



“The Role of Social Media in the Customer Journey of Cosmetic Brands in Relation to Generation Z”

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Abstract (English)

This dissertation investigates the influence of social media on the cosmetic industry's customer journey, specifically targeting Generation Z (Gen Z). It aims to answer the research question, **“What role does social media currently play in the customer journey of cosmetic brands among Generation Z consumers?”** by exploring the impact of social media platforms on the purchasing habits and brand engagement of Gen Z, within the cosmetics sector. A survey was employed as part of the quantitative research methodology utilized in this study to collect information regarding Gen Z's social media usage in regard to cosmetic products. The results of the study provide valuable insights into the impact of social media throughout the customer journey, specifically on brand perception, purchase decisions, and post-purchase behavior. Utilizing social media is crucial for cosmetic brands to successfully engage Gen Z and establish long-lasting consumer relationships, according to the findings. The study enhances academic comprehension and provides practical guidance for cosmetic companies seeking to engage Gen Z consumers through social media tactics.

Keywords: Generation Z, Social Media Usage, Cosmetic Brands, Customer Journey, Purchase Decision

Abstract (Portuguese)

A presente dissertação investiga a influência das redes sociais na jornada do cliente na indústria cosmética, tendo como alvo específico a Geração Z (Gen Z). O objetivo é responder à questão de investigação **"Que papel desempenham atualmente as redes sociais na jornada do cliente das marcas de cosméticos entre os consumidores da Geração Z?"**, explorando o impacto das redes sociais nos hábitos de compra da Geração Z e no seu envolvimento com as marcas de cosméticos. Recorreu-se a um inquérito online como parte da metodologia de investigação quantitativa utilizada neste estudo para recolher informações sobre a utilização das redes sociais pela Geração Z relativamente a produtos cosméticos. Os resultados do estudo fornecem informações valiosas sobre o impacto das redes sociais ao longo da jornada do cliente, especificamente na perceção da marca, nas decisões de compra e no comportamento pós-compra. De acordo com os resultados, a utilização das redes sociais é crucial para as marcas de

cosméticos criarem envolvimento (engagement) com a Geração Z e estabelecerem relações duradouras com os consumidores. Este estudo contribui para uma melhor compreensão académica e fornece orientações práticas para as empresas de cosméticos que procuram envolver os consumidores da Geração Z através de táticas de redes sociais.

Palavras-chave: Geração Z, Utilização de redes sociais, Marcas cosméticas, Jornada do cliente, Decisão de compra

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context of the Research

In today's environment of consumer interaction, the evolution of social media is crucial to the rethink of any marketing strategy. Social media has grown from simple online networking spaces to complex global networking nodes impacting traditional marketing strategies. The development of social media resulted in a new era of marketing communications and fundamentally altered how brands communicate, connect, and resonate with their target audiences (Appel et al., 2020).

Born into a digital world, Generation Z (Gen Z) displays characteristics and behaviors that set them apart from previous generations (Ninan et al., 2020). To decode the complexity of this generation's customer journey, it is essential to comprehend their distinctive preferences, values, and brand engagement patterns. As an important player in this dynamic environment, the cosmetics industry is utilizing social media to an exceptional degree (Binwani & Ho, 2019). This research analyses the performance of cosmetic brands across various social media platforms. It examines the strategies employed by these brands to attract the attention of the ever-demanding Gen Z target audience and comprehensively examines the role of social media in the customer journey of cosmetic brands, with an emphasis on Gen Z.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The cosmetic industry has witnessed a significant transformation in recent years, driven by the proliferation of social media platforms and the emergence of Gen Z as a key consumer demographic (Binwani & Ho, 2019). Companies face the challenge of establishing and maintaining a certain level of credibility and trust with their customers on social media as a result of the constant evolution of digital trends. While social media has become a central component of marketing strategies for brands, there is a growing need to understand the nuanced dynamics of how Gen Z consumers engage with social media throughout their customer journey with these brands. Despite the substantial investments made in social media marketing, there is limited research that comprehensively examines the necessity, utilization, and potential diminishing relevance of social media in influencing the purchase decisions and brand engagement of Gen Z consumers in the context of cosmetic products. This research seeks to address this gap by

conducting a detailed analysis that clarifies the evolving role of social media at different stages of Gen Z's customer journey, providing insights that are essential for both academic understanding and practical application in the cosmetic industry.

1.3 Significance and Relevance

This study deepens our understanding of the expanding influence of social media on the customer experience, especially in the context of Gen Z consumers. While social media plays a significant part in today's world and Gen Z is an important target group for brands, it is essential to find out if cosmetic brands are on the right path with their current social media marketing strategies, as well as if they are reaching their target audience correctly. However, if this study demonstrates that social media is not a fundamental and necessary tool for brands, companies can reallocate their marketing budgets and focus on other touchpoints and channels. By providing cosmetic corporations with a thorough understanding of the complex landscape of the customer's journey, our study provides insights that have the potential to benefit them greatly.

The relevance of this study lies in its potential to provide cosmetic companies with crucial information on the way that Gen Z consumers use social media during their purchasing and decision-making processes. With this information in hand, cosmetic companies may improve their online marketing strategies, and identify the best channels and chances to meaningfully engage with their audience. The information may be used to prioritize budgets for advertising campaigns by strategically identifying the touchpoints in the customer journey where social media has the greatest influence.

In addition, companies can adjust their communication strategies by recognizing the points in the customer journey where social media value declines. These results can encourage companies to investigate additional marketing channels or different kinds of social media content. Cosmetic organizations that align their marketing strategies with the findings of this study may benefit from a competitive advantage. Marketing and customer retention strategies will have a better chance of success if they are adjusted to the interests and behaviors of Gen Z as revealed by this research.

In conclusion, this study's deep understanding of Gen Z's social media preferences and habits can both improve marketing tactics and increase the effectiveness of customer retention efforts within the changing environment of the cosmetic industry. Apart from the budgets that are allocated to social media marketing, there exists a lack of academic investigations that analyze

the significance of social media in shaping the purchasing choices and level of involvement of Gen Z consumers concerning cosmetic products. This study undertakes an in-depth examination that clarifies the dynamic function of social media throughout various phases of the consumer journey of Gen Z. The results of this research are crucial for academic comprehension and practical implementation within the cosmetics sector.

1.4 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The paper addresses the relationship between the topics of social media and the decision-making process of Gen Z's young consumers in the cosmetics industry. As digital communication has become a central component of contemporary society, the question of the role and influence of social media in the customer journey of cosmetic brands has arisen (Binwani & Ho, 2019). To investigate this topic, the customer journey of Gen Z in relation to cosmetic products is analyzed, and the influence of social media in each phase of the journey is highlighted. In addition, the effectiveness of cosmetic brands' social media strategies in dealing with and engaging Gen Z will be assessed. Findings should be gathered from the analysis regarding how cosmetic brands can strengthen their social media strategies to improve their relationship with the younger generations. Problems and challenges can also be identified.

Overall, our study aims to answer the research question, "**What role does social media currently play in the customer journey of cosmetic brands among Generation Z consumers?**".

Additionally, the study will contribute to answer the following research questions:

1. "What role does social media engagement play in the decision-making process of younger consumers when purchasing cosmetics?"
2. "In what manner does the integration of social media into the customer journey of cosmetic brands increase Gen Z's awareness, interest, and desire for the offered products?"
3. "What influence does Gen Z's social media user behavior have on the interest and purchase of cosmetic products?"
4. "Do gender differences exist within Gen Z?"

These objectives will guide our analysis of the complex connections between Gen Z, social media, customer journey, and cosmetic brands. By achieving these goals, the study will not only contribute to the current knowledge of consumer behavior but will also provide useful insights for the strategic planning of cosmetic companies.

1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The next chapter provides an overview of the relevant literature about social media, with a specific focus on social media usage habits of Gen Z, along with the social media marketing tactics employed by cosmetic brands. The customer journey is discussed, linked to cosmetic brands, and the customer journey mapping model is incorporated and reviewed. The conceptual model and hypotheses drawn from the literature review are clarified at the end of chapter 2. Next, the methodology chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the survey approach utilized in this study. It outlines the specific procedures followed to gather primary data, namely the survey's design and participant selection, as well as the methodologies used for information analysis. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the results obtained from the quantitative survey research. The conclusions chapter provides a synthesis of the research findings, emphasizing their contribution to the current body of knowledge in the field of study. Practical implications and theoretical advancements will be examined in relation to those findings. Furthermore, this section highlights the study's limitations and proposes avenues for further investigation, thus making a scholarly contribution to the discipline.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Social Media

2.1.1 Generation Z and their Social Media Behavior

Social media is a term that describes a group of software-based digital technologies that allow billions of people all over the world to transmit and receive digital content and information over web-based networks. These digital technologies are displayed as apps and websites. Social media has developed into a key technology these days, with 3.29 billion users portrayed in 2022, or 42.3% of the world's population (Appel et al., 2020). These platforms, such as TikTok, Instagram, and Snapchat, provide a sizable prospective audience that uses social media extensively every day (Appel et al., 2020). Social media has a fast-paced, constantly evolving character that encourages ongoing innovation. For companies, organizations, and political groups, this makes it an essential marketing and communication approach. People use these platforms to show important aspects of their lives, communicate with close friends and family, and share news, rumors, and user-generated product reviews (Appel et al., 2020).

The characteristics of Gen Z, people who were born between 1995 and 2010, include early access to the internet and a strong dependence on social media. They are regarded as the biggest Internet consumers since they have had constant access to technology and the web since early childhood (Ninan et al., 2020). The primary drivers for Gen Z's extensive usage of online social media are their need to connect with people and stay informed. Given Gen Z's widespread acceptance and usage of social media, companies that emphasize consumer involvement, relationship development, and value creation stand out and see enormous potential. In general, Gen Z is influencing the digital age through their affection for technology, their use of social media to get information and interact with others, and their capacity to make well-considered decisions in a connected environment (Yadav & Rai, 2017). Gen Z values autonomy and fast transactions through the latest technologies, which enables them to make highly informed purchasing decisions (Ninan et al., 2020).

On the other hand, there exists a significant number of young people who intentionally avoid social media and choose not to use it. A study conducted in 2019 examined why Gen Z is abandoning social media (eMarketer, 2020). Nearly half stated they spent too much time on social media, 35% associated social media with too much negativity, and about 25% said they felt miserable about it. However, interest in content has increased slightly since 2017 (eMarketer, 2020). The results indicate that time spent, negative experiences, and the quality of content offered are significant factors in Gen Z's decision to quit social media. Companies that place a significant amount of value and budget into their social media presence should not forget these facts and motives and must observe them over time.

2.1.2 Cosmetic Brands and their Social Media Marketing Approaches

In recent years, the significance of social media as a tool for consumer engagement has increased exponentially, and cosmetic brands are at the top of this trend. Social media usage by brands incorporates the entirety of the customer experience journey, from discovery to engagement (Kumar et al., 2016). The global share of social media marketing expenditures related to brands was estimated to increase from \$32 billion in 2017 to \$48 billion in 2021 (Demmers et al., 2020). In response to modifications in the marketing environment, companies have increasingly shifted from traditional to social media marketing strategies. The shift from offline to online interactions between consumers and brands has rendered traditional forms of communication such as newspapers, television, and radio obsolete (Baharuddin et al., 2022).

In the cosmetics industry, social media has become a crucial tool for advertising products. Social media posts can reach a wide range of potential consumers worldwide and generate buzz (Kanuri et al., 2018). The change from traditional brand ambassadors to social media influencers that affect purchase intent is particularly remarkable. To advertise their products, businesses are cooperating with influencers who have a large number of followers (Binwani & Ho, 2019). Effective use of social media as a communication tool results in increased interaction and communication, enhanced brand engagement, a positive perception of the brand and its products, and repeat visits by consumers. Brands frequently utilize social media to expand their brand presence and audience reach. Social media brands in the cosmetics industry offer the opportunity to dynamically interact with their target audience and create an ongoing effect on consumer purchasing behavior in a dynamic environment (Binwani & Ho, 2019).

Kiehl's, for instance, shares primarily its products, user-generated content, tips and techniques, application videos, and much more on its Instagram account. The emphasis is on the company's product selection. Thus, consumers gain a clear understanding of the offer and are directly targeted (Kiehl's Instagram, 2023).

The Body Shop provides a comparable strategy, nevertheless, it also addresses current concerns and draws attention to issues such as hate speech, mental health, etc. This will establish intimacy and a closer relationship with users (The Body Shop Instagram, 2023).

Aesop relies on social media to appeal to its target audience, which is most probably to have an affinity for design, art, and minimalism. The brand strategically shares visuals that align with these passions, positioning itself as a lifestyle brand rather than a skincare brand. Beyond conventional methods, Aesop's marketing strategy effectively conveys a unique brand narrative that establishes an emotional connection with consumers. This distinctive brand culture, combined with an unconventional marketing strategy, fosters the development of strong brand loyalty among its consumers (Feng, 2022).

2.1.3 „Lush Cosmetics“ as an Exception

Lush Cosmetics, which was established in 1995 in the United Kingdom, has emerged as a leader in the field of natural and handmade beauty products. Lush, known for its wide selection of bath bombs, shower gels, soaps, and skincare products, has earned a name for itself not just for the quality of its products but also for its constant dedication to ethical business practices. With a strong opinion against animal testing, Lush takes fulfillment in being a cruelty-free

company. It should be noted that Lush is at the forefront of sustainability initiatives, minimizing packaging waste by delivering items "naked" without packaging or in materials that are beneficial to the environment ("Who We Are," n.d.).

However, Lush has abandoned popular social networking platforms including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat. Until significant improvements from society and social media in general are made, Lush has decided to shut down all its brand, retail, and people accounts internationally. The implementation started on the 26th of November 2021, in all 48 of the countries where Lush conducts business. Lush declared to investigate new possibilities for engaging with its audience in exchange for committing to not being wholly anti-social. The brand still maintains a presence on Twitter and YouTube, but it places more of an emphasis on developing stronger communication channels elsewhere. The choice made by Lush demonstrates its commitment to ethical beauty as well as to encouraging a safer and more responsible online environment ("Lush Is Becoming Anti-Social," n.d.). Jack Constantine, CDO and Product Inventor at Lush, once stated: "As an inventor of bath bombs, I pour all my efforts into creating products that help people switch off, relax, and pay attention to their wellbeing. Social media platforms have become the antithesis of this aim, with algorithms designed to keep people scrolling and stop them from switching off and relaxing." ("Lush Is Becoming Anti-Social," n.d.).

The company deliberately utilizes in-store marketing and word-of-mouth from a loyal customer base in place of an external advertising expense. Employees who are knowledgeable about the product play a crucial role. They deliver appealing messages, inform potential consumers, and design satisfying shopping experiences. Trained by the communication department, Lush successfully developed new brand ambassadors in the shops. The company frequently works with influencers and relies on user-generated content. Lush provides an engaging retail environment by using a variety of colors, and appealing scents, and inviting customers to touch and explore things. Demonstrations using the unique bath bombs improve relationships as well (Ernesto, 2022).

The key to Lush's success is that they pay attention to what their customers have expressed and give persuasive evidence. The company has carved out a route demonstrating the power of organic development and community participation by smoothly leading customers along the customer's journey through authentic interactions (Ernesto, 2022).

Lush Cosmetics demonstrates that it is feasible for cosmetic brands to build relationships with customers without using social media. However, it is important to consider that this brand was using social media platforms until the end of 2021, indicating that it has maintained communication with users for an extended period and has thus developed a degree of awareness. This

company did not initially intend to abandon the use of social media as a channel of communication; rather, it gradually adopted the strategy. As a result, it is not possible to conclude that social media does not necessarily have to be integrated into the customer journey for Gen Z. Determining whether social media platforms are an essential component of the customer journey for cosmetic brands remains crucial.

2.2 Customer Journey

2.2.1 Customer Journey in General

As an essential part of marketing knowledge, the customer journey reflects the ever-evolving cycles that modern customers go through before making a purchase decision. This development extends beyond traditional interactions between companies and their marketing initiatives to include factors such as product recommendations from colleagues, influencers, blogs, product tests, and feedback from clients on platforms such as Amazon. Thus, the customer journey has become a complex process, comprised of numerous touchpoints and media (Zöller, 2019). Customer touchpoints are any point of interaction between a consumer and a company, brand, service, or product. These interactions can be initiated by products, services, employees, or any online or offline form of communication. They include any interaction a consumer has with the brand, such as advertising, social media, browsing the website, customer support, and in-store contacts. Understanding and optimizing these touchpoints is essential for creating a positive and seamless customer journey, thereby fostering brand loyalty and retention in the long run. Companies must provide consistent brand experiences and should communicate in a transparent way to achieve success and satisfy customer requirements (Brandão & Wolfram, 2018).

Professionally constructed stories supported by a thoughtful customer journey are a critical success factor for organizations. Sungevity, a company that utilizes an automated sales model for solar systems, serves as a practical example of successful implementation. To ensure customer satisfaction, the thoughtfully planned customer journey includes personalized information, energy-saving contests, the installation process, and individualized guidance. Amazon, through its search, order, and payment system, as well as the incorporation of customer ratings, creates a customer-centric online purchasing environment that is comparable to the physical shopping environment (Zöller, 2019).

However, increasing touchpoints in diverse channels and media also create complex customer journeys. Specifically, consumer interactions on social media bring both challenges and

opportunities for businesses. The increasing number of contact options causes a growing challenge for companies in their attempt to gain a precise understanding of the customer journey. At this point, identifying the specific touchpoint that impacts the purchase decision positively or negatively has become nearly impossible (Lindenbeck, 2021).

The customer journey can be divided into three different stages: Pre-Purchase, Purchase, and Post-Purchase (s. fig. 1). Each stage entails specific customer interactions with the brand and its environment. A comprehensive analysis of these stages enables businesses to identify crucial elements and engagement triggers (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Companies face the challenge of integrating a growing number of customer touchpoints and creating positive customer experiences while reducing their control over customer journeys. In this context, the journey becomes a complex interaction between numerous business functions, such as information technology, service operations, logistics, marketing, human resources, and external partners (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016).

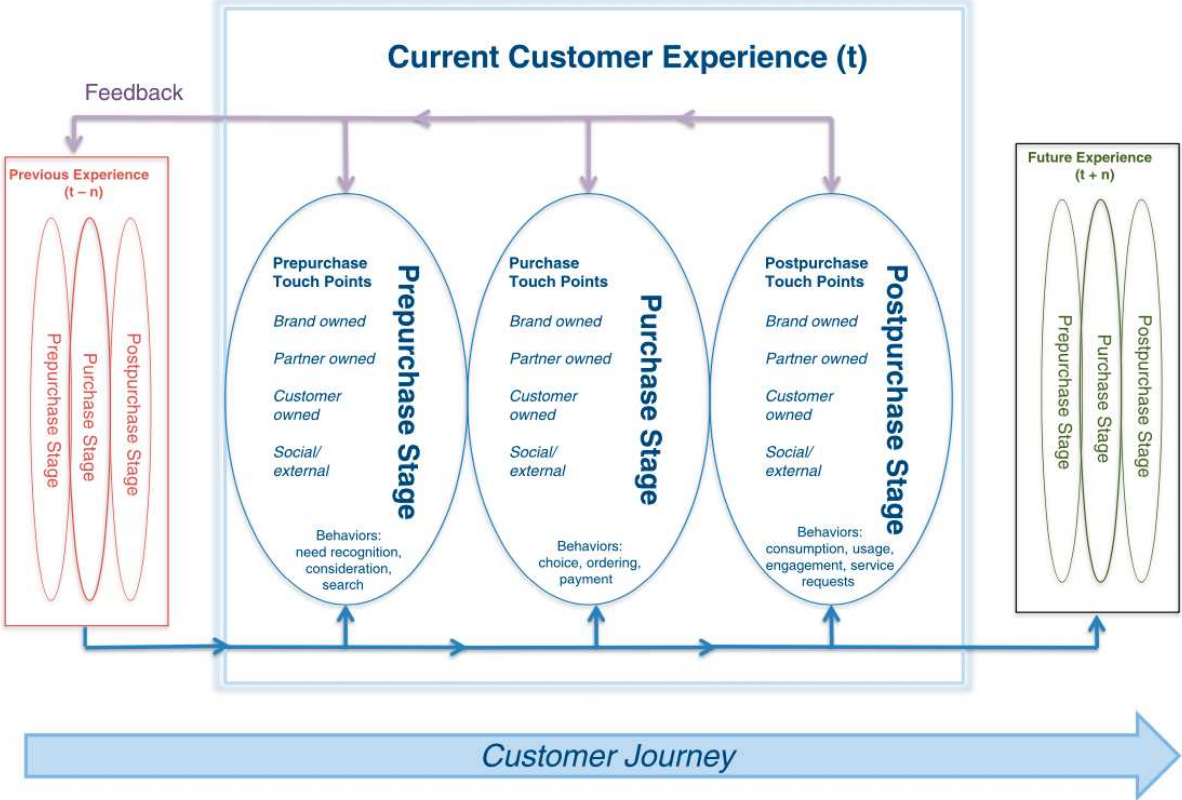


Figure 1: Process Model for Customer Journey and Experience (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)

The customer journey reflects the customer's information and decision-making process. Individualized media and contact channels are utilized, with customers choosing those that appear straightforward and convenient and meet their specific needs. The customer's journeys are highly unique, making discovering and evaluating individual touchpoints challenging (Böcker, 2015). In particular, the combination of online and offline channels in the customer journey brings new challenges to companies as traditional tracking systems meet their limits. However, companies that comprehend customer desires and can derive dialogue implications from them are attractive and will most probably succeed (Böcker, 2015).

The difficulty in understanding the impact of individual touchpoints and in designating specific purchasing decisions demonstrates the need for innovative solutions. Collecting internal insights, developing hypotheses, researching customer processes, and identifying trigger points are methods for achieving these objectives. By creating a detailed map of the customer journey, businesses can obtain a deeper understanding of their customer's needs and perceptions (Temkin, 2010).

2.2.2 Cosmetic Brands and their Customer Journeys

The cosmetics industry faces the difficulty of entering a crowded market and gaining the loyalty of today's connected consumers (Binwani & Ho, 2019). To reach this demographic, beauty brands must comprehend and incorporate consumer values into their merchandise and storytelling. In this regard, four fundamental procedures can be helpful.

First, social media transparency is extremely important. Authentic and straightforward representations of products backed by influencers are essential for the success of social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest. To establish a link with the consumers, the images must not only depict diverse individuals but also convey a realistic depiction of daily life (Hyder, 2019). Investing in influencer partnerships is a second crucial success factor. Influencers can serve as authentic advocates who are more accepted by the target audience than conventional personalities, particularly in the cosmetics industry. Combining online and offline purchasing experiences is highly significant. Although the linked consumer conducts extensive online research, he or she still values the in-person purchasing (Hyder, 2019). Through experiential marketing, such as pop-up events, customers can try out products and obtain personalized recommendations. In the luxury market, personal contact and the testing of products are of particular

importance. The purchasing procedure should also be simplified. Despite their decision-making power, networked consumers frequently feel overwhelmed and apprehensive (Hyder, 2019). Addressing the customer in the cosmetic industry generally necessitates transparency, influencer relationships, personalized product experiences, and convenient purchasing options.

The following is an example of a particular customer's journey from a cosmetics brand. Since its founding in 2004, e.l.f. Cosmetics has endured a remarkable evolution and, beginning in 2019, has been pursuing a digital transformation based on the complete elimination of physical stores. Choosing to focus exclusively on the digital customer experience has not only proven insightful in the context of the pandemic, but it is also a key element of e.l.f.'s strategy. For the successful execution of the strategy, the following targets have been implemented. E.l.f. utilizes a central hub to personalize experiences across multiple channels. With segmentation and personalization, a precise visual map of the customer journey is created. To optimize advertising campaigns, predict the chances of consumer interaction, and personalize offers, artificial intelligence is utilized (Salesforce, n.d.). By integrating marketing and e-commerce, seamless customer experiences can be established, thereby increasing customer engagement. The digital and site-to-store experience at e.l.f. is centered on the customer, with online stores delivering more relevant product results via predictive sorting and creating customized purchasing experiences. Integrating transaction data enables service agents to have a uniform understanding of the customer, resulting in quicker request resolution and increased customer satisfaction. E.l.f. enhanced its social media presence, debuted the e.l.f. cares page as a COVID-19 resource, and initiated a virtual trial. In an age of digital consumers, e.l.f.'s customer journey provides valuable insight into how a brand can leverage digital innovations to promote customer commitment and loyalty (Salesforce, n.d.).

2.2.3 Customer Journey Mapping as a Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the customer journey will be examined with greater detail, allowing for an understanding of precisely in which phase of the customer journey cosmetic brands can use social media. Customer journey mapping simplifies the analysis and development of optimal consumer journeys (s. fig. 2). To address the research questions in the context of this paper, it is necessary to investigate the precise touchpoint opportunities between companies and their

consumers via social media. The customer journey is a multi-phased, complex procedure that leads a potential customer from pre-awareness to loyalty (Zöller, 2019).

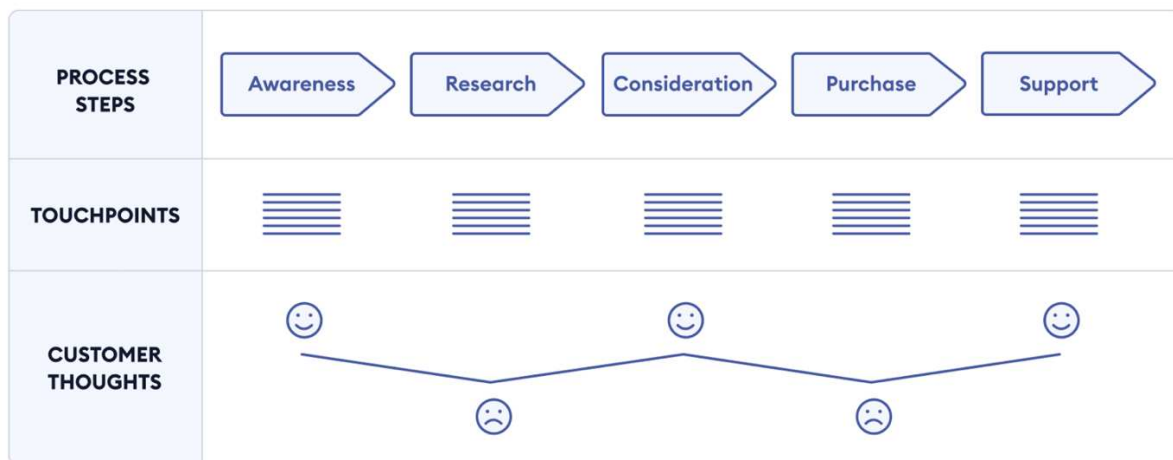


Figure 2: Customer Journey Map (Miranda & Watts, 2022)

In the pre-awareness stage, there is no approaching customer need, but there is a hidden desire. At this point, dynamic advertising campaigns are essential for capturing the attention of the intended target group. The channels Facebook and Instagram are ideal social media platforms since they enable storytelling which allows them to establish a first connection with the target audience.

The awareness phase starts when a marketing campaign attracts widespread attention and awakens consumers to specific products. Customers pursue suppressed desires, which are to address a problem or discover added value. This phase highlights the significance of authentic, target-audience-relevant content (Zöller, 2019). In this phase, social media channels can also be applied. Product specifications or applications are further suitable. Additionally, consumer reviews can be incorporated, and brand messages may be amplified through a consistent presence. The consideration phase takes place when customers examine the recently found product more thoroughly. They jump into information exploration and considerations that lead to decision-making. The company must provide appropriate answers to the consumers' inquiries to maintain their interest. Using live videos, content can be shared via social media, particularly Instagram and TikTok, in detail. Active interactions with the intended audience are encouraged here.

In the preference phase, the consumer has made a fundamental purchase decision but must now choose between multiple suppliers. Important roles are now served by product-specific advertising, pricing, and confidence-building measures. The consumer contacts the sales section and

picks a specific provider (Zöller, 2019). This enables influencers to establish a solid reputation on social media, share positive experiences with the community, and distribute product-related advertisements with discounts.

The purchase phase indicates the actual purchase process, which at first must be kept straightforward so as not to risk previously made decisions. Here, the focal points are processing, contract, payment terms, and the payment procedure. Through social media, an active order for a purchase can be placed, encouraging users to make a move (Zöller, 2019).

The emphasis of the after-sale phase is on product quality as well as service. In this manner, sustainable client relationships are either fostered or endangered. Customer satisfaction is influenced by factors such as on-time delivery, product conformity with the advertised features, and easy returns. Especially in the cosmetics industry, TikTok and other platforms can be used to create product application demonstrations. User-generated content plays a significant role here and is crucial for consumers (Zöller, 2019).

The loyalty phase reaches its peak when the customer enthusiastically shares his positive experiences and joy. Companies have a chance to promote cross-selling and provide loyal consumers with special offers. Targeted measures improve customer satisfaction, and modern membership programs offer a variety of benefits to increase consumer engagement (Zöller, 2019). For instance, success stories and feedback can be shared with the community through social media channels. Additionally, followers can be informed of exclusive offers.

Nowadays, customer journeys in general are more complex and personalized than ever before. They consist of a diversity of online and offline touchpoints. From what was said in the previous sections, we may assume customer journeys in the cosmetics sector are influenced by social media, but they can still be created successfully without the brands' presence on social media, as Lush Cosmetics shows. Companies should consider a variety of strategies to meet the demands of a diverse target audience. This raises the question of whether social media marketing is required. In the subsequent investigation, we will try to evaluate whether this assertion is correct or not. Indeed, in the cosmetics industry, the importance of transparency, influencer relationships, personalized product experiences, and convenient purchasing options cannot be emphasized enough.

The customer journey map serves as a foundation for the subsequent research. Based on the phases of the customer journey that have just been analyzed, it is possible to identify how cosmetic brands can or should develop their customer journey for brand awareness, successful approach, and product sales. In accordance with the previous review of the literature and analysis, the next chapter presents the hypotheses that are predicted.

2.3 Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

On the foundation of the previous sections, it now appears possible to draw conclusions and formulate hypotheses from the literature review. In conclusion, Gen Z is a group of consumers who emerged during the digital era. Their relationship with social media is profoundly rooted and characterized by a prominent presence on Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. However, there is also a competing point of view. Part of Gen Z has developed a conscious aversion to social media due to their belief that frequent use of these platforms is unfavorable to their health. Since Gen Z's social media usage behavior will be the focus, this will operate as the independent variable and be a component of all the following hypotheses. This study will analyze each of the three main phases of the customer journey regarding the personal attitudes of the younger generation towards social media. These are the three phases: Pre-Purchase, Purchase, and Post-Purchase. Due to the large proportion of Gen Z users on social media and the previous literature review, it is hypothesized that social media user behavior positively influences each of the three stages of the customer journey. It is predicted that for each of the three hypotheses, there is a natural positive correlation between the level of social media utilization among the participants and their pre-purchase intention, purchase intention, and post-purchase intention. Gen Z consumers are more likely to develop an interest in cosmetic brands and buy their cosmetic products before, during, and after making a purchase due to their increased utilization of social media. As a result, the three hypotheses have been formulated:

H1: The use of social media by Gen Z has a positive impact on the Pre-Purchase stage of the customer journey.

H2: Social media use among Gen Z has a positive influence on cosmetic product purchasing intentions.

H3: Gen Z's social media usage has a positive effect on cosmetic brands throughout the Post-Purchase phase.

Based on the above-stated hypotheses, the following conceptual model can be set up (s. fig. 3). This shows our independent variable (Gen Z's social media usage), and the dependent variables and how it is expected that they relate to each other.

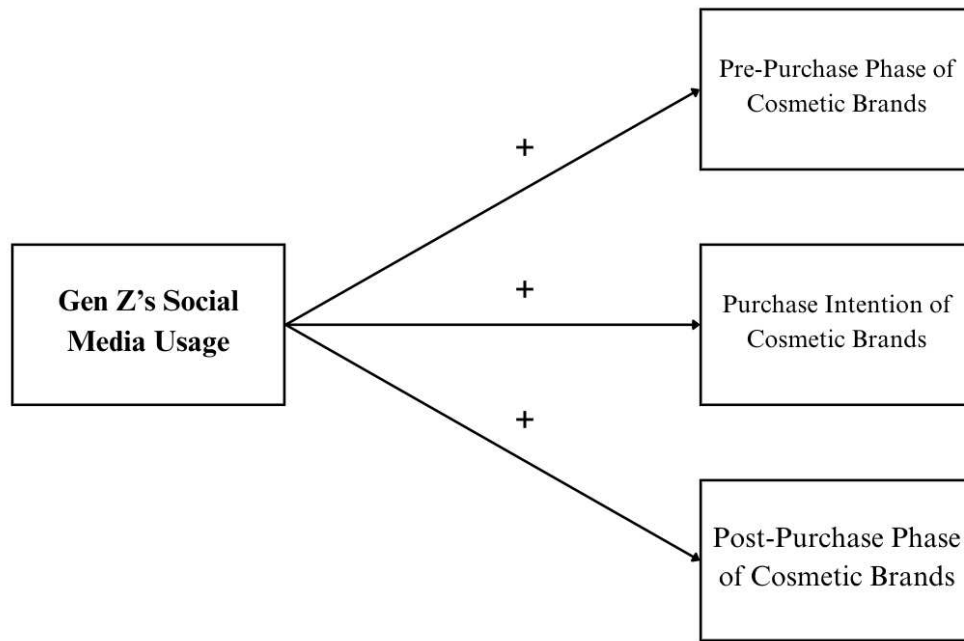


Figure 3: Conceptual Model (own concept)

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To address the research question "**What role does social media currently play in the customer journey of cosmetic brands among Generation Z consumers?**" a quantitative research methodology was employed. This involved a systematic and structured procedure for collecting and analyzing the data to reach meaningful conclusions. Before conducting the quantitative study, a thorough review of the literature was undertaken that served as a foundation for developing research hypotheses. An online survey was selected as the main data collection approach to gather a broad spectrum of information and gain a deeper understanding of consumer social media usage and online purchasing behavior for cosmetic products. The survey was designed to collect information anonymously, thus fostering truthful and unfiltered responses from the target audience, Gen Z consumers. The survey questions were designed to focus on respondents' interactions with social media in relation to cosmetics. The standardization of data collection is one of the significant benefits of using a quantitative research approach. This guarantees that the research can be replicated in the future to produce consistent results. The collected data has been structured and uploaded to statistical analysis, enabling the application of

quantitative methods to derive significant conclusions. This methodology allows for the ability to generalize findings besides the sample to a larger population of Gen Z consumers. In addition, quantitative research enables direct comparisons between various data aspects, enhancing the depth and accuracy of the analysis. The decision to conduct an online survey was impacted by the need to collect data from a large sample, in a short period of time and with low costs. The design of the online survey facilitated the collection of data from a wide range of respondents, which improved the accuracy and reliability of the results while making data collection and analysis efficient.

3.2 Data Collection Method and Sampling Strategy

This paragraph describes in detail the quantitative research procedure and the development of the sampling strategy. The online survey required contacting respondents via Instagram, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and other social media platforms, as well as specific network groups within these platforms. Since this study was intended solely for consumers of Gen Z, participants needed to be reached through appropriate channels. The target audience included active social media users. No additional specific criteria were required for participant admission. To guarantee that only those belonging to Gen Z took part, the first filter question asked if the respondent was born between 1995 and 2010. The subsequent question inquired about the participant's registration on social media networks. If the answers to both questions were yes, the participant was allowed to proceed with the survey. If not, the survey was over, and the participant was directed to the end of the questionnaire. This guaranteed that the sample was only constituted by respondents of the study's intended target group.

Before the large-scale publication of the survey, a pre-test was conducted with a selected group of individuals from the immediate environment. A total of ten people participated and were instructed to identify and report any errors or unclear details. Nevertheless, no issues were raised, and the feedback was highly positive. The survey officially ran for seven days, from the 14th to the 21st of November 2023. We collected a total of 195 answered questionnaires.

For subsequent data analysis, the collected raw data underwent a process of elimination, which involved removing unfinished questionnaires and encoding the responses correspondingly. 158 completed questionnaires remained in the end. For 13 participants, the answers were recorded only until after the Social Media Usage section. However, these have nevertheless been

considered and included in the data analysis, since the answers could still be counted for the independent variable and were of importance.

3.3 Development of Research Instrument

To test the three hypotheses by using quantitative techniques, the independent and dependent variables were first defined. In this case, social media usage is the independent variable hypothesized to influence each dependent variable.

In contrast, the dependent variables rely on the changes in the independent variable. The dependent variables are Pre-Purchase intention, Purchase intention, and Post-Purchase intention regarding cosmetic products. Having a total of three dependent variables and one independent variable, the questionnaire was divided into four main segments. As previously said, to ensure that only members of Gen Z participated, the very first question asked if the person was born between 1995 and 2010. The following question asked whether the participant was registered and active on social media platforms. A participant was able to continue with the survey if both questions elicited positive responses. Next, followed the questions to measure the four variables considered in the research hypotheses.

Figure 4 shows the structures of the variables, the number of scale items, and the literature sources that were utilized to create these scales. All questions, regarding the variables, used in the survey were measured using statements with 5-point Likert scales, ranging from "Strongly Agree" (5) to "Strongly Disagree" (1). Most of the constructs were measured using either four- or five-scale items. (s. fig. 4 and Appendix 7.1).

At the end, participants were asked about their personal demographic information.

Measurement Model		
Variable	Reference	Nr of Items
Social Media Usage	(Andreassen et al., 2012) (Ostic et al., 2021)	5

Pre-Purchase	(Silveira et al., 2023)	4
Purchase	(Bian & Forsythe, 2012) (Silveira et al., 2023)	5
Post-Purchase	(Lee et al., 2006) (Onofrei et al., 2022)	4

Figure 4: Measurement Model (own model)

To ensure that the scales represent a valid set of items or questions, a new Cronbach's alpha was computed for each of the four scales. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the independent variable Social Media Usage Scale is .748, indicating that the reliability of the five-item scale is adequate (s. tab. 1). In general, values exceeding .7 are referred to as appropriate, and greater values signify increased reliability. This metric is critical when assessing the quality of measurement instruments through the evaluation of questionnaires.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.748	5

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Social Media Usage (SPSS)

The following figure illustrates a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .835 for the four-item scale of the first dependent variable Pre-Purchase Phase (s. tab. 2). This suggests that the items possess a high degree of internal consistency, signifying that they consistently assess the identical underlying structure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.835	4

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha Pre-Purchase (SPSS)

The scale consisting of five items for the second dependent variable Purchase Phase has a high level of internal consistency, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha value of .873 (s. tab. 3).

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.873	5

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Purchase (SPSS)

A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .718 suggests that the internal consistency of the four-item scale for the third dependent variable Post-Purchase Phase is reasonable (s. tab. 4). This value is slightly above the limit of .7, indicating that the components comprising the scale show sufficient consistency to accurately assess the same structure, hence the scale is reliable.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.718	4

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha Post-Purchase (SPSS)

4. Quantitative Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Presentation of Survey Findings

The survey outcomes reveal a varied sample regarding the respondents' demographics and further information. The gender distribution of the participants revealed that females made up 66.5% of the total sample, males comprised 24.7%, and one individual self-identified as non-binary/third gender. A total of 8.2%, 13 people, declined to give any information (s. Appendix tab. 11).

In terms of age, 57.6% of the participants were 25 to 28 years old, while 34.2% were 21 to 24 (s. Appendix tab. 12).

The majority, 59.5%, hold a bachelor's degree, 29.1% a master's, and 3.2% a school degree only (s. Appendix tab. 13).

Regarding occupations, 39.9% of the participants are students holding a job at the same time, whereas 24.7% are full-time students and 27.2% are exclusively employed. (s. Appendix tab. 15).

About the income, 15.2% of the participants are currently unemployed. The percentages among those earning less than €1,000 and between €1,000 and €1,500 in income are 15.2% and 20.9%, respectively. 14.6% of the respondents stated that they earned a salary within the range of 1,501€ to 2,000€, with 8.2% earning between 2,001€ and 2,500€. Additionally, 8.2% of the participants receive an income exceeding €3,000 (s. Appendix tab. 14).

Concerning the utilization of social media platforms, Instagram ranks first with 58.9% of the total, followed by TikTok at 14.6% and YouTube at 7% (s. Appendix tab. 6). 46.8 percent of participants indicate that they devote no more than two to four hours per day to social media. 31.6% of individuals spend one to two hours daily on social media platforms (s. Appendix tab. 5). Social media has a moderate impact on purchasing decisions: 32.9% of respondents occasionally purchase cosmetic brands they have seen on social media, while 31% do so rarely and 22.2% never do so (s. Appendix tab. 10). About the purchasing of cosmetic products, the data reveals that 44.3% of the participants make monthly purchases of new cosmetics, whereas 30.4% do so every few months (s. Appendix tab. 8). Approximately one-third of the participants apply cosmetics only once per day, while 43% apply them multiple times per day (s. Appendix tab. 7).

According to the findings of the popularity survey about cosmetic brands, Nivea ranked first having been cited 29 times. Following closely behind with 19 nominations, L'Oréal emerges as the second most favored brand among the participants. Third place is shared by Maybelline and The Ordinary, both of which received 12 votes. Next is La Roche Posay having been mentioned 11 times, whereas Dove concludes the list with 10 nominations. The findings presented in Table 9 indicate the brand awareness and preferences of the participants (s. Appendix tab. 9).

To statistically test the hypotheses, a linear regression analysis was conducted. This analysis aimed to assess whether the utilization of social media (independent variable) affects the dependent variables: Pre-Purchase, Purchase, and Post-Purchase phases, as well as to examine the specific structure of this relationship. To measure the four variables of our model, for each participant, an average of all variables and the Likert scales were calculated. The four mean

values utilized in the subsequent analysis are the following: "Social Media Usage," "Mean Pre-Purchase," "Mean Purchase," and "Mean Post-Purchase."

As demonstrated by the first linear regression analysis (s. Appendix tab. 16), Pre-Purchase behavior is significantly impacted by Social Media Usage, the independent variable. As shown in the model summary, the R-square value is .058, meaning that the model accounts for approximately 5.8% of the variance in the dependent variable. The p-value in the ANOVA table ($p = .003$) is less than .05. This indicates that the regression equation is statistically significant in its entire form. The regression coefficient associated with Social Media Usage is positive ($b = 1.491$), indicating that Pre-Purchase behavior tends to increase in combination with social media usage. The intensity of the effect is indicated by the standardized beta coefficient of .241, which further establishes the existence of a positive correlation. The coefficient's significance ($p = .003$) provides further evidence supporting the statistical significance of the association between Pre-Purchase behavior and Social Media Usage. The Normal P-plot provides evidence in support of the assumption of normally distributed residues, which is a fundamental principle of linear regression. The proximity of the data nodes to the diagonal line signifies that the model has been appropriately adjusted (s. Appendix tab. 16).

Hence, the statistical findings derived from the regression analysis provide support for the hypothesis that Gen Z's usage of social media positively impacts the Pre-Purchase phase of the customer journey. As indicated by the model, "Social Media Usage" significant positive regression coefficient and p-value mean that an increase in social media usage is correlated with a corresponding increase in Pre-Purchase behavior for cosmetic products.

The analysis of the second linear regression examines the correlation between purchasing behavior (the dependent variable) and Social Media Usage (s. Appendix tab. 17). The R-square value of the model is .055, indicating that the utilization of social media platforms accounts for 5.5% of the variance in the Purchase variable. Considering the sample size and number of predictors, the adjusted R-square value of .048 indicates that the model's ability to explain is marginal but remains statistically significant. With an F-value of 8.388 and a p-value of .004 which is highly significant, the ANOVA table reveals that the overall regression model is statistically significant, and that Social Media Use affects the Purchase phase. The unstandardized regression coefficient for Social Media Usage is .378, which implies the probability of committing to a Purchase increase by .378 units for every unit increase in Social Media Usage, assuming all other variables remain constant. The standardized beta coefficient of .234 signifies a moderate

strength of association between the utilization of social media and consumer purchasing behavior. Finally, the normal distribution of the standardized residues is shown by the nodes being close to the diagonal in the Normal P-P diagram (s. Appendix tab. 17).

This analysis provides support for the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between the use of social media by Gen Z individuals and their purchasing behavior.

The last linear regression analyses the influence of social media usage on consumer behavior following a Purchase (s. Appendix tab. 18). The R-square value of .194 indicates that approximately 19.4% of the variance in the dependent variable Post-Purchase can be accounted for by social media usage. This represents a substantial increase in comparison to prior regression models. The adjusted R-square value is marginally lower at .188. The F-value of 5.609 and the corresponding p-value of .019 in the ANOVA table demonstrate that the model possesses significant predictive capability. Positive ($B = 2.726$) and statistically significant ($p = .019$), the non-standardized regression coefficient for social media utilization proves that an increase in social media use is statistically associated with an increase in Post-Purchase behavior. The standardized beta coefficient of .194 indicates the strength of the effect. The t-value of 2.368 provides further evidence that the coefficient is statistically significant. The proximity of the data nodes along the diagonal line in the Normal P-P diagram suggests that the residues follow a normal distribution (s. Appendix tab. 18).

In summary, this analysis confirms that social media usage is significantly and positively associated with Post-Purchase behavior. Utilization of social media appears to be a significant determinant of Post-Purchase behavior.

The statistical outcomes gathered from the linear regression analyses performed validate the three hypotheses formulated concerning the impact of Gen Z's social media usage on various stages of the customer journey in the cosmetics industry, as well as the conceptual model presented in Chapter 2.3:

H1: A significant positive correlation is observed between the Pre-Purchase phase and the utilization of social media by the younger generation. This finding supports the first hypothesis as it demonstrates that increased engagement with social media platforms positively impacts the Pre-Purchase stage of the customer journey. The greater the social media usage of Gen Z, the more favorable the impact on the pre-purchase phase. This indicates that the user's pre-

purchase behavior regarding cosmetic brands is more pronounced, which is beneficial for cosmetic brands.

H2: Moreover, the results indicate that the utilization of social media platforms by Gen Z positively impacts their intentions to purchase cosmetic products. This supports the second hypothesis, which states that the use of social media by Gen Z has a positive impact on the Purchase stage of the customer journey of cosmetic products (meaning that the purchase intention for cosmetic products is facilitated by the use of social media by Gen Z). The greater the social media usage of Gen Z, the more favorable the impact on the pre-purchase phase. This indicates that the user's pre-purchase behavior regarding cosmetic brands is more pronounced, which is beneficial for cosmetic brands.

H3: Finally, the last hypothesis was also supported as there is a positive statistical correlation between social media utilization and the Post-Purchase phase. This shows that Gen Z's social media usage positively influences Post-Purchase engagement of cosmetic brands. The greater the social media usage of Gen Z, the more favorable the impact on the pre-purchase phase. This indicates that the user's pre-purchase behavior regarding cosmetic brands is more pronounced, which is beneficial for cosmetic brands.

Consistent with our conceptual model, the empirical data supported the theoretically derived assumptions regarding the positive impact of Gen Z's social media usage on all three stages of the customer journey with cosmetic brands.

Lastly, despite the hypotheses test, we decided to examine if a difference in behaviors exists between genders because if gender differences existed in certain variables, cosmetic companies would also benefit from knowing. To check this, we used some crosstabs analyses.

The percentage of female respondents, 67%, and therefore 105 people in total, who state that they utilize social media for two to four hours per day is the largest. Male participants display a greater degree of variability concerning the duration of use. We carried out a Chi-Square Independence Test to determine whether gender (Q17) and daily social media usage (Q4) were significantly correlated. The findings of the SPSS analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship between gender and the frequency of daily social media usage (the two-sided asymptotic significance is .004 (s. Appendix tab. 19). The p-value suggests that the association between gender and social media usage is statistically significant. In addition to the data presented in the table, the bar chart illustrates the distribution of responses visually, revealing a

distinct trend in the way female participants utilize social media in comparison to their male peers (s. Appendix tab. 19).

The findings from the second crosstabs indicate that most female respondents use cosmetic products on average once per day (s. Appendix tab. 20). In contrast, male respondents show a more pronounced tendency towards using them on a weekly basis. The measured significance level of less than .001 indicates a highly significant correlation between the frequency of cosmetic product use and the gender of the participants. According to the results, female participants utilize cosmetic products on average more frequently than male participants (s. Appendix tab. 20).

The third crosstab illustrates the gender-specific distribution of the mean values during the Pre-Purchase phase (s. Appendix tab. 21). Most female respondents have mean values close to 4.00, whereas the mean values of male respondents are more dispersed. .010 is the asymptotic significance and the likelihood ratio indicates with .048 a level of significance. Both values suggest that a notable correlation exists between gender and mean values during the Pre-Purchase stage. The bar graph depicts the distribution of Pre-Purchase phase average values according to gender. The data reveals a distinct inclination towards greater mean values among female participants, whereas the values for male participants exhibit a wider range (s. Appendix tab. 21). In terms of the remaining three variables, Purchase Phase, Post-Purchase Phase, and Social Media Usage the variables did not correlate significantly with gender. Each of the three variables had a p-value greater than .05 (s. Appendix tab. 22, tab. 23, and tab. 24).

4.2 Addressing the Research Question

Social media plays a substantial and invariably favorable role in the customer journey of cosmetic brands among Gen Z consumers. The results obtained from the linear regression analysis provide evidence that social media exerts a significant influence at each phase of the customer journey. As a result, the following conclusion can be drawn regarding the research question **"What role does social media currently play in the customer journey of cosmetic brands among Generation Z consumers?"**.

Social media functions as an interactive medium through which brands can initiate conversations with Gen Z, resulting in the development of a dynamic and individualized consumer

experience. During the Pre-Purchase phase, social media enables the distribution of information about cosmetic products and attracts the interest and attention of Gen Z. This increases perception and has the potential to affect decision-making positively. During the Pre-Purchase phase, it operates as a significant touchpoint that can generate interest and form brand perception via advertising, reviews, and recommendations. By employing targeted advertising tactics and influencer marketing, brands have the ability to affect the purchasing choices of Gen Z.

It has been determined that social media significantly influences the development of purchasing intentions among people from Gen Z. This implies that social media functions not solely as a channel for spreading information, but also as a platform that exerts a direct impact on consumer decisions. In this instance, social media functions as a sales channel that accelerates the progression from desire to acquisition. Social media serves as a platform for brand storytelling, influencer marketing, and personalized advertising.

Brands that use these platforms effectively can significantly influence the purchasing behavior of this target group. Social media exerts a favorable influence on the phase after the purchase as well. Consumers of Gen Z utilize social media platforms to provide feedback and share their experiences, thereby augmenting brand loyalty and the overall customer experience. Social media engagement in positive Post-Purchase experiences can stimulate repeat purchases and amplify word-of-mouth advertising, both of which are beneficial for cosmetic brands that frequently depend on brand perception and image.

To summarize, social media exerts a significant impact on the customer journey of cosmetic brands within Gen Z through its ongoing influence on the stages of Pre-Purchase, Purchase, and Post-Purchase. Establishing and maintaining long-lasting relationships with Gen Z is an impossible task without social media for cosmetics companies. The social media activities of Gen Z influence both their personal preferences and their purchasing decisions regarding cosmetic products. Proficient brands on these platforms can exert a substantial impact on the buying patterns of this specific age group.

5. Discussion and Implications

5.1 Interpretation of Findings in the Context of Existing Literature

This research examines the impact of social media on the customer journey of cosmetic brands, with a specific emphasis on Gen Z. This underscores the impact of social media on consumer

purchasing behavior and decision-making. The importance of social media platforms during the pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages is becoming increasingly apparent. The analysis demonstrates a positive correlation between consumer behavior and social media usage, as supported by quantitative data.

Baharuddin et al. (2022) and Binwani and Ho (2019) highlight the significance of social media for cosmetic brands, particularly concerning the impact exerted by influencers and brand perception. While both Temkin (2010) and Lemon & Verhoef (2016) discuss the customer journey and its comprehension in a broad sense, they do not place particular emphasis on social media or cosmetic brands. Consistent with the findings of Binwani and Ho, Baharuddin et al., and this study, the central significance of social media in the marketing balance of cosmetic brands is emphasized in the research outcomes of this study. Nevertheless, this study offers a more comprehensive analysis of the distinct stages comprising the customer journey and their correlation with the social media usage patterns displayed by Gen Z.

One difference is that this research focuses on Gen Z, whereas alternative analyses examine broader demographics or overarching marketing tactics. Our study demonstrates that consumer engagement and communication via social media are becoming increasingly essential, particularly among younger target demographics. This facilitates a more comprehensive and precise examination of the inclinations and behaviors of this particular generation with digital affinities. Consequently, the insights generated by this research into forthcoming trends and obstacles in the field of cosmetic brand marketing are of great importance.

This work differentiates itself by analyzing the function of social media in the customer journey using quantitative data. This methodology establishes an impartial foundation for comprehending the influence of social media on consumer decision-making and purchasing patterns.

In spite of the success of Lush Cosmetics, who decided to abandon some social media platforms, it is important to acknowledge that the company maintained some social media presence; it is unlikely that a cosmetic company can achieve complete success lacking ever utilizing social media as a channel of communication and advertising.

In brief, this research adds to the current body of knowledge by having a closer look at the significance of social media throughout the customer journey of cosmetic brands, specifically in relation to Gen Z. This illustrates the imperative for brands to enhance their social media tactics and tailor their approaches to align with the preferences and actions of this particular demographic.

5.2 Managerial Implications for Cosmetic Brands

Research clearly shows that social media nowadays plays a crucial role in the customer journey of cosmetic brands, especially for Gen Z consumers. In addition to functioning as platforms for marketing and advertising, these types of media also provide consumers with important knowledge. By leveraging targeted content and interactions on these platforms, brands can attract consumers' interest, exert a substantial impact on their purchasing choices, and have a lasting impression in the long-term run, after purchasing something. Social media usage by Gen Z has a positive effect on their cosmetic product purchasing behavior, according to our findings. This interaction encompasses activities such as seeking information and inspiration before making a purchase, making the purchase decision itself, endorsing the products, and engaging in post-purchase interactions with the brands. Social media platforms are thus, an essential instrument for cosmetic companies to engage and connect with their target audience.

Social media are an essential instrument, particularly during the pre-purchase stage of the consumer journey. During this stage, consumers are actively seeking product-related information, evaluations, and recommendations. Cosmetic brands should focus on social media during the awareness phase to establish brand recognition via influencer collaborations and visually appealing content. It is advisable to offer comprehensive product information and reviews during the research phase to foster trust. Social media offers a suitable platform for spreading relevant information to prospective consumers and assisting them in the process of making informed decisions. This may be accomplished, for instance, via advertisements, brand user accounts, or collaborations with influencers. Useful during the decision-making phase are interactive, personalized campaigns that create dialogue. Within the purchase phase, social platforms can be applied to promote exclusive offers and simplified purchasing processes. Ultimately, during the advocacy phase, effective customer service via social media contributes to heightened customer loyalty and satisfaction. Hence, it is recommended that cosmetic brands develop and apply a well-considered social media strategy that addresses consumers' demands at all three phases of the customer journey. For example, to increase brand loyalty among Gen Z consumers, such a strategy should strive to generate genuine and personalized experiences. Cosmetic companies have the potential to greatly enhance consumer engagement on social media platforms by implementing User Generated Content (UGC). UGC is created and shared by the users. UGC can be generated effectively through the implementation of campaigns, contests, or challenges. As an example, cosmetics companies might organize a competition wherein consumers are invited to contribute videos or written reviews describing their individual experiences with the

products. As it encourages consumers to share their product-related experiences and outcomes, this type of campaign can be particularly effective during the after-purchase phase. To develop strong brand engagement, companies should prioritize the creation of appropriate content that aligns with the values and interests of this generation.

The positive impact that social media usage has on each of the three stages of the customer journey is amplified. In the three phases of cosmetic brand engagement, Gen Z users who allocate less time to social media are comparatively more difficult to access than those who devote more time to social media. This is demonstrated by the linear regressions. Additionally, on average, women invest more time in social media than males. Consequently, this enhances the accessibility of women to cosmetic brands throughout the customer journey. While this outcome might not come as a surprise, statistical certainty can be utilized to measure it and advise a cosmetics company to concentrate primarily on women or seek out alternative marketing channels if it is more difficult to reach males than through social media. In terms of social media platform usage, YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok pre-dominate among Gen Z. These platforms provide enormous opportunities for brands to promote their products and interact with this target audience. Instagram and TikTok present significant opportunities for cosmetic brands due to their primarily visual nature and capacity to generate innovative content.

5.3 Academic Contributions

Social media's impact on the decision-making processes of Gen Z within the cosmetics industry was highlighted in the present research. The findings of our study were derived from an extensive survey that investigated demographic characteristics, social media and cosmetic product usage patterns, brand preferences, and the influence of social media at various points of the consumer decision-making process, pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase. This research investigated the impact of social media on the behavior of Gen Z regarding cosmetics and presented relevant conclusions regarding their consumption patterns. The significance of social media to brands' marketing strategies and the consumer journey is emphasized. The customer journey is a fundamental concept in the field of marketing, encompassing the entire process from initial product perception to final purchase and beyond.

Further investigation in this field, particularly with regard to social media, enhances our comprehension of the contemporary purchasing behaviors exhibited by consumers. The customer journey has undergone significant transformation due to the advent of digital media. A wealth

of information regarding consumer preferences, behaviors, and feedback is accessible via social media. Investigating the impact of social media on the consumer journey yields significant knowledge regarding these facets, consequently enhancing the efficacy of marketing efforts. Furthermore, this study examined gender-specific variations in the utilization of cosmetic products and social media, an aspect that is important to the formulation of targeted marketing and product development approaches. These results hold significant value for cosmetic companies that target Gen Z and highlight the key impact of social media on consumer turnover and brand loyalty.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This research provided an in-depth examination of the influence that social media exerts on the purchasing process of Gen Z within the cosmetics sector. It demonstrated the significant impact that social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok have, not only on shaping brand perception but also on influencing consumer purchasing and post-purchase behavior. Emphasis was placed on the significance of influencer marketing and personalized advertising. Utilizing social media effectively is crucial for cosmetic brands to successfully engage Gen Z and establish long-lasting consumer relationships, according to the findings. The importance of incorporating social media into companies' marketing strategies to ensure success in a rapidly evolving market environment was highlighted.

6.2 Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. One significant restriction is that the survey unexpectedly involved the elder segment of Gen Z, thereby reducing the representativeness of the sample, as we targeted the entire generation. Moreover, the study's generalization of the cosmetics industry is excessively broad; narrowing the investigation to particular segments, like hair products, or price tiers would have enabled the collection of more precise, eventually more significant results. Furthermore, the respective Cronbach Alpha values of the four scales are not high. Although they were all acceptable, they were not very pronounced. This was because there

was very little existing scientific work on the subject and not much research was done in this area before. In addition, our study did not provide comprehensive data regarding the marketing strategies of cosmetic brands, including channel selection and content development for distinct Gen Z groups. Despite these limitations, the research retains its significance and has been carefully and rigorously executed from a scientific point of view. The identified limitations serve as foundations for future investigations that aim to enhance the comprehension of the subject matter.

6.3 Future Research Directions

Our research demonstrates a multitude of potential opportunities for future research. Representativeness of the sample could be enhanced by including a younger segment of Generation Z. To contribute to future studies, it is recommended that the study examining the influence of social media on the customer journey be replicated, with a focus on product categories and differences between generations. This may result in the development of innovative and more dependable measuring instruments for the various stages of the consumer journey. In addition, to obtain more comprehensive insights, mixed methodologies, and qualitative techniques, including in-depth interviews and focus groups, could be employed in conjunction with company marketing managers and Generation Z consumers. Incorporating a broader range of industrial sectors into the study would enhance the applicability of the findings. Furthermore, the advancement of a new scale, as suggested in the preceding section, would provide valuable insights. It is advisable to contemplate reviewing the dissertations of others as a way to acquire additional insights. By focusing on particular segments or price ranges within the cosmetics industry, more profound insights may be obtained. Further examination of marketing strategies and content development tailored to distinct Gen Z segments would provide valuable insights. Additionally, it is crucial to look into the effects that cultural disparities and emerging social media technologies have on Gen Z. An alternative research methodology could involve conducting a more comprehensive investigation into the development of marketing strategies tailored for Gen Z within the cosmetics industry. This could involve the examination of advertising strategies, channels, content, and messages that are specifically tailored to the requirements and desires of the target audience. The relevance of influencers and the development of personalized content may be significant in this context. Beyond social media, it is crucial to identify other factors that may impact the customer journey for the purpose of attaining a more comprehensive understanding.

7. Appendices

7.1 Scale Items

Social Media Usage

Construct	Item code	Loading
Social media use	SMU1—Social media is part of my everyday activity	0.756
	SMU2—Social media has become part of my daily routine	0.758
	SMU3—I feel out of touch when I have not logged onto social media for a while	0.834
	SMU4—I would be sorry if social media shut down	0.747

(Ostic et al., 2021)

BFAS4	Spent more time on Facebook than initially intended?	.68
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(Andreassen et al., 2012)

Pre-Purchase

Table 26.1 Main variables in the questionnaire

Variable	Platform	Cust. journey stage	Operationalization
YT-Awr	YouTube	Pre-purchase (Need recognition)	Know about new products or brands due to YouTubers
TT-Awr	TikTok	Pre-purchase (Need recognition)	Know about new products or brands due to TrikTokers
YT-Lrn	YouTube	Pre-purchase (Need recognition)	Learn more about products in YouTube without being that the initial searching purpose
TT-Lrn	TikTok	Pre-purchase (Need recognition)	Learn more about products in TikTok without being that the initial searching purpose
YT-SrchBfr	YouTube	Pre-purchase (Information search)	Search for YouTubers product reviews videos before a purchase
TT-SrchBfr	TikTok	Pre-purchase (Information search)	Search for TikTokers product reviews videos before a purchase
YT-SrchAft	YouTube	Pre-purchase (Alternatives evaluation)	Search for more informations about products after watching YouTubers
TT-SrchAft	TikTok	Pre-purchase (Alternatives evaluation)	Search for more informations about products after watching TikTokers

(Silveira et al., 2023)

Purchase

If I were going to purchase a luxury product, I would consider buying this brand.
 If I were shopping for a luxury brand, the likelihood I would purchase this luxury brand is high.
 My willingness to buy this luxury brand would be high if I were shopping for a luxury brand.
 The probability I would consider buying this luxury brand is high.

(Bian & Forsythe, 2012)

YT-Purch	YouTube	Purchase	Purchase after watching YouTubers reviews
TT-Purch	TikTok	Purchase	Purchase after watching TikTokers reviews

(Silveira et al., 2023)

Post-Purchase

YT-Rgrt	YouTube	Post-purchase	Regret having followed advices of YouTubers product reviews
TT-Rgrt	TikTok	Post-purchase	Regret having followed advices of TikTokers product reviews

(Silveira et al., 2023)

I would recommend the family restaurant to those who seek my advice	3.420 (0.620)	2.895 (0.624)	5.854 (0.000)
I intend to continue to visit the family restaurant	3.916 (0.713)	2.606 (0.785)	11.977 (0.000)

(Lee et al., 2006)

BE1: After reading the post shared by people in my social media network, I will press the 'like' button	0.646			
BE2: After reading the post, I will comment on it	0.833	0.096	12.623	***
BE3: After reading the post, I will share it with my friends	0.789	0.102	12.364	***

(Onofrei et al., 2022)

7.2 Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

My name is Julia, and I am currently writing my master's thesis in the study field of management and marketing. I would like to know more about your social media consumption and purchasing habits. This questionnaire has three main sections. Around 5 minutes are required to complete this survey. For the success of the study, it is important that you fill out the survey entirely and honestly. All information is collected anonymously, cannot be associated with your identity, and is treated with strict confidentiality.

Thank you for your participation!

Q1. I was born between 1995 and 2010. *

- Yes
- No → **End of survey**

Q2. I have one or more accounts on social media platforms. *

- Yes
- No → **End of survey**

In the following section, I will examine your social media user behavior in greater detail.

Q4. How often do you use social media? *

- Not every single day
- Less than 1 hour per day
- 1 to less 2 hours per day
- 2 to less than 4 hours per day
- 4 or more hours per day

Q5. Please select all social media platforms you use. *

- Instagram
- Snapchat
- TikTok

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- BeReal
- Pinterest
- Twitter (X)
- YouTube
- Others: Text field

Q6. Which of the platforms mentioned above do you utilize the most?

- Open text field

Q7. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Social Media is part of my everyday activity. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Social Media has become a part of my daily routine. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I feel out of touch when I have not logged onto social media for a while. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I would be sorry if social media shut down. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I do spend more time on social media than initially intended. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

The next section addresses your purchasing behavior and habits towards cosmetic brands.

Note: The category of cosmetic products includes hair, facial, body care products, and any type of makeup.

Q8. How often do you use cosmetics? *

- Several times on each day
- About once a day
- A few times a week
- A few times in a month or less
- Completely irregular

Q9. How often do you buy new cosmetic products, regardless of the category? *

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every few months
- Rarely or never

Q10. Which cosmetic brands do you currently use? Think of any hair, body or face products that come across your mind. *

- Open text field

Q11. Do you buy cosmetic brands after seeing their products on social media? *

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Q12. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

I know about new cosmetic products or brands due to social media. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I learn more about cosmetic products on social media even if it was not the initial searching purpose. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I search for more information about cosmetic products after seeing branded content on social media. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree

- Strongly disagree

I search for reviews on social media before a cosmetic purchase. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q13. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

The probability I would consider buying a cosmetic product after seeing it on social media is high. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

If I were shopping for a cosmetic brand, the likelihood I would purchase a cosmetic brand after seeing it on social media is high. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

My willingness to buy a cosmetic brand after seeing it on social media would be high if I were shopping for a cosmetic brand. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I purchase cosmetic products after watching influencers' reviews or branded content on social media. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

When available, I use influencers' promotion codes for buying cosmetic products. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q14. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

I would recommend the cosmetic brands I currently use on social media. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

I intend to continue to use social media to get information about new cosmetic products and brands. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

After buying a cosmetic product, I will interact with the cosmetic brand on social media (like following the brand's account, liking or commenting on feed posts, etc.). *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

So far, I have not regretted following the review of influencers or branded content on social media. *

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q15. Do you follow any cosmetic brands on social media? *

- Yes
- No

Q16. If yes, which specific ones?

- Open text field

To finalize the survey, you will be asked a few questions about yourself.

Q17. What is your gender? *

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary / Third gender

Q18. How old are you? *

- 13-16 years
- 17-20 years
- 21-24 years
- 25-28 years

Q19. What is your highest degree? *

- High school/Secondary school
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- PhD
- Others

Q20. What is your monthly net income? *

- I don't have a job
- Less than 1.000€
- 1.000€ - 1.500€
- 1.501€ - 2.000€
- 2.001€ - 2.500€
- 2.501€ - 3.000€
- More than 3.001€

Q21. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

- Pupil
- Student
- Student and employed
- Employed
- Not employed

Thank you very much for participating in the survey and supporting the research of customer journeys for cosmetic brands! If you have any questions or comments, please contact me via mail at s-jriederer@ucp.pt.

7.3 Survey Findings - Frequencies

Q4

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 1 hour per day	5	3.2	3.2	3.2
	1 to less than 2 hours per day	50	31.6	31.6	34.8
	2 to less than 4 hours per day	74	46.8	46.8	81.6
	4 or more hours per day	28	17.7	17.7	99.4
	Not every single day	1	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: "How often do you use social media?" (SPSS)

Q6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		23	14.6	14.6	14.6
	TikTok	23	14.6	14.6	29.1
	Instagram	93	58.9	58.9	88.0
	LinkedIn	2	1.3	1.3	89.2
	YouTube	11	7.0	7.0	96.2
	Twitter	3	1.9	1.9	98.1
	Facebook	1	.6	.6	98.7
	Others	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: "Which of the platforms mentioned above do you utilize the most?" (SPSS)

Q8

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		8	5.1	5.1	5.1
	Several times on each day	68	43.0	43.0	48.1
	About once a day	53	33.5	33.5	81.6
	A few times a week	11	7.0	7.0	88.6
	A few times in a month or less	8	5.1	5.1	93.7
	Completely irregular	10	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0		

Table 7: "How often do you use cosmetics?" (SPSS)

Q9

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	8	5.1	5.1	5.1
Daily	1	.6	.6	5.7
Weekly	21	13.3	13.3	19.0
Monthly	70	44.3	44.3	63.3
Every few months	48	30.4	30.4	93.7
Rarely or never	10	6.3	6.3	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 8: "How often do you buy new cosmetic products, regardless of the category?" (SPSS)

Q10

Cosmetic Brand	Frequencies
Nivea	29
L'Oréal	19
Maybelline	12
The Ordinary	12
La Roche Posay	11
Dove	10

Table 9: "Which cosmetic brands do you currently use? Think at least of one hair, body or face product that comes across your mind." (SPSS)

Q11

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	8	5.1	5.1	5.1
Often	14	8.9	8.9	13.9
Sometimes	52	32.9	32.9	46.8
Rarely	49	31.0	31.0	77.8
Never	35	22.2	22.2	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: "Do you buy cosmetic brands after seeing their products on social media?" (SPSS)

Q17

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	8.2	8.2	8.2
Female	105	66.5	66.5	74.7
Male	39	24.7	24.7	99.4
Non-binary / third gender	1	.6	.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 11: "What is your gender?" (SPSS)

Q18

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	8.2	8.2	8.2
21-24 years	54	34.2	34.2	42.4
25-28 years	91	57.6	57.6	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 12: "How old are you?" (SPSS)

Q19

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	8.2	8.2	8.2
High school/Secondary school	5	3.2	3.2	11.4
Bachelor's degree	94	59.5	59.5	70.9
Master's degree	46	29.1	29.1	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 13: "What is your highest degree?" (SPSS)

Q20

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	8.2	8.2	8.2
I don't have a job	24	15.2	15.2	23.4
Less than 1.000€	24	15.2	15.2	38.6
1.000€ – 1.500€	33	20.9	20.9	59.5
1.501€ – 2.000€	23	14.6	14.6	74.1
2.001€ – 2.500€	13	8.2	8.2	82.3
2.501€ – 3.000€	14	8.9	8.9	91.1
More than 3.001€	14	8.9	8.9	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 14: "What is your monthly net income?" (SPSS)

Q21

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13	8.2	8.2	8.2
Student	39	24.7	24.7	32.9
Student and employed	63	39.9	39.9	72.8
Employed	43	27.2	27.2	100.0
Total	158	100.0	100.0	

Table 15: "Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?" (SPSS)

7.4 Survey Findings - Linear Regression

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.241 ^a	.058	.052	1.01209	.058	9.069	1	147	.003

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

b. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Pre-Purchase

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.289	1	9.289	9.069	.003 ^b
	Residual	150.577	147	1.024		
	Total	159.866	148			

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Pre-Purchase

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.491	.561		2.657	.009
	Mittelwert Social Media Usage	.409	.136	.241	3.011	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Pre-Purchase

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

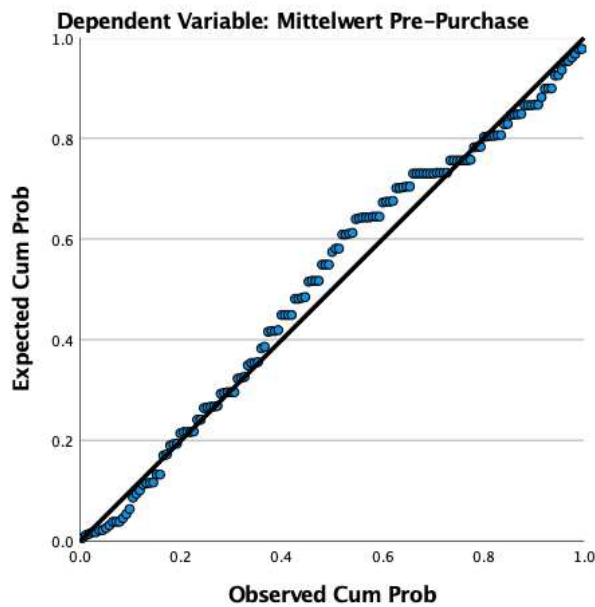


Table 16: Linear Regression - Pre-Purchase Phase (SPSS)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.234 ^a	.055	.048	.964193720	.055	8.388	1	145	.004

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

b. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Purchase

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.798	1	7.798	8.388	.004 ^b
	Residual	134.802	145	.930		
	Total	142.600	146			

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Purchase

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.585	.540		2.936	.004
	Mittelwert Social Media Usage	.378	.131	.234	2.896	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Purchase

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

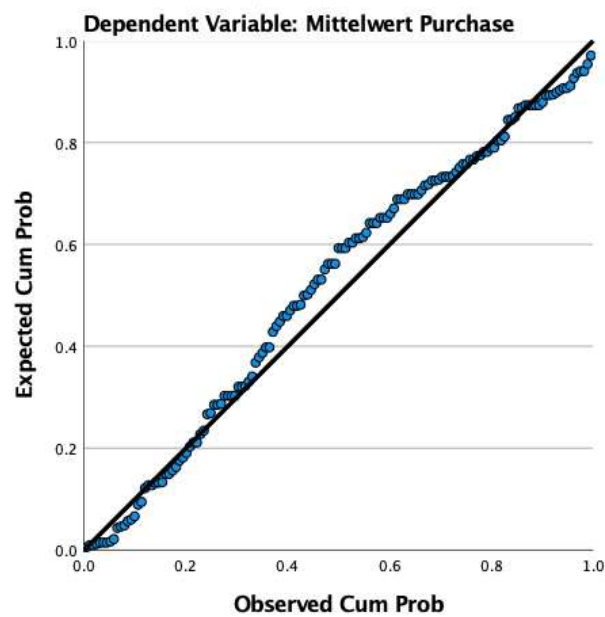


Table 17: Linear Regression - Purchase Phase (SPSS)

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.194 ^a	.038	.031	.84750	.038	5.609	1	143	.019

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

b. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Post-Purchase

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.029	1	4.029	5.609	.019 ^b
	Residual	102.711	143	.718		
	Total	106.740	144			

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Post-Purchase

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mittelwert Social Media Usage

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.641	.483		3.396	<.001
	Mittelwert Social Media Usage	.276	.117	.194	2.368	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Mittelwert Post-Purchase

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

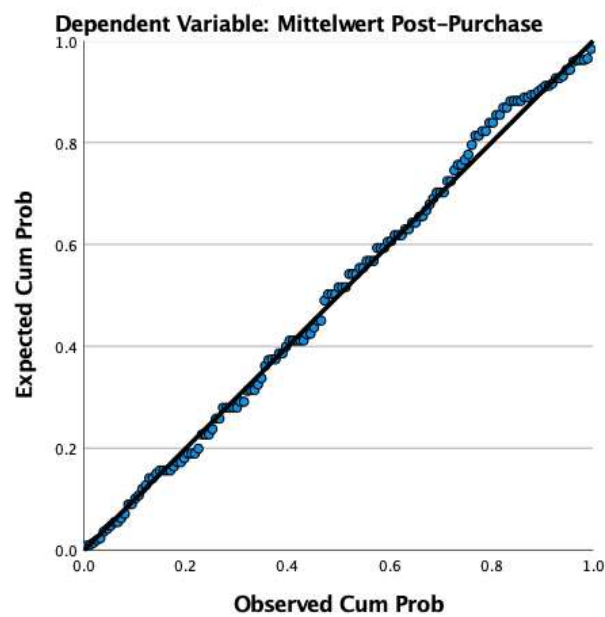


Table 18: Linear Regression - Post-Purchase Phase (SPSS)

7.5 Survey Findings - Crosstabs

Crosstab

Count

		Q4				Total	
		Less than 1 hour per day	1 to less than 2 hours per day	2 to less than 4 hours per day	4 or more hours per day		Not every single day
Q17		1	4	4	3	1	13
	Female	1	26	56	22	0	105
	Male	3	19	14	3	0	39
	Non-binary / third gender	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	5	50	74	28	1	158

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.169 ^a	12	.004
Likelihood Ratio	23.104	12	.027
N of Valid Cases	158		

a. 13 cells (65.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

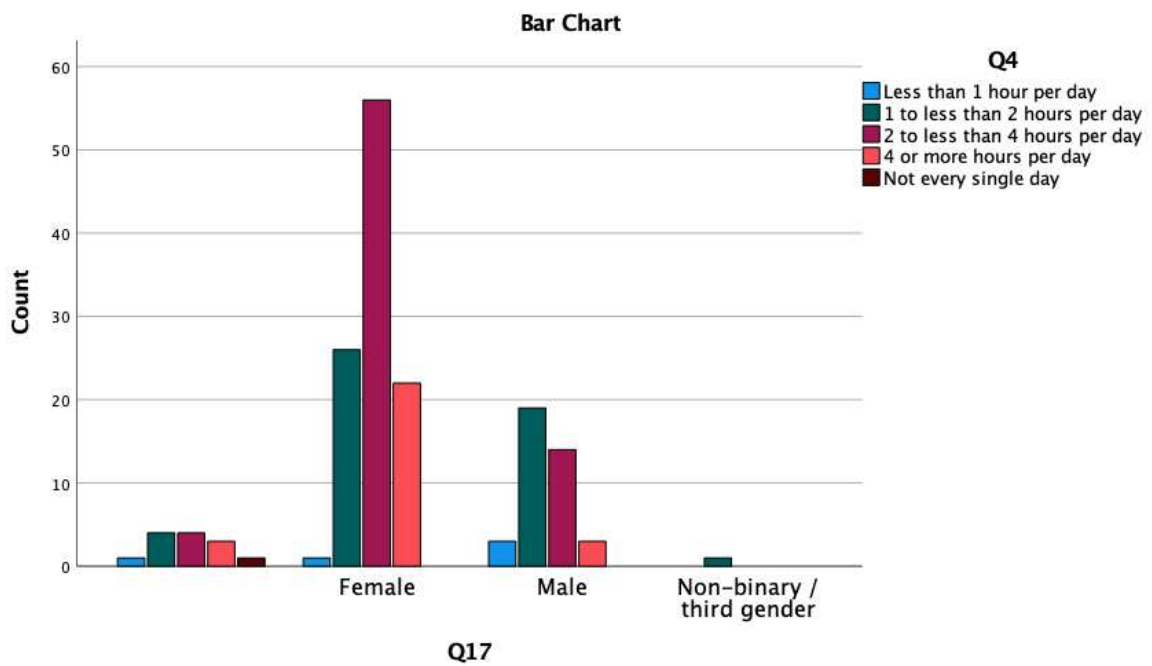


Table 19: Crosstab - Q17 and Q4 (SPSS)

Crosstab

Count

	Q8						Total	
		Several times on each day	About once a day	A few times a week	A few times in a month or less	Completely irregular		
Q17		8	2	1	1	1	0	13
Female		0	62	32	7	2	2	105
Male		0	4	19	3	5	8	39
Non-binary / third gender		0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total		8	68	53	11	8	10	158

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	138.425 ^a	15	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	91.290	15	<.001
N of Valid Cases	158		

a. 15 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .05.

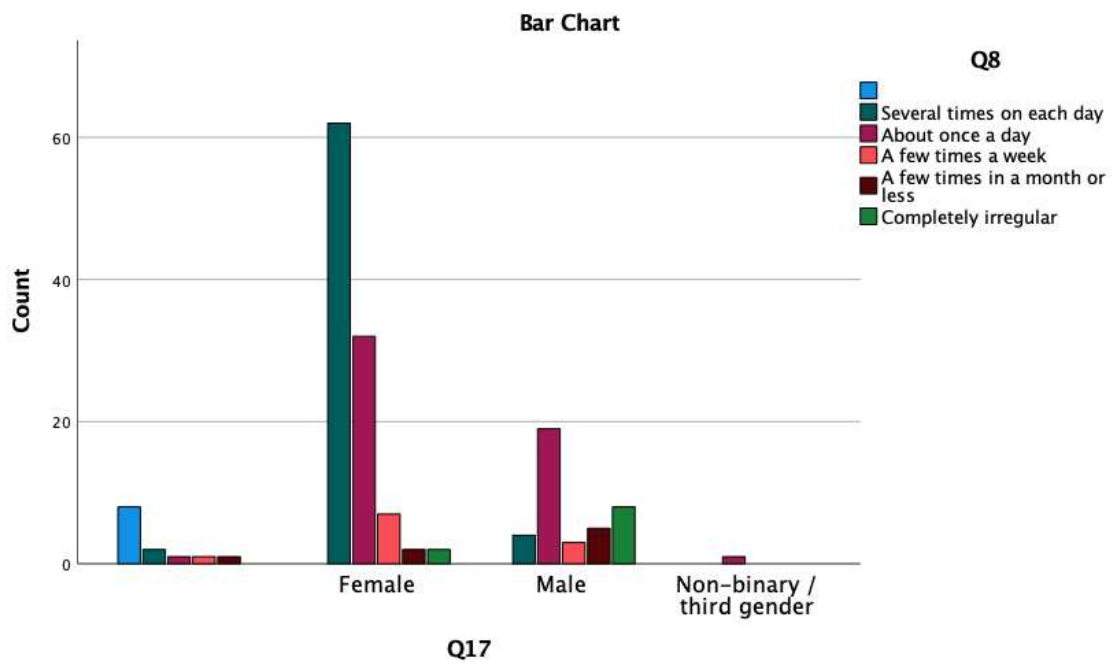


Table 20: Crosstab - Q17 and Q8 (SPSS)

Crosstab

Count

Q17	Mittelwert Pre-Purchase																		Total
	1.00	1.25	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.25	4.50	4.75	5.00		
Female	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	4	
Male	1	0	1	3	3	3	10	6	12	3	10	19	12	9	6	4	3	105	
Non-binary / third gender	6	2	2	3	5	1	3	3	1	2	7	1	1	1	0	0	1	39	
Total	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
Total	9	2	3	6	8	4	13	9	14	5	17	20	13	10	7	5	4	149	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	73.894 ^a	48	.010
Likelihood Ratio	65.466	48	.048
N of Valid Cases	149		

a. 58 cells (85.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

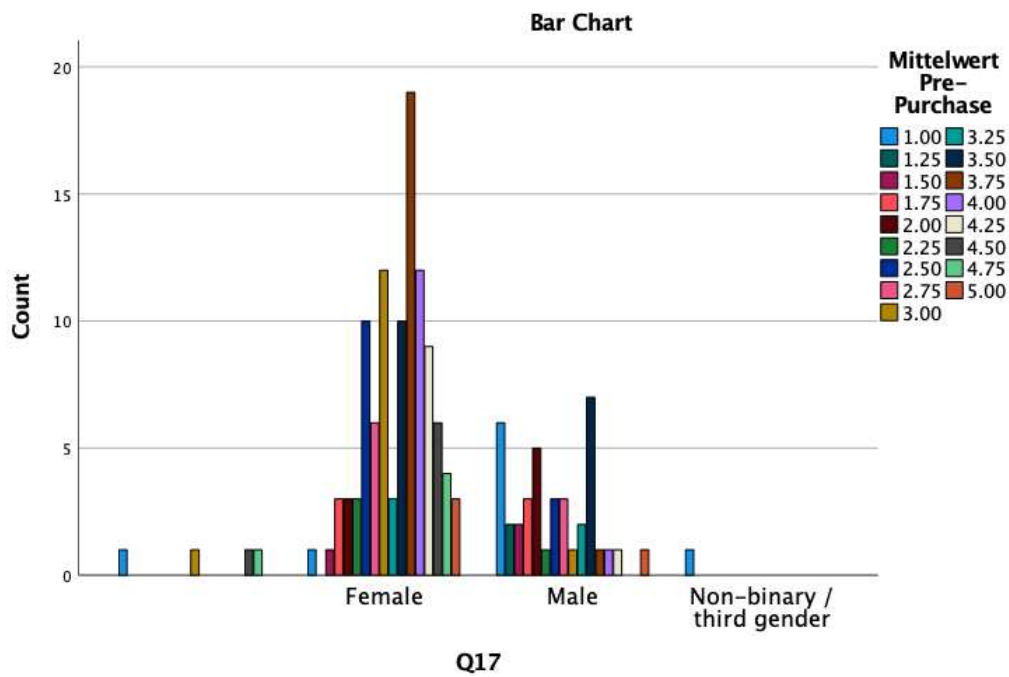


Table 21: Crosstab - Q17 and Pre-Purchase (SPSS)

Crosstab

Count	Mittelwert Purchase																	Total				
	1,00000000	1,20000000	1,40000000	1,60000000	1,80000000	2,00000000	2,20000000	2,40000000	2,60000000	2,80000000	3,00000000	3,20000000	3,40000000	3,60000000	3,80000000	4,00000000	4,20000000		4,40000000	4,60000000	4,80000000	5,00000000
Q17	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Female	2	1	1	2	5	1	2	5	7	5	3	5	12	13	9	14	6	3	6	2	1	105
Male	5	0	0	0	2	4	2	5	1	2	6	2	2	2	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	39
Non-binary / third gender	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	9	1	1	2	7	5	4	10	8	7	9	8	14	15	12	14	7	4	6	3	1	147

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68.790 ^a	60	.204
Likelihood Ratio	56.770	60	.595
N of Valid Cases	147		

a. 72 cells (85.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Bar Chart

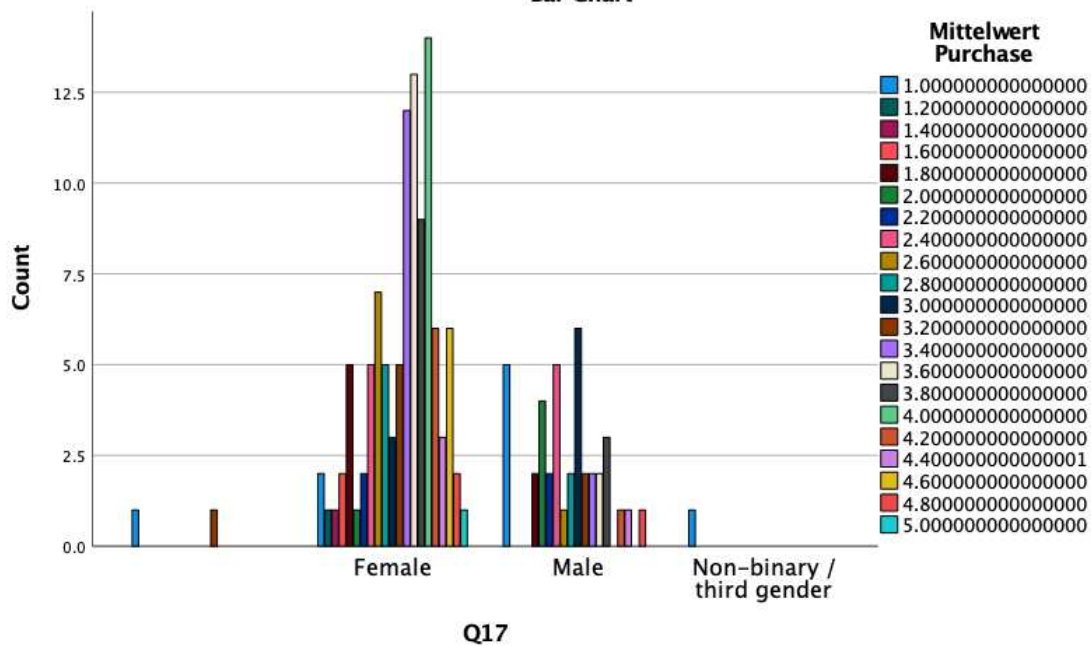


Table 22: Crosstab - Q17 and Purchase (SPSS)

Crosstab

Count

		Mittelwert Post-Purchase														Total
		1.00	1.50	1.75	2.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	3.00	3.25	3.50	3.75	4.00	4.25	4.50	
Q17	Female	5	4	1	7	11	11	12	15	8	5	12	7	5	2	105
	Male	2	5	3	8	1	3	3	5	4	1	2	0	2	0	39
	Non-binary / third gender	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total		7	9	4	16	12	14	15	20	12	6	14	7	7	2	145

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.392 ^a	26	.294
Likelihood Ratio	27.235	26	.397
N of Valid Cases	145		

a. 30 cells (71.4%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Bar Chart

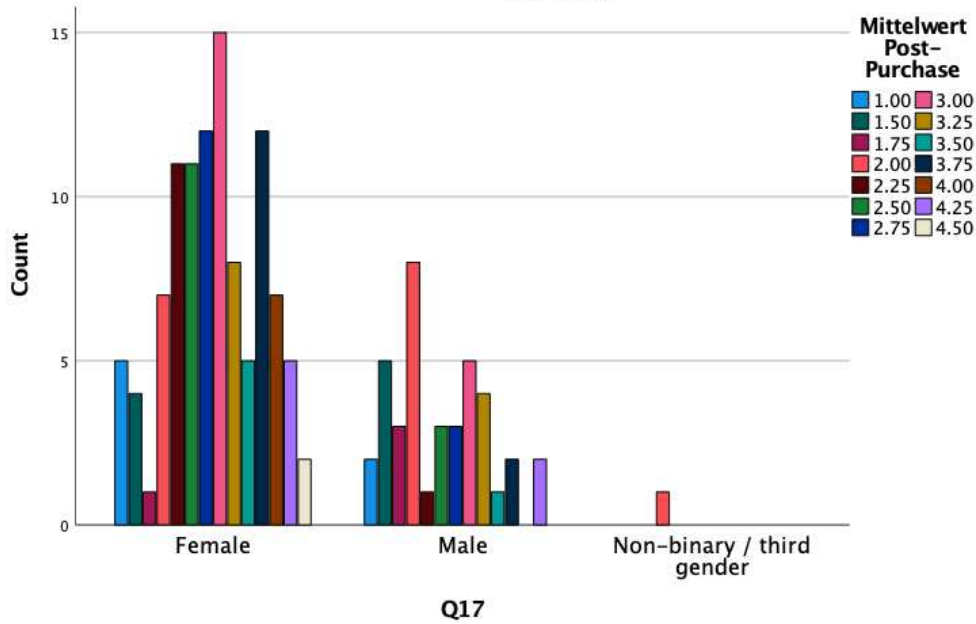


Table 23: Crosstab - Q17 and Post-Purchase (SPSS)

Crosstab

Count	Mittelwert Social Media Usage																Total	
	1.00000000	1.80000000	2.00000000	2.20000000	2.66666667	2.80000000	3.00000000	3.20000000	3.40000000	3.60000000	3.80000000	4.00000000	4.20000000	4.40000000	4.60000000	4.80000000		5.00000000
Q17	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	3	2	2	0	1	1	0	13
Female	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	3	3	5	9	23	9	14	14	14	105
Male	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	5	2	7	7	6	3	0	2	39
Non-binary / third gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	5	4	12	14	32	18	20	18	15	8	158

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	57.066 ^a	48	.174
Likelihood Ratio	48.859	48	.438
N of Valid Cases	158		

a. 59 cells (86.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Bar Chart

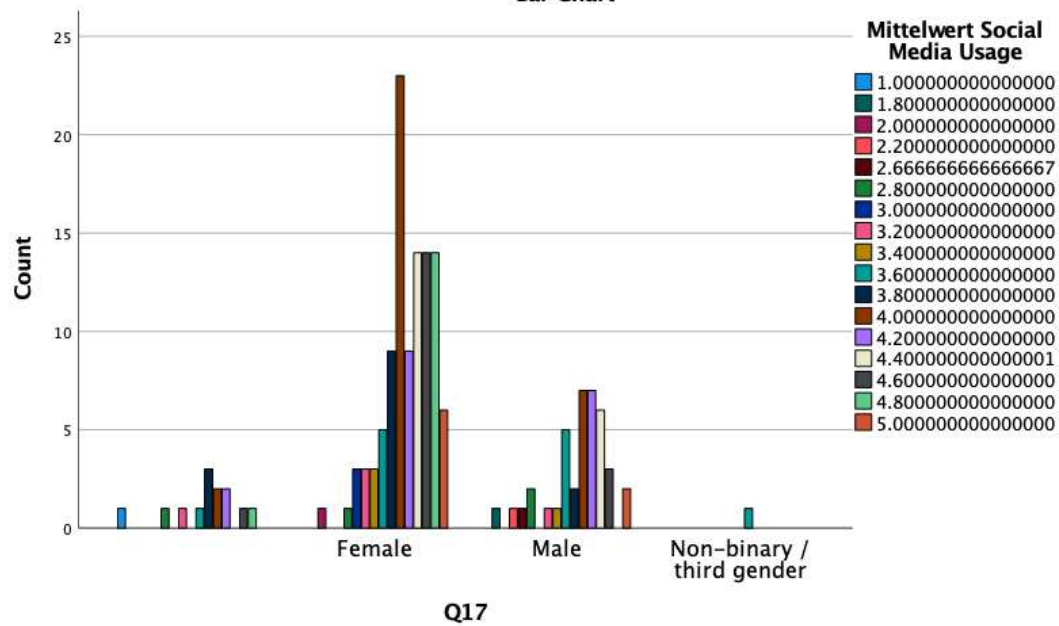


Table 24: Crosstab - Q17 and Social Media Usage (SPSS)

8. Bibliography

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