esteem influences the number of SMIs that consumers follow through materialism. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the average amount of SMIs that consumers follow is 9.23 (Score 1 – 50 ; $SD = 10.311$; $N = 444$). The analysis was conducted in SPSS with PROCESS macro by Hayes (Hayes, 2013). The results are shown in table 12. First, results show a significant relation between self-esteem and materialism ($\beta = -.111$; $t (442) = -2.113$; $p = .035$). This is a negative relation, which means that a lower self-esteem is related to a higher degree of materialism, as expected. The R-square of this part of the model is relatively small ($R^2=.010$, $F (1,442) = 4.464$; $p = .035$). Second, there is no significant relation found between materialism and the number of influencers a consumer has in his/her portfolio ($\beta = -.474$; $t (441)= -.743$; $p = .458$). Third, the indirect effect (.053) is tested using bootstrapping with 95% confidence intervals and the results show that this effect is not statistically significant (-.083 ; .243). Indicating that materialism is not a significant mediator. Finally, the direct effect of self-esteem on the number of followers is also not significant ($\beta = -.682$; $t (441) = -.961$; $p = .337$). Therefore, the hypothesis that people with low self-esteem have more influencers in their portfolio, mediated by their degree of materialism, is not supported. Results show that there is only a significant relationship between self-esteem (the independent variable) and materialism (the mediator).

Table 12: Effect of self-esteem on the number of SMIs in a consumer's influencer portfolio through materialism

Model	Total effect X on M			Direct effect X on Y			Direct effect X on Y		
	β	SE	p	β	SE	p	Effect	LLCI	ULCI
X: self-esteem M: materialism Y: No. influencers	-.111	.0527	.0352*	-.6818	.7095	.3371	.0527	-.0796	.2393

4.3.7 Additional variable: Authenticity

There were no specific expectations about the relation between self-esteem and the average authenticity of the SMIs in a consumer's portfolio beforehand. A regression analysis was conducted to check if there was any effect of self-esteem on authenticity. Results are shown in table 13. Model 1 did not explain a significant proportion of the variance (R^2 = .033, $F_{(8,443)}$ = 1.880, p = .061). Adding self-esteem in model 2 did not lead to a significant change in the explained variance ($R^2\Delta$ = .017, $F_{(1, 442)}$ = 1.429, p = .217). This second model was also insignificant (R^2 =.036, $F_{(9,442)}$ = 1.843, p = .059). Results show that only the number of platforms and the education of the respondent have significant effects on authenticity. The higher the number of platforms the SMIs in the portfolio are followed, the higher the average authenticity of the SMIs in this portfolio (β = .088, p < .05). Respondents who completed their University Master of science or have a higher education (β = .188, p < .05) have a higher authenticity of the SMIs in their portfolio than respondents who completed the university of applied sciences. However, self-esteem does not have a significant effect (β = .053, p >.05) on authenticity.

Table 13: *Effect of self-esteem on the average authenticity of SMIs in a consumer's influencer portfolio*

	Model 1: Control variables only			Model 2: With main variable		
	β	SE	p	B	SE	p
No. Platforms	.086*	.042	.042	.088*	.042	.039
Age respondent	.001	.004	.811	.000	.005	.938
Education: High school or lower	.222	.131	.090	.232	.131	.076
Education: Community college	.085	.083	.307	.091	.083	.272
Education: University Bachelor	.164	.084	.052	.160	.084	.059
Education: Master or higher	.197*	.089	.028	.188*	.090	.037
Gender: Not female	.098	.078	.210	.089	.078	.251
Nationality: Not Dutch	.028	.089	.757	.047	.090	.602
Self-esteem				.053	.043	.217
R² (Adjusted R²)	.033	(.015)		.036	(.017)	

*p < .05, **p <.01, ***p <.001

4.4 Additional analyses

Because most hypotheses were rejected, some additional analyses were conducted. All results are shown in Appendix I. First, additional analyses were performed where the groups following one influencer (N = 36), following two influencers (N = 70), and following three or more influencers (N = 346) were analyzed separately. As explained in the beginning of this chapter, most respondents (76.1%) claimed to follow three or more influencers on social media. However, there were also respondents who answered that they follow only one or two influencers. This could have impacted the results, because the count variables of someone who follows for example two influencers range from 0 to 2. Meaning that the maximum score for these respondents is lower than for respondents who follow three or more influencers. This could have impacted the results. Therefore, additional analyses were conducted for the hypotheses with count variables: number of SMIs with the same gender, number of SMIs with the same age, number of celebrity influencers and number of SMIs that post content about their daily life. The same control variables that were used for the previous analyses were added. The second hypothesis about the age of the SMIs was still significant in this additional analysis. However, the results show that self-esteem only has a significant effect on the number of SMIs of the same gender for consumers who follow three or more influencers (β = -.206, p <.05). Moreover, the analysis for celebrity influencers (hypothesis 3) shows significant results only for consumers who follow three or more influencers. For this group, the lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of celebrity influencers in their portfolio (β = -.134, p<.05). This is the opposite from what was expected. No statistically significant results were found for the number of SMIs with the same gender or the number of SMIs that post content about their daily life.

Second, an additional analysis was conducted for the hypothesis about the average number of followers of the SMIs in a portfolio. Because this hypothesis was rejected, it seemed interesting to look at the question 'How accurate do you believe your estimation of the number of followers is?' to find out if the trust people have in their accuracy of estimating the number of followers has any effect on the results. It might be the case that respondents who think they are more accurate, are in fact more accurate and have answered the questions about the number of followers correctly (for example because they recently saw this or looked it up to answer the question). Therefore, a regression analysis was conducted for two groups separately with the same control variables as in the previous analysis. The first group was not so sure about their accuracy (score 1 - 3; N = 143) and the second was very sure they answered the question accurately (score 4 - 5; N = 309). The results of this additional analysis were not statistically significant.

Third, some additional analyses were conducted to find out if the demographic factors in the sample have influenced the results of the hypotheses that were rejected. Gender was chosen because Hudder and de Jans (2021) show that female and male consumers perceive influencers in different ways. Moreover, Croes and Bartels (2021) found that influencer marketing has different effects on female and male consumers. Therefore, it seemed interesting to split the data for the gender of the respondent and analyze the groups 'female' (N = 372) and 'not female' (N = 80) separately. Thus, the data was split on gender of the respondent, after which regression analyses were performed with the dependent variables: number of SMIs with the same gender, number of celebrity influencers, average number of followers and number of SMIs that post content about their daily life. Also, the PROCESS analysis for the effect of self-esteem on the breadth of the portfolio through materialism was run again for the two groups separately. No significant effects were found in these additional analyses.

Next, the data was split on nationality because research states that there are differences in social comparison seeking between cultures (Strahan et al., 2006; White & Lehman, 2005). Some cultures seek more social comparison than other cultures. The social comparison theory was used as the underlying theory for all hypotheses. Therefore, the data was split on nationality and regression analyses with the same dependent variables as described above were conducted for the groups 'Dutch' (N = 383) and 'Not Dutch' (N = 69) separately. Three significant effects were found when splitting the file on nationality. For consumers who are not from the Netherlands a negative effect of self-esteem was found on the number of celebrity influencers in their portfolio (β = -.506, p < .05) and for the average number of followers of the SMIs in their portfolio (β = -6188287.27, p < .05). Finally, for Dutch consumers, results show that a lower self-esteem is related to following more

influencers that post about their daily life ($\beta = -.147$, $p < .05$). The PROCESS analysis for the effect of self-esteem on the breadth of the portfolio through materialism was also performed again for the two groups separately. However, this analysis showed no significant results.

Chapter 5 Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

This research contributes to the literature on influencer marketing by investigating if the self-esteem of consumers plays a role in the multiple influencers they follow on social media. Earlier research lacks to investigate socio psychological motives that drive consumers to follow SMIs and has only focused on following a single influencer instead of taking a portfolio perspective. The aim of this research was to answer the question: How do SMI portfolios of consumers differ based on their level of self-esteem? An online questionnaire with a valid response of 452 respondents was conducted to answer this question.

The results show that most expectations needed to be rejected. Table 14 provides a summary of the hypotheses in this study and the results from the analyses. Based on the social comparison theory, it was assumed that consumers with a lower self-esteem tend to engage more in social comparison (Chae, 2017; Chau & Chang, 2016). In order to do this, they look for similar others (Chae, 2017; Festinger, 1954) on social media (Chua & Chang, 2016; Vogel et al., 2014). Therefore, it was expected that consumers with a lower self-esteem have more influencers in their portfolio that feel similar to them (same gender, same age group, less celebrities and not too many followers) and that post content about their daily lives that can be used for social comparison. It was found that the lower the self-esteem of the consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their portfolio that are in the same age group. Meaning that this hypothesis was supported. However, no relationship was found between the self-esteem of a consumer and the number of SMIs in their portfolio with the same gender, the number of celebrity influencers in their portfolio and the number of SMIs that post about daily life. Also, no relationship with the average number of followers of the portfolio was found. Furthermore, a relationship between self-esteem and materialism was found, but this was not related with the breadth of the influencer portfolios of consumers. Finally, there was no specific hypothesis about the influence of self-esteem on the average authenticity of SMIs in a consumer's portfolio. Analysis also showed that there was no relationship between these concepts.

Concluding, this research did not find the expected relationship between consumers' self-esteem and their influencer portfolios, contrary to the expectations based on the social comparison theory. However, although most expectations were rejected, this research can be considered as a starting point. Research on influencer marketing is in its infancy and this research is the first to take a portfolio perspective. Because the knowledge was limited, this research was still very exploratory. In the

remainder of this chapter, insights are compared to literature, theoretical and practical implications are discussed and limitations and suggestions for future research are given.

Table 14: Summary of results

Hypothesis	Result
H1: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their influencer portfolio of the same gender as themselves.	Rejected
H2: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their influencer portfolio which are in the same age group as themselves.	Accepted
H3: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the lower the number of celebrity influencers in their influencer portfolio.	Rejected
H4: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the lower the average number of followers of the SMIs in their influencer portfolio.	Rejected
H5: The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs they have in their influencer portfolios that post about their daily life (snoopers and entertainers).	Rejected
H6: Individuals with a low self-esteem have more SMIs in their influencer portfolios than individuals with a high self-esteem, and this relationship is mediated by the degree of materialism.	Rejected

5.2 Discussion

The underlying theory that was used in this study is Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory. Literature states that people that have a low self-esteem tend to engage more in social comparison (Chae, 2017; Chau & Chang, 2016). For social comparison, individuals look for people that are somewhat similar to them (Chae, 2017; Festinger, 1954). This research shows that this is true regarding the age and the gender of the influencers that people are comparing themselves to. The lower the self-esteem of a consumer, the higher the number of SMIs in their portfolio with the same age and gender as themselves. However, the additional analysis showed that this is only the case for the respondents who followed three or more influencers. It could be possible that these people depend more on social media influencers than the respondents who claimed to follow only one or two influencers. This could be related to the fact that greater exposure to SMIs provides more information that can be used as a standard for social comparison (Chae, 2017).

The expected relationship was not found for the average number of followers of a portfolio and the number of celebrity influencers in a portfolio. However, results of the additional analyses showed that a lower self-esteem of consumers is related to a higher number of celebrity influencers. Also here, this result was only found for respondents that follow three or more influencers. The negative effect that was found is the opposite of what was expected. It was expected that people perceive regular influencers and celebrity influencers as different since celebrity influencers experienced fame independent from social media. However, research from Brooks et al. (2021) shows that all influencers can build celebrity capital through interacting with their audience and responding to their requests. This is referred to as 'influencer celebrification'. This could mean that consumers perceive all influencers as celebrities, not just celebrity influencers. Moreover, the concept of 'celebrity influencers' may be more complex. The concept refers to traditional celebrities becoming SMIs. However, as acknowledged by Brooks et al. (2021), it can also be the other way around. SMIs can also become traditional celebrities (e.g. online influencer Liza Kohsy who became a celebrity television host). Because of this, it could be that the concept of celebrity influencers was confusing for the respondents and that this impacted the results. Yet, there are no measures to capture the celebrity capital of influencers. It is interesting to look further into this to get better insights.

For the average number of followers, the additional analyses also show results that are opposite than what was expected. For respondents that live outside the Netherlands, a negative effect of self-esteem on the number of followers was found. This indicates that a lower self-esteem is related to a portfolio with a higher average number of followers. This result should be interpreted with care because estimates are used for this variable. However, it could also be true that there is another theoretical explanation for these findings for both the average number of followers as well as the number of celebrity influencers. Consumers might be interested in the fancy lives of influencers because this is an ideal for them (Chae, 2017). This is called upward social comparison, where the popularity and the life of the SMIs are the critical dimension where people compare themselves to. This can be related to research from Hung (2014), where aspiration was found to be an important reason for people to be drawn to celebrity entertainment. According to Campbell and Farrell (2020) and Hung (2014_, SMIs with a large following are perceived as an aspirational, and their audience often wishes to be like them. Thus, it might not always be the case that people look for similar influencers in order to engage in social comparison.

Moreover, it was expected that if consumers have a lower self-esteem, they follow more SMIs that post about their daily life. According to Chae (2017), posts about the daily life of influencers are used

more for social comparison. Results of the first analysis showed no significant effects. However, the additional analysis showed that for Dutch consumers ($N = 382$) this is true. Thus, this could be something that differs across different nationalities or cultures. This result could also be explained by the way the data was collected. Respondents only had to give a short description of the kind of content the SMI posts. However, postings about daily life can also include specific information, but the purpose of the influencer is to exhibit their personal life (Chae, 2017). Therefore, it is questionable if all respondents described the posted content correctly.

Results show that there is no relationship between self-esteem of consumers and the perceived authenticity of the SMIs they follow. Glucksman (2017) states that authenticity is an important characteristic that all influencers should possess. Meaning that they should be genuine and relatable. The success of influencers depends, among other things, on their authenticity (Glucksman, 2017). Lee et al. (2021) also showed that authenticity is an important motive for following influencers. This could mean that all consumers look for authentic SMIs. Therefore, there is no difference in the level of authenticity of the influencer portfolios based on the self-esteem of consumers.

In this research, materialism was investigated as a possible mediator in the relationship between self-esteem and breadth of influencer portfolios because Lee et al. (2021) state that materialistic people depend more on influencers. The results did not support this relation. A possible explanation could be related to materialistic envy: the desire of consumers to have the same possessions as others (Belk, 2008). According to Smith and Kim (2007), this feeling of envy is an unpleasant and painful emotion of feeling inferior. Materialists could follow less SMIs than expected because they want to avoid this unfavorable feeling. Although, the mediation effect was not significant, materialism could still be a factor that has an influence on other characteristics of influencer portfolios. Research from Lou and Kim (2019) showed that materialism drives consumers to make social comparisons with SMIs. It is interesting to look further into this relationship.

5.3 Theoretical and practical implications

This study contributes to existing literature of influencer marketing in several ways. First, previous research has only focused on single influencers. However, most people follow more than one influencer on social media. Therefore, this study takes a portfolio perspective (looking at multiple SMIs a consumer is following) when investigating influencer marketing. Second, this study is the first to look at possible underlying psychological motives. It was expected that there was a relationship between self-esteem and characteristics of SMIs in a portfolio. Contrary to the

expectations, only a relationship was found between consumer's self-esteem and the number of SMIs in their portfolio that are in the same age group as themselves. However, additional analyses show there may be some differences between nationalities, which could be further explored.

Nevertheless, this research also has some practical implications. Regardless of the self-esteem of the consumer, the influencer portfolios investigated in this research have some managerial implications for marketers. Marketers should use influencers from the same gender and age group as their target group because consumers are more likely to follow these SMIs, especially when their target group is female. For consumers that are not female this is less important. Moreover, older consumers are also less concerned about this. Overall, data shows that celebrity influencers are less appealing to follow since most consumers have portfolios that consist of no celebrity influencers at all. Moreover, consumers who are not female are also less concerned about this. When targeting female consumers, marketers should avoid the use of celebrity influencers.

Thus, demographic characteristics of consumers like their gender, age and nationality, are important factors. Consumers who are not female tend to follow SMIs with a higher number of followers than female consumers. Also, consumers that live outside the Netherlands have portfolios with a higher average number of followers than Dutch consumers. When marketers, for example, target Dutch women, it could be interesting to look at influencers that do not have a very large following base. Furthermore, consumers who are not female have less SMIs in their portfolios that post content about their daily life than female consumers. Daily life content was also found to be more appealing to young consumers. Marketers should take these findings into account when they design influencer marketing programs.

Besides these demographic characteristics, the number of social media platforms the SMIs are followed on could be taken into account. If consumers follow the SMIs in their portfolio on more platforms, they perceive them to be more authentic. The perceived authenticity of SMIs has a positive influence on consumers' willingness to pay for products and services (Kapital et al., 2020). Therefore, another recommendation for marketers is to use SMIs that are active on more than one platform.

This research gives some insights that could help brands and marketers to understand their (potential) target group(s) a little better, what is valuable for their branding strategies. When it comes to consumers with low self-esteem, it is better to use influencers that are in the same age group as the consumer and that have the same gender as them. And for Dutch consumers with lower self-esteem,

it could also be useful to work with influencers that post content about their daily life, called snoopers and entertainers (for example Monica Geuze). Finally, for consumers that live outside the Netherlands and have low self-esteem, celebrity influencers and influencers with a high number of followers are appealing. These results could be especially relevant for brands in appearance related categories since Arnocky et al. (2005) show that social comparison is most common within these categories. Consequently, marketers can adjust their marketing efforts to the demographics and psychological characteristics of their target audiences.

5.4 Limitations and further research

The data that was collected for this study caused some complications for the analysis procedure. If respondents had given exact numeric values as answers to the question what the number of followers of the SMI was, the data would have been more useful for analysis. Now, estimated values are used and therefore results should be interpreted with care. There were some reasons to use categories for this question. It is easier for respondents to check an option rather than entering an exact value and it is hard for respondents to recall or estimate the number of followers accurately. However, it could also have been interesting to just look at the perceptions of respondents, meaning that the correct number of followers would not matter because it is about respondents perceiving the SMIs as popular or not. Moreover, this research aimed to control for the kind of platform SMIs are active on, since social media platforms have various different functions (Voorveld et al., 2018), but the data only made it possible to look at the number of platforms. For future research, it is suggested to avoid multiple response questions in order to control for the specific platform the SMI is followed on.

Another limitation has to do with the concepts self-esteem and materialism. Respondents have the tendency to answer in such a way to give more positive self-descriptions (Holtgraves, 2004; Paulhus, 2002). This is related to the social desirability bias; the tendency to give answers that are socially desirable (Grimm, 2010). This means that respondents could have described themselves as less insecure (high self-esteem) and less materialistic since being insecure and materialistic are not perceived as good qualities. This could have impacted the data. According to Grimm (2010), it is useful to measure the extent of the bias in the responses by including a scale for this into the survey. Such scale was not incorporated in this study and could be an improvement in future research. Moreover, the scales used to measure concepts in this study were based on English research but have been translated into Dutch for the Dutch respondents. Sometimes translating scales can lead to complications because literal translations have a (slightly) different meaning in other languages (Baumgartner & Weijters, 2017). Therefore, it could be interesting for future research to look into

different ways to measure socio psychological motives or to create questionnaires in multiple languages to prevent problems with translation.

Although the questionnaire was available in both Dutch as well as English, it was still conducted in the Netherlands. Therefore, the majority (84.7%) of the respondents was Dutch. Because of this, it is questionable whether the results are generalizable to other countries. Cross-cultural differences could influence the values that consumers have, their consumption behavior, and more importantly; their social media usage (Okazaki & Taylor, 2013). Also, the ways of thinking (e.g. the degree of materialism) could differ a lot between modern Western cultures, like in the Netherlands, and more collectivistic cultures (Zhou et al., 2021). The additional analyses in this research also show that there are some differences between consumers from the Netherlands and from outside the Netherlands. Therefore, it could be interesting to do cross-cultural research investigating socio psychological motives that drive consumers to follow SMIs.

Furthermore, future research could investigate other characteristics of consumers that could influence their motives to follow SMIs. Besides self-esteem, there could be other relevant characteristics to investigate, maybe even in combination with self-esteem. For example, Chae (2017) states that public self-consciousness could also be an important personality trait and they look at this concept together with self-esteem. If consumers have a high level of public self-consciousness, they are very aware of themselves and are concerned about what others think. These people have a tendency to engage in social comparison, according to Buunk and Gibbons (2007). However, there is a lack of research on the underlying motives to follow influencers, this is still very exploratory, and the use of another method could be desirable. Qualitative methods are more useful when the nature of the research is exploratory (Brytting, 1990). Therefore, it might be interesting to use a more qualitative research approach, like interviews, to find out more about the underlying motives. This kind of research attempts to get a deeper understanding of how things work in our social world (Hancock et al., 2001). This could give us better insights into the possible underlying motives, which can be more than just the self-esteem of consumers. Furthermore, this kind of research might also provide a better understanding about how the social comparison process works regarding influencers. For now, it is unclear whether consumers look for SMIs that are similar to themselves or SMIs that they aspire to be because of their fancy lives or popularity. Moreover, by asking follow up questions the social desirability bias (that could occur when examining concepts like self-esteem) could be avoided or limited (Bergen & Labonté, 2019). Finally, as explained in the discussion, the measurement and

complexity of concepts like the number of followers, celebrity influencers and content could have impacted the results. In qualitative research this could be limited.

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Appendix A Number of followers

1. Monica Geuze 1.300.000
2. Kim Kardashian: 314.000.000
3. Rianne Meijer 1.500.000
4. Bram Krikke 1.000.000
5. Romee Strijd 7.500.000
6. Dee 1.500.000
7. Yasemin Ozilhan 1.500.000
8. Kobe Bryant: 20.800.000
9. Enzo Knol 1.900.000
10. Anna Nooshin 956.000
11. Chloe Ting 3.100.000
12. Nikkie Tutorials 15.900.000
13. Chantal Janzen 1.700.000
14. Zoë Sugg 9.300.000
15. Kalvijn 1.000.000
16. Selena Gomez 322.000.000
17. Juultje Tieleman 1.000.000
18. Boef 1.500.000
19. Frenkie de Jong 10.300.000
20. Zach King 24.500.000
21. Jonathan Bailey 3.300.000
22. Omaya Zein 1.300.000
23. Molly Mae 6.300.000
24. Chris Bumstead 8.000.000
25. Chiara Ferragni 27.100.000

Appendix B Discriminant validity

Table 1
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.828
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3090.490
	Df	153
	Sig.	.000

Table 2
Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Authenticity 1	1,000	.823
Authenticity 2	1,000	.850
Authenticity 3	1,000	.752
Materialism 1	1,000	.508
Materialism 2	1,000	.666
Materialism 3	1,000	.586
Materialism 4	1,000	.662
Materialism 5	1,000	.376
SE 1	1,000	.568
SE 3	1,000	.680
SE 4	1,000	.486
SE 7	1,000	.418
SE 10	1,000	.470
SE 2 Reversed	1,000	.628
SE 5 Reversed	1,000	.574
SE 6 Reversed	1,000	.703
SE 8 Reversed	1,000	.511
SE 9 Reversed	1,000	.654

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3

Eigenvalues

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.533	25.186	25.186	4.533	25.186	25.186
2	2.703	15.018	40.204	2.703	15.018	40.204
3	2.479	13.771	53.975	2.479	13.771	53.975
4	1.182	6.565	60.540	1.182	6.656	60.540
5	.924	5.134	65.674			
6	.710	3.946	69.620			
7	.668	3.713	73.332			
8	.637	3.541	76.874			
9	.594	3.302	80.176			
10	.555	3.081	83.257			
11	.535	2.970	86.227			
12	.449	2.493	88.720			
13	.433	2.406	91.126			
14	.405	2.248	93.373			
15	.375	2.085	95.458			
16	.341	1.895	97.354			
17	.296	1.643	98.996			
18	.181	1.004	100.000			

Table 4

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Authenticity 1	.161	.062	.884	.102
Authenticity 2	.207	.067	.866	.232
Authenticity 3	.126	.147	.838	.113
Materialism 1	-.065	.684	-.083	.173
Materialism 2	-.228	.752	-.123	.182
Materialism 3	-.190	.731	-.121	.022
Materialism 4	-.177	.785	-.087	.081
Materialism 5	-.065	.552	.087	-.246
SE 1	.701	.246	-.018	-.130
SE 3	.526	.138	.121	-.609
SE 4	.469	.242	.020	-.435
SE 7	.590	.108	.076	-.230
SE 10	.665	.154	-.001	-.059
SE 2 Reversed	.667	.058	-.227	.358
SE 5 Reversed	.743	-.092	-.106	.055
SE 6 Reversed	.696	.009	-.217	.414
SE 8 Reversed	.659	-.012	-.238	.139
SE 9 Reversed	.793	-.007	-.076	.136

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax.

Table 5

KMO and Bartlett's test after removal SE 4

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.824
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2959.507
	Df	136
	Sig.	.000

Table 6

Communalities after removal SE 4

	Initial	Extraction
Authenticity 1	1,000	.820
Authenticity 2	1,000	.853
Authenticity 3	1,000	.754
Materialism 1	1,000	.544
Materialism 2	1,000	.678
Materialism 3	1,000	.586
Materialism 4	1,000	.668
Materialism 5	1,000	.477
SE 1	1,000	.563
SE 3	1,000	.621
SE 7	1,000	.488
SE 10	1,000	.499
SE 2 Reversed	1,000	.607
SE 5 Reversed	1,000	.575
SE 6 Reversed	1,000	.709
SE 8 Reversed	1,000	.507
SE 9 Reversed	1,000	.656

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 7

Eigenvalues after removal SE 4

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.356	25.626	25.626	4.356	25.626	25.626
2	2.658	15.636	41.262	2.658	15.636	41.262
3	2.478	14.579	55.840	2.478	14.479	55.840
4	1.112	6.543	62.383	1.112	6.543	62.383
5	.804	4.727	67.110			
6	.706	4.154	71.264			
7	.648	3.811	75.075			
8	.613	3.605	78.680			
9	.593	3.486	82.166			
10	.542	3.188	85.354			
11	.450	2.645	87.999			
12	.434	2.556	90.555			
13	.406	2.386	92.940			
14	.377	2.215	95.155			
15	.345	2.030	97.186			
16	.296	1.743	98.929			
17	.182	1.071	100.000			

Table 8

Rotated component matrix after removal SE 4

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Authenticity 1	.158	.056	.887	.076
Authenticity 2	.208	.068	.869	.225
Authenticity 3	.118	.140	.841	.112
Materialism 1	-.102	.678	-.070	.263
Materialism 2	-.263	.744	-.109	.206
Materialism 3	-.225	.724	-.107	-.015
Materialism 4	-.206	.787	-.072	-.004
Materialism 5	-.091	.548	.098	-.398
SE 1	.683	.276	-.010	-.141
SE 3	.497	.137	.123	-.584
SE 7	.586	.139	.081	-.345
SE 10	.662	.193	.006	-.153
SE 2 Reversed	.677	.112	-.221	.295
SE 5 Reversed	.748	-.051	-.104	.048
SE 6 Reversed	.706	.061	-.213	.403
SE 8 Reversed	.668	.035	-.235	.066
SE 9 Reversed	.797	.039	-.072	.118

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax.

Table 9

KMO and Bartlett's test after removal SE 3

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.818
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2821.503
	Df	120
	Sig.	.000

Table 10

Communalities after removal SE 3

	Initial	Extraction
Authenticity 1	1,000	.821
Authenticity 2	1,000	.817
Authenticity 3	1,000	.748
Materialism 1	1,000	.478
Materialism 2	1,000	.637
Materialism 3	1,000	.586
Materialism 4	1,000	.668
Materialism 5	1,000	.312
SE 1	1,000	.523
SE 7	1,000	.345
SE 10	1,000	.472
SE 2 Reversed	1,000	.544
SE 5 Reversed	1,000	.573
SE 6 Reversed	1,000	.575
SE 8 Reversed	1,000	.512
SE 9 Reversed	1,000	.648

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 11

Eigenvalues after removal SE 3

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.158	25.986	25.986	4.158	25.986	25.329
2	2.644	16.527	42.513	2.644	16.527	42.357
3	2.466	15.413	57.926	2.466	15.413	57.926
4	.963	6.020	63.946			
5	.743	4.644	68.591			
6	.706	4.411	73.001			
7	.639	3.993	76.995			
8	.697	3.734	80.729			
9	.556	3.476	84.205			
10	.480	3.001	87.206			
11	.435	2.720	89.926			
12	.406	2.535	92.461			
13	.377	2.354	94.814			
14	.351	2.195	97.009			
15	.296	1.852	98.862			
16	.182	1.138	100.000			

Table 12

Rotated component matrix after removal SE 3

	Component		
	1	2	3
Authenticity 1	.021	-.037	.905
Authenticity 2	.079	-.033	.900
Authenticity 3	.006	.056	.863
Materialism 1	.046	.690	-.010
Materialism 2	-.091	.790	-.066
Materialism 3	-.068	.760	-.067
Materialism 4	-.040	.816	-.020
Materialism 5	-.014	.543	.129
SE 1	.703	.131	.112
SE 7	.569	.009	.174
SE 10	.674	.055	.122
SE2R	.732	-.005	-.091
SE5R	.732	-.192	.005
SE6R	.752	-.060	-.081
SE8R	.700	-.081	-.121
SE9R	.795	-.115	.056

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax.

Appendix C Convergent validity: self-esteem

Table 1

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.892
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1292.645
	Df	28
	Sig.	.000

Table 2

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
SE 1	1,000	,483
SE 7	1,000	,331
SE 10	1,000	,453
SE 2 Reversed	1,000	,529
SE 5 Reversed	1,000	,552
SE 6 Reversed	1,000	,563
SE 8 Reversed	1,000	,489
SE 9 Reversed	1,000	,642

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3

Eigenvalues

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.043	50.542	50.542	4.043	50.542	50.542
2	.867	10.839	61.381			
3	.663	8.285	69.666			
4	.628	7.844	77.511			
5	.556	6.955	84.465			
6	.503	6.284	90.750			
7	.392	4.897	95.647			
8	.348	4.353	100.000			

Table 4

Component matrix

	Component 1
SE 1	.695
SE 7	.575
SE 10	.673
SE 2 Reversed	.727
SE 5 Reversed	.743
SE 6 Reversed	.751
SE 8 Reversed	.699
SE 9 Reversed	.801

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Appendix D Convergent validity: materialism

Table 1

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.783
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	616.441
	Df	10
	Sig.	.000

Table 2

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Materialism 1	1,000	,473
Materialism 2	1,000	,638
Materialism 3	1,000	,594
Materialism 4	1,000	,672
Materialism 5	1,000	,287

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3

Eigenvalues

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.664	53.274	53.274	2.664	53.274	53.274
2	.843	16.861	70.134			
3	.676	13.513	83.648			
4	.429	8.572	92.220			
5	.389	7.780	100.000			

Table 4

Component matrix

	Component 1
Materialism 1	.688
Materialism 2	.799
Materialism 3	.770
Materialism 4	.820
Materialism 5	.536

Appendix E Convergent validity: authenticity

Table 1

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.725
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	714.851
	Df	3
	Sig.	.000

Table 2

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Authenticity 1	1,000	.825
Authenticity 2	1,000	.845
Authenticity 3	1,000	.746

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3

Eigenvalues

	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.416	80.520	80.520	2.416	80.520	80.520
2	.370	12.323	92.843			
3	.215	7.157	100.000			

Table 4

Component matrix

	Component 1
Authenticity 1	.908
Authenticity 2	.919
Authenticity 3	.864

Appendix F Reliability analysis

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha self-esteem

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.857	8

Table 2

Item-total statistics self-esteem

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
SE 2 Reversed	25.1416	23.346	.630	.837
SE 5 Reversed	24.2611	23.958	.639	.836
SE 6 Reversed	24.7743	22.929	.654	.834
SE 8 Reversed	24.8938	22.867	.594	.843
SE 9 Reversed	24.0929	22.732	.710	.826
SE 1	24.2522	25.608	.586	.843
SE 7	24.1482	27.005	.462	.855
SE 10	24.4204	25.189	.559	.845

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha materialism

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.773	5

Table 4

Item-total statistics materialism

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Materialism 1	9.77	11.001	.495	.747
Materialism 2	10.21	9.895	.626	.703
Materialism 3	10.21	10.047	.592	.714
Materialism 4	10.08	9.552	.662	.689
Materialism 5	9.82	11.237	.367	.792

Table 5

Cronbach's Alpha authenticity

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.876	3

Table 6

Item-total statistics authenticity

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Authenticity 1	7.6313	1.736	.782	.811
Authenticity 2	7.6663	1.584	.802	.787
Authenticity 3	7.7135	1.612	.709	.877

Appendix G Assumptions Regression

Table 1

Normality of the data

		No. SMIs Same gender	No. SMIs Same age group	No. Followers	No. Celebrity influencers	Amount of Daily life Content
N	Valid	452	452	452	429	451
	Missing	0	0	0	23	1
Mean		2.2035	1.0398	670669.25	.5711	1.7694
Std. Deviation		.90732	.99364	377412.274	.83033	1.04139
Skewness		-.842	.547	-.062	1.384	-.346
Std. Error of Skewness		.115	.115	.115	.118	.115
Kurtosis		-.350	-.818	-1.032	1.111	-1.064
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.229	.229	.229	.235	.229
Minimum		0.00	0.00	5000	0.00	.00
Maximum		3.00	3.00	1250000	3.00	3.00

Figure 1

P-Plots
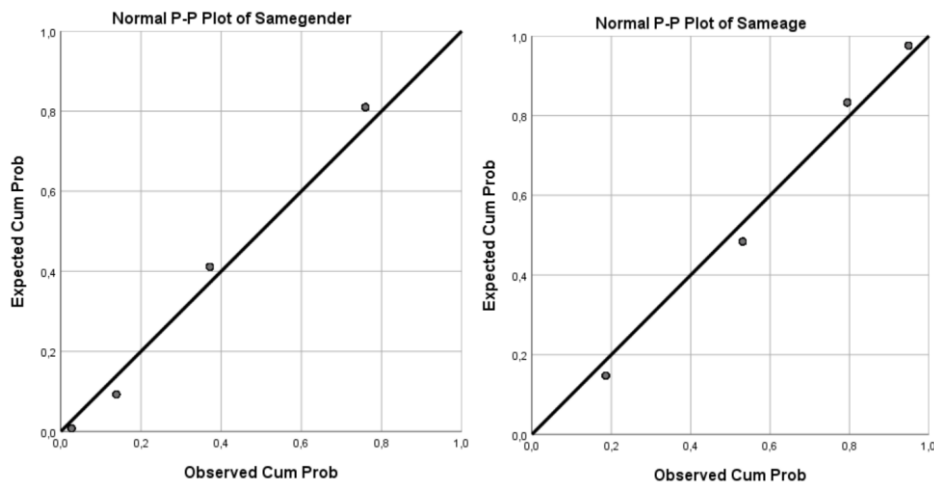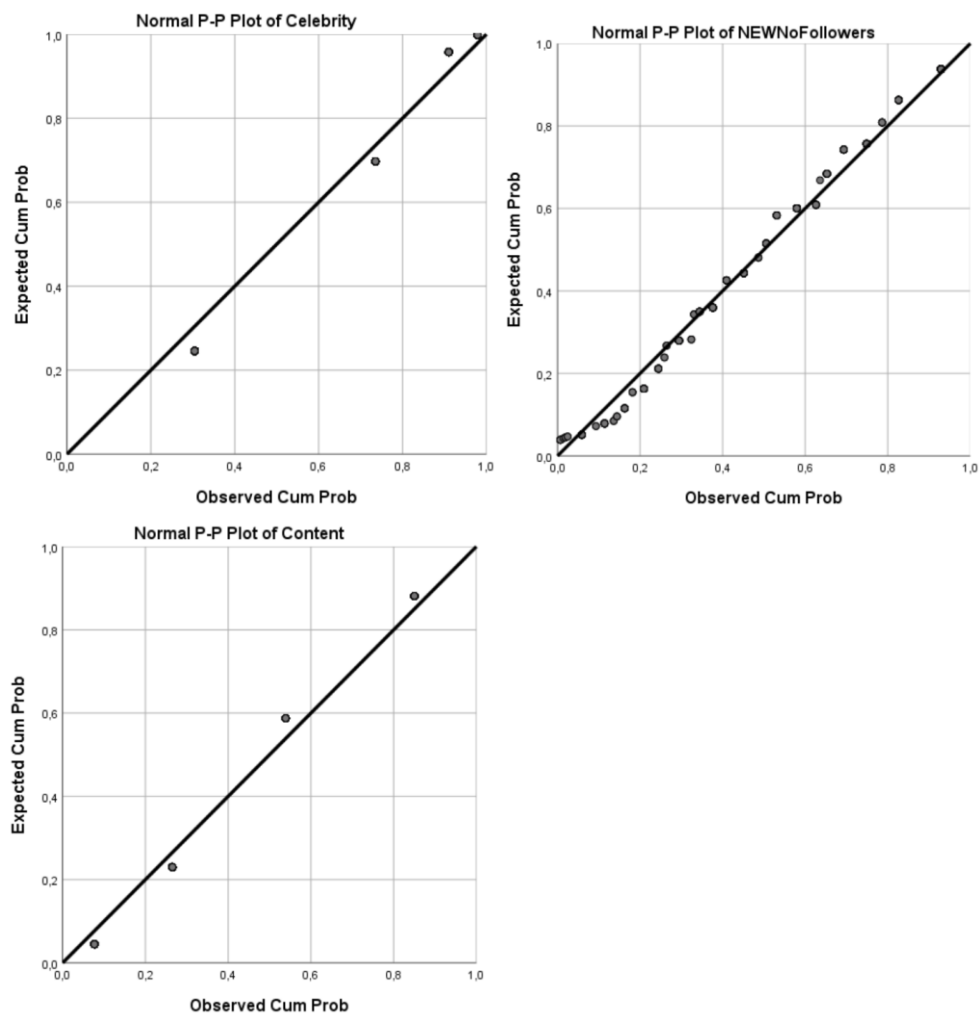
Figure 2

Scatterplots
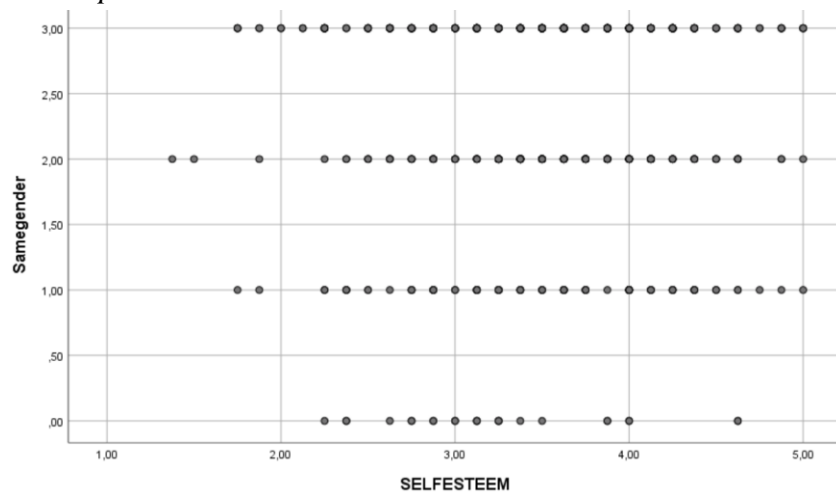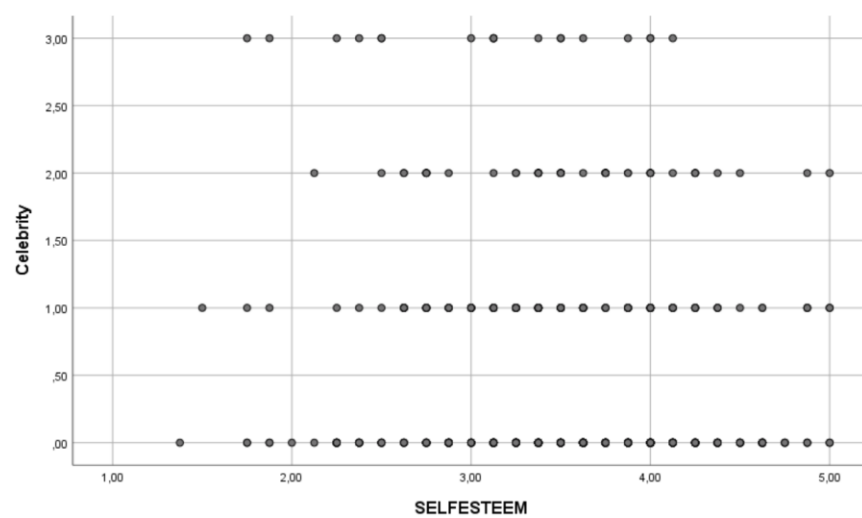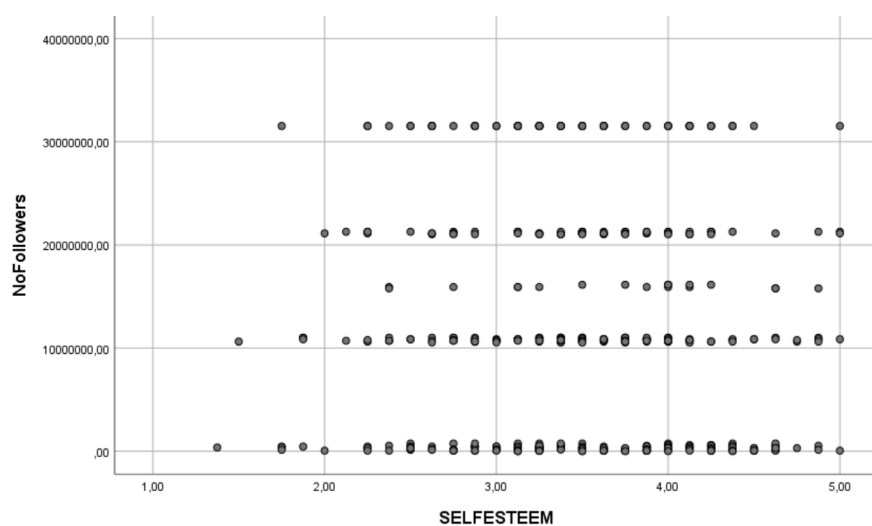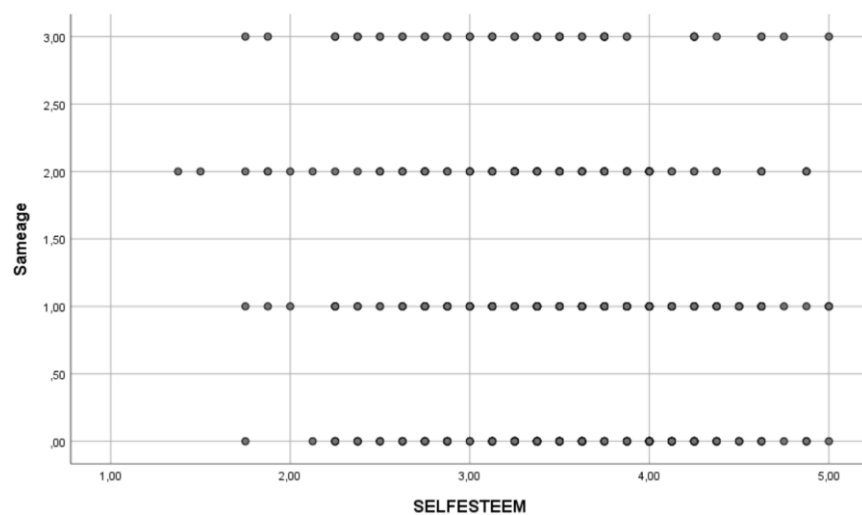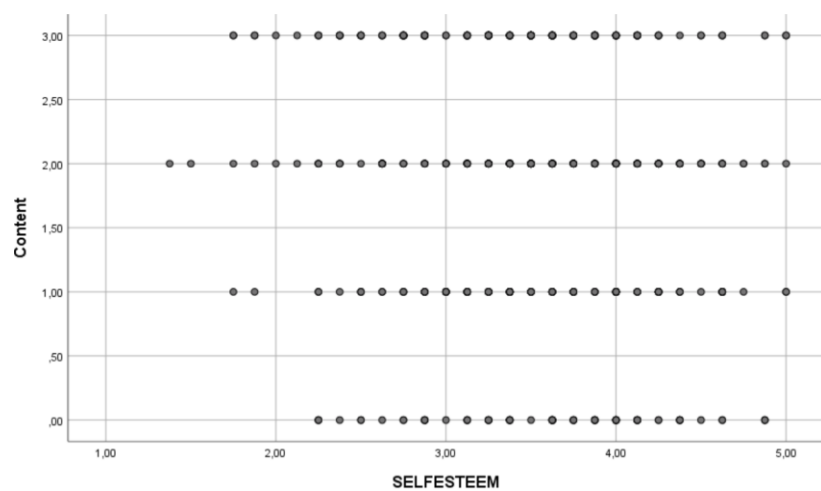
Appendix H Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.290ᵃ	.084	.068	.87607	.084	5.094	8	443	.000
2	.295ᵇ	.087	.068	.87572	.003	1.347	1	442	.246

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.275	8	3.909	5.094	.000ᵇ
	Residual	339.999	443	.767		
	Total	371.274	451			
2	Regression	32.308	9	3.590	4.681	.000ᶜ
	Residual	338.966	442	.767		
	Total	371.274	451			

a. Dependent Variable: Samegender

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.586	.209		12.399	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.048	.060	.037	.792	.429
	Age	-.012	.006	-.090	-1.936	.054
	High school or lower	-.160	.185	-.041	-.862	.389
	Community	-.223	.118	-.094	-1.893	.059
	WO Bsc	.070	.120	.031	.582	.561
	WO Msc or higher	.085	.127	.034	.668	.505
	Not female	-.555	.110	-.234	-5.044	.000
	Not Dutch	-.171	.126	-.068	-1.355	.176
2	(Constant)	2.357	.287		8.214	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.050	.060	.038	.824	.410
	Age	-.013	.006	-.097	-2.070	.039
	High school or lower	-.146	.186	-.037	-.784	.433
	Community	-.214	.118	-.091	-1.816	.070
	WO Bsc	.064	.120	.029	.530	.596
	WO Msc or higher	.073	.127	.029	.573	.567
	Not female	-.566	.110	-.238	-5.125	.000
	Not Dutch	-.145	.128	-.057	-1.131	.259
	SELF-ESTEEM	.071	.061	.054	1.160	.246

a. Dependent Variable: Same gender

Hypothesis 2

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.187[a]	.035	.018	.98488	.035	2.007	8	443	.044
2	.218[b]	.048	.028	.97958	.013	5.813	1	442	.016

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.029	11	1.457	1.494	.131[b]
	Residual	429.254	440	.976		
	Total	445.283	451			
2	Regression	21.497	12	1.791	1.856	.038[c]
	Residual	423.786	439	.965		
	Total	445.283	451			

a. Dependent Variable: Same age

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, Nonbinary vs. Female, Elementary vs. HBO, PhD vs. HBO, High school vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO, Male vs. Female, WO Msc vs. HBO, What is your age? (Fill in the number in years), WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, Nonbinary vs. Female, Elementary vs. HBO, PhD vs. HBO, High school vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO, Male vs. Female, WO Msc vs. HBO, What is your age? (Fill in the number in years), WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.088	.234		4.643	.000
	NRofPlatforms	-.074	.068	-.052	-1.091	.276
	Age	.009	.007	.060	1.255	.210
	High school or lower	-.122	.209	-.029	-.585	.559
	Community	-.211	.132	-.082	-1.595	.111
	WO Bsc	-.110	.135	-.045	-.815	.416
	WO Msc or higher	-.086	.143	-.032	-.604	.546
	Not female	-.391	.124	-.150	-3.159	.002
	Not Dutch	-.041	.142	-.015	-.291	.771
2	(Constant)	1.620	.321		5.048	.000
	NRofPlatforms	-.078	.067	-.055	-1.163	.245
	Age	.011	.007	.074	1.560	.119
	High school or lower	-.155	.208	-.036	-.744	.457
	Community	-.231	.132	-.089	-1.754	.080
	WO Bsc	-.095	.134	-.039	-.711	.477
	WO Msc or higher	-.059	.142	-.021	-.411	.681
	Not female	-.366	.124	-.141	-2.963	.003
	Not Dutch	-.102	.143	-.037	-.711	.478
	SELF-ESTEEM	-.165	.068	-.116	-2.411	.016

a. Dependent Variable: Same age

Hypothesis 3

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.240[a]	.058	.040	.81362	.058	3.220	8	420	.001
2	.256[b]	.066	.046	.81113	.008	3.581	1	419	.059

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, MBO vs. HBO, Dummy not female vs. female, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, MBO vs. HBO, Dummy not female vs. female, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	17.051	8	2.131	3.220	.001[b]
	Residual	278.030	420	.662		
	Total	295.082	428			
2	Regression	19.407	9	2.156	3.278	.001[c]
	Residual	275.674	419	.658		
	Total	295.082	428			

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, MBO vs. HBO, Dummy not female vs. female, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age, MBO vs. HBO, Dummy not female vs. female, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.682	.197		3.457	.001
	NRofPlatforms	-.046	.057	-.039	-.813	.417
	Age	-.006	.006	-.045	-.931	.352
	High school or lower	-.075	.173	-.022	-.434	.664
	Community	.079	.114	.036	.696	.487
	WO Bsc	.068	.113	.033	.595	.552
	WO Msc or higher	-.131	.122	-.057	-1.076	.283
	Not female	.363	.105	.167	3.457	.001
	Not Dutch	.262	.118	.116	2.218	.027
2	(Constant)	1.036	.271		3.818	.000
	NRofPlatforms	-.050	.056	-.043	-.882	.378
	Age	-.004	.006	-.031	-.647	.518
	High school or lower	-.098	.173	-.028	-.565	.572
	Community	.070	.113	.032	.613	.540
	WO Bsc	.078	.113	.039	.691	.490
	WO Msc or higher	-.112	.122	-.049	-.919	.358
	Not female	.382	.105	.176	3.631	.000
	Not Dutch	.221	.120	.097	1.841	.066
	SELF-ESTEEM	-.111	.059	-.093	-1.892	.059

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

Hypothesis 4

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.256[a]	.066	.049	10732819.326	.066	3.882	8	443	.000
2	.259[b]	.067	.048	10734740.793	.002	.841	1	442	.359

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3577527404572869.000	8	447190925571608.600	3.882	.000[b]
	Residual	51030680936057584.000	443	115193410690874.900		
	Total	54608208340630456.000	451			
2	Regression	3674488662247980.000	9	408276518027553.400	3.543	.000[c]
	Residual	50933719678382472.000	442	115234659905842.700		
	Total	54608208340630448.000	451			

a. Dependent Variable: NoFollowers

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	11005673.465	2554672.149		4.308	.000
	NRofPlatforms	676137.240	736927.996	.043	.918	.359
	Age	-76779.465	77888.348	-.046	-.986	.325
	High school or lower	-178594.027	2272174.541	-.004	-.079	.937
	Community	-1751867.169	1442231.058	-.061	-1.215	.225
	WO Bsc	2378397.992	1467966.761	.088	1.620	.106
	WO Msc or higher	16176.035	1555169.768	.001	.010	.992
	Not female	3110779.300	1349001.357	.108	2.306	.022
	Not Dutch	4281748.888	1542774.459	.140	2.775	.006
2	(Constant)	13222532.216	3517006.310		3.760	.000
	NRofPlatforms	657270.952	737346.832	.042	.891	.373
	Age	-67542.179	78550.465	-.041	-.860	.390
	High school or lower	-315009.506	2277442.019	-.007	-.138	.890
	Community	-1836688.708	1445450.057	-.064	-1.271	.205
	WO Bsc	2438134.496	1469673.102	.090	1.659	.098
	WO Msc or higher	131237.251	1560497.738	.004	.084	.933
	Not female	3214801.001	1354000.025	.112	2.374	.018
	Not Dutch	4029742.798	1567316.496	.132	2.571	.010
	SELF-ESTEEM	-688504.418	750583.777	-.044	-.917	.359

a. Dependent Variable: NoFollowers

Hypothesis 5

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.351[a]	.123	.108	.98381	.123	7.776	8	442	.000
2	.359[b]	.129	.111	.98173	.006	2.878	1	441	.091

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.210	8	7.526	7.776	.000[b]
	Residual	42.,807	442	.968		
	Total	488.018	450			
2	Regression	62.984	9	6.998	7.261	.000[c]
	Residual	425.034	441	.964		
	Total	488.018	450			

a. Dependent Variable: Content

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.528	.234		10.794	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.142	.068	.096	2.103	.036
	Age	-.033	.007	-.207	-4.567	.000
	High school or lower	-.143	.208	-.032	-.689	.491
	Community	-.177	.132	-.065	-1.341	.180
	WO Bsc	.008	.135	.003	.063	.950
	WO Msc or higher	.073	.143	.025	.510	.610
	Not female	-.609	.124	-.222	-4.906	.000
	Not Dutch	-.158	.142	-.054	-1.112	.267
2	(Constant)	2.903	.322		9.022	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.139	.067	.094	2.058	.040
	Age	-.031	.007	-.197	-4.319	.000
	High school or lower	-.167	.208	-.037	-.799	.424
	Community	-.192	.132	-.071	-1.450	.148
	WO Bsc	.018	.134	.007	.136	.892
	WO Msc or higher	.092	.143	.032	.647	.518
	Not female	-.592	.124	-.216	-4.764	.000
	Not Dutch	-.201	.144	-.069	-1.398	.163
	SELF-ESTEEM	-.117	.069	-.078	-1.696	.091

a. Dependent Variable: Content

Hypothesis 6

```
**************************************************************************
Model  : 4
    Y  : NRinflu
    X  : SELFESTE
    M  : MATERIAL


Sample
Size:  444


**************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 MATERIAL


Model Summary
          R        R-sq        MSE          F        df1         df2          p
      ,1000       ,0100      ,5928     4,4639     1,0000    442,0000       ,0352


Model
              coeff         se          t          p        LLCI        ULCI
constant     2,8867      ,1879    15,3627      ,0000      2,5174      3,2560
SELFESTE     -,1113      ,0527    -2,1128      ,0352      -,2148      -,0078


**************************************************************************


OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 NRinflu


Model Summary
          R        R-sq        MSE          F        df1         df2          p
      ,0552       ,0030   106,4655      ,6730     2,0000    441,0000       ,5107


Model
              coeff         se          t          p        LLCI        ULCI
constant    12,7977     3,1188     4,1034      ,0000      6,6682     18,9273
SELFESTE     -,6818      ,7095     -,9609      ,3371     -2,0762       ,7127
MATERIAL     -,4735      ,6374     -,7429      ,4579     -1,7263       ,7792
```

```
***************** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****************

Direct effect of X on Y
     Effect          se           t           p         LLCI         ULCI
     -,6818        ,7095       -,9609        ,3371      -2,0762       ,7127

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
             Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI    BootULCI
MATERIAL      ,0527      ,0792      -,0796      ,2393

********************* ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS *********************

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000
```

Additional variable: authenticity

						Change Statistics			
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.181[a]	.033	.015	.61732	.033	1.880	8	443	.061
2	.190[b]	.036	.017	.61695	.003	1.529	1	442	.217

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age?, Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.732	8	.716	1.880	.061[b]
	Residual	168.819	443	.381		
	Total	174.551	451			
2	Regression	6.314	9	.702	1.843	.059[c]
	Residual	168.237	442	.381		
	Total	174.551	451			

a. Dependent Variable: AUTHENTICITY

b. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age? (Fill in the number in years), Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, What is your age? (Fill in the number in years), Dummy not female vs. female, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	3.551	.147		24.167	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.086	.042	.098	2.040	.042
	Age	.001	.004	.011	.239	.811
	High school or lower	.222	.131	.083	1.698	.090
	Community	.085	.083	.052	1.022	.307
	WO Bsc	.164	.084	.108	1.948	.052
	WO Msc or higher	.197	.089	.115	2.202	.028
	Not female	.098	.078	.060	1.257	.210
	Not Dutch	.028	.089	.016	.310	.757
2	(Constant)	3.379	.202		16.719	.000
	NRofPlatforms	.088	.042	.099	2.075	.039
	Age	.000	.005	.004	.078	.938
	High school or lower	.232	.131	.087	1.776	.076
	Community	.091	.083	.056	1.099	.272
	WO Bsc	.160	.084	.105	1.893	.059
	WO Msc or higher	.188	.090	.110	2.097	.037
	Not female	.089	.078	.055	1.149	.251
	Not Dutch	.047	.090	.027	.522	.602
	SELF-ESTEEM	.053	.043	.060	1.236	.217

a. Dependent Variable: Authenticity

Appendix I Additional analyses

Split file on no. influencers: variable same age

	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
3 or more influencers	1	.153[e]	.023	.000	1.03194	.023	1.011	8	337	.427
	2	.205[f]	.042	.016	1.02362	.019	6.498	1	336	.011

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, WO Msc vs. HBO, What is your age?, High school vs. HBO, Male vs. Female, MBO vs. HBO, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO

e. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

f. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3 influencers or more	1	Regression	8.614	8	1.077	1.011	.427[f]
		Residual	358.868	337	1.065		
		Total	367.483	345			
	2	Regression	15.423	9	1.714	1.635	.104[g]
		Residual	352.060	336	1.048		
		Total	367.483	345			

a. Dependent Variable: Same age

f. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, High school vs. HBO, PhD vs. HBO, Elementary vs. HBO, Nonbinary vs. Female, Male vs. Female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, WO Msc vs. HBO, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO

g. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, High school vs. HBO, PhD vs. HBO, Elementary vs. HBO, Nonbinary vs. Female, Male vs. Female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, WO Msc vs. HBO, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
3 influencers or more	1	(Constant)	1.006	.323		3.113	.002
		NRofPlatforms	-.082	.087	-.053	-.942	.347
		Age	.016	.010	.087	1.566	.118
		High school or lower	-.213	.240	-.050	-.888	.375
		Community	-.116	.166	-.041	-.703	.483
		WO Bsc	-.118	.157	-.047	-.750	.454
		WO Msc or higher	-.137	.173	-.048	-.793	.428
		Not female	-.271	.170	-.087	-1.588	.113
		Not Dutch	-.014	.177	-.005	-.080	.936
	2	(Constant)	1.644	.407		4.043	.000
		NRofPlatforms	-.086	.086	-.055	-.993	.322
		Age	.019	.010	.106	1.898	.059
		High school or lower	-.251	.238	-.059	-1.051	.294
		Community	-.149	.165	-.053	-.907	.365
		WO Bsc	-.094	.156	-.038	-.603	.547
		WO Msc or higher	-.117	.171	-.041	-.685	.494
		Not female	-.230	.170	-.074	-1.354	.177
		Not Dutch	-.077	.177	-.026	-.434	.664
		SELFESTEEM	-.206	.081	-.140	-2.549	.011

a. Dependent Variable: Same age

Split file on no. influencers: variable celebrity

	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
3 or more	1	.274[e]	.075	.053	.84373	.075	3.331	8	328	.001
influencers	2	.293[f]	.086	.061	.83999	.011	3.932	1	327	.048

a. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. master or higher, Dummy not female vs. female, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, NRofPlatforms

e. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

f. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3 influencers or more	1	Regression	18.972	8	2.371	3.331	.001[f]
		Residual	233.497	328	.712		
		Total	252.469	336			
	2	Regression	21.746	9	2.416	3.424	009[g]
		Residual	230.723	327	.706		
		Total	252.469	336			

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

f. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO

g. Predictors: (Constant), Not Dutch vs. Dutch, HBO vs. high school or lower, Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, MBO vs. HBO, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, WO Bsc vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
3 influencers or more	1	(Constant)	.490	.265		1.848	.065
		NRofPlatforms	-.055	.072	-.043	-.774	.440
		Age	.002	.008	.011	.204	.838
		High school or lower	-.041	.196	-.012	-.207	.836
		Community	.141	.138	.059	1.022	.308
		WO Bsc	.076	.130	.036	.582	.561
		WO Msc or higher	-.103	.144	-.043	-.716	.475
		Not female	.568	.141	.217	4.029	.000
		Not Dutch	.301	.145	.120	2.074	.039
	2	(Constant)	.907	.337		2.688	.008
		NRofPlatforms	-.057	.071	-.044	-.803	.423
		Age	.004	.008	.025	.454	.650
		High school or lower	-.065	.196	-.019	-.332	.740
		Community	.119	.138	.050	.867	.387
		WO Bsc	.091	.130	.044	.701	.484
		WO Msc or higher	-.087	.143	-.036	-.609	.543
		Not female	.597	.141	.228	4.228	.000
		Not Dutch	.259	.146	.104	1.777	.077
		SELFESTEEM	-.134	.068	-.108	-1.983	.048

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

Split file on nationality: variable Followers

			R	Adjusted	Std. Error of the	Change Statistics				
	Model	R	Square	R Square	Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Not Dutch	1	.358ᶜ	.128	.028	12352907.67630	.128	1.277	7	61	.277
	2	.443ᵈ	.196	.089	11956104.68925	.069	5.116	1	60	.027

a. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

c. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher

d. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Not Dutch	1	Regression	1364138480639053.80	7	194876925805579.10	1.277	.277ᵈ
		Residual	9308254011616430.00	61	152594328059285.75		
		Total	10672392492255484.00	68			
	2	Regression	2095486131840765.20	8	261935766480095.66	1.832	.089ᵉ
		Residual	8576906360414719.00	60	142948439340245.30		
		Total	10672392492255484.00	68			

a. Dependent Variable: NoFollowers

d. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher

e. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Not Dutch	1	(Constant)	-6550326.359	10740816.196		-.610	.544
		NRofPlatforms	2242936.662	1884880.426	.145	1.190	.239
		Age	395500.561	276384.154	.189	1.431	.158
		High school or lower	7497261.991	9256529.746	.123	.810	.421
		Community	6680812.192	7869279.072	.151	.849	.399
		WO Bsc	9225278.124	5710629.672	.371	1.615	.111
		WO Msc or higher	5806291.742	6091872.516	.205	.953	.344
		Not female	4279651.372	3373523.887	.160	1.269	.209
	2	(Constant)	12253422.289	13311016.518		.921	.361
		NRofPlatforms	2600275.687	1831161.490	.169	1.420	.161
		Age	409597.144	267578.665	.196	1.531	.131
		High school or lower	6774872.028	8964879.990	.111	.756	.453
		Community	3372717.722	7755648.192	.076	.435	.665
		WO Bsc	9867849.639	5534487.368	.396	1.783	.080
		WO Msc or higher	6557796.370	5905541.444	.232	1.110	.271
		Not female	5475675.920	3307697.210	.205	1.655	.103
		SELFESTEEM	-6188287.727	2735887.731	-.280	-2.262	.027

a. Dependent Variable: Followers

Split file on nationality: variable celebrity

	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Not Dutch	1	.400c	.160	.062	1.01223	.160	1.637	7	60	.142
	2	.474d	.225	.120	.98076	.065	4.913	1	59	.031

a. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, MBO vs. HBO, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, MBO vs. HBO, NRofPlatforms, HBO vs. high school or lower, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, SELFESTEEM

c. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher

d. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Not Dutch	1	Regression	11.744	7	1.678	1.637	.142d
		Residual	61.476	60	1.025		
		Total	73.221	67			
	2	Regression	16.470	8	2.059	2.140	.046e
		Residual	56.751	59	.962		
		Total	73.221	67			

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

d. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher

e. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, NRofPlatforms, What is your age?, WO Bsc vs. HBO, HBO vs. high school or lower, MBO vs. HBO, HBO vs. master or higher, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Not Dutch	1	(Constant)	-1.104	.881		-1.254	.215
		NRofPlatforms	.162	.155	.127	1.045	.300
		Age	.045	.023	.259	1.984	.052
		High school or lower	-.240	.759	-.047	-.316	.753
		Community	.364	.646	.099	.563	.575
		WO Bsc	.574	.470	.277	1.221	.227
		WO Msc or higher	.222	.499	.094	.444	.659
		Not female	.262	.278	.118	.942	.350
	2	(Constant)	.421	1.096		.384	.702
		NRofPlatforms	.185	.151	.144	1.225	.225
		Age	.047	.022	.270	2.132	.037
		High school or lower	-.291	.736	-.058	-.396	.694
		Community	.107	.636	.029	.168	.867
		WO Bsc	.646	.457	.311	1.414	.163
		WO Msc or higher	.287	.485	.122	.593	.556
		Not female	.348	.272	.157	1.279	.206
		SELFESTEEM	-.506	.228	-.272	-2.216	.031

a. Dependent Variable: Celebrity

Split file on nationality: variable content

	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
						R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Dutch	1	.369[a]	.136	.120	.95328	.136	8.440	7	375	.000
	2	.382[b]	.146	.128	.94898	.010	4.408	1	374	.036

a. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO
b. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Dutch	1	Regression	53.686	7	7.669	8.440	.000[b]
		Residual	340.779	375	.909		
		Total	394.465	382			
	2	Regression	57.655	8	7.207	8.003	.000[c]
		Residual	336.810	374	.901		
		Total	394.465	382			

a. Dependent Variable: Content

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO

c. Predictors: (Constant), Dummy not female vs. female, What is your age?, HBO vs. master or higher, HBO vs. high school or lower, NRofPlatforms, WO Bsc vs. HBO, MBO vs. HBO, SELFESTEEM

	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Dutch	1	(Constant)	2.430	.248		9.817	.000
		NRofPlatforms	.211	.074	.142	2.867	.004
		Age	-.033	.007	-.216	-4.386	.000
		High school or lower	-.160	.214	-.037	-.746	.456
		Community	-.212	.133	-.083	-1.599	.111
		WO Bsc	.020	.145	.007	.136	.892
		WO Msc or higher	.056	.152	.019	.367	.714
		Not female	-.628	.137	-.222	-4.572	.000
	2	(Constant)	2.909	.336		8.664	.000
		NRofPlatforms	.204	.074	.137	2.768	.006
		Age	-.031	.008	-.203	-4.101	.000
		High school or lower	-.191	.213	-.045	-.897	.370
		Community	-.226	.132	-.089	-1.712	.088
		WO Bsc	.027	.144	.010	.186	.853
		WO Msc or higher	.080	.152	.027	.526	.599
		Not female	-.606	.137	-.214	-4.413	.000
		SELFESTEEM	-.147	.070	-.103	-2.100	.036

a. Dependent Variable: Content

Appendix J Questionnaire

Start of Block: Introduction

Dear reader/participant,

For our master thesis about influencer marketing, we are looking for people who are following influencers on social media to participate in our study. The study intends to gain insights about which influencers consumers are following on social media. This survey will take about 10 minutes. It will be conducted completely anonymously and data will not be shared with any further parties. To participate in this study, you need to be over 16 years old.

Three €20 Amazon.com gift cards will be raffled among the participants. You can enter your email address for this at the end of the survey if you would like to participate.

Thanks in advance!

Esra, Fabienne & Susan

○ I am 16 years old or older and I agree to participate.

Page Break

An influencer is someone who has access to an audience on social media (YouTube, Instagram, blogs, etc.). Influencers can vary in their degree of popularity (influencers with little to lots of followers and big celebrities). The audience listens to and engages with this influencer on a regular basis (think of liking and sharing posts or commenting on posts). A social media influencer has established credibility in a specific industry and posts content about their area of expertise on a frequent basis.

Do you follow at least one influencer on social media?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Nr influencers

How many influencers do you follow on social media?

○ 1 (1)

○ 2 (2)

○ 3 (3)

○ More than 3, namely (if you do not know the exact amount, you can give an estimation): (4)

_____

End of Block: Aantal influencers

Start of Block: SMI Questions explanation

In this part of the survey, you will be asked questions about the social media influencers you are following. Please choose the influencers that you engage (like, comment, share, message) the most with. You will be asked the same questions for each influencer   after you have filled them in for one.

End of Block: SMI Questions explanation

Start of Block: Portfolio

What is the name of the first influencer that comes to mind?

_____

Page Break

What is the gender of ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue}?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Other (for example non-binary) (3)

What is the age of ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue}?

○ Younger than 18 years old (1)

○ 18-25 years old (2)

○ 26-35 years old (3)

○ 36-45 years old (4)

○ Older than 45 years old (5)

How many followers does ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} have?

○ Less than 10.000 followers (1)

○ 10.000 to 100.000 followers (2)

○ 100.000 to 500.000 followers (3)

○ 500.000 to 1 million followers (4)

○ More than 1 million followers (5)

How accurate do you believe your estimation of the number of followers is?

○ Not at all accurate (1)

○ Not accurate (2)

○ Neutral (3)

○ Accurate (4)

○ Absolutely accurate (5)

Page Break

Some influencers were celebrities before they became influencers on social media, you can think of Selena Gomez, Paris Hilton, and Kim Kardashian. Was ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} already a celebrity before he/she became a social media influencer?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

○ I do not know (3)

In what category does ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} operate in? (Multiple answers possible)

☐ Beauty (1)

☐ Fashion (2)

☐ Sports (3)

☐ Fitness (4)

☐ Travel (5)

☐ Food (6)

☐ Gaming (7)

☐ Entertainment (for example funny videos) (8)

☐ Traditional celebrity (9)

☐ Other, namely (10) _____

Can you briefly indicate what kind of content ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} mainly posts? Think, for example, of cooking videos, explanations about products, vlogs about their day, etc.

_____

On which social media platform do you follow ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue}? (Multiple answers possible)

☐ Instagram (1)

☐ TikTok (2)

☐ Facebook (3)

☐ YouTube (4)

☐ Twitter (5)

☐ Blog (6)

☐ Other, namely (7) _____

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} is genuine. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} seems real to me. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue} is authentic. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? The personality of ${Naam 1/ChoiceTextEntryValue}...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Is consistent with how I see myself. (1)	○	○	○	○	○

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Is a mirror image of me. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Is consistent with how I would like to be. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Is a mirror image of the person I would like to be. (4)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Portfolio

Start of Block: Personal questions explanation

Now, some questions about you as a person will be asked. There is no wrong or right answer here, please try to answer the questions as honestly as possible.

End of Block: Uitleg persoonlijkheidsvragen

Start of Block: Materialism

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)

The things I own say a lot about how well I am doing in life. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I like to own things that impress people. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I like a lot of materialism in my life. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Happiness can be purchased with money. (5)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Materialisme

Start of Block: Self-esteem

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
At times I think I am no good at all. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I have a number of good qualities. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
I am able to do things as well as most other people. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (5)	○	○	○	○	○
I certainly feel useless at times. (6)	○	○	○	○	○

I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. (7)	○	○	○	○	○
I wish I could have more respect for myself. (8)	○	○	○	○	○
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (9)	○	○	○	○	○
I take a positive attitude toward myself. (10)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Self-esteem

Start of Block: Self-discrepancy

Please list four traits that you would ideally like to possess. You can use any adjective to answer and you can use the list of words below if needed. *Example: "I wish to be an artistic person"*

○ Ideal 1 (1) _____

○ Ideal 2 (2) _____

○ Ideal 3 (3) _____

○ Ideal 4 (4) _____

Page Break

Now for each ideal attribute, fill in how much you think you possess this attribute already.

	Does not describe me at all (1)	Does not really describe me (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat describes me (4)	Completely describes me (5)
${AISD eigenschap/ChoiceTextEntryValue/1} (1)	○	○	○	○	○
${AISD eigenschap/ChoiceTextEntryValue/2} (2)	○	○	○	○	○
${AISD eigenschap/ChoiceTextEntryValue/3} (3)	○	○	○	○	○
${AISD eigenschap/ChoiceTextEntryValue/4} (4)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Self-discrepancy

Start of Block: Tendency to follow recommendations

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I would purchase a brand based on the advice I am given by the influencers that I follow. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I would follow brand recommendations from the influencers that I follow. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
In the future, I will purchase the products of brands recommended by the influencers that I follow. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Tendency to follow recommendations

Start of Block: Mood

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
I often feel disappointed. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
I often feel dissatisfied. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
I often feel sad. (3)	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Mood

Start of Block: Demographics

What is your age? (Fill in the number in years)

_____

What is your gender?

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Would rather not say (3)

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

○ Elementary school (1)

○ High school (2)

○ Community College (3)

○ University of Applied Sciences (4)

○ University Bachelor's (5)

○ University Master's (6)

○ PhD or higher (7)

Which country are you residing in?

_____

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Gift card

Please fill in your email address below for a chance to win an Amazon gift card worth €20,-. The winners will receive an email at June 1 the latest.

_____

If you have a remark or question, please feel free to comment below.

If you do not have any remarks or questions, please click on next to hand in the survey.

_____

End of Block: Gift card

This is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for participating! If you have any questions or if you are interested in the results of this study, you can send an email to susan.vandenbroek@ru.nl