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Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

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Abstract

Influencer marketing within the business marketing segment is a novel phenomenon, which has been induced through the technological development of social media (SM). Extant literature tends to explore the Social Media Influencers (SMIs) area through a marketing lens, hence there remains a paucity of research centring around Beauty Influencer's (BIs) within the aesthetic field. The current paper reflects follower perspectives around the roles in which BIs play on social media to promote a sense of inclusivity and whether these roles serve to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time. Using a qualitative design, eight semi-structured online interviews were conducted with male (50%) and female (50%) followers aged 18-25 (M = 20.63, SD = .744). This study undertook Template analysis and found that BIs play various socio-cultural roles. These roles included climate sources, social activists, diversity advocators, ideological reinforcers, representatives and motivational role models. These roles were associated with promoting inclusivity and bolstering young people's self-perceptions. The results indicate that BIs are not just bound to playing marketing roles but also execute socio-cultural leading roles. Future research may want to divulge into replicating this design with follower's perspectives from other demographics such as BAME, sexuality, disability communities.

Key words: beauty influencers, roles, inclusivity, social media, follower, self-perceptions.

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List of Acronyms

SM. Social media

SMIs. Social media influencers

BIs. Beauty influencers

BLM. Black Lives Matter

Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Contemporary influencer marketing literature tends to explore social media influencers (SMIs) through a marketing lens, particularly investigating how SMIs influence audiences through brand endorsement, consumer purchase intentions and communication strategies (Abidin & Ots, 2016; Bettiol & Spironellil, 2019; Choi & Rifon, 2012; Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019; Enke & Borchers, 2019; Lee & Eastin, 2020; Tafesse & Wood; 2021). Though the beauty influencer (BI) field is relatively novel, literature has followed a parallel research pattern (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019). Thus, influencer perspectives have generally been explored around inclusive beauty within the beauty industry (see Flora, 2020 in Appendix A; Tran et al., 2018). Nevertheless, there remains a paucity of research directly exploring whether BI's (rather than the industry) play a role in promoting a sense of inclusive beauty online from the perspectives of followers. Hence, this study aims to explore follower perspectives around the key roles in which BIs play on social media (SM) to promote a sense of inclusivity and divulge into whether the presence of these roles serve to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Beauty Perceptions within Society

Western beauty ideals that were previously tied to stringent gendered customs, roles and expectations, are now encompassed within the field of makeup and are permeating across different cultural milieus (Jalba, 2018; Rahmawati, 2019). The social constructs underpinning beauty standards comprise of unrealistic desires which women have strived to meet cross-

culturally (Ashikari, 2005; Calogero et al., 2007; Carneiro et al., 2013; Rahmawati 2019). Those whom may be closely aligned with the Eurocentric beauty standards have primarily been portrayed as white, blonde, slim figured, blue-eyed and deriving from a higher class (Frith et al., 2005; Mears, 2011; Walters, 2018). Women's physical attractiveness rather than any subsidiary and interpersonal qualities have been superiorly positioned (Ashikari, 2005; Carneiro et al., 2013; Rabiah et al., 2019; Rahmawati 2019). Therefore, substantial pressure has been compelled to the conscious modification of one's lips, hair texture and application of bleaching products to lighten the skin (Abdi et al., 2019; Korichi et al., 2008; Tran et al., 2020).

Further, the technological advancement of the internet has further embodied these standards within our social worlds, altering our perceptions around beauty meaning systems (Perloff, 2014; Walters, 2018). The interplay between idealistic media representations of beauty normalcy and consumerist ideologies heightened by beauty media, has driven a profound influence on the self-esteem (Dittmar et al., 2009; Finci, 2019; Jin et al., 2019, Khamis et al., 2017; Richardson-Stovall, 2012; Tran et al., 2020), body discontentedness (Arnocky et al., 2015; Kuipers et al., 2014; Perloff, 2014) and psychological wellbeing amongst audiences (Finci, 2019). Women currently sought to modify their physical appearance by engaging in cosmetic surgery which can be detrimental to one's health status (Sepulveda & Calado, 2012, Walters, 2018). Thus, such irrational westernised beauty ideals play a role in inducing aetiology of eating disturbances such as anorexia, apathy and depression amidst individuals (Ashikari, 2005; Hesse-Biber et al., 2006; Pike & Borovoy, 2004; Spettigue & Henderson, 2004).

1.2 Beauty and our Self-perceptions

Studying the psychology of cosmetics has been codified as an extant discipline of contemporary inquiry, constituted by the psychological and symbolic effect (Komulainen &

Hjort, 2017; Korichi et al., 2008) that aligns with one's hedonic wellbeing (Belk, 1988), perceived aesthetic appeal (Rahmawati, 2019; Karabulut, 2020), emotionality (Graham & Jouhar, 1981) and generalised self-perception's (Korichi et al., 2008). The Self-perception theory (SPT) (Bem, 1967) advocates that humans internalise, evaluate, and impute self-judgements over their embodied behaviours, qualities, values, and attitudes (Bem, 1967; Goldstein & Cialdini, 2007). Our self-concept is encompassed by emblems of desires, fantasies, traits, role attributes and affective and cognitive perceptions of the self (Belk, 1988; Hermanda et al., 2019). In order to acquire a cognate upwards self-concept, one may desire to consume something that is congruent with the elements of their own identity for instance celebrity representations to uphold connotations beyond individual quintessence (Belk, 1988; Bocock, 1993; Kacen, 2000; Rogers, 1959). Individuals concur to evaluate and hence adjust self-behaviours to emulate synonymous behavioural norms derived from the internalisation of lifestyle representations, for the means of self-affirmation and social validation (Bandura, 1971; Bem, 1967; Choi & Rifon, 2012; Festinger, 1954; Goffman, 1959; Ilicic & Webster, 2015; McCracken, 1989). Accordingly, this enables individuals to achieve an analogous yet fictitious status to celebrities (Choi & Rifon, 2012; Festinger, 1954; Finci, 2019; Hubbard, 2016; Veblen, 1994).

1.3 Social media (SM)

Social media (SM) is constituted by a network of internet-based applications and has been constructed through the mechanical basis of Web 2.0 (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). It had surfaced from the instability and redundancy of traditional media sources such as newspapers, and magazines (Glucksman, 2017; Hermanda et al., 2019; Tiago & Verissimo, 2014). SM functions as a universal mediator in initiating social interconnections between users (Finci, 2019; Siemens & Weller, 2011). These latter exchanges induce subcultural and navigational capital,

allowing heuristic knowledge to be shared, universally (García-Rapp, 2017; Tull et al., 2017).

Groups from akin socioeconomic and cultural milieus can form group alliances and transgress

any inequalities subsisting within space and locality (Kumar et al., 2010; Komulainen & Hjort,

2017; Montgomery, 2018; McAlexander et al., 2002). Since the mid-21st century, SM has

yielded a novel phenomenon known as influencer marketing and an array of modern studies are

commencing to scrutinise this field further (Glucksman, 2017; Hermanda et al., 2019; Jin et al.,

2019; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Nandagiri & Philip, 2018; Rabiah et al., 2019; Taylor, 2020).

1.4 Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing is a segment within endorsement on SM, centered around the

partnership between brands and SMIs (Freberg, et al. 2011; Widyanto & Agusti, 2020). SMIs are

third-party content marketers who possess the power to influence public perceptions through

endorsing products (Freberg et al., 2011). In exchange, brands aim to attain equitable product

reviews and brand sustainability from this segment of marketing (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016;

Berne-Manero & Marzo-Navarro, 2020; Hermanda et al., 2019; Rabiah et al., 2019). Both

traditional and influencer marketing media sources exert brand recognition, howbeit influencer

marketing advances further by fostering interchanges between consumer intentions and cosmetic

purchases (Forbes, 2016; Lee & Eastin, 2020). Thus, influencers projects current affairs to an

audience that may not necessarily be extracted from traditional news sources (Berryman &

Kavka, 2017; Bettiol & Spironellil, 2019; Choi & Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Coursaris & Van

Osch, 2016).

1.5 Inclusivity in the Beauty World

Inclusivity is an integrative culture that enables all users, irrespective of their diverse

milieus to feel safe, appreciated, and valued and to cohere to content organically through

narrative and discourse (Gilbert, 2021; Sehl, 2020; Racher, 2020). An auspicious analysis of the beauty world pertains to the trivial revolution of a plethora of marginalised communities (i.e., ethnic minorities, LGBT, disability, plus size, old-aged), gradually but surely leaving an imprint for future cohorts (Adbi, 2019). Inclusive beauty is the strive for humanity to reject monolithic beauty standards and to prelude to showcase novel perceptions of individual multiformity and diversification (Adbi, 2019; Chen & Kanai, 2021; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Rahmawati, 2019; Williams, 2017). Research proclaims that society has entered a dual androgyny sphere whereby socially constructed roles, which had once differentiated masculinity and femininity roles into separate entities, are now blurred (Bem, 1974; Bano & Sharif, 2016; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017). The novel classifications of masculinity including the emergence of the rebel man has transiently welcomed male influencers such as James Charles into the current neoliberal beauty culture (Chen & Kanai, 2021; Holt & Thompson, 2004; Jankowski, 2018; Monnloss, 2016). Natividad, 2017).

   As structural inequalities have become foreshadowed, male BIs are normalising makeup as an inclusive embodiment of artistry, empowerment and manifesting hybridised cultural realms of beauty within the feminal labour market (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014; Chen & Kanai, 2021; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Simpson, 2002). Nevertheless, there remains several universal socio-cultural controversies that commonly cause traction within beauty industry which follow; a felt sense of corporate tokenism, typecasting and inconsistencies in salaries and sponsorships amongst ethnic minority influencers (Deighton, 2020; Lawson, 2020; Rao, 2017; Flora, 2020; Katsha, 2020; Korichi et al., 2008). Thus, an inability for beauty companies to imprudently cater for a gamut of skin complexions and shades on the foundation spectrum (Jedinak, 2019; Lawson, 2020; Simeon, 2018).

1.6 Beauty influencers

In several cases the definition of a BI remains ambiguous compared to the broader SMI concept as it has been commonly intertwined with the term 'beauty vlogger' which is someone who solely uploads beauty videos on Youtube (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019). Gathering from a concoction of research studies, consensus may derive that beauty influencers or beauty specialists theoretically are SMIs, yet within the aesthetic field (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Barreda et al., 2015; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2020). BIs are sought by brands to perform lucrative cosmetic promotions and enact beautification practices online using a vocal interactive style called electronic-word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Evans et al., 2017; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2020). That is, BIs provide crystallised health, beauty, and lifestyle information (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019) through videos on several leading SM sites such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019; Freberg et al., 2011; Glucksman, 2017; Tarkovsky, 2021). Thus, BIs may be classified as micro celebrities across a myriad of domains such as skincare, haircare, and cosmetics (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019). Tacitly, influencers act as in-between systems and mediate concordance between stakeholders falling on a spectrum in-between friends and traditional celebrities (Abidin & Thompson, 2012; Berryman & Kavka, 2017; Chae, 2018). Audiences may interact and find empowerment amidst influencer personas (Abidin & Ots, 2016; Finci, 2019; Marwick, 2015) and hence establish illusory Parasocial interactions (Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Labreque, 2014; Rubin, et al., 1985). Consequently, brands are increasingly attracted to mediating indirect relations with younger audiences through influencers (such as generation Z) as they tend to merit peer representations and EWOM (Rameez & Ahmed, 2014; Widyanto & Agusti, 2020).

Within marketing strategies, the content creation role has been consistently found in engagement strategy literature (Tafesse & Wood; 2021; Enke & Borchers, 2019; Silva et al., 2020). (Tafesse & Wood; 2021; Enke & Borchers, 2019; Silva et al., 2020). Additionally, influencers may play a protagonist role, spreading brand awareness by engaging in offline activities such as testimonial providing and hosting events on behalf of the brand (Enke & Borchers, 2019). Thus, a multiplicator role, successfully mastering SM vernacular to distribute content boundlessly, and a moderator role engaging in relevant brand discussions beyond contracted promotions (Enke & Borchers, 2019). Further, ambiguity remains around the roles in which BIs play online to promote inclusivity and whether this has an influence on younger people. An adaptation from traditional influencer roles to niche health advocates, has enabled influencers to promote social awareness and support intersectional high-risk communities (Calhoun & Gold, 2020; Ifeanyi, 2019; McNamara, 2018). Influencers pertain the power to behove an advocate role in the retaliation against social oppression (Calhoun & Gold, 2020; Ifeanyi, 2019; Lawson, 2020; McNamara, 2018; Nakamura, 2015). Further, for BIs to refute against diversity-related inequalities, several actions may be taken such as spreading awareness, enforcing punitive responses, exhibiting dissent through unsubscribing from perpetuators and engaging in 'calling out' inaugural practices (Jedinak, 2019; Lawson, 2020; Simeon, 2018; Nakamura, 2015).

1.7 Problem Statement

This study has briefly explored general patterns of inclusivity that have currently emerged within the beauty world and the roles in which influencers have fit these demands. Hitherto, the application of makeup and aesthetics was constituted as a feminine adornment, whereas for males it was perceived to be an effeminate and extraordinary act, hence why

previous literature has been feminal dominant within this field (Edwards, 2003; Guazzarotti, 2010; Olson, 2009).

Though, the beauty community is no longer engrossed as a feminised sphere (Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Chen & Kanai, 2021; Natividad, 2017), contemporary literature has still failed to employ both male and female populations, within research designs (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019; Hermanda et al., 2019; Jin et al., 2019; Lee & Eastin, 2020; Widyanto & Agusti, 2020). As previously mentioned, the SMI field is a contemporary phenomenon, which concludes that the study of BI's is thus, novel (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019). Yet there remains a paucity of research directly exploring whether BI's roles directly reflect or refute a sense of inclusivity online rather from an industry lens and whether this has an influence on followers. Herein, the aims of this qualitative study were to explore follower perspectives around the key roles in which BIs play on social media to promote a sense of inclusivity and divulge into whether the presence of these roles serve to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time.

2. Methods

2.1 Ethics

A participant information sheet in tandem with an informed consent form was issued (see Appendix B) to each participant to read and sign where appropriate. This study was ethically approved by the Loughborough University Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee (see Appendix C), after formal consideration of all the documentation presented through a LEON application. Participants were advised of their right to withdraw throughout the

data collection process. To ensure participant's anonymity and confidentiality, the participants were informed that pseudonyms were ought to be used in the finding's sections.

2.2 Inclusion criteria

This study was open to males, females, other gender identities and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The participant inclusion criterion followed; to be aged between 18-25, have access to either or both YouTube and Instagram social media platforms and follow BIs over the 60,000-follower count threshold. This threshold has mirrored the level of persuasive power influencer's pose on the multitudinous population (Forbes, 2016; Tran et al., 2020).

2.3 Sample size

Purposive sampling was initiated to sought participants who were closely aligned with the study's inclusion criteria in order to capture quality, illustrative and in-depth data around this subject area (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Originally thirteen participants had sought interest, however only eight had fully met the inclusion criteria. Nonetheless, the researcher aimed to devote an extraordinary amount of time investing in the analysis of each individual transcript, to gather more of a crystalised interpretation (Morse, 2015).

2.4 Procedure

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the procedures were altered to an online format to fit these conditions, accordingly. An online poster detailing the relevant inclusion criteria, to recruit potential participants was created via PowerPoint (see Appendix F) and posted on the Loughborough participant recruitment Facebook page. This action contributed to an interest from prospective participants, whereby solemn contact through a university email was initiated. The researcher's email response included an attached participant information sheet, informed consent form, detailing the study's aims and procedures of the data collection.

Within this email, a link was also provided to a five minute online questionnaire that was created on Online Surveys (https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/) to obtain participant demographic information (see Appendix D) such as their name (for withdrawal purposes), age, gender, and ethnicity and to confirm whether the inclusion criteria was met. At the end of this online demographic questionnaire, the participants were provided with a debrief sheet (see Appendix E). Consent was obtained through a signed consent form (whether printed and handwritten or signed directly into the document) and completed demographics questionnaire from each of the eight participants. After this, individual interviews were scheduled amongst all the participants through a following email.

2.5 Interviews

An access link to the interviews on Microsoft teams was provided to each participant on their scheduled interview days. An interview schedule, exploring several areas such as 'connectedness, representation, personal self and future progression' (as shown in Table 1) around the study's aims was used to guide the interviews. Each participant answered an array of semi-structured interview questions within these areas. Probes were used to gain a deeper insight into subjective experiences within the most prominent areas. All interviews lasted between 20 and 50 minutes (M= 28 minutes).

During the process, the researcher was reflexive about the degree of control that was asserted over the interview and how one's position could shape the research operations (Madill et al., 2000) and hence gave the participants the liberation to generate novel avenues and explore the potential answers to the study's research inquiries through discourse. The interviews were audio-taped with participant consent through Microsoft teams and Otter and transcribed verbatim (see Appendix G for example transcripts) with participant consent. Another debriefing (see

Appendix E) was initiated after the interviews, which provided the participant the opportunity to ask any questions. Respondent validation was ensured (see, Appendix G at the end of the transcripts) through the process of sending the participants a copy of their transcript verbatim to validify whether the transcripts were a true reflection of the discursive dialogues, having emerged within the interview. Feedback was returned, and this initiated the data analysis stage.

Table 1

Interview Guide.

Themes	Questions
Introduction	What does a beauty influencer mean to you? If you had to explain to someone who didn't know what they were, how would you explain the concept?
	Who is your favourite beauty influencer?
	What types of roles do you see them play on social media? What are the features of their job titles?
	What types of things can they do to keep their followers engaged?
	How connected do you feel to their lives/ social world?
Connectedness	What do they do to make you feel this sense of connectedness? e.g., through social media engagement?
	Have your beauty influencers been able to express any experiences revolving outside of the beauty world e.g., their experience of university?
	How well have you been able to relate to their experiences/ been connected to these experiences?
	How well does this fit with your identity?
	Are there specific qualities that have drawn you to follow beauty influencers, if so, do they relate to your own identity and why?
Representation	Essentially beauty influencers are social media influencers which means they are also micro celebrities and hold a strong influence just like traditional celebrities. Therefore, would you say you may hold them accountable for representing underrepresented groups in society?

	How well do you think beauty influencers have been advocates for social change in terms of the issues that happen in the industry and external world?
	Do you think they can do more and in what ways?
	To what extent have beauty influencers helped to change beauty ideals and promoted a diverse industry
Personal Self	
	How well have beauty influencers met your standards?
	Have they helped you achieve any personal needs?
	And if so, how? e.g., starting your own tutorials and practicing makeup, supporting campaigns for social change or other
	How have beauty influencers promoted self-confidence amongst young people?
	Some influencers claim that some of the issues occurring online are mirrored in the real world (such as Mikai McDermott), so with all these actions presented by beauty influencers, do you feel that parts of your identity are being represented inclusively online/ offline world?
	Do these actions help in boosting how young people perceive themselves?
Future progression	
	Would you say there is hope for an inclusive future, especially through brand advertisement?
	Do you have final thoughts on what else these public figures could do to improve society?
	Do you think their followers have just as much of a role as beauty influencers, to create a social reformative world?
	Have the issues that occur online pushed you to want to do more for the online/wider community, or if not in the future?

2.6 Template analysis

This study undertook Template Analysis (King, 1998; 2012), a flexible data analysis within qualitative research (Brooks et al., 2015) that systematically arranges theoretical accounts of human affect, thought, and action (King, 2012). Template analysis has proven to be credible (Brooks et al., 2015) within a scope of occupational and health literature (Brooks & King, 2012; Goldschmidt et al., 2006; Gollop et al., 2004; King et al., 2002; McCluskey et al., 2011; McDowall & Saunders, 2010; Poppleton et al., 2008; Stratton et al., 2006; Kent, 2000; Waring & Wainwright, 2008). Individual experiences exhibited on social media cannot be directly observed yet, with the construction of subjective and meaningful accounts, the most essential elements can be vocalised and captured.

2.7 Analysis

A concoction of steps proposed by Brooks et al. (2015) and King (1998; 2004; 2012) as well as a 32-item guide (Tong et al., 2007) for reporting qualitative research was utilised to guide this data analysis stage. The researcher utilised QSR NVivo, to explore potential relationships between themes and to generate a complete thematic map of the textual data. This process had begun with three initial a prior themes (i.e., socio-cultural transformation, marketing endorsement and information source) in light of the study's aims and potential themes that previous literature had advocated were competent that influencers play online throughout the SM world (as shown in Table 2). These were initially input into the system before the analysis. King (2004) proclaims, that the analysis can begin from this theoretical stance and the amount of a prior codes chosen for this current study adequately allows for the exploration of rich data (King, 2004).

Table 2

A Prior Themes.

Themes	Literature
Socio-cultural transformation	Abdi, 2019; Choi & Rifon, 2012; Hermanda et al., 2019; Ifeanyi, 2019; Katsha, 2020; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Lawson, 2020; McNamara, 2018; Nakamura, 2015; Puvia, 2011; Simeon, 2018; Tran et al., 2020.
Marketing endorsement	Abidin & Ots, 2016; Bettiol & Spironellil, 2019; Choi & Rifon, 2012; Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019; Evans et al., 2017; Flynn et al., 1996; Forbes, 2016; Glucksman, 2017; Hermanda et al., 2019; Ilicic & Webster, 2015; Lee & Eastin, 2020; Liu et al., 2015; McCracken, 1989; Munukka et al., 2016; Nandagiri & Philip, 2018; Tafesse, 2016; Tran & Strutton, 2014.
Information source	Bettiol & Spironellil, 2019; Choi & Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Coursaris & Van Osch, 2016; Evans et al., 2017; Flynn et al. 1996; Liu et al., 2015.

The initial template presented as a linear index of codes (Brooks & King, 2014) (see Appendix H1) was created by the immersion (Crabtree & Miller, 1999) and thorough familiarisation of a subset of three participant transcripts. This template was underpinned by preliminary codes deriving from transcript data and was placed under the initial a prior theme headings. With no more emerging associations between the textual verbatim data and existing a prior themes within NVivo, codes were either modified, deleted or replaced with new emerging codes. The researcher hereafter worked systematically through the next subset of three transcripts in a similar process aforementioned (Brooks et al., 2015), identifying elements within the text which were relevant to the existing themes and the projects aims. The initial a prior themes in the initial template were tentative, and so they were defined and redefined in the hierarchal structure to categorise the most salient codes deriving from new verbatim data. This continuous iterative nature throughout the process allowed for greater attention and

scrutiny to be drawn to the most salient encompassed codes of textual data (Waring & Wainwright, 2008). Where no material was emerging out of these next three transcripts, this initiated the construction of the second template (see Appendix H2).

An interpretativist bottom-up approach was undertaken throughout the analysis as opposed to a prima facie stance (Madill et al., 2000). A conclusive examination of the last two transcripts led to a generation of further codes, added within NVivo. This led to data saturation and hence an imperative decision to terminate the data analysis was initiated as the richest data insights were found and no more themes could be generated from these last transcripts (Brooks & King, 2012; Kozinets, 2002). Consequently, a final template version was revised (after three revisions in total) (as shown in Table four).

3. Findings

3.1 Participant demographics

All data from the eight participants were included in the final analysis and results section. This study's population sample meets the criteria utilised by template analysis (King, 1998; 2012) with literature varying from relatively large (Gollop et al., 2004; Kent, 2000; McDowall & Saunders, 2010), to smaller population samples (King et al., 2002; Stratton et al., 2006) and even as seldom as one autobiographical analysis (King, 2008). Results from the demographic questionnaire (as shown in Table three) revealed that the participants (50% male, 50% female) were all aged between 18-25 years ($M = 20.63$, $SD = .744$), seven were of a black African/black Caribbean/black British ethnic group (87.5%) and one derived from an Asian/Asian British background (12.5%). All of the participants reported to have had access to one or more of the social media sites; YouTube and Instagram and were following BIs over the 60,000+ follower count threshold.

3.2 Overview of themes

One higher-level theme emerged from the data analysis; sociocultural roles (as shown in Table four). Embedded within this hierarchal theme formed multiple subsidiary roles in which followers perceive BIs to play online which promote inclusivity and bolster young people's self-perceptions over time. This was followed by narrower nested third, fourth and fifth level codes. Several common fourth level integrative codes transpiring across the participant transcripts regardless of the participants age, gender, and ethnic background follow; power, self-concept, representation of the social personae and representation of the self-personae.

Table 3

Demographic results.

Number of participants	How old are you?	What is you gender?			What is your ethnicity?		Do you have access to social media platforms? (via Youtube, Instagram)	Do you follow beauty influencers on any of the sites previously mentioned?	Are they over a 60,000-follower count threshold? (meaning, do they have 60,000 or more followers on the sites previously mentioned)
		Female	male	Other					
8	18-25 (M = 20.63, SD =.744)	4 (50%)	4 (50%)	0 (0%)	Black African/Black Carribean/ Black British	7 (87.5%)	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	8 (100%)
					Asian/ Asian British	1 (12.5%)			

Table 4

Final Template Analysis revision.

1.   What roles do Beauty Influencers play online to promote inclusivity and bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time?

1.1 Definitions of Beauty Influencers

1.2 Role liability

1.3 Socio-cultural Roles

      1.3.1.1 Climate Sources

            1.3.1.1.1 Socio-cultural Responsiveness

            1.3.1.1.2 Covid-19 Pandemic

      1.3.1.2 Social Activists

            1.3.1.2.1 Power

            1.3.1.2.2 Boycotting

      1.3.1.3 Diversity Advocators

            1.3.1.3.1 Racial Diversity

            1.3.1.3.2 Gender and Sex Diversity

      1.3.1.4 Ideological Reinforcers

            1.3.1.4.1 Conflicting Beauty Ideals

            1.3.1.4.2 Self-concept

1.3.1.5 Representatives

    1.3.1.5.1 Public vs Private Self

        1.3.1.5.1.1 Representation of the Social Personae

        1.3.1.5.1.2 Representation of the Self-personae

            1.3.1.5.1.2.1 Relatedness

                1.3.1.5.1.2.1 Personality Relatedness

                1.3.1.5.1.2.2 Socio-cultural Relatedness

1.3.1.6 Motivational Role Models

    1.3.1.6.1 Multipotentiality

To reduce the chance of bias the researcher ensured that the emerging themes had adequately addressed the study's research aims and the thematic data was grounded (see figure 1, for the codebook for some of the themes created by Nvivo).

Figure 1.

Nvivo codebook.

Name of Theme	Files Coded	References
BEAUTY INFLUENCER CONCEPTUALISATION	8	11
SOCIO-CULTURAL ROLES		
Climate Sources		
Socio-cultural Responsiveness	6	12
Covid-19 Pandemic	6	11
Social Activists		
Power	8	21
Boycotting	6	14
Diversity Advocators		
Racial Diversity	7	12

Gender and Sex Diversity	5	9
Ideological Reinforcers		
Conflicting Beauty Ideals	7	16
Self-concept	6	14

Note. This is an example of some of redefined codes on Nvivo which constituted the final template. It also illustrates how many times these codes had been referred to within the transcripts.

Thenceforth, patterns and relationships across the participant data sets within and between the clusters will be explored, prioritising the themes which highlight the most valuable insights, in compliance with the research aims. Thus, the participants will now be referred to as followers and given pseudonyms.

3.3 Definitions of a Beauty Influencer

The definition of a beauty influencer (BI) is multifaceted as this notion was initially referred within several follower transcripts through the BIs physical representations; "*…to progress, their beauty ideas through them'' (Monica, P2),* physical behaviours; "*the job description is pretty much posting as much as they can, promoting different products'' (Alexandra, P8),* intellectual artistry; *"I would simply say, someone who uses the platform, in order to spread some sort of positive light on some sort of artwork" (Mark, P2),* personal influence; "*someone that influences peoples buying decisions when it comes to products, about hair and beauty" (Joshua,*

P2), trait attributes; *" they are already sort of popular maybe not to the extent of, like, a celebrity like Beyonce" (Alexandra, P8),* and consisting within a myriad of beauty realms; " *promotes a business's products umm maybe if that's via Instagram or social media or other factors such as fashion, models and stuff" (Matthew, P1).*

3.4 Role Liability

Though, the study's main aims were to explore follower's perspectives around whether BIs create an inclusive space, a debate was initiated around whom may actually be liable for promoting a sense of online inclusivity. Given the positionality of a BI, Demi lies liability entirely on the influencers due to a lack of public representation in the beauty world;

> *Umm personally, I hold them accountable in the sense that, umm because there is not a lot of*
>
> *representation for people that are from minority backgrounds… they kind of need to represent*
>
> *us in a good way and like be positive promotion, specifically for like black girls (Demi, P3).*

However, the nature of leadership is dependent on followership; and one cannot stand without the other hence followers cannot be excluded from this context; *"they play a bigger part than the influencer, but not that much of a bigger part but without an influencer without followers, it isn't going to do anything in it" (Joshua, P7).* Contrarily opposing perspectives, pertain to the idea of collective liability as conferred; "*but because of their status and because everyone knows they have more of an influence. The pressures on them. So yeah, me personally I feel like we all do" (Alexandra, P13).*

3.5 Socio-cultural Roles

3.5.1 Climate Sources

BI's responsiveness to social-cultural issues and the projection of climate affairs, is

pivotal for the judgment of how one may feel included, particularly when the context revolves around the social impact on particular demographic groups. Despite, the Covid-19 pandemic (C19P) lockdown which prohibited mass navigation, BIs became online cosmetic advisors and hence shaped cosmetic preferences:*" I feel like a lot of people were watching makeup videos especially when they couldn't match that foundation match in store especially with COVID" (Alexandra, P10).* Follower honour was delineated to BIs who spanned awareness around the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement during C19P; "*all these influencers that we follow, including beauty ones as well, not just posting their beauty things but you know they talked about how black lives matter and stuff like that" (Alexandra, P4).* This infers that BIs assimilated a moderating role, whereby the preeminent engagement in overt discourse external to the beauty context through spreading socio-cultural awareness on this collective movement, forasmuch influenced followers to enact comparably; "*They have addressed other issues, other than beauty world, such as Black Lives Matter which has, like, made me want to now, promote it myself or promote it to the wider community" Joshua, P9).*

Contrarily, this narrative can be judged as fictitious as there have been precarious oppositions between BIs voicing out and not voicing out, *(e.g., "when the issues arise or when the issue becomes popular. That's when I find more influencers, kind of opening up about experiences surrounding that issue, rather than just talking about it on their own" [Demi, P3]).* This may potentially contradict an authentic agenda for promoting inclusivity and cause followers to adjourn from enacting, comparably to the BI *(e.g., "Therefore, I would say BIs fail to help me, in terms of like anything to do with social justice" [Demi, P4]).*

 3.5.2 Social Activists

This theme exhibits the degree to which valid justification is prohibited from followers for BIs levels of impertinence and enforcement of actions towards inequity within the beauty industry *(e.g., "when beauty influencers, boycott brands it is one of the best ways of protesting because it is peaceful and you're definitely getting a message across" [Mark, P7]).* Boycotting, that is through BIs and followers collectively enacting comparably, is an effective approach to exerting awareness of socio-cultural controversies; *"...this is a lesson, not only to this company but every company out there to avoid any form of potentially discriminatory actions or decisions" (Mark, P7).* Contrarily, connotations also allude to boycotting being sporadically ineffective, as Demi confesses that SM users function to inherently enlighten issues in the moment yet progress to supporting brands unprecedently which may thus contradict the agenda for promoting inclusivity:

...too fickle, so I feel like even if you do say okay let's boycott this brand, people, people may like boycott it for like a month or so, and then like once the hype has died down people will go back to buying their products again (Demi, P6).

3.5.3 Diversity Advocators

There has been a gradual emphasise of diversity within current marketing media: "*I mean you see more curvier girls now or plus size, plus size women, or you see you know see people embracing their natural features (Monica, P8).* A prominent focus on femininity-masculinity role reconstructions has been induced through alterations in beauty paragon perceptions *(e.g., " they have changed the beauty standards" [Monica, P6])* deriving from BI championship within mainstream marketing. Female BIs were labelled by their physical attractiveness traits; *"she's really pretty" (Alexandra, P2); "she's beautiful and she's so*

modern" (Jason, P3). The preliminarily declaration of a females physical elements before any other subsidiary internal elements such as specific personae traits *(e.g., "down to earth…so humble and cool…got a good vibe" [Jason, P3])* were more prominent in these transcripts, irrespective of the followers gender. In order to re-shift the fixation on women's attractiveness enduring amongst followers, male BIs such as James Charles were accredited for promoting inclusive beauty *(e.g., "stands up for guys to wear makeup and not to be afraid and to feel free" [Jason, P8]),* educating audiences and empowering marginalised groups *(e.g., "educate us and then we can help anyone we find who is going through any struggles, whether it be about sexuality or racism or any form of discrimination" [Mark, P4]).* The act of mass advocating may derive from a collective (BIs and followers) felt underrepresentation of one's own identity, for example gender equality and sexuality integration are salient drivers in the advocation for BIs to support gender and sex diversity movements:

> *He always speaks about the struggles of being a part of the LGBT community, trying to fit in to society, you know there's a lot of homophobia about and actually one of my best friend Marco . He goes through this a lot (Mark, P4).*

3.5.4 Ideological Reinforcers

Followers may interpret the roles in which BIs reinforce beauty ideals in two ways, either with a positive or a negative outlook depending on what the BI publicly projects. For instance, one may fail to overlook BIs repetitive exposure and incompetent usage of filtered Instagram images; *"umm they just use photoshop just way too heavily and filters on top of that. So, I do feel like it kind of has had a negative effect on self-confidence…" (Demi, P5).* BIs economic capital of derived through paid promotion; *(e.g., "But all these influencers that we see*

they have so much money, so they can do these procedures and that" [Alexandra, P7]), enhances exclusion amongst lower socio-economic groups, who are constantly reminded to fetishise over pseudo representations of the ideal self (*e.g., "this idea of looking so flawless and effortless which isn't honest towards the viewers" [Monica, P4]),* but lack the economic capital to modify their appearance. Further, this implication socially eliminates those whom have bio-cultural characteristics that do not fit societal beauty standards; "*for instance for ethnic people who have bigger noses, if you see that everywhere it's like everyone contouring their noses, it kind of feels as though something is wrong with yours" (Monica, P7).*

Contrarily, one may be able to overlook and seek positive connotations by acknowledging that these latter BIs exist, yet re-shifting their attention to those BIs who solely display authentic representations online *(e.g., they kind of they tell us about their insecurities, which is a good thing because it kind of reinforces the fact that you aren't the only one with insecurities [Monica, P5]),* leading to more of a positive follower outlook *(e.g., "So yeah, it has pushed me into wanting people to know how amazing and worthy, they are within themselves before anything" [Monica, P12]).* Alternatively, there are BIs who unveil both representations online and these BIs project self-love through discourse, yet exhibit spurious behaviours by using filters to fit stringent ideologies *(e.g., "I mean she does speak about, loving yourself within and like talking about just natural insecurities that anyone would kind of have, but she still filters, her pictures her pictures, so it's not, it's not necessarily natural on screen" [Monica, P4]).* This latter conflict, creates a discrepancy between the actual-self and fallacies of the ideal-self, thus most prominently has an influence young people's self-efficacy during their identity developmental stages (adolescence and emerging adult).

I had to unfollow some people because it was having an impact on my own self-esteem,

because you know you see all these things on social media see all these people and you're like

I want to be like them (Alexandra, P9).

3.5.5 Representatives

Representation of the social personae represents how BIs personas are constructed

through the succinct duality of the online and real world, and the amalgamation of these dual

elements produces a pertinent online social persona primed to be consumed; "*for example, Nella*

Rose she does YouTube, in that aspect like her group videos and like, with her friends, they're

quite funny. So, it has helped me in terms of like, stay out of boredom, if I watch them"

(Matthew, P6). This latter comical narrative is a salient trait in the judgment of BI genuineness

and originality and alters the conventional conditions in which social interactions are perceived

to materialise through technological means *(e.g., "it just shows how to bond with people"*

[Kirsty, P2]).

On a peer-to-peer congenial level, followers tend to feel embodied in influencers rather

than celebrities lives (e.g., *"more time, some of us we've seen them grow from a smaller sort of*

following to big one to where they are now" [Alexandra, P3]), therefore when tragic occurrences

surface externally around BIs personal lives, it nurtures a sense of connectedness somewhat like

an actual companion, or immediate family member; *"when I heard that Nella Roses dad had*

died that hit me. I couldn't relate in that sense, but like, I still felt somehow like you know"

(Alexandra, P4). Contrarily, followers experience a sense of exclusivity when BIs veil their

private-public persona *(e.g., "I wouldn't really say I feel that connected to her because she*

mainly just uses her social media like primarily just for like beauty influencing" [Demi, P2]),

compared to those who are extraneously transparent with their private-public persona *(e.g., "in some sense I would feel more connected to those that probably share more about themselves" [Demi, P3]).*

Representation of the self-personae represents how BIs create self-personas online to connect with the public on a uniform level, and it is through these personas, that followers may feel a sense of representation being projected through mirroring qualities constituted amidst these self-personas. Relatedness explores representation through how closely aligned follower's traits are perceived to be to BIs traits, for example through personality relatedness and socio-cultural relatedness (such as environmental climate, cultural background, age). The exhibition of the following personae traits; *"so humble and cool" (Jason, P3)* make it intrinsically palpable for followers to construct veracious intimate connections notably if their traits are similar.

Representation can further be driven through socio-cultural relatedness, when BIs display ordinary worlds and followers can relate to this ordinary; *"a normal job that she does, she is also a student like I am you know what I mean that's going to uni doing her course, similar to me" (Jason, P4).* Further, followers feel inclusively represented through ethnic background relatedness *(e.g.," Probably say, as they are a black influencer, probably engages with me a lot more, because I can sort of relate to it"[Joshua, P3]),* hence why followers significantly allure to BIs who represent one's cultural milieus online:

> *… I feel like every single person out there has someone who looks like them, and is doing amazing in this industry and showing how beautiful their culture, their background is, and if someone can relate to that, I feel like that's even more amazing (Mark, P5).*

Contrarily, other followers believe that aspects of their identity have been partially represented *(e.g., "there are still darker skinned women who aren't necessarily being represented properly" [Monica, P9]),* which contradicts the perceptions around how far inclusivity in the industry has evolved.

3.5.6 Motivational Role Models

BIs express relatable goal aspirations, evoking favourable feelings of follower inspiration, intrinsic motives, desires, and interests enabling followers to become wholly intricate within a leading journey *(e.g., "she's kind of like us like normal kids are growing up like same similar background" [Matthew, P4]).* It is through the vocalisation of the BIs realistic progressions that rationality is enhanced as Mark emphasises that this nature prevents pseudo illusions encompassing the journey to success, making him feel ordinarily coequal to fellow BIs:

> *...it helps me it helps to keep me motivated, above all things, because, you know, I can sort of, you know, work my way up to the top, rather than think that everything you know just happens or just appears (Mark, P2-3).*

Consequently, self-motivation levels are increased through the presence of multipotentiality and entrepreneurship and this further proliferates followers attractiveness to BIs particularly if both parties comprise of congruent goal aspirations:

> *Seeing these influencers do outside things can be quite motivating to me as someone that wants to start my own sort of business, so if they're, you know, if I find an influencer that's entrepreneurial, I like that sort of thing and I tend to follow them, because it's motivating to me and what I want to do in the future (Alexandra, P11).*

These joint aspirations have led to the conscious implementation of lifestyle modifications and hence followers altering SM algorithms to fit these goals, *"tweaking my following and following a lot of like motivation pages for example, because I felt like it would be good for me to see that on my timeline, every single day, the same way"* (Alexandra, P4).

4. Discussion

The current study sought to explore the role's in which BIs play on social media to promote a sense of inclusivity and whether these roles serve to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time from follower perspectives. The holistic insights revealed that most saliently, BIs play various socio-cultural roles which are associated with promoting inclusivity and bolstering young people's self-perceptions. Mixed, yet subjective interpretations derived around what a BI conceptually means and whom the role of promoting a sense of inclusivity online may be liable to. Some followers suggested that full responsibility lie individually on BI's, followers or both collectively. From previous literature, the definition of a BI has been less clear cut, however this is no revelation as notions of beauty are constantly shifting across space and time (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019; Rahmawati, 2019).

4.1 Socio-cultural Roles

This study found that BIs are not just bound to marketing roles for their own transactional gains like traditional influencer marketing definitions propose (Barreda et al., 2015; Evans et al. 2017; Tran et al., 2020). Natheless, BIs go beyond their duty to execute socio-cultural leading roles including boycotting brands, advocating for inclusive beauty and altering societal

ideologies (Abdi, 2019; Hermanda et al., 2019; Jalba, 2018; Jin et al., 2019; Komulainen &

Hjort, 2017; Lawson, 2020; McNamara, 2018; Williams, 2017).

A collective (BIs and followers) felt underrepresentation of one's own identity was a justified

rationale for the forthwith actions taken by BIs towards those who continually enlighten

prejudice behaviours towards particular social groups. This rationale had only been explored

from influencers perspectives in previous literature (Jedinak, 2019; Lawson, 2020; Simeon,

2018). The implications of BIs actions coherently propagate a message to future perpetuators to

restrict any future malpractices, thus had aspired followers to master and replicate these actions

to potentially sought an akin status (Bandura, 1971; Veblen, 1994). However, in several cases

these acts were deemed as ineffective due to SM users, enlightening prejudicial concerns yet

progressing to support those exhibiting unfavourable levels of inequity, somewhat like woke

washing (Reid & Sehl, 2002). That is, when one may advocate for social change yet still support

the perpetuators that continuously affect marginalised communities (Reid & Sehl, 2002).

Uniquely, as this study was conducted during the C19P lockdown, BIs adopted a climate

source and reliable advisor role in online shopping precisions in cosmetic matching through

direct BI application and modelling, online. Thus, considering a majority of this study's sample

were of a black ethnic background, BIs responsiveness to the BLM movement also occurring

within C19P exhibited a crucial role in influencing the assessment of whether this group felt a

sense of inclusivity. Enke & Borchers (2019) found that in communication strategies, influencers

play a moderator role in which they engage in relevant brand discussions external to their niche

job role (Enke & Borchers, 2019). These findings are consistent with this findings in this study,

as BIs were perceived to promote socio-cultural awareness through moderating dialogues online amongst audiences around the BLM movement.

The following section constitutes to the diversity advocate role played by BIs, exploring the advocation for gender and sex inclusivity. Regardless of the followers gender, female BIs were defined by their physical attractiveness traits before any subsidiary traits such as personality traits. This infers that there may still remain a greater fixation on hierarchal labelling, gender norms and beauty, amongst young people, despite the evolutionary changes. This may be due to the traditional ideals that have sustained beautification agendas and beauty standards for women embodied through our cultural understanding of beauty (Ashikari, 2005; Carneiro et al., 2013; Jalba, 2018; Rabiah et al., 2019; Tran et al., 2020). To redshift, these feminal demands follower appreciation was awarded to male BIs such as James Charles, a rebel male who aims to refute societal ideologies by constantly emboldening inclusive beauty (Jalba, 2018; Williams, 2017) and educating those further on sexuality matters (Choi & Behm-Morawitz, 2017; Holt & Thompson, 2004). Contrary to the diversity advocate role, the ideological reinforcer role was found to either contradict or promote the fundamental agenda for online inclusivity depending on what the BI represents and how the followers may internalise the representations. The two types of internalisations that occur amidst different followers follow; those who may not be able to overlook pseudo BI representations and hence have a negative outlook and those who are able to overlook pseudo BI representations and hence have a positive outlook. The followers with a positive outlook may be intrinsically appreciative of oneself (Korichi et al., 2008) (Hall, 2012; Jalba, 2018), as it was proclaimed that in order to reduce the adverse effects derived from the

pseudo representations, followers tweaked their explore pages so that Instagram could display more image-friendly representations.

The concoction of both of these representations existing, and the degree to which some BIs execute self-love but yet visibly engage in filters on Instagram can induce role conflict amongst young people. This latter nature advocates for self-concept inadequacy and exclusion for those deriving from lower socio-economic backgrounds who fail to fit the standard image (Belk, 1988; Bocock, 1993; Kacen, 2000; Rogers, 1959). Further, this role conflict contradicts the functions of SM to supposedly refute real socio-economic hierarchal barriers that divide humanity (Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Montgomery, 2018). Overall, this theme corroborates with previous evidence suggesting that media representations can cause self-discrepancy, that is between one's actual-and-ideal self and have an influence on one's internal wellbeing and self-perceptions (Dittmar et al., 2009; Finci, 2019; Khamis et al., 2017; Richardson-Stovall, 2012; Tran et al., 2020; Wood 1989).

The representative role was underpinned by two underlying themes: representation of the self-personae, and representation of the social personae. Relatedness explored self-representation through how closely aligned follower's traits were perceived to be to the BIs individual traits through the underlying 'personality relatedness and socio-cultural relatedness' (such as environmental climate, cultural background, age) themes. These young people are now extremely attracted to those BI's who are visibly diverse, mirror their own cultural milieus (Gilbert, 2021) and are able to promote diversity through education (Choi & Behm-Morawitz, 2017) within different cultures.

Representation of the social personae illustrated that the assimilation of the social persona online is produced through amalgamating elements of the private-public self to an audience for consumption (Brown et al., 2007; Lawson, 2020). Followers feel more invested in micro celebrities lives rather than traditional celebrities (Abidin & Ots, 2016; Khamis et al., 2017; Komulainen & Hjort, 2017; Labreque, 2014; Stefanone et al., 2010; Tran et al., 2020) hence why one follower illustrated that they tend to experience akin emotional valence towards BIs life events such as relatives passing away, somewhat like a real peer, or close family member.

The motivational role model, as expressed through the BIs multipotentialite nature between multiple online and offline roles, (student, casual worker, BI) enabled the followers to become intrinsically motivated to these role attributes. This was enhanced significantly when both parties mirrored identical goals. Previous literature has found that SMI users perceived influencers to be role models and the ideal concept, depending on what lifestyles they conveyed and whether any similarities existed between user-influencer lifestyles (Choi & Rifon, 2012). It may be indicated that followers sought to match a congruent self-concept, in this context through consuming akin motivational passions (Belk, 1988; Bocock, 1993; Kacen, 2000) to feel more inclusive in the influencers journey (Glucksman, 2017). Though, not all followers perceived BIs to be supportive in their interpersonal goal attainment. A sense of amotivation was thus, shown within in this study which may be due to the fact that some individuals have more of an interest in attaining particular extrinsic goals such as skincare goals rather than other intrinsic competencies (Frith et al., 2005; Mears, 2011; Walters, 2018).

5. Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Research Limitations

There are several limitations within the present study that are worth stating and also may guide future research. Firstly, though other template analysis studies have varied within the sample sizes, this study had a relatively small sample population of followers between the ages of 18-25. Therefore, these findings on follower's perspectives may not be generalisable to other demographic populations. Though, this study was inclusive of participants from intersectional identities, there was a paucity of participants representing from any LGBT, disability communities or diverse ethnic groups. In order to further explore the influence that beauty influencers roles has on younger people, future research may want to examine this inquiry, stringently focusing on different population communities.

5.2 Research Contribution

The findings of the present study has contributed to growing research within the influencer marketing field, and particularly within the division of BIs (Ananda & Wandebori, 2016; Forbes, 2016; Rabiah et al., 2019; Widyanto & Agusti, 2020). This study presented inclusivity through a generalised lens, and so the study was open to male, females, and any other definitive (BAME, LGBT and disability) communities which previous literature had failed to account for (Dhanesh & Duthler, 2019; Hermanda et al., 2019; Hjort & Komulainen, 2017; Jin et al., 2019; Lee & Eastin, 2020). This study also utilised template analysis for the data collection, which is unique considering that previous BI literature has generally utilised other distinctive qualitative analyses (Forbes, 2016; Hjort & Komulainen, 2017; Lawson, 2020).

5.3 Conclusion

Future prospective work is needed to corroborate and build upon theses finding, with a strict focus in this field, larger sample sizes and other age ranges, particularly younger than this cohort, as they may exhibit different perspectives around the roles of beauty influencers. A majority of individuals from a similar black ethnic group sought interest in this study, which may illustrate that racial inclusivity is a salient topic that this group may feel most connected to, considering the BLM movement which occurred in C19P. Further a focus on sexual inclusivity, and the integration of how intersectional individuals navigate across SM, whether they feel inclusive as an audience may be important to study, especially cross-culturally given that there may be non-western cultures that still hold fairly traditional views about gendered norms and beauty conceptions.

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influence purchase intention of generation Z? *Jurnal Manajemen dan Pemasaran Jasa*, *13*(1),

1-16. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/326769354.pdf

Williams, S. (2017, September 25). What 'Inclusive Beauty' Means and Why It's Here to

Stay. *Metrin*. https://blog.metrin.com/what-inclusive-beauty-means/

Appendix A

Table A1.

Influencer perceptions of inclusivity in the beauty world

Ethnicity	Influencers	Influencer perceptions of inclusivity
Black British	Adesuwa Ajayi (owner of the influencer pay gap page on Instagram)	'A black influencer who participated received £1750 and a mixed-race person mentioned they were £10,000 for the same campaign' (Adapted from Katsha, 2020).
Black British	Alison Kukosama	'Brands will always find a way to short-change us whilst abusing our labour. The influencer industry reflects what's going on in the real world' (Adapted from Katsha, 2020).
Latin	Babba Rivera	'The Black girl, the Asian girl, the redhead, the blonde — and it's sort of like, check, check, check' (Adapted from Flora, 2020, p.). 'As someone on the influencer side myself, I never really fit into any category' (Adapted from Flora, 2020).
Latin	Mariale Marrero	'Well, this sucks, but that's the industry standard,' which is very discouraging because the industry standard is to discriminate' (Adapted from Flora, 2020).
South Asian and Middle Eastern	Nabela Noor	'Me even existing on the internet is doing the damn thing," she said. "Because it's so important to show brown girls,

		plus-size girls, Muslim girls. We are here' (Adapted from Rao, 2017).
South Asian and Middle Eastern	Shahd Batal	'I'm literally just a normal Black Muslim woman sharing her life on social media, largely because I want to shape my own narrative and help younger girls feel like anything is possible for them, even if they don't look like other girls' (Adapted from Rao, 2017).

Note. Adapted from:

Katsha, H. (2020, June 26). Black influencers shortchanged by big brands are starting to

talk: Brands want influencers for their reach, but depend on their silence when it comes to

paying a fair fee. Life. Huffpost. https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/black-

influencer-pay-gap_uk_5ef32959c5b6aa825ac96254

Flora, L. (2020, September 29). Latinx influencers are Pushing for Inclusion: 'It's

important that we start casting the people in the gray zones'. *Glossy*.

https://www.glossy.co/beauty/latinx-influencers-are-pushing-for-inclusion-its-important-

that-we-start-casting-the-people-in-the-gray-zones/

Rao, P. (2018, October 17). How South Asian and Middle Eastern influencers are

changing the beauty industry. Glossy. Digiday. https://digiday.com/marketing/south-

asian-middle-eastern-influencers-changing-beauty-industry/

Appendix B

Participant Information sheet

Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Adult Participant Information Sheet

Investigators Details:

Main investigator: Student researcher

Crystal Daly, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3TU

C.Daly-18@student.lboro.ac.uk

Other Investigator: Supervisor

Dr Thom Wilcockson, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3TU

T.Wilcockson@lboro.ac.uk, +44(0)1509 225434

We would like to invite you to take part in our study. Before you decide we would like to give you a better understanding of why this research is being conducted and what it will involve for

you. One of our team will go through the information sheet with you and answer any questions you have. Talk to others about the study before making a decision if you wish.

What is the purpose of the study?

This research aims to explore the roles that beauty influencers play in promoting inclusivity on social media platforms: Instagram and Youtube. This area of research is fairly limited though; the beauty influencer trend begins to serve its importance in our everyday lives. It has become salient to examine the potential roles of beauty influencers and how these roles may have an influence on specific audiences; hence why the research population sample will be open to both female and male followers to gain a wider insight into our question of inquiry: to explore follower perspectives around whether the roles in which BIs play on social media promote a sense of inclusivity and bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time.

The study's main aims are to:

a) Explore some of the key roles that beauty influencers play on social media.

b) Explore how these roles promote a sense of inclusivity for their followers.

c) Whether their presence serves to bolsters young people's self-perceptions over time?

Social media is a platform in which has tended to form a strong influence over people's lives. A better understanding of follower insights on the roles in which beauty influencers are thought to play to promote an inclusive environment and shape follower perceptions will help the

researcher's further gain an understanding into whether public perceptions can be altered through bodies of social influence.

Who is doing this research and why?

The main investigator is Crystal Daly, an undergraduate final year Psychology student at Loughborough University. The other investigator is Dr Thom Wilcockson, a Lecturer in Psychology within the School of Sport Exercise and Health Sciences and who is supervising this project. This study is part of a student research project supported by Loughborough University.

Are there any inclusion or exclusion criteria?

In order to take part in this research study, participants should be between the ages 18-25, have either or both YouTube or Instagram social media platforms, follow BIs over the 60,000-follower count threshold and engage with at least one beauty influencers content e.g., watching their beauty videos.

What will I be asked to do?

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, the procedures within this study have been changed and will be done online to fit this. Once the participants show an interest from the online recruitment poster that will be created and posted on Loughborough's recruitment Facebook page, the researcher will send a participant information sheet and informed consent form to the respondents emails. This will give them access to read all of the study information documents

and give them more of an insight into the main procedures taking place on the day of the interview. The participant will be required to either electronically sign or alternatively print out the informed consent form, sign it at the bottom, scan this back on their computer and send it back to the main researchers email. Within the email, there will also be a demographics questionnaire link to online surveys which will take five minutes for the participants to fill in their details (name, age, gender, ethnicity) and the inclusion criteria. This will all need to be done prior to the interview. The interviews will be scheduled after all the documents have been received back to the researcher. The interviews will take on Microsoft teams, which will be recorded with the participants consent. During the interview, the participant will answer a series of questions based on perspectives around beauty influencers and their inclusive nature on social media for approximately an hour. After the interview is complete and successfully recorded, there will be a debriefing which will provide the participant the opportunity to ask any questions. We will be sure to mention the processes of opting out, giving details of the deadline for this action.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

If at any time, before, during or after the sessions you decide and wish to withdraw from the study, please contact the student researcher. You can withdraw at any time and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing. However, once the results of the study are submitted in our final dissertation on the May, 2021 it may not be possible to withdraw your individual data from the research.

Will I be asked to attend any sessions and where will these be?

You will only be asked to attend one interview session online in which the main data collection will happen. Interviews will take place in the comfort of your own environment. Please ensure that you have access to a strong internet connection to successfully carry out the interview.

How long will it take?

The expected duration of the online interviews should take approximately 1 hour to complete. Please make sure you are available to commit to the full duration of this interview.

Are there any disadvantages or risks in participating?

This research doesn't anticipate any risks of taking part in this research. Our risk assessment has been checked by the ethics team. If you would like to ask further questions about the study, please contact the main researcher or the supervisor Dr Thom Wilcockson (T.Wilcockson@lboro.ac.uk).

What are the possible benefits of participating?

By participating in this research study, you will be contributing to a growing body of literature enhancing our understanding around beauty influencer roles within social media, and exploring whether these roles promote inclusivity amongst their followers and serve to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time.

What personal information will be collected from me and how will it be used?

We will collect some personal information about you including your name, age, gender, and ethnicity which may be regarded as sensitive information. The participant's personal information will only be accessed by the investigators to see whether the participants fit the research aims. Personal information will be stored. In the case of requesting to withdraw, it will be easier for the researcher to retain the data if we hold your personal information.

What is the legal basis for processing my personal information?

I understand that all the personal information I provide will be secured in accordance with data protection legislation on this public task basis.

How long will my personal information be retained?

The information will be stored no longer than 05/05/2022 after the completion of the study and will not be accessible to anyone outside the research team.

Will my personal information be shared with others?

Participant data will be shared with the student researcher, Crystal Daly and the supervisor, Dr Thom Wilcockson. If you have any questions, please contact the student researcher.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes! Data collected in this research study will be stored confidentially and anonymously coded where possible. The information provided in the study will not be accessible to anyone outside the research team.

How will the anonymised data/results collected from me be used?

The results of the study will be collected and outlined in the results section of an undergraduate research written dissertation and published to examiners for marking.

How long will the anonymised data/results be retained?

Your data will be stored for this taught student project until final marks (05/05/2022). You have up to 05/05/2021 to withdraw your consent from the study.

I have some more questions; who should I contact?

If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact the student researcher or the supervisor on the following email addresses:

C.Daly-18@student.lboro.ac.uk

T.Wilcockson@lboro.ac.uk

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact the Secretary of the Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee, Research & Enterprise Office, Hazlerigg Building, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: 01509 222423. Email: researchpolicy@lboro.ac.uk

The University also has policies relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which are available online at http://www.lboro.ac.uk/committees/ethics-approvals-human-participants/additionalinformation/codesofpractice/ .

If you require any further information regarding the General Data Protection Regulations, please see: https://www.lboro.ac.uk/privacy/research-privacy/.

Loughborough University

Participant Consent Form

Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

ONLINE INTERVIEW INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Welcome to the Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives **interview.**

Taking Part	**Please initial to confirm agreement.**

The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. The purpose of
this interview is to record your perceptions around what roles beauty influencers
play on social media to promote a sense of inclusivity and whether these roles serve   ———
to bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time.

 I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all
procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethics Approvals
(Human Participants) Sub-Committee.   ———

I have read and understood the participant information sheet and this informed
consent form.   ———

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.

                                                                                            ———

I understand that taking part in the project will involve being interviewed and my
information will be audio recorded.   ———

I understand that my personal information, e.g., name, age, gender, date of birth and
ethnicity will be collected during this study and will be anonymised in our findings.   ———

I understand that my personal information e.g., name, age, gender, date of birth and
ethnicity will be filled out on a five-minute online demographic questionnaire   ———

created by the student researcher and I will be given the web link to gain access the questionnaire prior to the online interviews.

I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study, have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, and will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

Use of Information

I understand that all the personal information I provide will be secured in accordance with data protection legislation on this public task basis and will be treated in strict confidence unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others or for audit by regulatory authorities.

I understand that information I provide will be used in the results section of an undergraduate research dissertation project.

I understand that my personal information collected about me will not identify me, such as my name or ethnicity and will not be shared beyond the study team.

I understand how my personal information will be used.

_____

I agree that information I provide can be quoted anonymously in research outputs.

_____

I agree that my name will be anonymised for the use of quotes.

_____

I understand that the anonymous data I provide from this study will be shared with

the student researcher and the supervisor.

_____

I understand that my data will be retained until final marks for the project have been

confirmed.

_____

Consent to Participate

I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

_____

_____   _____   _____

Name of participant   [printed]   Signature   Date

_____   _____   _____

Researcher   [printed]   Signature   Date

Appendix C

Ethics Information

Ethics Awareness Form for Taught Student Projects

Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

All students should discuss with their supervisor whether their project might conflict with the University's ethical principles which can be found in the Ethical Policy Framework.

Students should complete the second column in the table below, discussing with their supervisor as appropriate.

Aspect of project	Does the project involve this aspect? (Yes / No)	If Yes, follow the process(es) below
Analysis of secondary or pre-existing data (without permissions required for	No	Please send this form to ssehs-res-ent@lboro.ac.uk

use, i.e., the data is in the public domain)		No ethical approval required
Analysis of secondary or pre-existing data (permissions required)	No	Follow guidance from the Ethical Advisory (Human Participants) Sub-Committee. Complete an ethics application via LEON https://leon.lboro.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
Investigations with human participants	Yes	Follow guidance from the Ethical Advisory (Human Participants) Sub-Committee. Complete an ethics application via LEON https://leon.lboro.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
Activity falling under the Human Tissues Act	No	Follow guidance from the Human Tissue Act Licence Sub-Committee Complete an ethics application via LEON https://leon.lboro.ac.uk/ActivityForm/Index
Funding by philanthropic gifts	No	Follow guidance in Appendix 5 of the Ethical policy Framework
Military Applications	No	Follow guidance in Appendix 6 of the Ethical policy Framework
Animal testing	No	Contact the Research Office
Possible conflict with ethical principles partially or wholly outside the above.	No	Complete the general ethical checklist in Appendix 2 of the Ethical Policy Framework

		and forward to Dean of School or designated nominee along with project description.

Project Title/Topic: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

All students should discuss with their supervisor whether their project might conflict with the University's ethical principles which can be found in the Ethical Policy Framework.

Students should complete the second column in the table below, discussing with their supervisor as appropriate.

Student Declaration

I confirm that I have discussed the ethics awareness form with my supervisor and, if appropriate, followed the relevant guidance / made the relevant application.

Student name: Crystal Daly

Student ID number: B820850

Signature:

C. Daly

Date: 16/11/2020

Supervisor Declaration

I confirm that I have discussed the ethics awareness form with my supervisee and, if appropriate,

requested that they follow the relevant guidance / make the relevant application.

Supervisor name: T Wilcockson

Signature:

Date: 16/11/2020

Ethical Approval Letter

Research & Enterprise Office   T: 01509 222222
Loughborough University   W: www.lboro.ac.uk
Leicestershire LE11 3TU UK

Loughborough University

Dear Crystal

PROJECT TITLE: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting

Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower

perspectives

PROJECT ID: 2801

On behalf of the Ethical Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee I can confirm that the proposal 2021-2801-2771 has full ethical approval.

Before you begin, please amend the following:
- Proof read the documents and ensure formatting is correct
   - Revise the line 'I understand that my inform a on for my personal information' in the consent form as it doesn't make sense
   - Advise how long it will take to complete the demographic questionnaire on the information sheet
   - Of the personal details listed, only 'ethnicity' is sensitive personal data

Where possible we recommend that studies are conducted online. However, if it is necessary to conduct face-to-face research you must ensure that you follow the latest Government guidance on COVID-19. In addition, there is a Health and Safety Process that must be completed after the ethical review. You are not permitted to begin data collection which requires any face-to-face interactions with participants in person without the appropriate COVID-19 risk assessments signed by the School Safety Officer and Julie Turner, in the Health and Safety Office, and with approval from the Dean.

Studies can be moved online without requiring an amendment, unless this substantially changes the study in which case an amendment is required.

If in the future, you wish to make any amendments to the study please submit an amendment using the relevant form.

You are required to report to the Sub-Committee any incidents that have an adverse effect using the Adverse Events Report form in LEON. This approval applies until 05/05/2021. If the study continues beyond this date, you should submit a request for an extension.

Kind Regards,

Jackie

on behalf of Ethical Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Date	Assessed by (name and signature required)	Checked / Validated (delete as appropriate) by (name and signature required)	Location	Version no.	Review date
16/11/2020	Crystal Daly C. Daly	T Wilcockson	All suitable locations within the UK.	001	05/05/2022

Activity	Hazard	Who might be harmed and how	Existing measures to control risk	Likelihood*	Severity **	Risk rating***	Result (T,A,N, U)	Additional controls required to adequately control the risk
Interviews	Risk of verbal abuse	The researchers conducting the interview	If the researcher feels uncomfortable/pressured/ and are presented with verbal	3	3	6	A	Risk adequately controlled.

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT
(The latest version is maintained on the HPSC network):
This document is not a controlled copy once printed from the network.
Loughborough University

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

			abuse at any time during the interview, then they are obliged to postpone or terminate the interview. The researchers will contact their supervisor about any concerns they may have.					
Technological equipment e.g., laptop and mobile phone	Computer crash/ difficulty with internet access to interview source via online platform	The researcher as it may be difficult for them to obtain substantial data	To ensure both the participant and researcher have a suitable internet connection and online platform which is accessible for both parties. Confirmation of this information will be asked before the interview, to avoid any connection risks. It will be highly recommendable for the	3	1	3	A	Risk adequately controlled.

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

			participant to do this in their home and avoid external environments. This has also been stated on the participant information sheet to increase more awareness.					
Interview equipment e.g., recorder	Recorder shutting down due to insufficient battery charge	The researchers conducting the interview	Researchers are trained to keep their equipment charged so it is their responsibility to make sure this is charged fully before each interview to avoid any issues.	3	1	3	A	Risk adequately controlled.
Data Collection	Data protection issues	The University and the participant.	Researchers are instructed to obtain and abide by data protection guidelines when applicable. Questions on demographic information with personal interviews as well as	2	2	4	A	Risk adequately controlled

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT
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Loughborough University

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises:　　Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

			the content provided in the interviews are NOT to be left unattended and out where they can be interfered with. Data will be handled by the researchers conducting the study only. Information will be anonymised/ coded where possible.					
Data Collection	Withdrawal of consent	The participant and The researcher	For any reason, the participant may want to withdraw, the study researcher has the obligation to release participants' information immediately. Alternatively, if the participants choose to withdraw after the interview, the participant will have up to	3	2	6	A	Risk adequately controlled

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT

(The latest version is maintained on the HPSC network):
This document is not a controlled copy once printed from the network.
Loughborough University

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

			the specified hold of information date. The information participant sheet and consent form specify that once the study is submitted in May 2021, it may not be possible to withdraw. This will also be reinstated in the debriefing at the end of the interview process.					
Conducting an interview away from the university premises.	It can also be an organisational hazard, loss of reputation for Loughborough University.	Loughborough University- Poor conduct of researchers can damage the integrity of work at LU/ lead to complaints/ disciplinary actions.	Researchers submit project proposals via an ethics/ checklist/ ethics committee which are checked over by the ethics team prior to commencement of work.

Any and all adverse events must be reported. LU procedures will be followed. | 3 | 2 | 6 | A | Risk adequately controlled. |

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Conducting an interview away from the university premises, and within an external environment	Risk to the participant feeling uncomfortable	The participant welfare	Researchers are trained how to behave appropriately when conducting interviews. Participants can contact any supervisors if they have any concerns. These details are provided on the participant information sheet.	3	2	6	A	Risk adequately controlled.

Key: T= trivial risk; **A** = adequately controlled, no further action necessary; **N** = not adequately controlled, actions required; **U** = unable to decide (further information required)

*Likelihood   ****Severity**

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

5   Very likely – risk will occur repeatedly. To be routinely expected once every 20 – 100 operations, possibly weekly or more frequently if done regularly.

5   Fatality – death of an employee or multiple fatalities.

4   Likely – will occur several times a year so does not surprise when it happens.

4   Major injury – permanent disability, serious amputation e.g., Loss of hand.

3   Possible – may occur sometimes. Likely to occur once a year.

3   Medium injury e.g., Bad scald, or burn, fracture, minor amputation, temporary injury, loss of consciousness. Reportable to the HSE as a three-day lost time (employee unavailable for normal work for over 3 days) or serious injury.

2   Unlikely – but may occur perhaps once in every 10 to 100 years.

2   Minor injury – More severe cut, sprain, strain, burn, etc. where return to work is not possible after treatment. It may be lost time less than 3 days.

1   Very unlikely to occur. Likelihood approaching zero.

1   No injury or very low injury – scratch, bruise, knock, minor cut, needle stick etc. where the injury allows return to work after first aid treatment – no lost time.

*** Risk rating = Likelihood x Severity

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Likelihood x Severity = Risk assessment score

(LOW RISK 1-8 / MEDIUM RISK 9-15 / HIGH RISK 16-25)

Low risk - improve if possible (typically within 1 - 2 years)

Medium Risk - Introduce further controls to reduce risk further (typically 1 - 3 months)

High Risk - Possibly stop operation or immediately introduce control measures within a day or two.

Risk Assessment
SSEHS/RA-XXX

Task/ premises: Beauty Influencer's Roles in Promoting Inclusivity on Social Media and our Self-perceptions: Follower perspectives

Action plan				
Versi on no.	**Further action required**	**Action by whom**	**Action by when**	**Done**

Appendix D

Demographic Questions

D1

Questions to Gather Participant Demographic Information.

Questions for personal information on the online survey:

---

1. What is your name?

2. How old are you?

3. What is you gender?

4. What is your ethnicity?

5. Do you have access to social media platforms? (via Youtube, Instagram)

6. Do you follow beauty influencers on any of the sites previously mentioned?

7. Are they over a 60,000 follower count threshold? (meaning, do they have 60,000 or more followers on the sites

previously mentioned)

8. Finally, what is your email?

All questions will be answered in an open text format for the participants to add more detail where necessary.

Appendix E

Debriefing Information

Debriefing information on online surveys

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire! A reminder that if you wish to withdraw your data, all you need to do is contact the student researcher by emailing: Crystal Daly (C.Daly-18@student.lboro.ac.uk); quoting your name, the name of the project and the data you completed in this demographic questionnaire. Should you wish to discuss any issues that may arise as a result of taking part in this study please contact Dr Thom Wilcockson: (T.Wilcockson@lboro.ac.uk; +44(0)1509 225434).

Debriefing after interviews

Thank you, that was an interesting insight. I want to say thank you for taking part in my student project. This information will not be stored no longer than the fifth of May 2022. Please make sure if you want to withdraw you contact the student researcher which is me by the fifth of May this year. Otherwise, your data will be in my final section and published to the exam board for marking. As I've mentioned, it will be anonymous like your name will not be in my project. It will literally be just your information. For example, it might say Participant A said, and then the information. Yeah, I'm going to send you a copy of this interview transcript once it is written up, and this will just confirm what you've said in this interview is valid. So, thank you once again.

Appendix F

Recruitment Poster

Appendix G

Participant Verbatim Transcripts

Transcript 1

Mark

Interviewer: Welcome to my project, which is solely based around a theme of beauty

influencers and potential roles that they play in promoting follower self-

perceptions and a sense of inclusivity on social media. Before we start, I need to

communicate that all information that you disclose within this interview will be

regarded as personal data, and as a result, this information will be stored only and

shared with the investigators of this study. I want to clarify that the names will be

anonymous when I am using this data in my final project. Quickly just checking,

have you been able to read the aims and objectives on the information participant

sheet?

Participant: Yes, I have.

Interviewer: Perfect. I just want to quickly define inclusivity, and this is to be able to provide

equal access and opportunities to all groups of society, making them feel safe

respected and valued. In reference to this context, it would be beauty influencers

making their content, resonate with people from all backgrounds and walks of life.

So, from like gender, disability, LGBT, race, and socio-economic status

backgrounds. There will be no wrong answers to the questions as these are purely

based on your perceptions. I'm going to give you a couple seconds in between the questions to reflect on your answers. So, are you ready to start...?

Participant: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay so firstly I want to start off by asking a simple question of what a beauty influencer means? So, if you have if you had to explain this to someone who didn't know who they were, or didn't use particular social media platform, how would you explain this concept?

Participant: For me, a beauty influencer is someone that has the power to influence others perception on the topic of beauty, but the actual word beauty could mean different things so for example, it could mean just the aesthetics of you know someone's, you know, physical appearance, or you could also mean through someone's like, artwork, it could be for someone craft, or talent, which can be a form of beauty. So, for me, a beauty influencer is someone who uses their talent or their you know, ability to be aesthetically pleasing to the eye, has power over a larger group of people who are kind of like an audience to them, so that they have the power to influence other's decisions. If I am going to explain it to someone who doesn't know what a beauty influencer is. I would simply say, someone who uses the platform, in order to spread some sort of positive light on some sort of artwork, which could be anything from what I was saying before. So, yeah.

Interviewer: So, the next question is, who is your favourite beauty influencer, if you have one?

Participant: My favourite beauty influencer is James Charles. The reason for this is because I just feel like James is very brave to come out of his comfort zone, even though you know all the mental health issues and other problems that you know he always addresses, and I like how his transparency with his audience. You know you can be violable with them and you know I feel like different people can relate to different things that he brings up in his videos so yeah, I would say James Charles.

Interviewer: Okay, um, what type, what types of things do you think, James... Well, do you see James Charles playing online, or like the roles he plays?

Participant: The role he plays. He plays a role of a leader in a variety of communities which could be the LGBT community, the YouTube community, the makeup community. The fact that he's able to combine all these features into one person which is him, shows that you know he is willing to push the boundaries of today's social constructs which, you know, I don't agree with. We still have some old traditions that I feel like we need to get over and with the help of influencers like James Charles, who constantly push the barriers for people to, you know, for different people from different sexualities backgrounds or whatever, are able to still make it to the top which is very inspirational.

Interviewer: Thank you. I'm moving to the connectedness theme. So how connected would you say you feel to the lives of beauty influencers? Yeah… to what extent do you think that they make you feel close?

Participant: Um, well, I feel like ever since YouTube, vlogs and you know, little podcasts and things on that started happening. I feel like I've been a little more connected than I was before because, you know. James Charles makes me feel like I'm part of his family because he always starts his videos with hey sisters, which is, you know is very inclusive. It makes me feel like I'm a part of his, his family. Does that kind of make sense like it doesn't address me as if I'm an outsider I'm more of an insider. So, you know, I feel like that, especially is very beneficial for many people, because there's a sense of inclusivity here.

Interviewer: Would you say that they addressed any issues that you can relate to, which happened on the outside,

Participant: Any issues that I can relate to?

Interviewer: I mean not issues sorry experiences any experiences.

Participant: That James Charles has that I can relate to?

Interviewer: Yeah, that he speaks about.

Participant: Yeah, He always speaks about the struggles of, you know, being a part of the LGBT community, trying to fit in to society, you know, like, there's a lot of homophobia, about and actually one of my best friend Marco. He goes through this a lot, and, you know, using, you know, stuff like this, it helps us to understand that we are not the only ones like that go through something like that, you know. Even though I might not go through it, you know personally, I can see how it

affects other people and the issues that they go through, but it helps to educate us and then we can help anyone we find who is going through any struggles, whether it be about sexuality or racism or any form of discrimination.

Interviewer: Perfect. Um, moving on to the representation side now. Essentially beauty influencers are like micro celebrities who hold a strong influence just like traditional celebrities. So, would you say you hold them accountable for representing underrepresented groups in society?

Participant: So, I would hold them accountable for representing unrepresented groups in society because these beauty influencers, as you said, there are micro celebrities so they have they have a lot of influence on the way people think, and they should definitely be held accountable because they have the power to change the minds and opinions of so many hundreds of 1000s of people. Within those people you know somebody could be having prejudice or racist or homophobic, or any, any of those thoughts. But, with the help would beauty influencers because they're able to reach so many people, you never know they could change the mind of even one person which is a positive difference, which is what we strive toward every day so yeah, I would say that.

Interviewer: Right, so on to another question then so do you think that beauty influencers have helped to change, traditional beauty ideals and promote a diverse industry?

Participant: Yes. Precisely because, you know, there's so many different influencers out there that come from different backgrounds, you know, different colours. White, black

mixed race, Asian you know there's so many different types of beauty influencers. I feel like every single person out there has someone who looks like them and is doing amazing in this industry and showing how beautiful their culture, their background is, and if someone can relate to that, I feel like that's even more amazing because it shows people that it shows that people can relate to the, to the movement that's happening around social media.

Interviewer: Perfect. Relating to the self now have beauty influencers been able to help you achieve any personal needs on the outside, external world?

Participant: Oh, yes, I feel like a lot of influencers you know, even though they do show us the aesthetically pleasing side of things you know which is amazing artwork or makeup or hair. There also because of their transparency, they show us the actual process of how we get to that level like they show us the beginning, the middle and the end of the journey. So that helps me in my personal life because it shows that, you know, it doesn't matter if you haven't quite, you know achieved exactly what you wanted to achieve. As long as this is the beginning, you know that you can, you know, work hard and perfect your craft until you reach the middle, and then you'll reach the end. So, it helps me it helps to keep me motivated, above all things, because, you know, I can sort of, you know, work my way up to the top, rather than think that everything you know just happens or just appears. Influencers show the messy side of things as well, which, you know, gives you a sense of reality that, you know, there's a process to everything. So yeah, in my

personal life has given me a lot of motivation and you know, belief that I am at the beginning stage of my dream, and I will, and I will get there eventually.

Interviewer: So, some influencers tend to voice that they've seen differences in the way specific influencers from different backgrounds, tend to be treated in comparison to others. Some would actually say that these issues occur occurring online, are actually mirrored in real life. How would you respond to this? Do you agree with the statement or not?

Participant: I definitely agree that, you know, some influencers are treated better than others for specific reasons. I feel like this is a reflection of reality, you know, it does it both happen in real life. It is a testament to how real life is you know people do get treated differently for whatever reason, but the thing is at least, you know, it's changing the dialogue. It is changing, it's becoming more positive, race positive. And you know, although we know we are not there yet, completely 100%. We are on the way.

Interviewer: Okay, an influencer…this is just an example of an issue that did happen in industry, so an influencer called Patricia bright. Not sure if you know her. She chose to boycott and refuse to buy a beauty brands product called Tarte. And this was due to Tarte being on a label to cater for medium to dark tones. They had bought out like a foundation line had light to medium tones in various, various selection but then they had this scarce amount of foundations for darker skins. And yeah, she thought that this was the only way that she could respond to that situation. So, do you think that these actions that she took so boycotting and

refusing to use this brands product, do you think that these actions actually solve any issues, or could she have done something differently in response?

Participant: I believe that she acted in the right way. If a brand is, you know, potentially behaving in a manner that is prejudiced or discriminatory towards a certain group of people. When beauty influencers, boycott brands it is one of the best ways of protesting because it is peaceful and you're definitely getting a message across. And the fact that she's an influencer with a large following a lot of people can follow in her direction which can kind of bring out some real change in the company. And what's even better about this is the fact that because it's so public her dispute with the company. Other companies watching wouldn't want the same sort of negative impact on their sort of public relationship with their customers so they will be able to act on their own accord rather than needing a boycott, so this is a lesson, not only to this company but every company out there to avoid any form of potentially discriminatory actions or decisions. So, I feel like she did the right thing. Definitely.

Interviewer: Perfect, and just on to the last section now, what do you say that there's any hope for an inclusive future through brand advertisement?

Participant: Yes, definitely in the future. There's already been steps to include everyone in advertising. Recently, for example, there was a Sainsbury's or Tesco's. I think it was a Sainsbury's advert, where it showed a black family, enjoying a Christmas dinner, which is a positive step towards inclusivity and diversity. However, there was a lot of racist backlash on social media, against Sainsbury's for you know

taking this step forward, which shows that although some companies are willing to risk, negative feedback, negative reactions from racist people, which could be damaging to their brand, they're still willing to take that risk, which shows that there's a lot of hope for the future as, although decisions like that could be negative for the company. They're willing to take them. So, especially a big company like Sainsbury's that it shows how companies care about inclusivity and diversity which is definitely a sign of hope for the future.

Interviewer: Perfect. Um, would do you say that followers have just as much as a, just as much of a role as beauty influencers in creating this social reformative society?

Participant: Yes, definitely because followers they choose a follower, right? So, if followers are responsible with who they follow and responsible with who they trust with their decisions and who they trust to influencer them, you know, then the world will be a much better place because we are able to give our energy to the right, influencers to the right people who have the best interest for us. So, followers have just as much responsibility as influencers as, you know, they have the real power here because they are a large number of people, they are large collective, and whatever decisions they make can influence, all the stakeholders, including the influence of the company and the brand. Because at the end of the day the followers, is what every company organisation needs. Because, you know, they're the ones who keep everything ticking. So, I feel like following are just as important and they, they might even be more important because they are the ones who need to be responsible with who they give power to in the first place.

Interviewer: Perfect, and last question now how any of the issues that have occurred online…
have they pushed you to want to do more for yourself, or online or the wider
community or if not in the future?

Participant: Yes. You know, just like you said earlier about the example, with the beauty
product. It is always a small microcosm of problems that will happen online that
does affect us personally. You know I feel like with racism, we experience that
every single day. As a black person, you know, a lot of microaggressions occur,
which also happens online, which I feel like with the help of beauty influencers
with the help of people, pushing a lack of positive message. I feel like eventually
we'll be able to get rid of this issue, online and on social media, and in real life.
So, just with time with patience, with the right people pushing the agenda. All the
issues that we see online like trying to brand discriminating, restaurants
discriminating in real life. I feel like with the help of the right people it will
definitely be eradicated.

Interviewer: Thank you, that was an interesting insight. I want to say thank you for taking part
in my student project. This information will not be stored no longer than the fifth
of May 2022. Please make sure if you want to withdraw you contact the student
researcher which is me by the fifth of May this year. Otherwise, your data will be
in my final section and published to the exam board for marking. As I've
mentioned, it will be anonymous like your name will not be in my project. It will
literally be just your information. For example, it might say Participant A said,
and then the information. Yeah, I'm going to send you a copy of this interview

transcript once it is written up, and this will just confirm what you've said in this interview is valid. So, thank you once again.

Participant: Thank you so much.

Appendix H

Templates

H1

Template analysis, version 1

1. What roles do Beauty Influencers play online to promote inclusivity and bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time?

1.1 Socio-cultural transformation
    1.1.1 Diversity
    1.1.2 Social Justice
    1.1.3 Social Support
    1.1.4 Progression
    1.1.5 Motivation
    1.1.6 Representation

1.2 Marketing endorsement
    1.2.1 Accessibility
    1.2.2 Content frame
    1.2.3 Expectations
    1.2.4 Interactive promotion
    1.2.5 Purchase intentions
    1.2.6 Relationship-based influencer marketing
    1.2.7 Communication strategies

1.3 Information source

    1.3.1 Product awareness

    1.3.2 Climate awareness

H2

Template analysis, version 2

1. What roles do Beauty Influencers play online to promote inclusivity and bolster young people's self-perceptions, over time?

1.1 Socio-cultural transformation

    1.1.1 Diversity

    1.1.2 Social Justice

    1.1.3 Social Support

    1.1.4 Progression

    1.1.5 Motivational goals

    1.1.6 Representation

    1.1.7 Accountability

    1.1.8 Responsiveness

1.2 Relationships

    1.2.1 Genial follower-influencer relations

    1.2.2 Relationship-based influencer marketing

    1.2.3 Relatedness

1.3 Traits

    1.3.1 Attractiveness

    1.3.2 Authenticity vs pseudo

    1.3.3 Leadership

    1.3.4 Multipotentiality

    1.3.5 Power

    1.3.6 The Self

        1.3.6.1 Private vs Public Self

        1.3.6.2 Self-concept

            1.3.6.2.1 Ideal self

            1.3.6.2.2 Self-image

            1.3.6.2.3 Self-esteem