



UNIVERSIDADE
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DIVERSE OR NOT?
REPRESENTATION IN INFLUENCER MARKETING
FROM A PERSPECTIVE OF RACE

Internship to Universidade Católica Portuguesa to obtain a
Master's Degree In Communication, Internet and New Media

By

Camilla Bryø Christoffersen

Universidade Católica Portuguesa

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Abstract

This internship report is based on curricular internship at Social Ninjas, a digital marketing agency. During the internship, lasting 6 months the primary work was done in managing influencer marketing, an observation was done early on, that there was a lack of representation among the influencers. This was found in a combination of looking through an influencer platform, and realizing talking to the internship company, that there was a lack of awareness about this subject, which was found interesting, when thinking about the shift happening in society currently talking about race. Correlating the lack of awareness with the lack of representation, the study set out to examine the current state of representation amongst non-white influencers in Portugal. Furthermore, to understand what initiatives brands can take in their efforts in becoming more diverse in their marketing strategy, ultimately to promote representation and diversity.

It was an explorative study, set out to examine the subject based on a qualitative approach of semi structured interviews and a content analyse. The content analyse was done, to understand the current state of representation of non-white influencers. It was conducted based on the 100 top ranked beauty influencers, taken from a influencer marketing platform. Measuring this could be used as an indicator for the overall landscape. Furthermore, semi structured interviews was conducted with different actors in the industry, agencies, expert and influencer. Aiming to give an in dept knowledge about some of the issues within the industry, that effect the current state of representation and diversity.

The internship report hoped to find a lack of representation of non-white influencers within Portugal. Supporting the initial observations done during an internship at a digital marketing agency. The findings hope to support that there is an issue within the influencer marketing industry in Portugal, when it comes to the way the industry promote representation and diversity, and further research needs to be done to examine and clarify the issues within the landscape as a whole.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, racial structure, diversity, representation

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Introduction

A topic that has always been discussed widely as an occurrent problem in society is racism. The way we talk about and treat racism has changed over the last couple of years and is now debated more than ever. People are asking for racial justice, and there is a demand for change within our society. Following the murder of George Floyd, we saw the power of social media where the video was shared and watched by millions (Wirtschafter, 2021). was the catalyst that started the movement of Black Lives Matter and peoples demand for change. Information was shared, and eyes were opened towards how the history of race is still affecting us and our systems to this day (Wirtschafter, 2021).

Also, in the marketing industries, it had an effect, seeing companies supporting the Black Lives Matter sceptical whether or not it has just been a way for the brands to raise their profiles and gain positive feedback from the consumers, or are they genuinely interested in the cause. A term has even been made for it; Brand Activism which is a trend based on consumer behaviour asking for companies to take a stand on political, social and environmental issues (Duarte, 2020). Also, in the influencer marketing industry, there has consequently been asked for changes. A racial injustice has been noticed among black influencers where systemic racism has been pointed out as the reason why white influences are still being paid more than non-white influencers. Pointing out a significantly large pay gap (Schiffer, 2020). As to bring awareness to the racial injustice happening in Influencer Marketing activists created the Instagram account #influencerpaygap. The page is an outlet for black influencers to have a voice, speaking out about racial injustice happening to them within the industry. Calling out the industry for its lack of awareness and biases (*Influencerpaygap*, n.d.). Furthermore, platforms have been called out. One of the more known cases was when Tik Tok and Twitter were called out for their algorithm creating racial injustice for enhancing content from white content creators (Schiffer, 2020).

Though there is a shift happening within the marketing industry, and the brands are starting to become more aware in their efforts when it comes to thinking more about diversity and representation into their advertising, but critics still call them out for not doing enough, stating that using one or two non-white influencers a year doesn't change

the deeper root of a systemic problem. Instead they need to change their marketing strategies and focus on changing their biases and blind spots (Schiffer, 2020).

In relation, this research sets out to examine the current state of representation of non-white within influencer marketing in Portugal. By interviewing agencies and influencers the aim is to gain insight into the issues within the industry regarding representation and diversity. Recognizing the challenges helps understand which initiatives brands can take to become more diverse in their overall marketing strategy.

Problem Framework

A lack of academic research within this field makes it difficult to point out the exact problem. Leaving us with a research gap for the current state of representation of non-white influencers in Portugal. Influencer marketing is a field that is relatively new, and even though plenty of studies have been conducted, none that revolve around the question of race and inequality within Influencer Marketing.

During an internship, an observation sparked a realization of a potential research gap within race representation in influencer marketing in Portugal. Looking at studies that research racial inequalities within marketing, it was possible to create a hypothesis and develop the report around that. Furthermore, building on from testimonies and own observations during an internship, the baseline for the report was established, assuming it was a lack of representation that needed to be proved, as well as understanding why that this lack of representation exists looking into inequality and diversity issues within racial injustice. Looking at already conducted research, asking agencies and influencers, doing a content analysis of influencers in Portugal, and understanding the point of view from a marketing perspective through Manuela Botelho the general secretary of APAN¹ this internship report sets out to explore the current state of representation in influencer marketing in Portugal.

¹ APAN - Associação Portuguesa de Anunciantes.

Motivation of the Internship Report

The motivation for this report was established during an internship at Social Ninjas a digital marketing agency, where during the time I worked as a digital marketing intern I was assigned with controlling the agency's influencer marketing efforts for the brands connected with the agency. Working with an influencer platform, I made the observations that finding diversity among the influencers was difficult. Often it was the same type, the same niche, and the same previous brands they worked with. Furthermore, there was a lack of representation amongst non-white influencers which I was questioning since assuming, that Portugal is a very diverse people. I found that that within the agency, it wasn't really anything that was questioned before, mostly because they also found that there was a lack of representation, and often it was the same influencers they used amongst the different brands. This was based on availability, pricing, and niche. All these influencers were white. Working with a beauty brand we discussed within the agency to look for influencers with more diversity and the search for that was found to be difficult. Looking through the platform finding influencers who matched the brand in niche and pricing turned out to be difficult because of the lack of option, and in the end the agency and brand went with the same influencers as before, white females.

This situation created the motivation for this report, looking into it, and why there is a lack of representation and which efforts brands can make to become more diverse and help equal the gap in representation.

Research Questions

- How are non-white people represented in Influencer Marketing in Portugal?
- What initiatives can brands take in their efforts to become more diverse in their marketing strategy?

The research questions includes the terms; Non-white, representation and diversity. A clarification of how these terms is necessary for the understanding of the internship reports focus and research question.

Clarification of concepts; Research Questions

Non-White

In this report the term non-white refers to people of who is not white of race (Webster, n.d.). So, everyone who is not ethnically white. The reason for using this term is to prevent exclusion of any race who is not Caucasian. This term covers all black and brown skin colours in any tone range.

Representation

In this report the word representation is used to describe the inclusion of people. For this study representation is stated as; *“The fact of including different types of people, for example in films, politics or sport, so that all different groups are represented”* (Dictionary, n.d.)

Diversity

In this report the word diversity is acknowledging *“ the inclusion of individuals representing more than one national origin, color, religion, socioeconomic stratum, sexual orientation ”* (‘Diversity’, n.d.).

Objectives

With the aim of structuring the answers to the research question. The following objectives are proposed;

1. Understanding racial structure and inequality in the Digital Media landscape to understand how these structures effect the current state of race representation within influencer marketing in Portugal.
2. Understand what best practices can be set to promote representation and diversity in influencer marketing.
3. Gain insights into which difficulties agencies face when trying to create diversity in their Influencer Marketing efforts.

In the research objectives includes the terms; race and inequality. A clarification of these terms is necessary for the understanding of the internship reports focus and research question.

Clarification of concepts; Objectives

Race

The concept of race originated from the idea that humanity is divided into various groups based on certain criteria. The biological foundation of a race is inherited from generation to generation. It allows an observer to identify a person's race through their ancestry. This inherited biological foundation manifests itself in various physical phenotypes, including skin colour, hair texture, eye shape, and bone structure. Others defend the concept of race, despite the significant changes in its foundations through history. They maintain that it is neither essential nor discrete. Some theorists believed that humans were only four distinct races: white, black, Asian, and red. They did not discuss biological or phenotypic differences within these groups. Others argued that humans could be distinguished into various racial categories, such as African, Asian, and Mediterranean. The idea that race is biological reality has been widely debunked. It has been argued that during human evolution, reproductive isolation was used to create sufficient genetic isolation to allow us to refer to non-discrete human groups as race. There is also debate about the nature and form of race in society. For instance, it is possible that race is not inconceivable without race hierarchies. Due to the complexity of these issues, it is important that we consider the various forms of justice and legitimacy that are involved in addressing racial inequality (James & Burgos, n.d.)

In a discussion of meaning and differences in the terms race and ethnicity, Douglas Hartmann and Stephen Cornell (2007) argue that the concept of race is determined by the physical characteristics that are inherent in each individual, these characteristics are determined by their perceived common physical features. Stating that ethnic identity is a sense of common ancestry that is derived from past cultural and religious ties, or some physical traits, though both terms are not categorized as being predetermined by biological factors. Individuals who are labelled as black may have various ethnic identities based on cultural markers or national or sub-national origins. Race is typically externalized by

outsiders. When whites created the Negro race, they homogenized the various ethnic groups they controlled in Africa. Race is also often defined by the power to exclude certain groups based on their social, political, or economic benefits. Most people have no choice but to identify with racial groups due to the visual impact of their race. Since the differences between races are less striking, individuals tend to exercise more choice when it comes to choosing their ethnicity. Individuals who appear to have Irish ancestry can more readily choose to assert their Irish identity by celebrating St. Patrick's Day than by choosing not to

Inequality

Inequality is a concept that refers to the distribution of resources and/or opportunities among individuals in a given society. This concept can vary depending on the context. Debates about inequality are often complex, as they are between the moral ethics of social justice and equity. There has been a growing awareness of the existence of inequality within social groups. Awareness about the existence of inequality has increased, which has led to the realization that inequality is entrenched in various political and socioeconomic structures (Koh, 2020).

Methodology

The main objective of this research is to answer the research questions and formulate a strategy for addressing them. Through a content analysis, theoretical framework and semi structured interviews, the report aims to provide a variety of two methods and approaches for carrying out this research. The report is conducted based on a qualitative approach. Second-hand data, studies conducted in other research was aimed to provide a deeper understanding of different aspects of the subject, using this knowledge to conduct the primary data, which was semi structured interviews, that could give a deeper insight into the problematics set around the subject within Portugal. Furthermore, a content analyse was conducted to understand the current state of representation.

1. Internship at Social Ninjas

This internship report is written based on a curricular internship taking place at Social Ninjas, for the duration of 5 months starting on the 1st of October and ending on the 28th of February. The internship facilitated an opportunity to learn and understand components of the media landscape within digital marketing. In the following section of the descriptive memory, I will define the progress of my internship and the task I executed. Starting with an introduction of the company and the companies they work for, following a summarize of my role in the company.

In relation to the topic of this internship study a relation between the two will be made. Connecting the dots between influencer marketing and furthermore how my reflections and observations during my internship lead me to be curious about the topic.

1.1 Social Ninjas

The internship took place at Social Ninjas, a digital marketing agency. They specialize in digital marketing strategy, social media and community management, content creation, performance marketing, online advertising, and influencer management. Their slogan is *“we work in the shadow because we believe that the main characters should be the brands that we work with, not us. This is Social Ninjas”* (Social Ninjas, n.d.).

Social Ninjas work with companies that need help to improve and transform their digital presence. They believe that it is crucial for companies to have a strong digital strategy, and often see companies struggle with this. Therefore, they take an honour in helping brands communicating their strengths online. This mostly happen through content creation and all content is specially made and targeted, so it brings value to the relevant audience through the specific platform.

Social Ninja works as an extension of the individual brands marketing department. Looking at the specific brand and what they need help with, Social Ninja functions as a support of the brands marketing team. Some brands need help with an entirely new strategy, some just need help with social media management or setting up an influencer strategy. Meaning, that it is individual from brand to brand how Social Ninja assists them, making them an agency that is very adaptable and use to transits between many tasks and

brands a day, which has given them a wide knowledge and expertise in using the most common social networks and tools, consequently leading to increase sales by establishing a clear brand communication and audience engagement in all aspects of digital marketing. Furthermore, Social Ninjas operates on data and numbers adjusting if they can see through the data, that the brand's objectives are not meet. From performance marketing they will help brands find the right format for the individual brand's needs, it can be native advertising, search engine marketing, social media advertising and affiliate marketing. When the right channel is decided, they will be based on an analysis of the target set up content and time of posting to reach them best possible. Following, each performance will be monitored to make sure it is performing accordingly to the objectives and KPI'S. All results will then be analysed and delivered to the client (Social Ninjas, n.d.).

Social Ninjas is a new company founded in 2018 by Helena Dias and Liliana Pericão. Both came with years of experience from other marketing departments, and freelance work. The company is located in Aveiro, though since the beginning of Covid19 all work is done from home. Which makes the company very flexible in the people that they hire, and where they can work from.

Despite being a relatively newly founded company Social Ninjas have already achieved great results, some of these are listed below (Social Ninjas, n.d.):

- 317.394 followers managed.
- 20 influencers activated.
- 206 reports produced.
- 16 published landing pages.
- 720.341 engagement received.
- 269 sent newsletters.

Besides the numbers, Social Ninjas has also won several recognized emblems as a quality stamp on their work. Among other they won the Clutch award (Clutch, n.d.) for top b2b companies in Portugal for the third year in a row. Furthermore, in 2020 they also got the

stamp from being a part of scoring.pt meaning a quality stamp of approval living up to the emblem of providing a service of uniqueness and trust for their stakeholders to be provided for a sustainable and ethical practice.

1.1.1 Brands Description

This section aims to give an insight into the brands that the company works for. The brands are selected based on being the primary brands I worked with doing the internship. All these brands are supported by Social Ninjas in bettering their digital presence and create strategies that could increase their awareness. All done from their social media channels. Each strategy for the individual brand will be elaborated in the description of each brand listed below:

Corc Yoga is an e-commerce brand which produces the world first Cork yoga mat. The brand is American, but the products are produced in Portugal. Doing my time at Social Ninjas the company was trying to expand to and create more awareness in Europe. Therefore, the strategy applied revolved around that. Specifically, they worked with influencers to bring awareness to the brand, here they did giveaways and partnerships. They changed the website to increase user friendliness, they created a twitter account focusing on sustainable talks, did community management on their Instagram as well as created content for their platforms. Furthermore, creating monthly newsletters. Ultimately the goal was to build a wellness community and increase online sales. In 2021 the company is expanding from a solely yoga business to a launch wellness retreats as well. The company focuses on giving back and being sustainable. Therefore, a percentage of the sales is being donated to a non-profit in Portugal focusing on youth mental health issues.

Andreia Professional is a wholesale company that specializes in beauty products. Specifically, they are a recognized nails and cosmetic brand in Portugal for professionals, with a following of more than 80.000 people on Instagram, they have managed to build a strong community with high engagement on each post. Being a strong name within the professional world of nails it is seen as a stamp of quality and recognition for the professionals to have their work posted on Andreia Professionals Instagram page. Social Ninjas managed its digital marketing channels until the start of 2021. Here amongst doing the community management in a very active community, creating all their content

for their social media, finding influencers to promote their makeup, website optimization and all organic and paid digital advertising.

Hortaria is an e-commerce business selling garden supplies. Here amongst everything to grow a vegetable garden. Fruit trees, herbs, flowers seeds etc. The strategy was to create awareness through influencers and develop their digital strategy on social media. The goal was to create awareness that would lead to sales. Social Ninja developed a strategy where the focus was to gain awareness through influencers. Besides the Instagram was optimized to match the brand image and recognition, which was trying to be established through the influencers being associated with the brand.

Texas instruments is an American company who is present and recognized worldwide. They specialise in developing electronic equipment. Social Ninjas managed and produced the company's newsletters in Portugal, Sweden, Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands, which is one of the company's biggest and most important tasks.

1.1.2 Mission, vision and value

For a further understanding of the company and what they are representing when working with brands, below their Mission, Vision and Value is introduced. Confirming that the customer is always in focus, and the creation of each specific strategy is customized for the brand's need with an insured quality of work and professionalism.

Mission: Create a perfect and memorable experience for our customers.

Vision: To be a global marketing agency, ensuring performance based on the trust of partners and customers and oriented towards profitability and sustainability.

Values:

- Dedication; We know and feel the brands we work with better than no one.
- Confidence; We strive every day to be faithful advisers to our customers, working hand in hand in order to develop solutions for your brands.

- Responsibility; Being professional and keeping our integrity in the relationship with customers and internal and external partners.
- Quality; We have adopted a qualitative business strategy, with a main focus on quality of our work, monitoring and attention to details within each customer's brand.

1.1.3 Organization Chart

The organization chart is presented to create an overview over the structure in the company. The agency is still considered small and looking at the organization chart that is noticeable. To note that this is how the organization looked doing my internship, following my departure the organizational structure possibly can have changed.

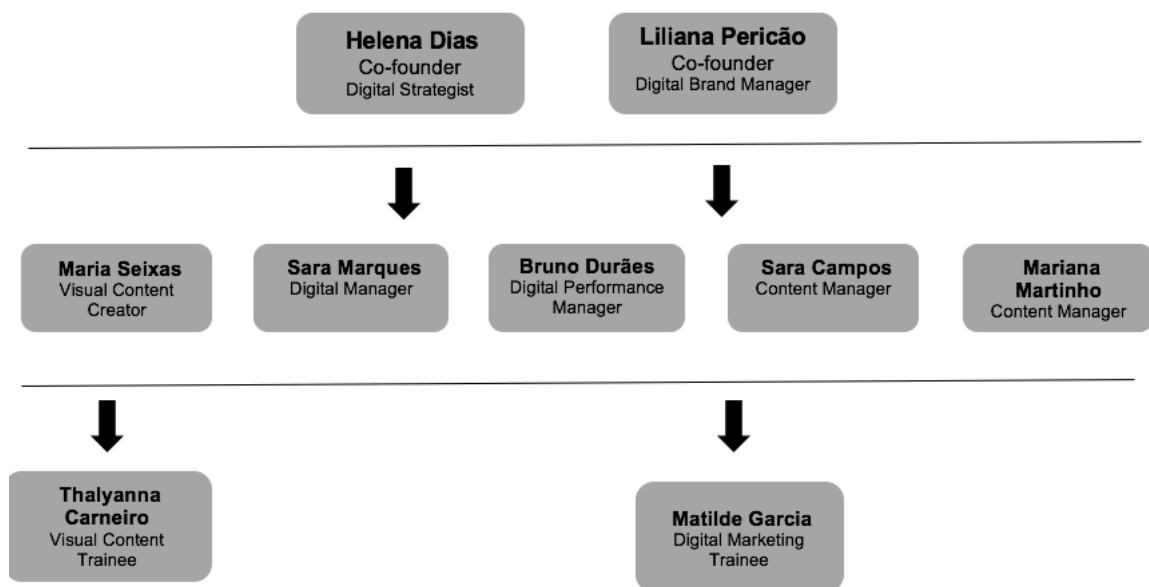


Figure 1: Social Ninjas Organizational Chart

Presented in the chart is the founders of Social Ninjas they are in charge of the overall decisions and daily management. Being strong in each of their specialties it creates a consistent base of professionalism within the agency. Helena, being a digital strategist, she oversees everything on paid media and monitors how the campaigns perform amongst others. Liliana, being the brand manager, she makes sure that the strategy is upheld, besides that she is the one responsible for influencer marketing and works as an all-around octopus where it is needed.

Below them on the chart we have the people working within the specialisations in the agency. All working closely together for the purpose of sending the clients the best product. We have the designer Maria and design intern, they create all things related to design, posts, images for newsletters, logo design, website design. Further we have the digital manager Sara who takes care of everything else in relation to the digital channels. Bruno is the tech, and numbers guy, and is the one optimizing websites and paid ads amongst other. Following on the chart is the content managers, who is the ones in charge of everything written, posts, newsletters, press release, website text and community management.

The role of the interns and trainees are to complement these tasks as well as having a learning experience. Therefore, there is an intern/trainee within the biggest working areas. Which are the graphic designs and digital managers.

Though everyone is working within their own specialty everyone is depended on another and often it is necessary to work across specialisations because of the increased workload caused by the company's fast growth.

My role in the company was alongside side the other trainees, my title was digital marketing intern. I worked closely together with Liliana Pericão and became her right hand during the internship – furthermore also assisting Helena Dias in some of the technical assignments with set of functions on websites or analyse user experiences.

1.1.4 Competitor Analysis

To understand the landscape and competition of Social Ninjas this section aims to give and overview over Social Ninjas competitors done through mapping the competitors and analysing their position vs. Social Ninjas. The mapping is done based on a competitor analysis Social Ninja have done within the agency. The map focuses on services similar to Social Ninjas and Alexa rankings from the competitive companies. Alexa ranks is a tool used to rank different websites and compare them to one another in terms of popularity. The ranking is calculated based on a combination between page views on the website and daily visitors over a period of 3 months (Slivka, 2021).

Below the table shows the 10 agencies who could be a competitor to Social Ninjas. Also, in the table we can see their services and there Alexa rank. The companies are chosen based on their location being in the same area as Social Ninjas. Furthermore, they are all digital agencies providing similar services. To compare Social Ninjas services are: Digital marketing strategy, Management of Social Networks and Communities, Creation of Content, Online Advertising and Influencer management and their Alexa ranking is 6,935,961.

Table 1: Overview over Social Ninjas Competitors

CP²1	CP2	CP3	CP4	CP5
Digital marketing strategy, Social Media, community management, Content Creation, Online Advertising, Influencer management.	Transmedia storytelling, digital brand strategy, design and development, social media, online advertising, digital influencers	E-commerce, digital marketing, brand activation, branding & design, illustration, advertising, photography and video, marketing and communication, consulting, public relations, copywrite, digital printing	Web design, web development, online advertising in Google AdWords, content marketing and digital creativity, social media management, advertising on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Bing	Advertising, Communication, Technology, Branding, Events
#8,275,943	#5,346,739	#321,904	#3,872,345	#4,902,526
CP6	CP7	CP8	CP9	CP10
Advertising, design, content marketing and digital creativity	Digital marketing, design and branding, strategy and consulting, web development	Inbound Marketing	Content Marketing, social networks, Web Design & Development,	Design, web development, Digital marketing, content management, technical support

² Competitor Company.

	and photography and video		Ads & reporting	
invalid	Invalid	#3,950,877	#8,449,117	#2,486,982

To understand the map below, it displays that there are a few competitors within the same rank and services as Social Ninjas. In comparison to direct competitors there are two, these two are the only ones also offering influencer marketing as a service. Though looking at their Alexa ranking only 1 of them can match Social Ninjas which is CP1, meaning that Social Ninjas' role in competing on the market is strong.

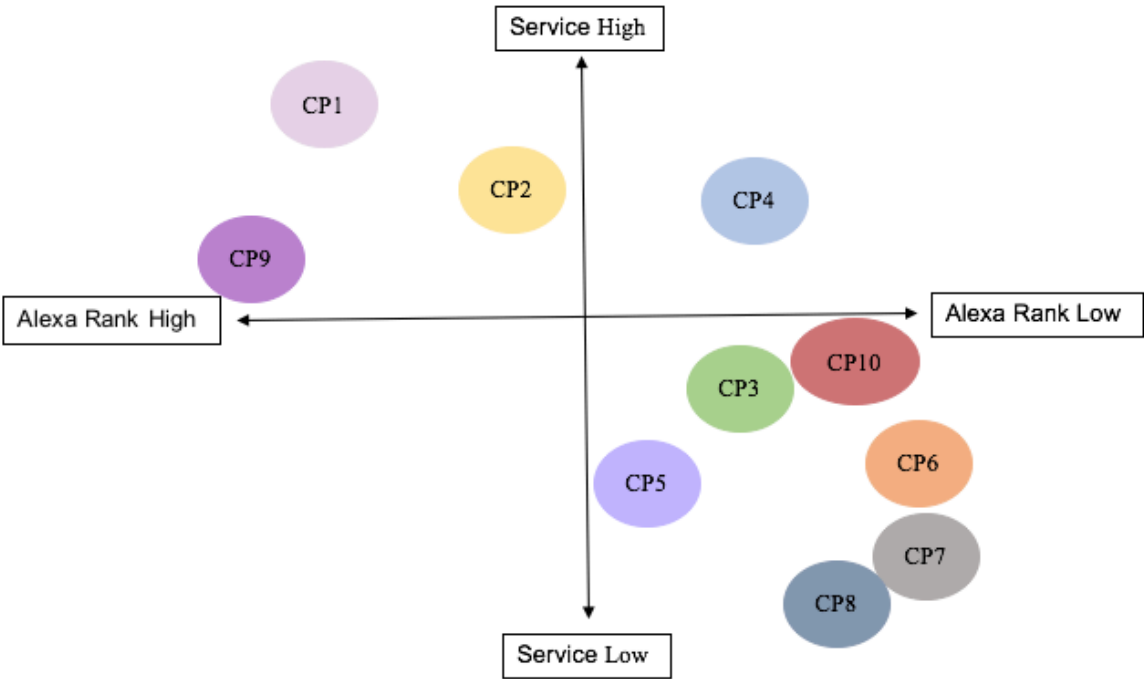


Figure 2: Social Ninjas Competitor Scale

1.2 Internship Description and Tasks

During the duration of my internship my task consisted of email marketing, influencer management and assisting in website optimization and research up to date digital marketing to implement. In this section my main task and the areas I was responsible for will be introduced within the different brands.

Corc Yoga: The first brand I was assigned to work with was Corc Yoga. This was the brand that I worked closest with. While I was there, we implemented a new website for the European market, here I was involved with launching the website, optimize it and create call to action sales points throughout the website. Furthermore, I created and planned their strategy for implementing SMS marketing and a new affiliate program. Though my main responsibility was the influencer collaborations, where my task was to find and implement an influencer marketing strategy to create awareness in Europe. I solely was in charge of creating the contracts, strategies, contact email and I was the one to access the influencers, also if they contacted us. Below you can see examples of campaigns I helped to create with different influencers. For the duration of my internship, I also became in charge of implementing a new platform for email marketing and create the sign up welcome newsletters.

Andreia Professional: For this brand I was in charge of the Influencer management. Though it was the first brand where I was in charge of the influencer strategies, I developed my skills and got to experiment with different ideas. It was also with this brand I was introduced to the influencer platform, that I was working from that inspired this thesis subject. The Influencer Platform was just implemented at Social Ninjas, therefore, I was the first one to use it and benefit from it. Meaning I was also the one in charge of everything that happened on the platform according to influencers and campaigns. Amongst other we used it so promote a new mascara for Andreia Professional. Besides this, I created reports, assisted Lilliana in research for content, and tasks for the ambassador program.

Hotaria: My tasks for Hortaria included primarily influencer marketing. Through the influencer platform had to find influencers who could match the brand, plan a campaign and strategy, including the different influencers.

Texas Instruments: My task for Texas instruments was creating newsletters. This was a task that required a big overview, and I developed my managing skills throughout handling this task. It was also a big logistic work dealing with marketing departments from different Texas instruments offices around Europe making sure the right newsletters went out with the right design and to the right people.

1.3 Internship Reflections

Based on the subject of this thesis the reflections focus on the thoughts and ideas I had about influencer marketing during my 6 months internship.

Within my first days of the internship, I already started working with influencer marketing. Starting out with mainly looking for influencers for the respective brands. The company had just started using a new influencer platform, and I was assigned to get to know the platform and how we could search influencers through it. Though this new platform was a great way to search for influencers it was only a platform for influencers in Portugal and Spain - later only Portugal. This made it difficult for a brand like Corc Yoga to look for influencers, and it had to be done organic. The problem with looking for influencers organically by scrolling through Instagram niche communities, is that it based on a feeling of a potential matches but can't be documented by data, though some influencers have a brand book, I found most smaller influencers didn't. This can mean that despite creating a strong campaign it can perform badly because potentially the audiences do not match, and the brands are aiming their money towards a wrong audience who won't generate revenue.

In my experience I found that influencer marketing in general is an industry that lack tools to match influencers and brands. Influencer marketing can be difficult because it is based on an assumption and human analysis. You can analyse the material, but you can never be sure that the influencers audience will respond well to the brand.

Furthermore, I found the brands not wanting to pay influencers, to be a problem. Because it makes it more difficult to expect and request anything from the influencers. Some brands prefer to pay the influencer in products, though paying an influencer in products, I did not find to be sustainable for several reasons. Firstly, it means that it becomes a question of who is willing to work for free vs. do the followers of the influencers match the brands target group? Besides this, I found within the brands that Social Ninjas worked with that the majority who wanted to work with influencers did not want to pay them, or weren't able too, and if they were, their budget was very small. This I found to be a misconception of using influencers, because the brands would pay for other marketing efforts. Though I think that lacks a professionalism and understanding between influencer and brand, and here I think it comes down to a lack of clear tangible outcome

for the brands. Influencer marketing is hard to measure and often it is used as a tool in creating an awareness about the brand and is used as a part of the funnel, though I do believe the agencies also carry a responsibility in finding a way to match the brands audience better with the influencers going more specifically into the niche communities. At one point I also found it became a question of availability and more on the terms of the influencer and the company, then focusing on the audience.

Another issue I found was doing my first campaign and working with the influencer platform was the lack of representation. Looking for influencers for a cosmetic brand I was interested in using more diverse influencers because I wanted the audience to feel represented and doing that time, I assumed a cosmetic brand in Portugal would have a diverse audience. When questioning this I found it was something that hadn't been discussed within the company before, though I also found it was because the best influencers in the industry and the ones the brand had worked with before was mainly white. When reflecting more on the why, I found that it was not always about not wanting to be representative but more a lack of representation within the different niches. Meaning more white influencers existed which meant that was more to choose from when looking for the best match for the brand. Also, making it a question of "do we want to comprise by being representative?" Furthermore, it also made me question how the audience saw the brand, would they want to buy and be more loyal towards it, if they could not see themselves represented, how would that affect the buying intentions if they for example never saw the product on someone with their skin tone?

1.4 From internship to Research Idea

As an extension of my reflections, I became curious about this topic. Furthering the importance of research in this field, which I found to be none existing I found the theme to be current and relevant. The internship developed the curiosity and the questions "what can be done?" or "is it even a problem?", but also understanding the consequences of lacking representation in marketing and the commercial aspect of not feeling seen in society. Furthermore, looking into how deeply it is rooted and what can be done to change it.

Furthermore, when talking to the internship organization about my curiosity, and my reflections about studying this subject, I was met with a hesitancy about it being a relevant

study, especially in Portugal. Furthering my curiosity to the subject, but also consequently, leading to reflections about which difficulties brands were facing to create more diversity in their marketing efforts.

Correlating the two perspectives, one where the intern organisation did not see a problem, and two where I could see that there was lacking representation from the platform that I was working for, made it even more interesting to look into to the different aspects of the subject, and examine the current state of representing, understanding if there even where an issue, and how that related to the agencies, and the consequences of lacking representation.

2. Theoretical Framework

This section introduces the theory to support the research of this report. Explaining the current theories and studies that are related to the development and examination of the research theme of this report.

2.1 Platforms and Algorithm shaping Realities

Media platforms are often defined as tools that facilitate social interaction. In other words, they are tools that help people connect and collaborate. As a result of the emergence of networks, a new infrastructure emerged with a large number of players and an ecosystem of platforms (Dijck, 2013). Each platform has its own eco-system with users that help shape social structures across them, also outside the world of these platforms.

Platformization refers to the process of transitioning from an existing platform to a new one, which is subject to continuous change. terms such as “infrastructural” and “sectoral” should be used to describe the various roles and relationships that actors have within these contexts. Platformization is the process of transforming entire sectors into platforms that are mutually shaping by connecting people and connecting them online. Platform infrastructures should not be considered separate from social organizations and sectors, as they have become paramount to the operation of economies and democracies. These being seen as complementors to the platform, which raises the question who is beneficial to who, being depended on each other, both platforms and complementors meaning individual citizens, business, institutions, and governments. Platformization refers to the process of mutualizing the various sectors of society through the use of online platforms (Van Dijck, J., Poell, T., & De Waal, M, 2018)

To understand the overlapping nature of the platform society and how deep it reflects into our society the figure below illustrates representation of the actors from the private and public sectors who shape the platform society. Showing the complex and interconnected overlapping structure of the information services They are often built into complex media ecologies and platforms (Van Dijck et al., 2018).

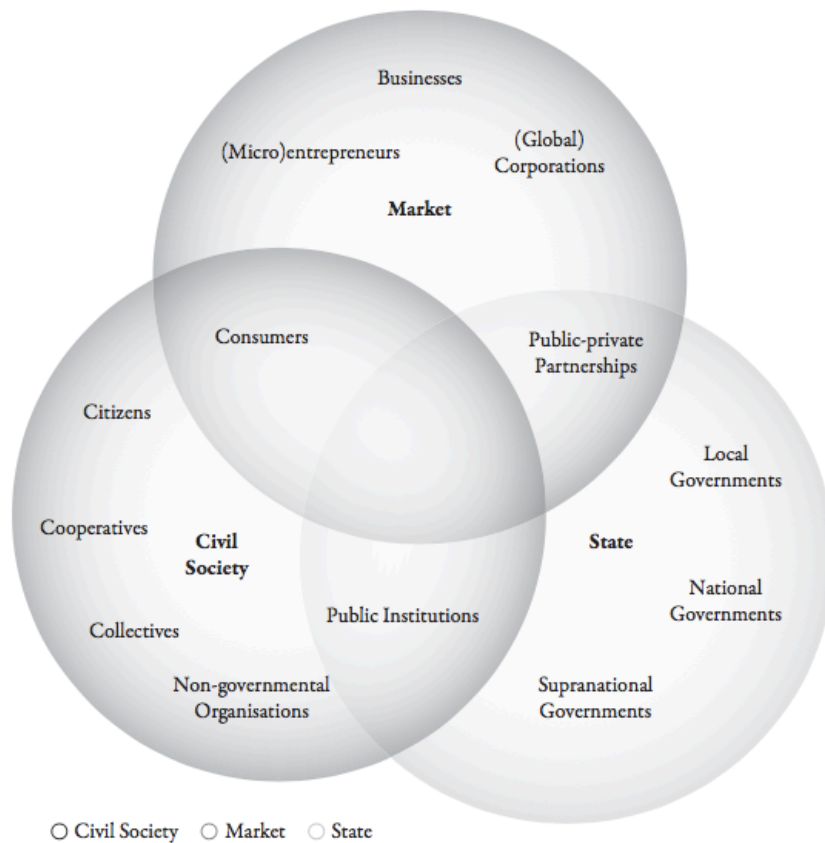


Figure 3: Illustrates representation of the actors from the private and public sectors who shape the platform society (Van Dijck et al., 2018)

The ecosystem itself is not neutral. Its ideological tenets are not only bound by the public interest but also by the business models and algorithms that underlie it. Understanding how these social media platforms make certain things visible while hiding others are very useful to understand how these tools shape social activity in different economic sectors and spheres of life, as well as how they can be used to inform user decisions (Van Dijck et al., 2018).

Henry Jenkins (2013) argues that distinctive for social media is that they are spreadable, and that the cultural logics that have enabled people to share their lives through digital platforms are also responsible for the rise of social media. Jenkins (2013) doesn't presume that digital media liberates people from old constraints, but rather that it can stimulate new ways of thinking about culture. It's about reorienting social relations and the expectations of political participation. Spreadable media is media that is designed to spread. It works by influencing audiences to shape media flows. Culture becomes more participatory through the sharing of content online. Every interaction that a user has with

an online platform can be captured as data. This type of data, which includes but not limited to ratings, reviews, and likes, is often used as a by-product of the platform. While data collection and analysis can be considered commercial strategies, they can also be considered user practices and help shape a culture. Platform owners collect and analyse user data in various ways. They then constantly circulate these data through their various platforms and apps. With the rise of online platforms, there is a new set of practices of data collection that are now focused on the collection of personal data. The interactions that happen on these platforms are now captured through a variety of data practices, such as recommendation and friendship. The platforms premeditate the gathering and analysis of data through standard buttons and deep integration. Each user's activity is analysed and aggregated to provide platform corporations with valuable insights. This data can be used to improve product offerings, identify potential users, and tell demographic and behavioural characteristics of users.

Behind the social media platforms that appear to be more lightweight forms of interaction are complex networks where data is continuously aggregated and analysed for more effectively connected users. When a user clicks a social plugin, their activity is processed in several ways. First, it is shown on the user's News feed, which then makes it available for further engagement. Although the data is still publicly visible, it is not associated with the end users. As such, it is not used to identify users. The Facebook corporation processes all the user data that it gets from each and every one of its users. This data is collected in the form of likes, comments, and topics. Data cation is the process of analysing and communicating the public value of data. It can be done through the aggregation, analysis, and dissemination of real-time data streams (Van Dijck et al., 2018). Van Dijck (2015) argues that the term "social media" should be replaced with the term "connected media" and that we should also look at the cultural aspects of this phenomenon. The first decade of social networks shifted its gravity away from the human user to an automated connectivity of platforms. Connected through algorithms, data flows, interfaces and business models (Van Dijck, 2015).

In other words, platform algorithms determine the interests and needs of each individual user on the basis of a variety of data collected by various third parties. This allows them to customize the user's stream of content and advertising, meaning having a

control over what we see on the social media platform and furthermore, being in control over what we see (Van Dijck et al., 2018). Bucher (2012) argues that the algorithms that determine the conditions under which users are seen on social media platforms are made on assumptions about the relevance of newsworthiness and are not designed to provide real-time visibility. Furthermore, the study argues against that Facebook's algorithm and other social media platforms are responsible for the newsworthiness of users. Bucher (2012) states that establishing conditions for visibility through algorithms makes visibility a privilege, rather than a threat.

Beer (2017) explore the various questions that arise when we consider the social power of algorithms. He considers how we might approach the algorithms from a social scientific perspective. The article argues that one key challenge in trying to understand the social power of algorithms, is how we approach them in the first place. Stating that the problem with detaching an algorithm from the social world is that it becomes a technical object that is bound to the world's various social processes. The algorithms are produced from a social context, and they are integrated into practices and outcomes. As algorithms are designed to work seamlessly with data, they can be re-designed where their design needs to be adjusted. Beer (2017) enhances a discussion from Bolin and Schwarz (2015) that the human agents who design the algorithms are the ones who make these decisions happen. The human agents are the people who help design the algorithmics. They then shape the systems that these components operate in. Given that algorithms are often seen as the decision-making components of code, there is a growing interest in understanding how they shape decision making processes. Beer (2017) furthermore discuss how Big data and algorithms are becoming more prevalent in regulation and governance and that their influence can be powerful in shaping choice and pushing behaviour attitudes.

Beer (2017) also express concern with the politics of algorithms sorting and prediction, which includes the capacity of an algorithm to produce and maintain norms and notions of abnormality. Stating that we should remain critical what the algorithm set up people to encounter and discover, and that the algorithm has the power to make choices for us. Mager (2012) states that capitalist ideology is embedded in search engine processes, and concludes that power structures are included in our the algorithmic processes and design. Beer (2017) enhances Eli Pariser's (Samuels, 2012) work on filter bubbles proposes that

algorithmic sorting could limit social and cultural connections. It is proposed that algorithms could filter out the influences that people regularly consume and thus limit their ability to connect with others. Connecting an algorithm to power dynamics suggest that by having power it allows it to produce truths, also stating that the algorithm has become a cultural presence. Not just because of its capabilities but also because of how it is used to project them. This means that the algorithm can be part of the deployment of power, not just in terms of its function but also in terms of how it is understood as a phenomenon.

Matamoros-Fernández (2017) argues how a platforms holds power through the algorithm, describing it at concept of platformed racism, which is a new type of racism that is derived from the culture of social platforms. Matamoros-Fernández (2017) argues that the concept of platform-ed racism undermines the discourse of neutrality that is present in the world of social media platforms. It shows that platformed racism is a new form of racism that originated from the users' practices and cultural values. On the other hand, it draws parallels between the way platforms make and distribute racist discourse, and the ways in which these are used. Matamoros-Fernández (2017) argues that platforms are forms of governance that can reproduce inequalities. The rise of platformed racism was largely facilitated by the policies and practices of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. These platforms were ambling hate speech by not taking racist messages down, feeding the algorithm and preventing it spreading. The appropriation of these messages by users contributed to the amplification of racism on various platforms, such as YouTube and Facebook. These systems then generated more racist content and contributed to the circulation of such content (Matamoros-Fernández, 2017)

2.1.1 Algorithm and Race

“The New Jim code” is a term that Ruha Benjamin (2019) explores in her book; *Race After Technology*. The concept explores the ways inequality can be encoded in various discriminatory designs. Among these are: intentionally inflating racial hierarchies, ignoring social divisions, or attempting to fix racial bias. She herself defines this as: “The employment of new technologies that reflect and reproduce existing inequalities but that are promoted and perceived as more objective and progressive than the discriminatory systems of a previous era” (Benjamin, 2019). There are different dimensions that come together into the New Jim Code, dimensions such as engineered inequality, which

elaboration the social hierarchies, Default discrimination, which refers to the fault in processes when it comes to designing around personal biases, coded exposure refers to not all people being seen and Technological benevolence refers to technical products that is promised to fix social biases still just reproduce or deepen the problem. Benjamin (2019) argues that race is not just an inherent feature of technology, it also operates as a technology, stating that race and technology is co-produced, and racism is productive it constructs within systems. Given the example of tech fixes for social problems, such as an app called “Citizen” which function is to give people crime alerts and tell you which supposedly dangerous neighbourhoods to stay out of which is not simply about how technology effect our society but about how its shapes social norms and values through tech fixes that reinforce and deeper existing hierarchies. Furthermore she gives an example for AI robots that was found to have racial biases, which she states; “is that so surprising when technology inherits its creators biases” (Benjamin, 2019).

Connecting this to her glitch theory where she talks about a glitch being a minor problem or a sudden interruption or irregularity that can happen. Glitches are often considered a temporary interruption of an otherwise healthy system. Programmers may choose to ignore the inevitable consequences of their actions, such as accidentally reinforcing social problems. She argues that glitches can reveal the underlying flaws of a system though fixing a glitch isn't enough to prevent the system from getting worse. Circling back to the example of the app “Citizen”, crime prediction algorithms are not algorithms but feedback loops that encourage specific policing strategies. The pervasiveness of digital technology can be both obvious and insidious. It can affect everyone from the users to the developers.

Pasquale, (2016) argues that we are living in a black box society. He claims that the values and immunities of democracy are hidden within the boxes and the increasing popularity of authority is becoming algorithmically expressed. This raises various questions about the nature of authority and the role of algorithms in its distribution of information. Big data and algorithms are associated with each other, and their relationship is the source of political concern for Pasquale (2016). Benjamin (2019) states that the algorithmic black boxes are now more prone to undermining the integrity of identity and racial inequality. Meaning that because the racism is coded into our technology it makes

discrimination easier and therefore, we as a society must hold the programmers and platforms accountable and demand visibility and representation. The objective of black box technology is accommodating unfair outcomes, which is not the case with most modern systems. To think about technology as a social construct, we must first think about race. Benjamin (2019) argues that we can see how race be both a marginal and focal point for tech development. Furthermore, Benjamin (2019) argues that machines are not racist, as they do not have explicit or intentional intentions. Instead, racism occurs when people do not consciously call out each other for racial behaviour. Racism also occurs without self-conscious intent. She warns that robots and technologies could become racist if they communicate in the same coded language as humans. Linking this to the institutional biases that the builders of the algorithms may have. Creating the same biases in the technologies (Bolin & Andersson Schwarz, 2015).

Benjamin (2019) stating technologies are often designed to address social issues, but they can also become biased if they are not exposed to the biases of humans. This is because systems that are designed to be biased may also act upon them. The use of cultural markers can help explain how society views people. It can also help explain why people are still being racially stratified. The Blackbox makes it harder to evaluate the qualities that are most likely to be racially or gendered. This is also true for companies that use ethnicity as a tool to improve predictions. Discrimination in tech companies is becoming more prevalent. It allows firms to make money by doing costs and shifting to a profit-oriented model. Without public supervision these practices are not transparent, and there is no way to know if they will be used for discriminatory purposes. Benjamin (2019) also states that the "diversity" mantra is a form of rigidity, and individuals are forced to participate in data mining technologies to be labelled suspicious. She concludes that "Racial fixing" attempts to rationalize or solve racial issues by customizing goods and services for different races.

A great example of algorithms having racial biases is a study by Obermeyer (2019) that proves how algorithmic biases creates racist actions and inequality into society. He studied the algorithm in a hospital digital system and found racial biases in a commercial nationwide algorithm, which is used to guide decisions about health care. He found that the algorithm that divide the black patients assigned the same level risk of illnesses as white patients, which was a problem because black patients tend to be sicker based on a

socioeconomic divide. He estimated that this bias reduced the number of Black patients who were identified for extra care by over 50%. The algorithm falsely states that black patients are better than white patients due to the racial bias it uses. Reformulating the algorithm aims to remove this racial bias and improve its accuracy. But as Ruha Benjamin (2019) states it's not enough to just fix the algorithm on one place.

Connecting this to Ruha Benjamin (2019) stating that black people are often seen as hyper visible, and this is because various technologies fail to see them properly. All the way back to early photography we can see how technology helped in stratifying racial distance, as it allowed for visual evidence that was not subjective. As technology evolved, the inability to see dark skin was explained away by physics. The inability to see dark skin on webcams is not an indicator of progress, argues psychologist and professor Marjorie Davidson in *Race After Technology* (Benjamin, 2019). Her research focuses on the biases in facial analysing technology when it comes to identifying black faces. This is usually influenced by the socio-geographical landscape. Due to the large number of Black men in photo databases, the inability to identify them is dangerous because of use of predictive technology can lead to profiling and even murder investigations, here is no link between appearance and DNA. Research shows that even though algorithm is showing great accuracy up to 90% in classifying people, it is not all demographics groups the accuracy is that high. The most outstanding divergent errors are found among black females between the age of 18-30 (Najibi, 2020). In a study by Buolamwini and Gebru (2018) a conceptual approach was developed to evaluate the various gender classification algorithms, used by amongst other; Microsoft, and IBM. Three gender classifications was grouped into four categories: darker-skinned females, darker-skinned males, lighter-skinned females and lighter-skinned males (Buolamwini, et, al, 2018). All algorithms showed up to 34% higher error rates among darker-skinned females than lighter-skinned males (Buolamwini, et, al, 2018). Finding furthermore, that up to 189 algorithms are the least correct on women of colour (Najibi, 2020).

2.1.2 How the Algorithm and What We See Online Creates Misrepresentation

Nakamura (2008) argues through her digitizing race theory that digital media are complicit in the formation of racial minorities through their reception and production. She argues that the Internet is a space where re-embodied representations can be made.

Nakamura (2008) aims to deconstruct the constructs of racial formation that are typically represented by images. In an example of a video with Jennifer Lopez is introduced, as the viewer she states we see Lopez through an interface that lets them see her as a woman of colour and Latina with the eyes of a white man. This concept, which is rooted in the idea that race and gender are most meaningful when they are depicted against one another, is a vital part of the visual world. In this context, Lopez takes on a mobile race identity, based on the viewer's preference, psychology, and identity. New media's new interactivity allows people to connect with the audience and to democratize information. Visual capital is a system of social differentiation that draws upon the relatively easy access to media platforms worldwide. Questions about race, gender, and access are often treated with ambivalence, as they have in a post-racial and post-feminist age. Supporters of this post-colonial perspective remind society that despite the cultural wars that have been waged in the past, we now have a society that is more tolerant and accepting of individuality (Nakamura, 2008)

Nakamura (2008) explores different websites that allows icons for messages, she argues that these are more than just images, and can be used to create various identities. Connecting this to how young women are presented as if they are objects of a virtual inventory that is overpowered to the previous existence of textual conversation. Nakamura (2002) argues how digital racial formation can be coded into mainstream media, she gives the example of the matrix tribology, where she found the black users are represented as cool. Which she argues is an example on how digital racial formation and be coded as property. Where white users are depicted using gestures such as machines instead of clicking buttons. These actions make whites easily replicable and soulless simulations.

Nakamura (2002) states that user bring stereotyped concepts of racial identity into the digital platforms. As stereotypes constructed online personas are created. All these stereotyped images of race in new media originates from popular media such as movies, novels and video games. Looking at the adaptation from popular media to new media link between cyber types and their link to genres like science fiction and how these images of stereotypical acts are brought from old media into new media. Meaning that we are not changing the racial stereotypes, we are maintaining them in their original form.

Another example of how racial formation can be coded into mainstream media channels and cause misrepresentation is a paper by Davis (2018) who examines two Instagram sites specifically targeting traditionally college-aged individuals. These sites have tens of thousands of followers, post frequently, and solely focus on highlighting the college experience. Due to the nature of social media platforms, it can have significant impacts on one's development of identity and sexual orientation. These two sites are targeted to college-aged individuals. While they have thousands of followers and are very active, they do not explicitly target specific groups or individuals.

Through textual analysis of the two sites, problematic issues emerged, such as the objectification of women and the lack of diversity in the college experience. The posts were often promoted by college students and are often viewed by thousands of people. However, their messages are problematic due to the racial and gendered inequality they contribute to which was discovered to be objectification of female college students, submissiveness of female college students, and emphasis on a young, white collegiate experience. These themes were analysed within 600 Instagram posts. The number of likes and top comments were included in the analysis. The results showed that on both Instagram and Tumblr, female college students are depicted as objects of desire to be looked at by their male counterparts. Their bodies are also used as sexualized and physical objects by men. College students are often shown as submissive to male peers. They are photographed in various poses while lying on their backs. They are also subjected to sexual aggression and violence. The last theme emphasis on the white college experience. In most posts, the majority of people are white and male. Aside from denigrating the non-white student experience, these posts also show a lack of understanding of what it's like to be a non-white student in college. The posts showed how easily non-whites can be ridiculed and ignored in a mocking manner. The findings indicate how easy it is to create misrepresentation among communities on social media. These themes of gendered and racial prejudices are so evident misrepresented on social media with thousands of young college students to impact (Davis, 2018).

Nakamura (2008) tackles the intersection of race and the Internet. She argues that the rise of digital representations of women and people of colour have challenged the logic of post-racial logic. It focusses on images and its users' ability to show race, it is most

meaningful to them when considered along with other factors such as gender, ethnicity, and sexuality. However, it often assumes that visibility guarantees authenticity. In connection Daniels (2015) argues that the internet is a circuit of three interconnected circuits that are colour-blind. The first is a fantasy created in the 1990s that imagines a world where everyone has unlimited possibilities. The second is a persistent theme that permeates the tech industry. The idea that the Internet is a colour-blind system is deeply rooted in the tech industry. Consistent with the ideology of colour-blindness that has guided the development of the US. Daniel (2015) states that most books on the Internet do not discuss race or racism. Instead, they discuss the various aspects of the web. If race is rarely mentioned in this frame, then racism is virtually non-existent. Popular writers engage in this mechanism because they would prefer not to notice race, he states. The reality of race in the tech industry is also rarely discussed in popular and academic writing. Instead, the implicit colour-blind racism that underlies the tech industry's practices is exploited to justify the systemic racism of the tech industry Daniel (2015) argues.

2.2 The Interplay of Institutional Racism and Advertising

Institutional racism can be considered as racism ingrained in our society or organizations. Leading to potential discrimination within our public institutions that should be equal for all, and instead becomes more favourable for white people. This is something that has manifested through history and into our current society (Dicks, 1997). The first example we saw on blackfacing in advertising was in 1888 when Charles Underwood and Christopher Rut found themselves with a market full of surplus in flour, coming up with a marketing strategy to sell the flour targeting the local southern costumers. Out of the idea came a blackface figure called Aunt Jemima, who was created to symbolize the black servant appealing to the white consumer, as being something relatable to them. Aunt Jemima the pancake queen is one of the first symbols on racisms adaptation into the marketing industry (Behnken, Brian D., Smithers, Gregory D, 2015).

Advertising does more than just create images of life that people or consumers can define as normative, it creates stereotypes of reality. Advertising is stated to have a significant role in shaping society and promoting a certain vision of the good life. The use of racist and offensive imagery in advertising has informed how mass media institutions

can shape social and cultural norms. In Britain, for example, during the late nineteenth century, advertisers provided white consumers with a racially charged language that became central to their sense of superiority. During the late nineteenth century, a cultural process was initiated in the US. It is referred to as cosmopolitan domesticity. With increasing income levels and a growing number of newspapers, white Americans were able to allow more of the outside world to enter their homes without leaving their homes. This allowed them to indulge in the luxuries of home without disrupting their racial harmony. During this period, as many as three out of four white households shared a common set of racially biased stereotypes about minorities. Instead of challenging these notions, the non-whiteness of minorities reinforced their sense of racial superiority. During this time, American advertisers had a ready supply of funds to make money while also reinforcing racial stereotypes that most white Americans held. This was especially true when they used imagery such as blackface minstrelsy to make money. The use of these characters in advertising campaigns effected America's popular media into a more racist discus that still effects advertising today (Behnken, Brian D., Smithers, Gregory D, 2015). Since American popular media heavily influence the rest of the world, the tendencies seen here would spread into a worldwide practices (Ostendorf, 2001).

The individual prejudice is not the factor creating institutional racism, not at least until it is acted out against racial discrimination, and when that discrimination is being transferred to institutions of society it is institutional racism. For example, when working in a company with procedures, structures and culture is discriminating, it will be hard not to be affected by it. Given that it will be hard for one person in the company to affect individual people vs. against the whole company (Dicks, 1997). This can be an explanation on how the digital companies think, and the institutional racism seen in society, can be reflected into companies and their marketing. Judy Foster Davis (2018) states that a coherence between racism and marketing can be found. She perceives marketing organizations as a contributor to the cultural production. Together with the media, marketing organizations have the responsible to reflect and showcase different areas of society from different angles, this also include the aspect of race. Understanding that marketers have the tool of influence, meaning that marketing efforts can be used to support different aspect of society through messages and images, and can in the end be used to influence norms and values across cultural, political, economic, social, and psychological

spectrums. Stern (1999) found that advertising could be a source of influence in transmitting racist ideologies and stigmas. Mainly because ads are so accessible to the public in comparison to fine arts for example. Marketing is a part of mass media and mass media have an influence in shaping our culture, therefore, there is a higher pressure on ads to have a more multicultural agenda. Mainly based on concern that what we are exposed to can possibly end up influence our idea of things. Advertising is to a greater extent more influential than other media because of its accessibility, also, it is the medium that spreads the most racist and sexist because of broad reach it can have (Stern, 1999). Davis (2018) states that marketing is a strong power of social control by placing the message in the focus of our awareness over and over. In her research she also found that mass media help maintain inequalities in race for commercial purposes done through promoting cultural assimilation.

It was seen that some brands tried to create marketing efforts to stand against racism in marketing. Brands like Benetton and Nike both created social topics into their marketing efforts, often exposing racial inequalities. One campaign Nike did exposed marketers in using racial hints, like the word “Blackness” in an attempt to sell products that could resemble black culture. Research showed that black culture was a big draw in selling, especially among the young. Even though it was found that black American culture become more popular, it just showed the effects of marketing and didn't really show if the attitude towards racism decreased (J. F. Davis, 2018).

Research found that brands using cultural symbols and an ethnic identification is a big component when influencing a positive or negative attitude. It was also made aware that people of colour were like white people, different groups within one group, what tends to be overlooked by marketers. Also, research found that there was a diversity on what some people would find offensive vs. who would not. Differentiating between age group, race, gender etc. Therefore, the research suggests marketers to have different strategies when targeting an ethnic audience, based on neutral vs. race-based product. Especially when creating a global ad, they should create tests of the images they are planning to use and test it on the different markets across culture to make sure the content is not offensive to any culture (Stern, 1999). Media imagery tests, scholars agree is important because people with different backgrounds are exposed to the same image and message and will all be viewed

with the individual's own perspective and understanding, where some messages can be overlooked by marketers as damaging (Taylor, Lee and Stern, 1995)

Following the uprising of the Black Lives Matter movement many corporations have tried various strategies to support the movement. Unfortunately, these efforts often fall flat, as they appear inauthentic to many consumers. Menon and Kiesler (2020) suggest a four-part framework that helps businesses identify the types of brand actions that are most authentic and avoid becoming part of the problem. They define authenticity as the extent to which a brand is faithful to its promises and to its customers' expectations. It is also motivated by the values of integrity and responsibility towards its community. While both integrity and responsibility are important ways of expressing a brand's authenticity, actions with a social orientation are likely to be considered more authentic when it comes to addressing social issues such as race relations.

Brands can choose to be either an ally which is perceived as supportive and non-racist, or an activist which is perceived as actively anti-racist. Two different strategies are categorized in two; Corporation-Oriented Actions and Societally-Oriented Actions. Within them they are furthermore categorized in two. For the corporation-oriented actions, they are two different strategies that brands can use which are Atone and Allure. Atone focuses on making amends for past wrongdoings. These actions are made by corporations that are aware of the need to make amends for their past wrongdoings. They take the necessary steps to do so, showing that they are aware of the need to act in the interests of social justice. Corporate-Oriented atoning would be considered as an ally and would have low perceived authenticity. Allure focuses on proactively attract consumers These actions are still corporation-oriented, but they are also more proactive. They can be used to support a cause or an activist in a way that's also in their self-interest. Corporate-Oriented Alluring would be perceived as activist actions and would have a low-medium perceived authenticity.

For the societal- oriented actions there also two different strategies the framework suggests which is acknowledge and advocate. Acknowledge focuses on recognizing a broad social issue these actions are relatively small, but they recognize social issues in a wider context. They are also not limited to corporations. As allies, they take actions in support of racial justice, but they may not lead to a profit directly, but also is securing

themselves towards negative impact on the brand. Societally oriented acknowledgement would be perceived as an ally and would have a medium-high perceived authenticity. Advocacy focuses on actively support a cause or policy, these actions mean to a voice of anti-racism and to effectively represent social issues that matter to consumers, companies must start by becoming socially aware and active. Doing so also means, that it potentially can harm the brand (Menon & Kiesler, 2020). Following displays the framework done by Menon and Kiesler (2020) creating a visual overview over the described framework with examples on consumer perception of authenticity.

Table 2: Taken from Menon & Kiesler (2020) displayed framework over consumer perception of authenticity of racial justice brand actions.

Orientation of Action	Level of Participation	
	Ally Supportive, non-racist	Activist Actively anti-racist
Corporation-oriented Actions focused on being faithful to the corporation (continuity) and to its consumers' expectations (credibility).	Atone Makes amends for past wrongdoings, such as product withdrawal (Aunt Jemima), name change (Unilever's Fair & Lovely), and more inclusive product offerings (Band Aid). Perceived Authenticity: Low	Allure Proactively supports racial justice while attracting more customers (Aerosoles donating 10% of sales proceeds to the NAACP) Perceived Authenticity: Low-medium
Societally-oriented Actions focused on caring for the community (integrity) and reflecting consumers' values (symbolism).	Acknowledge Recognizes a broad social issue while neither hurting nor benefitting the corporation financially (Netflix curating BLM content). Perceived Authenticity: Medium-high	Advocate Proactively supports racial justice even at a risk to the corporation (Nike using Kaepernick as the face of their campaign). Perceived Authenticity: High

As consumers become more vocal about social issues, they are demanding that companies do more to address them. 60% of people in U.S say that based on how a brand

act regarding to social issues, will reflect how they will receive the brand, whether they will boycott, or buy from the brand in the future. 60% say that brands should talk about the causes of racial inequality and make people aware of those cause. Also, a shift has happened with the younger generation regarding to demand and expectations, that is required of a brand. Gen Z and Millennial consumers have expectations that are beyond those of their parents. They want corporations to stand up for something more than just selling a good product. In order to connect with these younger buyers, brands need to stand up and be part of the movement against racial injustice. The most authentic brand actions are those that are designed to promote social and anti-racist actions. These actions can be risky but are also highly likely to create real consumer loyalty (Menon & Kiesler, 2020).

An ideology that effects the interplay between constitutional racism and adverting, and which provides an understanding of where biases are created from - is the ideology of whiteness. It stands for an ideology that structures and establish racism, and maintain it, by giving systemic advantages to white people, which they are often not aware of. It goes back to the European people, who when relocated to different parts of the world they would establish a social system with white superiority that would become the norm. Creating the system, and the ideology of whiteness that we still have incorporated in our social systems today.

Whiteness theory occurred in the 1990s, created by scholars to be more aware of the research that was related to race issues. Scholars believe that whiteness is so deeply integrated in us, as a part of our story and social behaviour, that we often become blind to it, and therefore, whiteness can occur unrecognized and furthermore, being applied into our digital systems without us being aware. Scholars recognize in their studies, that white interests have been preferred to the point where their interests now are the universal language for fair and good. The institutionalized parts of whiteness are followed by sense of white entitlement and superiority. Meaning, that when white people feel like they are threatened in their position of the dominating race, people of power see it as an attack and will accordingly respond with aggression. This has the term White Fragility (Davis, 2018).

Lisa Nakamura (2002) states in her book *Cyber types: Race, ethnicity, and identity on the internet* that whiteness is the very paradox of new media. Meaning that in the creation of the space, that are the new media, whiteness has gone back to its older ways, of racial

biased towards white people, which can be referred to a past with strategically main white domination (Nakamura, 2002). Within the new media, there is a big potential of creating new ways of whiteness that takes a distance toward the older formation, and instead focuses on a new more progressive way of racial thinking (Nakayama, 2017).

In the essay *What's next for whiteness and the Internet* by Thomas K. Nakayama (2017) suggest potentials issues there could be found because whiteness is changing in the digital environment. Firstly, interactivity meaning that in new media the way we communicate with one another is shifting, and it gives the possibility that everyone can have an uncensored voice. At least everyone who has digital access. This can lead to a fast-changing racial landscape within new media. The problematics that could be in this is occurring attempts to stop it, which consequently means reversing to older forms, which has been seen already in the shape of backlashes on the internet. For example, if a person of colour has been given to much attention by the media. It's observed that the internet environment establishes a place for older forms of racism appears and whiteness tries to restore its place. Secondly, Anonymity which is highly presented in the new media scene. People feel freer to post messages that wouldn't be acceptable in other parts of society, but because people feel a sense of anonymity that makes them use a language that they wouldn't in face-to-face communication. Therefore, the internet is also a place where racial terms can be heavily used to marginalize other individuals, and by doing so undervalue them in society. The third issue he proposes is vilification, which means the possibility of a post going viral, and be seen by thousands of people. Consequently having a either negative or positive outcome. The fourth issue is somewhat linked to the third, Global awareness. Meaning that a racial message can go viral fast, and it can be widespread globally.

Though racism looks similar all over the world, it can also be reflected differently, depending on the place. But what these places have in common is that whiteness is positioned in a privileged position. The rising of the web 2.0 has also allowed people to demonstrate their resistance against whiteness, and we see people resists the white domination by revealing racist action in society and try to create awareness and demand justice online. Like for example the occurring events of police shootings on black people. By using the internet to hold people accountable is a great example on how social media

can be used to challenge and reconstruct the field of whiteness. Though a current study examines college students' usage of social media. Multiple quantitative analytic studies revealed that racial and frequent social media use were both significant predictors for online responses to race-related issues.

The findings support that moral identity does not predict moral behaviour when it comes to speaking up on race-related issues. Social media use and racial identity were also linked to the responses to race-related issues. The study shows that various factors, such as race, social media use, and the sense of belonging in the online community, can predict how people will behave on social media when faced with racial issues. Black students were more likely to engage in discussions about race-related topics on social media regardless of their level of engagement on other moral issues. Only White students scored high on the symbolization subscale related to self-presentation. However, they were also more likely to engage in racial issues than those with similar scores. It is possible that students are more likely to maintain appearances on social media in order to avoid becoming associated with race-related issues.

The social media context can be considered as an additional layer or aspect of the moral identity framework that enables individuals to behave in a way, that they would otherwise not be able to do. This feature gives users an opportunity to ignore posts or situations that they might encounter online, as well as to respond in a rude or hateful manner. It also allows them to participate in acts of kindness and bravery. Although the concept of internalization of moral identity is associated with moral behaviour, this idea is not apparent in the contexts where people behave in online settings. It could be that social media platforms lend itself to a sense of disconnected anonymity, which could prevent White college students from engaging with race-related issues. This study shows that, among White students with high levels of symbolization of moral identity, they are more engaged with race-related issues online than their non-white counterparts. This suggests that this component of moral identity is not internalized and that it can be developed by helping students develop this component (Bindra & DeCuir-Gunby, 2020).

2.2.1 Representation and Diversity Challenges in Advertising

A current exploratory study from 2021 researching peoples attitude towards diversity in online advertising, researched the current state of representation and the impact of diversity in digital campaign performances (Alcantara, 2021). A survey conducted in the study with 1.200 online survey participants from Brazil, UK and the US found that 54% of these participants said that they do not see themselves 100% culturally represented in online advertising, furthermore 64% stated that they would like to see more diversity in online advertising. The study also found that 27% of the participants regularly see online advertising that has an stereotypical representation of people. Here the 27% are mostly people stemming from an minority group, the paper state the example of “Latino and Black Americans are 1,8 time more likely to say they see stereotypical representation in online ads” (Alcantara, 2021). Following when asked to describe the negative stereotypical representation they found the participants mentioned nine main areas: “age, body, culture, household, income, race, religion, sexualization and transgression” (Alcantara, 2021).

Highlighted for the relevance of this study is body where the participants mentioned; “People often look the same, usually with white skin and straight hair, Beauty is idealized and shown unrealistically, and there is a lack of diverse body types” (Alcantara, 2021), regarding race the participants mentioned; “there are prejudiced jokes related to skin colour, hair, gender and body type, White people are featured more often than a mix of races, and most diverse groups are shown in ads about having struggles” (Alcantara, 2021) and for culture they mentioned: “There is a lack of cultural diversity in ads. Everything is standardized, culture is misrepresented, and there are stereotypes based on race and accents” (Alcantara, 2021). The study also showed that 71% of consumers stated that they assume brands to promote inclusiveness and diversity in their marketing efforts. This will lead to a positive effect including driving purchase and loyalty, where 61% said that they view the brand to be more authentic when they include diversity, corelated with 59% stating that they will be more loyal towards brands that support inclusion and diversity in their online advertising, similar 59% also stated they choose brands that stand for inclusion and diversity (Alcantara, 2021).

To test it, the study did a lift analysis, and the result suggested that the online campaigns with more diverse representation are shown to have a higher advertising recall³, and that advertising using diverse representation often outperformed campaigns where a more traditional representation approach was used, furthermore, a Bayesian test on 4000 simulations was conducted, and the results showed that more than 90% of the simulations who had diverse representation in the advertising would outperformed single traditional representation advertising in an ad recall used. Alcantara (2021) concluded on the study the current situation in online advertising is that misrepresentation and lack of representation still occur, people belonging to a minority often feel misrepresented, brands get more loyalty from their consumers when they show diversity, inclusion, and equality in their online advertising and, when doing those.

Similar, Ipsos conducted a study in 2018. The study consisted of a survey with 14,700 people from 28 different countries around the world. 500 people participated from Turkey, Sweden, Spain, South Korea, South Africa, Serbia, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Romania, Poland, Peru, Mexico, Malaysia, Japan, Italy, India, Hungary, Germany, Great Britain, France, China, Chile, Canada, Brazil, Belgium and Australia and 1000 participants from the United States. All participants were between the age of 16 and 24.

The results was that 72% of participants say that advertiging does not reflect the world around them, 63% do not see themselves represented in most advertising and 45% see sexists' ads that they are offended by, and 64% said that advertisers have to do better to eliminate old-fashion gender roles in their advertising. Furthermore, the findings revealed how strong the influence from advertising is on the global community, and how it consequently sets unrealistic expectations to the world around us, people and ourselves, presenting the most relevant data from the study conducted by Lacey (2018) they found that "76% of consumers believe that advertising has a lot of power to shape how people perceive each another", "73% find that advertising influences how women see themselves (Lacey, 2018), 75% say advertising influences how girls see themselves (Lacey, 2018), and 67% agree advertising influences how men and boys see themselves" (Lacey, 2018)

³ An estimate of the number of additional people who may remember seeing your ads, if asked, within 2 days.

and 35% feel advertising often makes them feel like something is wrong with them.”(Lacey, 2018).

Furthermore they also asked the participants about inclusiveness in advertising and they found that “72% feel most advertising does not reflect the world around them” (Lacey, 2018), 63% claim they don’t see themselves represented in most advertising” (Lacey, 2018), “60% say they don’t see their community of friends, family, and acquaintances represented accurately in most advertising” (Lacey, 2018), “Only 44% say that, in recent years, it seems that more ads have people that look like people they know” (Lacey, 2018). Though also a positive change was seen lately within the advertising industry. It was found that “73% believe advertising is presenting more people from a wide range of backgrounds in the last few years” (Lacey, 2018), “55% feel there are fewer ads with traditional roles for men and women lately” (Lacey, 2018), “53% find that advertising is presenting a more realistic portrayal of people in the last few years” (Lacey, 2018), “48% agree that, recently, they have seen more positive role models in ads that inspire them” (Lacey, 2018), and “38% say they have been inspired by an ad in the past year” (Lacey, 2018).

Another similar study done by Facebook and the Geena Davis Institute was conducted to look into the understanding of people’s expectation of representation online, and furthermore, look into how the impact was on diverse and inclusive online campaigns. The study conducted a survey with 1,200 people participating and a review of more than 1,200 brand lift studies which and then analysed more than 1,000 Facebook video ads (Facebook IQ, 2021). The goal was to explore the intersection of diversity and representation in advertising and how it affects campaign performance. The results of the study indicated that although many online marketing campaigns are tackling negative and limiting representations, these are still present in most cases. A quote by Madeline Di Nonno, CEO, Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media stated in the article said: “Although there is a concerted effort and priority by agencies and advertisers to improve underrepresented communities onscreen and behind-the-camera, we still see the negative tropes and stereotypes showing up in ads. In order to drive systemic change, we all need to establish measurable goals toward how we approach the work” (Facebook IQ, 2021). A survey was conducted to research people attitudes about representation in online

advertising. The study was conducted in Brazil, United States and United Kingdom and had 1,200 participants between the age of 18 and older. They found that 54% of that “they do not feel fully culturally represented in online advertising and 71% expects brands to promote diversity and inclusion in their online advertising” (Facebook IQ, 2021). Furthermore, they found that Latino and Black Americans see themselves 1,8 times more negatively represented in online advertising. Another find was that brands are showing initiative to be representation it has a positive effect on the consumers, 59% said they are more loyal to brands who that are focusing on being inclusive and diverse (Facebook IQ, 2021).

To understand the impact being diverse had on business online campaigns, the study analysed the results of 25 brand lift studies. It was running in different verticals from 2018-2019 and 4000 simulations was ran. Furthermore, a meta-analysis of 1,207 brand lift studies was done. The result showed that campaigns who was more diverse in their representation often have a higher recall then traditional ads, and over 90% of the simulations who had diversity in the ads was the best strategy for the ad recall. A further exploratory analysis revealed that women tend to have higher recall for ad characters that are female than male. This suggests that people tend to better recall ads that feature characters similar to themselves. Ultimately, the study shows that digital channels have challenges with underrepresentation and misrepresentation, and by creating by diverse and inclusive ads it can create stronger bonds with consumers and contribute to a positive social impact (Facebook IQ, 2021). The authors of the study suggest methods in how marketers can advance in inclusive representation. The first suggestion is to always use tools and check all the latest ads and evaluate on the level of representation and diversity they have and then continue this into new campaigns, second they suggest to always build more inclusive ideas, and state it is important to check the biases throughout the creating process, and last the marketers should always use data driven approaches to check the effectiveness of diversity (Facebook IQ, 2021).

Similar for all these 3 is that there is no scientific basis for the way they measure representation and diversity. They all measure it based on an individual understanding of identity based on their respondent’s self-image. Therefore, these studies can only give an understanding of advertising not being able to create representation that people can

identify with, and the take away is that even though we don't have a shared consensus for representation in the studies, though a take is that advertising people can relate and see themselves in, are still lacking in the industry as a whole, and the numbers for misrepresentation and lack of, is still high, and therefore, it is an important matter for the marketing industry to find a solution that catalyse change.

Grier & Perry (2018) introduces the term “faux diversity” grounded on a study researching “diversity seeking, consumption and community in neighbourhoods undergoing gentrification” (Grier & Perry, 2018). They found that the increasing number of households with diverse characteristics in neighbourhoods can create faux diversity. This occurs when the social, political, and economic factors that encourage diversity are combined with limited social interaction. In these situations, diversity is often superficial, temporary, and misleading. The lack of social interaction is identified as a major factor that influences diversity seeking. The dynamics of race and inequality are influenced by various factors, such as racism and political power. The diversity of the neighbourhood was seen as a positive thing, though especially new residents were enthusiastic about the diversity of their neighbourhoods. Most of them identified themselves as diversity seekers due to their values and experiences with diverse people, looking for something that's cultural, as well as something that's a bit superficial. The importance of seeking diversity and valuing diversity is a key factor that can be the social dynamics of these neighbourhoods.

This study revealed that these factors have a significant positive impact on the consumption dynamics of these communities. Though there was a different understanding and interpretation of ethnic and racial heterogeneity among the residents which created a social gap between them. This was explained by the opportunities in social interactions and consumptions that still felt not equal for all residents – here the divide between long term residents and newcomers were pointed out. The concept of diversity-seeking living is that individuals desire to learn about another culture. However, when it comes to actively learning about diverse individuals, newcomers do not seem to take the initiative. Although they praised the virtues of a diverse community, many noted that cultural differences play a key role in the limited interactions. Consequently, tensions grew between long-term and new residents over the sharing of space and social engagement. They found that in

communities that are being gentrified, residents value diversity, but they often face challenges when it comes to social interactions and norms of engagement and suggest that communities are characterized by social interactions and traditions, and that residents value diversity but face challenges when dealing with social groups. Both public and private spaces can serve as potential settings for cross- group interaction and engagement. This interaction can also be used to promote social integration. Some participants noted that neighbourhood diversity has brought about tensions and antagonisms due to various factors such as race and income. This study revealed that differences in access to goods and services have been identified as factors that contribute to tensions.

The study's findings reinforce the idea that diversity seeking is linked to both context and stable components. People may be prone to developing a high diversity-oriented tendency due to the variety of representation of difference people they encounter. The effects of faux diversity are evidenced by the disconnect between the various social interactions and the marketplace dynamics. These factors are responsible for the observed decline in social interactions (Grier & Perry, 2018). Residents also mention the class differences explained in the differences in race and ethnicity which can create divides and different cultures within communities furthering the gap (DeSena, 2012). Connecting this to theory about high diversity seekers who are more likely to have targeted inclusion efforts and may also attempt to make changes themselves. Their willingness to move outside their cultural belief systems makes them carriers of cultural content (Brumbaugh & Grier, 2013). An example of "faux diversity" effect is the study conducted by Avery (2003), which provides a comprehensive analysis of the effects of job advertisement diversity. It shows that there are significant differences in how job seekers respond to ad diversity.

The study also revealed that the racial orientation of employees is a significant factor in how job seekers perceive ad diversity. It showed that ad diversity does not affect potential white applicants and that it attracts some white candidates. Where non-white candidates were affected in terms of the effect of restricted ad diversity on non-white. In response to the study, many African Americans chose to go with organizations that portrayed no diversity, while those with restricted diversity perceived the best opportunity to interact with other groups. The various ratings indicated how well-regarded non-white

job seekers were. Some of them may have expected to be regarded this way, given the opportunity to advance within the company. Others may have assumed that the company valued diversity more than them. The study found that racial diversity did not affect the level of organization attractiveness of black participants. However, the effect of racial diversity was contingent on one's openness to racial diversity. Connecting the “faux diversity” to the diversity in the job advertising where it indicates that the people the diversity target ads are aimed towards, are the people who do not attract towards them. Perceiving them as creating a faux diversity, in the end attract more white people than non-white applicants, leaving it with the same starting point.

A perspective on this can be found in the following study by Boulton (2016) who examines black identities in the U.S advertising industry, which is stated to be influenced by the under presentation of non-white Americans as well as the history of discrimination against. The study focuses on theories of stereotyping and code switching to analyse data collected from a set of focus group of non-white interns at agencies. The study found that in one focus group when talking about code switching⁴ a participant who grew up in a mostly white neighbourhood couldn't relate to stereotyping around skin colour, and also couldn't recognize distinction between code switching in speak, she related it to not having anyone represented around her doing those things. The MAIP's⁵ insistence on racial sensitivity can create a class-blindness that makes it hard for upper-class Blacks to feel secure in their own sense of belonging. For instance, a participant talked about the feeling of constantly having to prove herself in order to be considered a black woman. Many of the women in my focus groups also felt that their racial identity was not informed by their culture. They often felt like they had no control over how or why they were treated. They also felt like they had no choice but to accept that they were a racial minority, and the participants often felt that racial identity was seen and a membership card that could be taken away at any moment, and that they felt like white people assume that they all got a described a “black memo” but furthermore as whites assumed their black identity as a race biased, they also found their own racial belonging was something that could be taken away, if they were not black enough. This contradiction between the ideals of racial affiliations and the realities of working in an agency environment, made it difficult for

⁴ Code switching, the modifying of one's behavior, appearance, etc., to adapt to different sociocultural norms.

⁵ American association of advertising agencies.

these young women to code switch seamlessly while navigating the White-controlled worlds of their internship.

The study concluded that the race problem in advertising presents a unique set of challenges for the participants. On one hand, they are expected to excel in their own demographic, while at the same time, they are also expected to behave properly in order to gain the respect of their White peers. While they may be able to manage their behaviour, they must also code switch to negotiating Whites' racial stereotypes in order to avoid potential threat. Agencies should not be afraid to acknowledge the cultural differences between the people who work for them and those who don't. This is especially true since many of them have learned how to adapt to these differences through their own experiences. This would help avoid hiring non-white simply for their non-white perspective. It would also help avoid them being assorted into a single identity and limit their contributions. Even with changes, structural racial inequality within advertising will remain because the advertising industry's inability to address its own diversity problems may be the only way to address the issue. This study shows how advertising agencies can support their own diversity commitments by creating incentive to follow suit. It also highlights the importance of ethical and methodological issues in this area. By shifting the focus from message reception to observing the opportunities and constraints of message creation, scholarship can provide new insights into how worker identity and subjectivity can shape the range of expression within the creative industries (Boulton, 2016).

What all these studies have in common are that they found initiatives done to create diversity failed and ended up with negative consequences for the non-white participants. Reflecting that despite the companies effort they were lacking the resources to understand the people they were trying to reach, creating a "Faux diversity". The tangibility of racial dynamics in consumption and markets activities is almost impossible to ignore. From the rise of Islamic consumption practices to the debate over the role of race in the financial markets, it is clear that race is a crucial ideological component in the functioning of global consumption markets (Nopper, 2011). How race is conceptualized depends on context. For instance, in the US, it is often unclear what constitutes biological diversity, while in France, it is often debated whether or not race is real. Due to the significant impact of software algorithms on consumption outcomes, the incomplete consideration of race in

these assessments is highly problematic. Grier, Thomas and Johnson (2017) argues that the inclusion of race in these assessments undermines the integrity of the algorithms and the decisions they make. The race/facial recognition challenge is a key component of recognizing that race is a marketplace icon, and it is often ignored by the marketplace when it comes to recognizing individuals. The race/facial recognition challenge is a key component of the marketplace icon concept. It is both highly relevant and also seemingly disregarded at the intersection. An icon can only become truly iconic once its ideology has been acknowledged. Unlike other marketplace icons, race is not celebrated or recognized as such. Instead, it is a silent and unassuming marketplace luminary.

Race serves as a cultural taxonomy of physical representations that represent social power. Race is a key site of hierarchy in global markets. It is central to contemporary marketing and advertising practices globally. Within marketing, race is often viewed as a segmentation variable that draws attention to the group-level influences that influence consumers. It is not uncommon for reviewers to ask for and accept the data and behaviours of white consumers as a baseline, while non-white communities are often relegated to monolithic categories. This scenario occurs when the experiences and behaviours of white consumers are used to evaluate the non-whites' marketplace experiences (Grier et al., 2017).

Though, a current new initiative launched by BRIM6. The Advertising Association has launched a new scheme aimed at improving the representation of non-white people within the marketing industry. The initiative, which is powered by some of the world's biggest advertisers and agency partners, is a step towards creating a more inclusive and diverse marketing environment. Brim is a new framework that aims to provide a fair and inclusive representation of Black people in the marketing industry. The framework aims to cover the entire marketing journey, from creative output to strategic campaign decisions. It includes the core team responsible for all aspects of marketing, as well as the various partner ecosystems (Ormesher, 2021).

Consequences of not feeling represented is examined by Fryberg & Townsend (2008) introduces the theory of invisibility which refers to when a group of people in society is

⁶ Black Representation in Marketing

feeling underrepresented in media. Consequently, it can worse can scenario mean that the group is lacking social elements and strategies on how to be a person. Furthermore is was also found that when a minority group is not represented in the media, they are likely to convey to other members of the group, that they do not belong in job fields where the group is not seen represented in the media (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Though this do not indicate that increased representation would lead to a more positive effect because these groups would still be susceptible to misrepresentation and negative stereotype behaviour. Even though the representation of people of colour has increased it is still argued, that represented is still portrayed in a stereotypical manor (Mastro et al., 2011). Though the impact it will have on the individual person will be different based on state of their social identity such their gender, social class, education etc. (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Not only does it affect people's self-perception how they are presented in the media, but also how they interact with people around them (Chang et al., 2004). Gunter and Levy (1987) stated that as a society we are live isolated from our ethnic and racial groups, where this will be most apparent through media. Through media messages, society can get a better understanding of its various groups. This can influence the collective perception of these individuals. Through exposure to depictions of race and ethnic groups in the media, individuals can develop a deeper understanding of these communities within society.

2.2.2 Cultural appropriation in advertising

Perry (2002) states that colour-blind ideology can provide the foundation for a person's racial identity. Colour-blind ideology provides the framework for whites to construct racial identities that are cultureless. The lack of cultural substance in whiteness provides the basis upon creating an identity based on black characteristics obtained through cultural appropriation. Similar Gallagher (2003) states colour-blind eyes can interpret cultural symbols in ways that undermine their racial coded character. This allows whites to feel like they are part of a racialized culture. Also, colour-blind eyes are trained to interpret cultural symbols in ways that diminish the character of people of colour. They can also identify cultural identities without being associated with them (Gallagher, 2003).

Rodriquez (2006) conducted a study researching how whites are colour-blind to their own racial privilege and how they manage this privilege, while justifying the colour-

blindness of a cultural form while also endorsing a form which is explicitly racial. As a reference to culture, Rodriguez (2006) found that Hip-Hop consumption elevates the image of white people as they move through a black cultural environment. Yet their adherence to colour-blind ideology leads them down a path of consuming hip-hop in order to indicate the irrelevancy of race in their lives. Using a rhetorical strategy that values the importance of race in society, most concertgoers justify their participation in a hip-hop scene by stating that they are doing it for the love of music.

Colour-blind ideology allows people to identify cultural forms that are both culturally correct and racially coded. The findings showed that most concertgoers exhibit the same behaviour as they do in their own lives: They participate in the scene as an expression of their own race's irrelevance. Colour-blind ideology is a vital component of hip-hop, as it allows people to justify their presence in the music scene, and it also allows whites to use their racial power in the culture. Furthermore, the findings show that colour-blind ideology can be robust enough to incorporate racially charged cultural markers and their connections to race. The study also shows that blind ideology can modify hip-hop's association with blackness.

Similar to findings Hall (1997) argues that the pattern of separating art from the people leads to the exploitation of non-white cultural forms, which are often exploited commercially and otherwise. Colour-blind ideology is also relevant to popular culture because it enables those with racial power to more effectively decontextualize cultural objects that were previously considered impenetrable (Rodriguez, 2006).

Bonilla-Silva, (2003) shows how white people can hide their racism by developing four avenues of colour-blindness: cultural racism, abstract freedom, minimalization, and the naturalization of racism. They are the ones who are responsible for their own negative situation, and it is not the way they were treated in the past, cultural racism argues that the white culture is superior in terms of both economic and political positions. This concept argues that the white people have the advantage when it comes to making political and economic decisions. This is the reason why many people who are against racial issues often object to the efforts to make them better.

Though a tendency to see non-white culture as a trend is something there is found within different aspects based on cultural appropriation. Though the problem is that it is only a certain type of skin tone as found in a study (Mitchell, 2020).

This study investigates the link between the alleged practice of whitewashing the skin tones of black women in print media, and the racial issues surrounding these tones. It also explores the various facets of the presentation of skin tones in marketing. The study focused on the skin tones of the female characters featured in print media advertisements and the covers of four magazines. The results revealed that the subjects' skin tones were influenced by the circulation size of the magazines and their target markets. With the highest circulation, Condé Nesty and Vogue were the magazines that targeted to black women the most. The model's skin tone was determined using the Pantone colour system.

The system is commonly used to describe colours by an allocated number. The colours used by Pantone for skin tone were grouped into three categories: light skin tones, mid skin tones, and dark skin tones. For instance, the numbers 734, 722, and 729 were labelled as light skin tones, while the numbers 731 and 732 were labelled as dark skin tones. The model in the centre of the image that occupied the most space was considered as primary. If another model where in the image, they would be coded as secondary. Results showed that the most popular skin tone that was represented was PMS 729 (34%). PMS 729 represents the brown paper bag skin tone. PMS 730 (one shade darker than a brown paper bag) represented 21% of the models, and PMS 728 (one shade lighter than a brown paper bag) represented 28% of the model's skin tones (Mitchell, 2020). When grouped into skin tone categories, 10% of the models were dark skin tones (PMS 731 and PMS 732), while 36% were light skin tones. The top three product categories that the Black models appeared in were retail (33%), hair products (20%), and skincare for the face (18%) All four magazines were least likely to have models with skin tones of PMS 726 (the lightest shade) and PMS 732 (the darkest shade).

Likewise, all four magazines were most likely to have models with skin tones corresponding to PMS 729 (brown paper bag) and PMS 728 (one shade lighter than a brown paper bag) (Mitchell, 2020). Concluding although Black women tend to buy magazines such as Vogue and Elle, they are also targeted to white women. This is because, despite the lack of celebrity endorsements, they are still considered the main target in print

media. In the current study, only one percent of the Black models was portrayed as a main target. The results also support the ideology of colourism, which is that dark skin tone is not an acceptable representation of mainstream beauty. The results of this study raise concerns regarding the extent to which marketers use dark and light skin tones in their marketing materials. It also raises the question as to whether these advertisers see white washing. The concept of whitewashing is a form of racialized marketing communication that involves the use of digitally altered images of black models to give them a lighter skin tone. This practice has been criticized by various individuals and groups. According to a rapport from Nielsen (Grace et al., 2017), most African American women are fashion trendsetters who have a significant impact on mainstream culture. Black women's spending power was found to reach over 1.5 trillion dollars. There has been a history of black women's bodies not being represented in terms of the idealized beautiful thin bodies unless they are depicted as exotic or objectified beauty. This could indicate that the reason is due to how they are portrayed in body advertisements. Henderson (2003) argue that this undermines the idea that black women are more attractive than white women. It is consistent with the accusations made by L'Oréal Paris against Beyoncé in 2008 for her hair colour advertisement. The excessive whitewashing was so excessive, that Beyoncé appeared to be the exact same skin tone as the white Model in the same advertisement. The accusation supports the concept of colourism in the media marketing industry and its practice of whitewashing. Supporting the ideology of colourism (Mitchell, 2020), most of the models wore brown paper bags or one shade lighter. They could also disguise themselves as neutrals to avoid controversy.

Similar Baker (2005) found through a content analysis coding 32 magazine targeting both men and women discovered that most of the women displayed was of a medium skin tone, though it was found that the magazines targeting white people had mostly black women with a light skin toned displayed. Amongst those accused of black fishing is Bruno Mars, Iggy Azalea and Ariana Grande.

Stating that point that only certain skin tones are seen trending as seen among celebrities and influencers impersonating as light skin black women on social media. Black fishing can be linked to the practice of catfishing, which is where people create fictional online personas. It can also be linked to the practice of blackface, which involves putting

on dark makeup to make someone look like a Black person. The term "Blackface" became popular in 2018, after journalist Wanna Thompson noticed how white celebrities and influencers dressed up as black women on social media. It is often used to describe individuals who use various methods to make up or appear black in order to appear more ethnically ambiguous. Black fishing is a modern form of digital blackface, in which the features of black culture are only considered attractive when used by non-black (VCCP, 2021).

2.3 Influencer Marketing

According to experts, opinion leaders, also known as influencers, can influence their peers through social media. They can also get their peers to discuss topics related to news, movies, and politics (Bakshy et al., 2011). Influencer Marketing is focused on connecting brands with their target audiences through social media. It is done through the use of various influencers and various platforms (Childers et al., 2018). Due to the increasing number of offerings by various companies, consumers are more likely to look for authenticity from their interactions with them. For instance, they often use in-game experiences that are shared through social media platforms (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Brands use influencer marketing to build strong relationships with their consumers. It is not only beneficial for the brand, but also the influencer who can use it to increase their community (Woodcock et al., 2011).

Influencer marketing hub describe an influencer as someone who has: *“the power to affect the purchasing decisions of others because of his or her authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with his or her audience”* (Geysler, 2021) And who has *“a following in a distinct niche, with whom he or she actively engages. The size of the following depends on the size of his/her topic of the niche”* (Geysler, 2021).

A consumer trust study was in 2019 conducted by Olapic (Hutchinson, Andrew, 2019). The study showed that 64% of 16-22 year-olds follow an influencer on social media, 37% of consumers trust images more that is created by other consumers then they trust brand created images. 51% believe that content posted by other consumers is more authentic, and 48% find it more relatable. It also stated that brands who wish to work with consumer-generated images should first turn to Facebook and Instagram, here they can find the

consumers who interact the most with consumer generated images, for Facebook it is 44% and Instagram 35% (Hutchinson, Andrew, 2019). Similar another study found that a recommendation from a friend or other consumer has a stronger effect on the buying decision than traditional marketing have. An advertisement with the same message would be perceived as more genuine coming from another consumer. Therefore, with the emerge of social media, the peer-to-peer review reached new ways of communicating opinions and experiences to fellow consumers. It gave the consumers possibility to critique and recommend brands on their own account to their own community through eWOM⁷ (De Veirman et al., 2017). Tuten (2012) describe Influencers as opinion leaders who are peoples with a strong communication network that allows them to effect peoples buying decisions. Tuten (2012) states that there are 5 characteristics to describe an influencer; activists, connected, impact, active minds and trendsetters. Giving, that they create a community within a niche of their expertise. Trough that they engage and communicate within the community, building a trustworthiness around them. Though the influencer can besides being seen as experts in a certain field, also be seen as someone who stays connected and is informed about things that are being communicated through mass media and generate it into messages conveyed to a community (Casaló et al., 2020).

De Veirman M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017) found that brands facing difficulties to reach their audience through advertising, are now focusing more on using influencers as a part of their marketing efforts. Instead of directly aiming advertising towards their target, they look to influencers with a similar target audience and through them brands push their product indirectly (De Veirman et al., 2017). Similar Hennessy (2018) states that influencers who post content, whether it is branded or not the audience will trust them and therefore also the main reason why brands work with influencers, they want access to their audience. Since it is harder for brands to gain peoples trust because consumers have more scepticism against brand intentions. Working with influencers give brands an audience that will listen and see their product through the trust of the influencer, that is also why it is important that the influencer that the brand chooses has a community that trust them, otherwise no matter how great the content is, if the influencer don't have a

⁷ Electronic Word of Mouth.

loyal community it won't be possible to influence anyone, and the brand will have gained nothing (Hennessy, 2018).

When brands work with influencers, it means that influencers are providing the brand with a service, they either get paid or receive the product in payment. The brands then expect in return that the influencer promote their product to their followers. These collaborations range depending on the influencer's follower base and the budget of the brand. This is what we would describe as influencer marketing (De Veirman et al., 2017).

To understand the mechanisms in influencer marketing that affect consumers via social media Lou and Yuan (2019) looked into three different types of social media advertising value; informativeness, entertainment and credibility. To research the three types of an online survey was shared among social media users who followed at least one influencer. Findings indicated that all types have a positive effect on consumers perceived value of advertising which consequently affected their purchase intentions. Through the findings, it was discovered that influencers' informative posts can add trust in their branded content. This can indicate that social media users perceive influencers as a place to find quality information, and enhance their trust, or buying considerations based on influencer informative content, more than their entertainment action. A second finding showed that: trustworthiness, attractiveness, and perceived similarity (Lou & Yuan, 2019) affected positively the influencers' followers' trust within their branded posts. Which is coherent with the hypothesis that influencers' perceived trustworthiness and attractiveness can affect the trust in their sponsored post, which is related to their perceived appealing online personas and cultivated credibility. Furthermore, in relation they found that the influencers' expertise and attractiveness can improve followers' brand awareness when seeing branded posts. The study furthermore showed that influencers who are credible as experts within a specific area, makes them more prone to promote brands within the specific area effectively (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Similar Kim and Johnson (2016) conducted a study to research consumers' response when exposed to brand related user generated content. They found that users being exposed to brand related user generated content when browsing through Facebook, had a cognitive response that was positive. Among those responses was pleasure and perceived information quality though influenced by the brand identified. For all the participants impulse buying, information pass-along, future purchase intention and

brand engagement are all behavioural responses to brand related user generated content (Kim & Johnson, 2016). Furthermore Kim and Johnson (2016) found that in relation to social media marketing, that understanding the consequences of the consumers engaging in brands on Facebook helped the consumer behaviour responding to brand related user generated content, to enhance brand sales like impulse buying and future purchase intention, relationship building as brand engagement and eWOM as information pass along. Therefore, providing new channels for the consumers to engage with the brand, channels on social media that can talk about the brand and help connect the consumer and brand, channels could for example be an influencer. Consequently, leading to increase in sales and initiate and maintain a brand-customer relationship.

A good way to learn about how an online community works, is to find out who the key members are. A community organizer is someone who can help keep the conversation going and the community running smoothly. It was found that often the founder of the groups is the main initiative taker when it comes to planning and running the community, though a community tend to have strong members who can take over, when the leader is not available. This concept is important because it shows that a healthy online community can still exist even without the presence of certain individuals. For instance, if some members of the community cannot participate in a certain weekly discussion, the others would still carry out the conversation. A high number of messages makes one's content more visible to the other members of the community, but this does not mean that the messages are of interest to the other community members. In order to be considered interesting, the content of the messages should be shared among the community (Gruzd & Haythornthwaite, 2013).

Connecting this to social identity theory which can help explain how people communicate with each other based on the intrinsic value they place on social group membership. This concept can help explain intergroup behaviour and the various forms of intergroup communication (Bouvier, 2020). The concept of the minimal group paradigm was popularized by studies conducted during the 1970s. They showed that people tend to distinguish themselves from other members of a group based on their group membership (Harwood, 2020). Turner and Tajfel (1979) developed the SIT model, which describes how individual identities affect their decisions to discriminate against groups. It shows how

these identities can also predict collective responses to group status. We tend to categorize people into groups, which serves to simplify our environment. Also, we tend to categorize ourselves into various social groups. Once we become long-term members of a group, we seek ways to gain the positive feelings from that group. One way to achieve this is by viewing the ingroup more favourably than the outgroups we are in. Seeking positive distinctiveness for an ingroup is an explanation for our negative attitudes and beliefs about other groups (Harwood, 2020).

Furthermore, people can adopt a social change belief system, which encourages individuals to challenge the status quo and improve their ingroup position within the social hierarchy. People tend to endorse social change ideology when their ingroup identification shows signs of being high, as the status quo is perceived as unstable and illegitimate. This belief system is often associated with collective movements, such as those around group rights. Social identities are also a part of the Self-concept. The goal is to maintain a positive image of one's group. Media can also help members of marginalized communities by providing positive representations of their ingroup. This can also help build support for a social change system (Reid et al., 2004). Though it can also have the opposite effect and spread hate speech and encourage violence among various groups. Online platforms that cater to white supremacy and other violent content are also accessible to the general public.

2.3.1 Selection of influencers

A study by Mallipeddi (2021) states that despite the increasing popularity of influencer marketing, it is a problem that it has been neglected in the academic literature. The explosion of social media users has changed the way firms approach their marketing activities. Instead of just focusing on traditional marketing techniques, firms are now turning to influencer marketing. The study suggests a framework that will help firms effectively implement long- and short-term campaigns. The models are based on various interactions between marketers and social media platforms, as well as empirical data from twitter. Two important parameters are the collective influence and multiple exposure effect. For the long- term campaign, they formulate an optimal procedure to select and schedule influencers. For the short-term problem, they present an optimization model that can be used to select influencers. We show how our solutions can solve both short- and long-term problems faced by firms in the influencer marketing industry. First, the different

influencers are defined by their different levels of following and engagement. These are the levels of engagement that influencers typically reach with their followers. Influencers might also have a common subgroup of overlapping followers. This increases multiple exposures from the same ad if a user follows several influencers, they may receive the same ad regardless of if the user followed one influencer or not.

Mallipeddi (2021) developed a main model based on linear practices. The model is set to help develop fast and effective influencer sets, that can provide companies with an easier solution than organic practices used currently in influencer marketing. The contribution to this is a solution based on a suggested model. Based on time limitations they developed an alternative model closely connected to the main model planned to be developed. This was done to show the options of the optimizing effect, such a model will provide.

The model provides assistance in influencer selection in matching promoting products. Furthermore, the model is aimed to provide assistance in conducting full influencer marketing campaigns in, furthermore the model is to help with optimizing the planning of ad posts process. The objective of the selection model is to find the right influencers at the right time. This is because, at the moment, there are diminishing returns on hiring an additional influencer. Through two case studies, we demonstrate how the model can be implemented to improve the selection process. Some of the things that this new model fails to include, is stating how they plan to measure the data of the influencer in the selection process, and furthermore will a model based on calculation be able to measure authenticity and representation based on algorithmic practices, or will it just provide another form of structural divide within the influencer platform space.

Obermeyer (2019) investigated the conscious and instrumental interactions between algorithms and digital influencers on Instagram. It shows that the pursuit of influence on the platform is a game played by rules that regulate visibility. The study argues that influencers could be relabeled as playing the visibility game, which shifts the focus away from acting as a single manipulator of the algorithm. With the rise of influencers, Instagram's algorithmic architecture has become more extensive. (Cotter, 2019) argues that influencers are not only aware of Instagram's algorithms, but also of the discourses around authenticity and entrepreneurship within their communities. Instead of asking users

to “play the system” or “gaming the system” to determine their behaviour, asking users to behave in a certain way makes sense. Concluding that influencers are aware of the algorithmic power that can propel them to greater visibility. Instead of following the rules, they play by them. The game shows that platform owners have complete control over the game's technical structure. As such, knowing the rules does not mandate strategy, and it informs influencers' decisions on how to implement them.

The intersection of algorithms and culture, suggests that entrepreneurship and authenticity are shaped by the behaviours that influencers adopt. Instagram’s algorithm could identify authentic connectivity and influence, but simulation influencers believed that its algorithms could not effectively measure popularity and authenticity. These influencers used their platforms to target specific status markers and emphasize their personal achievements. Through divergent clarification of Instagram’s algorithm, they explore how knowledge of algorithms can affect platform behaviour. The comparison of playing the visibility game acknowledges the mutual influence that users and platforms have in shaping the kinds of platforms, that they use. Holding platform operators accountable for enforcing rules and acknowledges the role of algorithms in defining rules. Also highlighted the users’ role in identifying possible solutions within the regulatory structure. Beyond game creators and algorithm-based platforms, the game industry is also affected by third-party marketing companies. While influencers often cite specific apps or services they use, the extent of this impact remains unclear.

The visibility game has implications for digital inequalities, as it brings attention to the divide between the winners and the losers. Veteran influencers see it as the precursor of a paradigm shift that will allow anyone to be an influencer. Critics of the post-algorithm-ranking platform see it as a plutocratic system where shifting rules are imposed, and not everyone will be able to follow the rules demand, creating a system potentially not allowing everyone to participate (Cotter, 2019). Proven in in previous studies - that despite people who are lower educated spent more time online, people who have a higher social status are using the time that they are online in a more beneficial way (Deursen & Van Dijk, 2014).

A similar study by (Zillien & Hargittai, 2009) also concluded that those with higher social status are more likely to use the Internet in a beneficial way. The visibility game

also encourages offline hierarchies of privilege, with the winner being the individual with the most social, economic and political power. This suggests that the presence of influencers on social media culture may have the same effect on society as it does in real life (Deursen & Van Dijk, 2014). Providing that the influencers would be able to manipulate the algorithm, suggested for the model by (Mallipeddi et al., 2021) it is something they take into consideration in their development of the selection model.

Furthermore, perceived authenticity is also something that should be taking into consideration. The role of perception of authenticity in a social conscious advertising strategy. It shows that although perceived authenticity does not lead to increased social media engagement, it does improve brand attitudes (Shoenberger et al., 2020). The success of an influencer marketing campaign is largely influenced by the importance of authenticity (Moore et al., 2018).

The concept of influencer marketing is about connecting with existing and potential customers in an authentic and engaging manner (Leparoux et al., 2019). Through influencer marketing, the products are brought closer to the customer through engaging and authentic communications. This is the reason why finding and recruiting influencers is so important in order to build trust and legitimacy among customers. Trust is a vital component in authentic influencer marketing. Audiences are looking for recommendations that they can trust (Moore et al., 2018)The content of an influencer's posts is very important to create credibility. This is because influencers are often communicating through their posts. The content and behavior of the influencers and followers must be consistent in order to create an effective and persuasive marketing message. This process requires that the audience is aware of and trust the truthfulness of the content. The marketing messages should not be too hard to digest and should be consistent with the consumers' needs and expectations (Moore et al., 2018). The messages should speak to the audience in terms of their provided information, so that they can connect with the content created by the company.

Similarity and Likeability can also be built up through trust, which is the concept of persuasion introduced by Cialdini (2016). This concept states that when a consumer experiences an influencer similar to them, they are more likeable and trust them more (Moore et al., 2018). For instance, if an influencer has expertise in a certain field, the

consumers will consider him or her as more trustworthy than a non-expert (Moore et al., 2018).

Bishop (2021) explores algorithmic influencer management tools, used to find influencers in advertising campaign and argues that, by approximating these values, tools demonstrating existing social inequalities in influencer industries, particularly along the lines of sexuality, class, and race. They also deepen surveillance of influencer content by brand stakeholders, who are concerned that influencers will do a mistake and be “cancelled” (risking their investments in content).

Through the theoretical framework Bishop (2021) give in dept insight into the complexity of the relationship between influencers and marketers, many intermediaries are still trying to streamline the process of managing the relationship. There are various types of intermediaries that offer various services such as full-service talent agencies, collectives, and membership fees (Bishop, 2021). MCNs are digital platforms that manage various aspects of a brand’s lifecycle, such as advertising, content, and loyalty. They operate by serving as cultural intermediaries, which is exactly what Bourdieu meant when he defined them (Bourdieu, 2000).

Those who develop algorithmic influencer management tools, sell them to brands with the securement that they should not be afraid to work within these new ecologies. While the contractual obligations for both types of intermediaries vary, most influencers are encouraged to work with commercial opportunities in exchange for a percentage of their income. As intermediary organizations promise to increase brands' control over the message being put out, they will discipline and narrow the cultural production of limited commercially recognizable categories. The commercialization of cultural production has long been practiced in various forms. For instance, modelling agents identify talent based upon commercial “types.” Or records labels genres people into a commercially recognized genres like “salsa.” Influencer management tools claim to do the same as these intermediary organizations, which they state should help in being able to find the most promising talent in specific niches, such as fashion, beauty, and gaming. Through their management tools, influencers can identify and recommend individuals that align with various commercial themes and genres (B. Duffy, 2017).

Both desirable and risky, authenticity is a balancing act between brands and ordinary people. In terms of its performance, it is consistent, elegant, and glamorous (Abidin, 2017). This style of authenticity is rooted in the intersection of the various inequalities that confront the creative online economies. Duffy (2017) arguing that the perception of authenticity in an influencer industry is distributed alongside the privileges and nepotism that come with it (Duffy & Hund, 2019).

Wilson, Rule and Hugenberg (2017) argues that white bodies and perspectives are often favoured on platforms like YouTube, where racism is common, which is coherent with Gaunt (2015) who shows how black girls' self-esteem is often distorted and stereotyped on YouTube. The algorithms that underlie influencer management tools are rooted in colonial systems of power and privilege. They are designed to give little insight into how processes work, and how to address instances of improper classification (Gordon, 2019). There have been many examples of Twitter systematically suppressing black faces in its image preview, and TikTok looping the white creators based on algorithms.

Epps-Darling (2020) argues that moments of algorithmic prejudice are moments of technological micro aggressions, which are produced by the systematic exclusion of non-white users from technology. concluded, that creative work has been widely promoted as a path to social mobility and entrepreneurship. However, this promotion undermines the precarious nature of creative work and its associated social inequality. In the UK, there are various initiatives that aim to help young people gain skills in vlogging and content creation. For instance, the UK Media Trust has partnered with Google to offer training in this area, with great success.

When using software that helps manage influencers is often used to rationalize the selection process and exclude those with lower scores. This is because, as an influencer management tool, it enables creators to make money by driving traffic to their YouTube channels. This is a multi-pronged approach that aims to make money from the creators themselves. Showing indications that data can be manipulated and used to create accurate and truthful content. This idea fits with the narrative of how data is manipulated, and how it can be used to create seemingly accurate and truthful content. They enhance concepts such as safety, but in doing so encode decontextualized language through a white lens. The complexity of the marketplace makes it hard to predict who will be hired. It is important

that we distinguish the claims of expertise from the actual endorsements made by influencers. There are also historical factors that can affect the validity of these claims. This context is important to understand before diagnosing issues with influencer management tools. For instance, they can easily modify their processes or platforms to work seamlessly without requiring deep knowledge in marketing or technology, creating potentially another bias system Bishop (2021).

2.3.2 Current State of Influencer Marketing and representation within Portugal

Companies who use influencer marketing are increasing every year. This year 67,9% of companies used influencer marketing within the US. By 2022, that number will increase up to 72,5%. This is mostly an increase caused by the pandemic, which boosted the use of influencer marketing. A comprehensive study conducted by (Insider Intelligence, 2021).

Influencer Marketing Hub (Santoral, 2021) researched the current state of influencer marketing worldwide for 2021, though it is not specific to Portugal, it does give an indication to an overall shared state of the development of influencer marketing. They found that;

- “Influencer marketing is expected to grow to be worth \$13.8 billion in 2021”.
- “The majority of brands (59%) have a standalone budget for content marketing”.
- “75% of them intend to dedicate a budget to influencer marketing in 2021”.
- “90% of our survey respondents believe influencer marketing to be an effective form of marketing”.

Though influencer marketing is a thriving industry, it also showed that the industry has some shared difficulties. Which is; “56% of brands use the same influencers across different campaigns”, stating that they found the reason to be because most brands prefer to build long-term relationships with their influencers instead of finding a new one for each campaign, since the process of matching the brand influencer can be a difficult one (Santoral, 2021).

Furthermore, it was found that “36% of brands still tend to pay their influencers with free product samples (or even just discounts on more expensive products), rather than paying their influencer. Almost half of the respondents stated that they pay influencers with samples or discounts. Another 19% said they just give them promotional products or services. This mostly just happens among the nano influencer, who are happy to work and therefore, do not ask demands of the brands (Santoral, 2021). It was also found that “67% of our respondents measure the ROI from their influencer campaigns”, meaning that 33% does not measure their results (Santoral, 2021) and “34% of brands that run campaigns in-house say that finding influencers is the most significant challenge for them”. This percentage is down from last year's 48%, which is mostly due to the development of digital marketing platforms. Some of the problems brands stated, included managing expectations and deadlines, processing payments to influencers, and bandwidth or time constraints (Santoral, 2021). Which is similar to the challenges Mallipeddi (2021) found and suggested developing a model against, which can be why marketers are starting to use platforms. Coherent with a survey conducted in 2019 that found that, “61% of marketers consider finding relevant influencers for a campaign difficult” stating “If you don't partner with the right influencers for your product, the campaign is doomed to fail from the start.” (Santoral, 2021).

The statistics below displays the number of brand sponsored influencer posts on Instagram from 2016 to 2020. Which indicates the high increase in partnerships between influencer and brands.

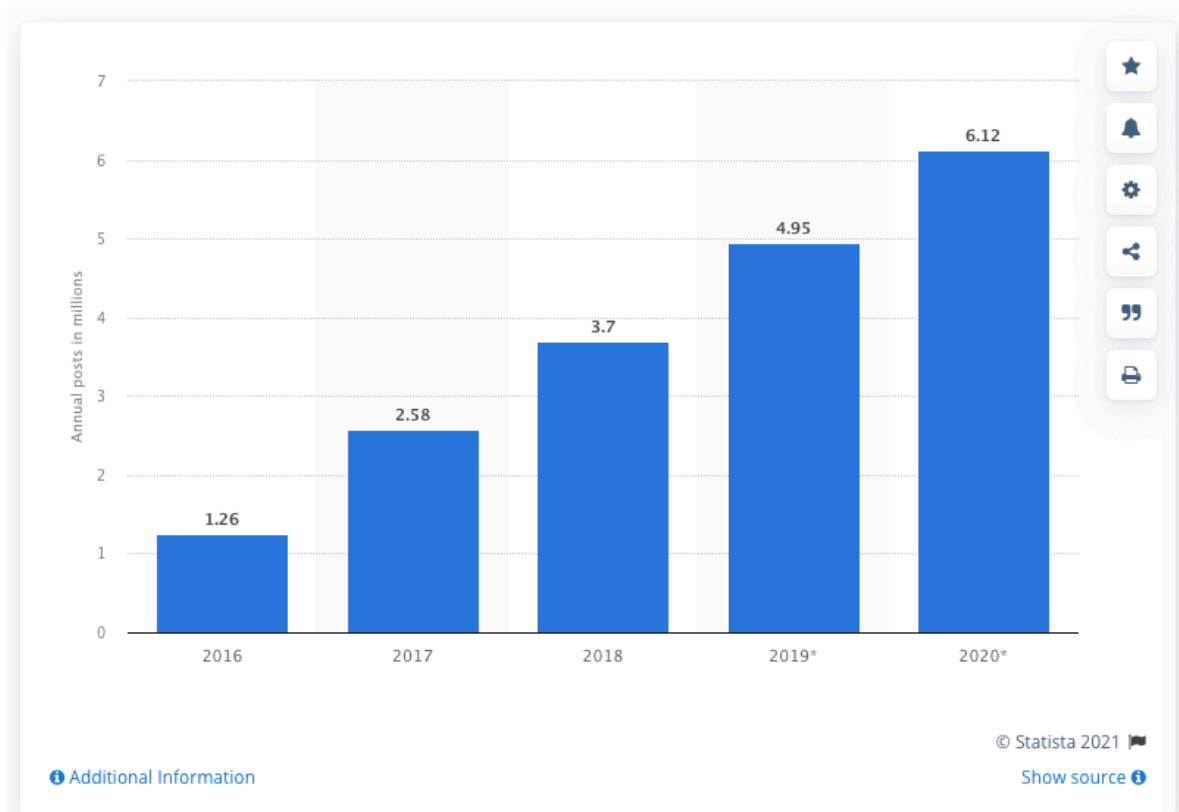


Figure 4: Number of brand sponsored influencer posts on Instagram from 2016-2020 (Statista, 2021)

The statistics show the increase from 2018 where 3,7 million posts was brand sponsored influencer posts to the difference in 2019, where that number rose to 4.95 million (Statista, 2021). The study found that the global that the global influencer market value had doubled since 2019, leaving it worth 13.billion dollars in 2021.

Many studies have been conducted looking into the economic aspect of influencer marketing, and the development of the industry in regard to the growth of the industry. Though still missing in the academic research is furthering examine the current state of representation within influencer marketing, both worldwide and within Portugal.

3. Methodology

The aim of study is to gain new knowledge into a field that has limited research. Though individually influencer marketing and representation in advertising is a current debated topic. Combining them to gain knowledge about the current state of the art in Portugal is still to be explored. Therefore, this study aims to look into the field of inclusivity and representation within influencer marketing in Portugal focusing on race. Through a qualitative approach the study aims to gain in dept knowledge about the current subject of research. Furthermore, the goal is to understand how more representation can be gained, and what issues that related to brands being more diverse and representative. A content analysis over the top 100 beauty influencers was conducted with the goal of understanding the current state of representation of non-white influencers in Portugal. Furthermore, interviews with marketing agencies, the executive director of APAN and one content creator/influencer was conducted to gain a deeper understanding into the different perspectives and issues for the different actors in the field. The study is expected to give enough insight, that it will be possible to suggest an approach to practices for marketing agencies in obtain more representation and diversity amongst their influencer marketing efforts.

3.1 Exploratory study

The research questions propose an exploratory study looking at the phenomena that connect race and influencer marketing. Knowledge that can be gathered around that, will help answer the research questions in a qualitative approach. Within the qualitative research tradition, phenomena must be described before they can be explained and understood (Brinkmann 2015).

The research is based on an empirical study collection and therefore, is set to have a descriptive and understanding approach unfolding the existing context and the perceived understanding of the participants in the study. The direction of the study is predominantly inductive, as the starting point was to observe reality and analyse empirical data with the aim of being able to understand the data and gain a new understanding based on it. – exploratory study (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2015).

In this process, the subject is examined to comprehend through other studies, following interpreted and finally, subjected to critical reflection. The research process has taken place in a hermeneutic circle, in which the phases of pre-understanding, comprehension and post-understanding are included. In the analysis of the empirical material, a hermeneutic interpretive approach is applied. Based on methodological perspectives, the analysis will be based on a contextual description and an interpretation-based understanding of situations, as they appear to the people involved in the study (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2015).

3.2 Qualitative method

For this internship report a qualitative approach had been used to conduct interviews and form the content analysis. Qualitative method is a common term for a number of different survey methods, such as semi-structured interviews and observations. The qualitative approach offers opportunities to gain knowledge about conditions that are often difficult to quantify and measure with numbers. The motivation for using a qualitative approach was to gain a deeper understanding and new knowledge about the subject being researched. The benefits was that the interactions between interviewer and respondent allows for elaboration and justification of answers. There is greater flexibility in relation to quantitative methods, meaning it allows for adaption doing the development of the research. Adapting to new knowledge, new perspective, and an opportunity to investigate an unknown field. Characteristic of the qualitative research tradition is that scientific knowledge is contextual and found in the real world in which we live. The basis is to understand and describe experiences, or to understand and uncover more abstract concepts (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2015).

3.2.1 Observations

The observations were done through a platform, and in an environment working with influencer marketing daily. Furthermore, doing organic search through social media looking for influencers to match with brands. The observations were not structured at any given time. It was conducted doing a six month internship at a digital marketing agency, it was a given beforehand that the research would evolve around that, given that there was an in sentiment to be aware of potential issues relating influencer marketing. This meant that

early on doing the internship an observation of lack of representation among influencers was made. Following becoming more aware, both of the lack of options, but also how unaware the surroundings were. Meaning that there wasn't found any critical thought process on the selection process of finding influencers, and what the contribution of that would provide to the representation in influencer marketing. The observations is done without an observation schedule, though the descriptive memory functions as a memory document over the reflections and tasks throughout the internship. Emphasis must be placed on the unstructured interview and on the unstructured observation (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2015), given that the observations was conducted throughout the internship without it being written down or documented doing, though this internship report contains of a descriptive memory which is given from a narrative perspective or memory of thoughts from the given six months internship. Being aware that because this observation was done early in the internship, it became the primary observation focus. Potentially leaving other researched themes unnoticed.

When starting the research, the observations lead to a pre-understanding notion of the direction the research was going to take. Meaning that throughout the study the pre-determined observations would be a guideline, but not a blind spot. Given being open to the research process and the directions of the research, gaining new knowledge with an open approach, this is especially something to be aware of when conducting interviews.

3.2.2 Conducting of interviews

For this study the qualitative methods, the main research has been conducted through semi structured interviews (Kvale & Brinkman, 2015). Based on the phenomenological approach to the study, the interviews were chosen based on an exploratory and open approach while also remaining within a guided structure, making sure the answers stayed within the frame of the themes researched. The interviews were conducted with the aim of obtaining new knowledge through the perspective of the respondents. They are well-suited to the qualitative exploration of the opinions and perceptions of respondents regarding sensitive and complex issues. Exactly those issues made it difficult to find participants, who were willing to participate in the study. The interviews were supposed to be conducted face to face but doing the process the course of actions had to change based on the participants willingness to participate, therefore the interviews was allowed to be

conducted in a written form. Which also meant that the possibility to engage and ask deeper into the answers was not possible. Therefore, also the initial plan to create intimate and confidential atmosphere, was not able to be carried out. Potentially effecting the study. Multiple agencies, influencers, experts, and activist was contacted, but unfortunately the majority did not answer, some said yes, but stepped responding when they learned about the subject, confirming the sensitivity of the theme, and some said no. Consequently the way the method was conducted, was changed, so that the questions was send as a form, and they were allowed to answer in writing. This was necessary for the participation of the respondents, it allowed for more flexibility, also based on availability and the language barrier. This took away the possibility of ask in dept questions based on the respondents' answer, it also meant that themes couldn't be explored deeper, and explaining question which could be misunderstood, was not possible. Which also effected the answers, since we can see in Appendix 1 and 2 that the more sensitive questions about race, representation and diversity is short answered and some avoided. An interview guide was created specifically for the different groups of respondents. Though only agencies ended up with being more respondents in one group, though only 3, which also means that the perspective from the different groups, which was planned to give different opinions and perspective, are now limited, and it won't be possible to form a general opinion, it will only be a subjective opinion. Though it is still possible to analyse the answers against each other to give an insight into the different perspectives of the actors in the industry.

3.2.3 Interview guides

This section includes the interview guides which is base for the various interviews conducted in this report. The goal was that the respondents answer the questions to develop a comprehensive and accurate study. The interview guide was written as a manual for the interviewer to help guide the respondents in the direction of the research questions. The aims were to provide the most comprehensive and accurate answers possible. Though the ones who wasn't done face to face, made it more difficult to make sure the respondents understand the questions the way the researcher would have liked, and since not there to guide in the direction, it potentially made the comprehension different then indented. The duration of the interviews was set to last thirty mins to one hours. Based on the answers of the written interviews, the answer lasted between ten minutes to one hour. To gain deep

knowledge of the research theme different respondents was asked to participate, to gain perspectives based on their experiences and position.

Interview guide; Digital Marketing Agencies

Background knowledge

I: What is your job title and what is your job description?

I: How long have you worked in the field of influencer marketing?

I: What brands do the company usually work with?

I: What type of influencers do you specialize in? niche, generation etc..

Influencer Marketing

I: How would you describe the process of finding influencers for a brand within your company?

I: What would you say are the key factors when paring a brand and an influencer?

I: How do you analyse the target groups of the influencers?

I: And make sure they match the brands target?

I: Do you see a trend regarding influencer marketing in Portugal?

I: What Criteria do brands usually describe when they look for influencers?

I: Does this also include visual criteria? (Physical features, style of fashion, race etc.)

I: Is inclusivity a criteria that weighs in on your decision process when choosing influencers for a campaign?

I: if yes, is this something your agency is asking for or the brands?

I: Do you experience that the clients request inclusivity?

I: What are some challenges you face when looking for more diverse influencers?

I: Do you find it difficult to be diverse if you are going into the different communities and niches of influencer marketing?

I: Can you give examples of campaigns that you did where you were aware of being inclusive in the representation, and how did it reflect on the results of the campaign?

I: Which KPI's did you track within the campaign?

I: What is added value, and do you think brands are aware of the added value?

I: In general, are you aware of any failures regarding misrepresentation that happened in the industry

I: what did you take away from it? (Best practices)

I: Do you think the influencer industry truly represent the audience in Portugal?

I: do you often look to increase your spectrum of influencer to ensure representation?

I: How?

I: Do you think there is a lack of representation in regard to people of colour among the industry?

I: if yes, why do you think that is?

I: If no, how do you think this could be improved in the future?

I: Do you think it is harder for influencers of colour to get agreements with brands and get recognized in Portugal?

I: In your opinion, what actions could be taken from the side of the client, the agencies, and the influencers to become more inclusive in the future?

I: What would you say are some of the biggest challenges within the influencer industry in Portugal?

I: Do you struggle with finding influencers who match the brand?

I: Would you say it is more difficult to find people of colour who match the brand?

I: If yes, why do think that is?

I: Do you find it harder among influencer of colour to find people to match with a niche target?

I: Do you often feel like you must compromise something when matching an influencer and brand?

Interview guide; Digital Influencers/ Content Creator

Background knowledge

I: How long have you worked as an influencer/content creator?

I: What is your Niche

I: What is your main target group?

Content Creator/Influencer

I: Did you ever feel like you struggled to be seen or taken serious as a content creator?

I: If yes, why do you think that is?

I: Did you have anyone you could see yourself represented in, that inspired you to become a content creator?

I: If yes, who? and how you think that affected you?

I: If no, do you think it would have made a difference if you would have had?

I: Do you see yourself as a role model for other people?

I: If yes, what do you think it means for them to feel represented? (Also, for example for non-white children kids that follows you)

I: And how does it affect your work?

Working with brands

I: What is your experience working with brands?

I: Are you finding it easy to find collaborations?

I: Have you experienced any difficulties as a non-white content creator in working with brands?

I: Have you ever experienced discrimination in the industry?

I: Can you tell any specific examples?

Challenges within the industry

I: Why do you think representation is important?

I: What are some of the biggest difficulties you find in the influencer industry as a non-white content creator?

I: What can brands do to be more inclusive when working with non-white content creators?

I: Do you have any advice for business who want to work with non-white creators?

I: Do you think there is problem with representation within in the industry?

I: Is there anything you would like to add?

I: example an experience, a perspective etc.

Interview guide; Manuela Botelho executive director of APAN

Background knowledge

I: What is your job title and your job description?

I: Can you tell us more about what APAN is?

I: What are some of the current issues that you are targeting at the moment?

Advertising in Portugal

I: What would you say are some of the biggest trends you are seeing in advertising in Portugal at the moment?

I: Would you say that also reflects on influencer Marketing?

I: In what way?

I: Do you see any specific trends in influencer marketing?

I: Do you think we are heading towards building a more diverse influencer environment – is that a trend?

I: What do you think provoked that trend, what was the trigger?

I: Or is it because of the audience – Who is pushing the agenda? (more vocal groups?)

- Audience
- Big international brands
- Activist groups
- Younger audience

I: Is inclusivity and representation something you are promoting at the APAN?

I: In what way are you promoting it?

I: Do you have examples of specific awareness campaigns that you did?
I: if yes, why it is something that you have chosen to bring awareness to?
I: In general, do you experience that it is something that marketers are paying more attention to?
I: How do you measure that?

I: Do you think the influencer marketing industry truly represent the audience in Portugal?

I: Do you think it is a problem?

I: Why do you think this could be a problem?

I: Do you find there is fields where it is more visible?

I: What do you see as the main challenge when marketers are trying to be more inclusive in their marketing efforts?

I: Do you think these are some of the same challenges you are facing with influencer marketing?

I: what do you think are some initiatives that agencies, brands take in their efforts to become more inclusive in their marketing strategy?

I: Do you think there is a lack of representation of race(diversity) in Influencer Marketing in Portugal?

I: if yes, why do you think that is?

I: How do you think this could be improved in the future?

I: Do you think it is harder for influencers of colour to get recognized in Portugal?

I: Do you think influencers of colour struggle more to get agreements with brands?

I: If yes, is this something you are creating awareness about at APAN?

I: If yes, in which initiatives?

I: How did you feel the marketers receive the initiatives?

I: How do you feel the influencers receive the initiatives?

I: In your opinion, what actions could be taken from the side of the client, the agencies, and the influencers to become more inclusive in the future?

I: Could you give any specific idea on, how it could be changed?

I: What is the added value of being more diverse?

I: is there one and what is it?

I: you think brands would benefit from more diverse and what would those be?

I: What are the brand/brands you think is more active in this field – in the forefront of inclusiveness and showing more diversity?

I: Is there anything you would like to add to the topic, that you think is relevant that we haven't already discussed?

3.2.4 The Sample

The sample of respondents are separated into different actors within one field. This increased the understanding from different perspectives. The initial plan was to interview five agencies and five influencers, and supplement that with an expert interview and an activist. Giving in dept knowledge about the landscape and difficulties within representation and diversity of non-white influencers in Portugal. Doing the research, it became difficult to get people to participate, assuming based on the subject's sensitive nature as well as availability and time management. For example, it was it not possible to get the internship company to participate.

Furthermore, because of the sensitivity of the subject respondents were offered to stay anonymous for the sake of getting more people to participate, therefore, 2 of the respondents remain anonymous.

The final sample of the report is listed below:

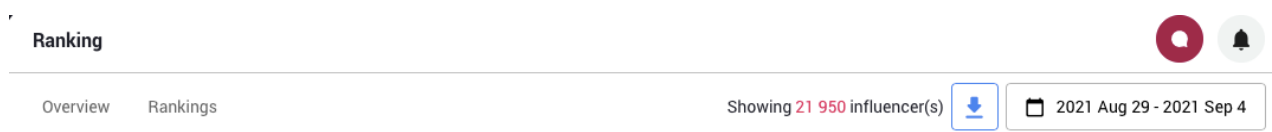
- Hugo Silva who is the CEO of brand tellers studio a digital marketing agency. He has 4 years of experience in influencer marketing and has most experience with working with B2B brands (Appendix 1).
- Diana Alves who works at influenza an influencer marketing agency, mostly working with brands connected to the Maternity, Fashion and Food Segment (Appendix 2).
- Anonymous who works as an account manager for a digital marketing agency working with Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Paid Ads, and Influencer Marketing. Working in one year in the industry, mostly with brands in fashion, Automotive company, and pharmaceutical industry (Appendix 3).

- Anonymous content creator who has worked as a content creator for 9 years. Their niche is within; “All kinds of people who want to have fun, but obviously I end up attracting more attention from younger people” (Appendix 4). The main target group is young adults.
- Manuela Botelho executive director of APAN which is the Portuguese Association of Advertisers. Which promote and It is a non-profit, legal entity whose specific objective is to defend, understand and promote the interests of its members in all aspects related to commercial communication (Appendix 5).

3.2.5 Content analysis

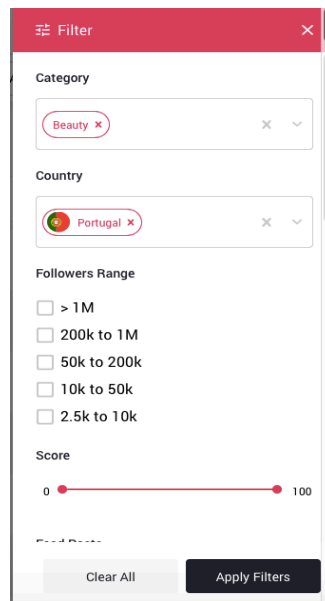
The content analysis was conducted on data collected from an influencer platform gained access to, through the internship already described in the descriptive memory. Appendix 6 illustrates how the content analysis examined the top ranked 100 influencers from the period between the 25th of August and until the 31st of August 2021. The analysis involved looking at their ranking, which they are presented in the rank they were placed in on the platform. Besides that, the content analysis looked at gender, race, country, age, categories, they were presented in, followers pr. Thousand, like pr. Thousand, comment pr. Thousand, engagement pr. Thousand and their partnerships within the last two months, August and July. Only focusing on posts. Following they were categorized into who were non-white females, white males, white females, and invalids. The reason why there isn't a category of non-white males is because there weren't any. The invalids cover business and private profiles. These were left out the report because they couldn't be categorized into gender and race.

Following images displays the selection process on the platform, narrowing it into the field we wanted to analysis. First image (Image 1) displays the amount of influencers; 21.950 ranked on the platform. Also, the dates of the ranking is displayed.



(Image 1 displaying the selection process)

Next image (image 2) displays the filtering process. The category of beauty was decided upon, based on findings in the internship. The initial idea for the study came from looking at influencers for a beauty brand. Noticing the lack of representation amongst the platform's influencers. Furthermore, it was decided based on the range of color and skin tones found in beauty related products, that it should be a place of representation based on the wide consumer base. Furthermore, the country explored should be Portugal because it is the market that are being explored. Following range wasn't considered because the study isn't differentiating in influencer size but looking at the collected landscape.



(Image 2 displaying the filtering process in selection of influencers)

Image 3 below, displays the amount of influencers ranked after the filtering. We see 936 beauty influencers who are ranked in the report. In the this report the 100 top ranked beauty influencers was examined out of the 936.



(Image 3 displaying the available influencers ranking after the filtering process)

Analysing the sponsorships between influencers and brands the posts had to have an indication, that it was an advertised post. Those indication had to appear on the post for

them to be considered a sponsorship post. They were either a hashtag with the words; #publicidade #Pub #PUB #ad #publi #sponsored or the word was just mentioned in the text as PUB, Publi or Publicidade. Furthermore, if it was marked as sponsored collaboration at the top of the posts it was also counted as a partnership.

Also counted, was the post stated gift, giveaways, Collab, gifted or parceria and discount codes. Though these partnerships potentially are not paid, they are still an exchange of a transactions, and therefore a partnership.

Even though these indications were selected to ensure as accurate a study as possible, there are still some affects to be considered, that could potentially affect the results of the study. First, the study didn't differentiate between if it was a repeated partnership, since it would have been an estimation and not a certainty, therefore, it was decided to count all post marked with one of the above making of sponsored posts. Furthermore, discount codes are an often used practice. Even though for this report it was considered a partnership, discount codes also can indicate affiliate links, which can mean that the influencer receive a percentage when someone uses their promotion code, which can give them incitement for promoting it, which can affect a heavily push of the promotion code link, and can give an awry result at the end, not being giving a correct view of the influencer landscape.

3.2.6 Presentation of findings from the Content Analysis

The following graphs shows the results of the content analysis (Appendix 6). The goal is to give an overview of the representation in influencer marketing in Portugal. The graphs displayed in the following chapter, only show the landscape of beauty influencer in one platform, and therefore is only an indication on how the landscape is, to draw a conclusion other industries and platforms would need to be examined.

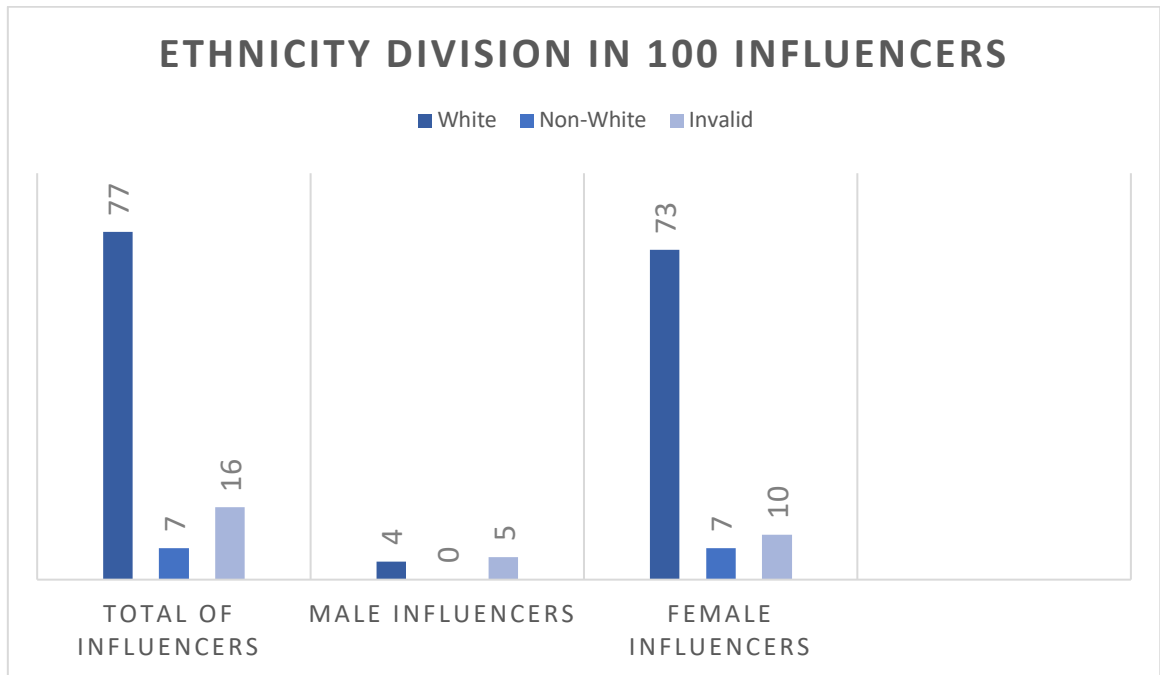


Figure 5: Ethnicity Division in 100 influencers

Figure 5 show that out of 100 influencers 77 of them are white and only 7 are non-white, and 16 remain invalid. 1 was not possible to gender categorize. Among male influencers are only 4 valid and all of them are white. 73 of the influencers are white females.

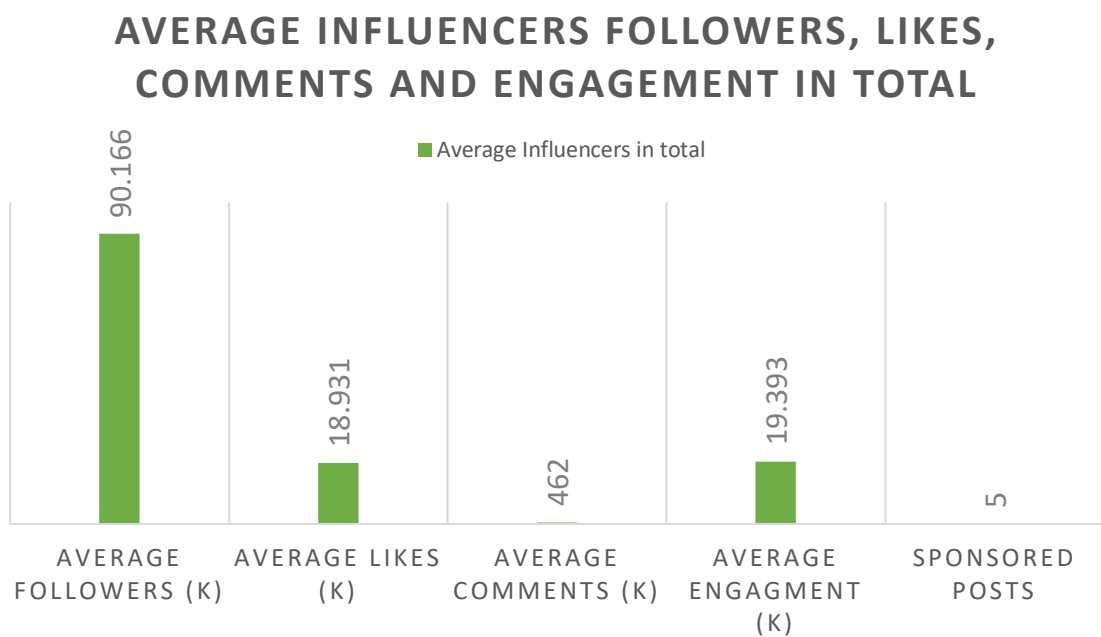


Figure 6: Average Influencers Followers, Likes and Comments and Engagement in Total.

Figure 6 shows the average indications of the influencers. There were analysed in average followers, like, comments, sponsored posts, and engagement. The average for all the influencers is conducted to compare it to the categorized following graphs, giving an indication if there is a different on non-white and white influencers.

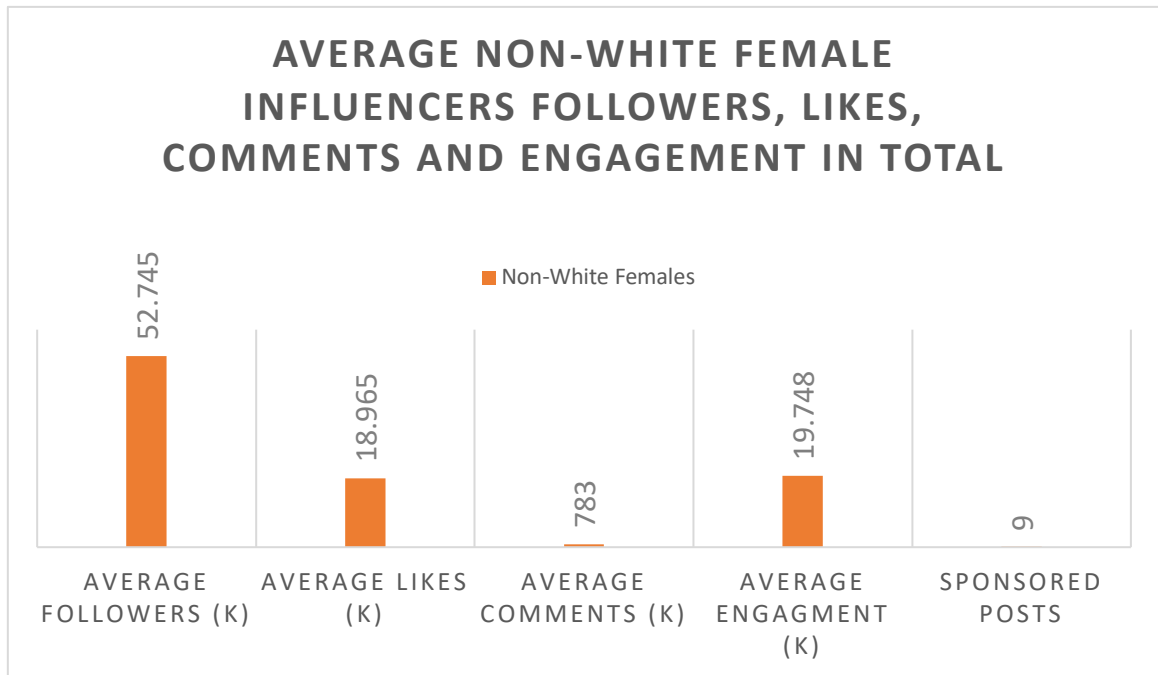
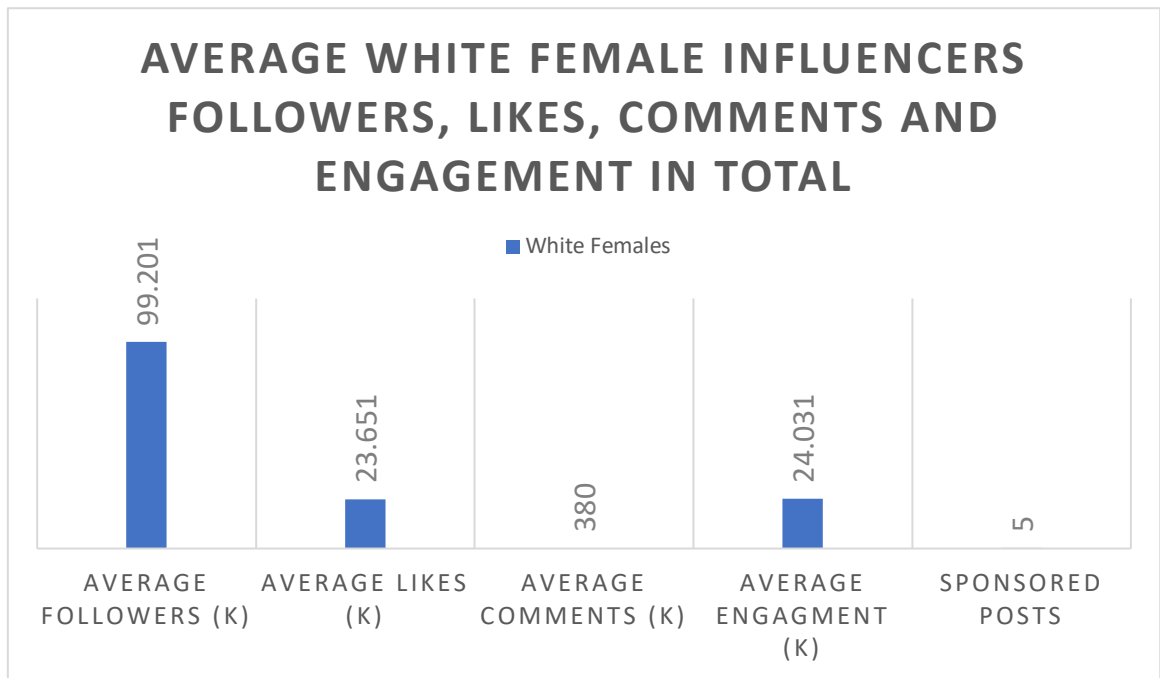


Figure 7: Average Non-white Female Influencers Followers, Likes, Comments and Engagement in total.

Figure 7 Indicates that in comparison to the average of the influencers shown in figure 6 showing the average followers of non-white influencers are significantly lower. Though the average likes and engagement is the same average, where the comment and sponsored posts are noticeably higher. Indicating an active community and demand for non-white influencers. Based on the lower amount of influencers the data performed great comparing it to the average followers. Reaching the same numbers as the average or higher, it gives an indication that these 7 non-white influencers have strong and active communities. That the post average is higher could indicate brands desire to work with non-white influencers. In comparison the white influencers sponsored posts average is only 5.

Though this is only analysed based on 7 non-white beauty influencers, and can therefore, not be concluded on, but give an indication. Though it can be difficult to find enough non-white influencers to draw a real overview of the landscape. We can draw from

it, that there is missing non-white influencers to state that there exists representation in the landscape.



Figur 8: Average White Female Influencers Followers, Likes and Comment And Engagement in Total.

Graph 4.4 shows the average data of the white influencers, which out of the 100 means 73 influencers. In comparison to the average, the followers are higher as well as the engagement and comment. The higher amount of likes could be coherent with the average higher engagement. Though when looking at the comments, they are lower, and the sponsored post are matching the average. This could indicate that because there are more white influencers, it also means that the competition to get the brand deals are higher.

Below table shows the categories that the influencers could work in. Meaning they belonged to different niche communities.

Beauty	
White Influencers	Non-White Influencers
Youtube, fashion, lifestyle, music, wellness, travel, decoration, other, tv and	Fashion, lifestyle, Youtube, tv and entertainment, other

entertainment, family and kids, tik tok, eco-sustainability	
--	--

What it indicates is, that the white influencers operate within more niche groups, which increases the chances of getting partnerships. These categories can be a reflection of the different representation. If there was more non-white influencers represented, it potentially could look different.

3.3 Ethical issues in the Research

The sensitive subject being researched in this internship study, meant that consideration went into figuring out, how it was possible to talk about race and inequality in a way, so all parties felt respected. Therefore, it was important a part that the researchers separated their own biases and preunderstandings from the study, or at least were aware of them.

Accessing and analysing skin colour will always be a delicate thing to do, and therefore it was important in the content analysis to make sure, the anonymity of the participants was protected, and to understand that errors could have been made when classifying skin colour since it was made based on image and assessment, but without the clarification from the person in the question.

The report should remain critical towards the literature, and their own preunderstanding of race related issues. Furthermore, it was taken into consideration how to set up the interview, so it as much as possible felt like a safe space, where the researcher was there to gain knowledge, not to judge. Because it ended up being conducted in written form, it was clear that the agencies avoided answering the questions about race and representation, meaning, that it could be argued that the study did not manage to create a safe space. Which confirms that it is a sensitive subject that it is difficult to get people to talk about, even though they were given the option to choose anonymity, which two of the respondents also chose. It is important for the study that it is handled in a sensitive way. All answers are valued, and all responses can give an indication about the difficulties of the subject. Therefore, all interviews are handled with an open mind to understand the

views, to gain knowledge about the subject, and the challenges faced dealing with representation in influencer marketing and racial injustice.

3.4 Reliability and Validity in the Research

Early in the research, it was established that it would be difficult to find respondents, who were willing to partake in the study. Therefore, the approach of conducting the interviews changed along the way. They went from semi-structured interviews which was set up to be conducted face to face, into semi-structured interviews the respondent was allowed to do in a written form. Since the nature of the semi-structured interview is to gain in depth knowledge to conclude on, and without that it can be difficult, because your data won't be valid to draw a conclusion from. Because the interviews in this report was conducted in written form, it provided a superficial insight into the subject, this could have been a consequent of not having a safe space for the respondent, where the possibility of asking more in dept was not there. Giving that the respondents had other perspectives on the subject, that was not possible to examine. Unfortunately, this provided the research without the possibility to conclude, but only to provide an insight into the subject.

3.5 Limitations

The report set out to research representation of race within influencer marketing. Being a sensitive subject, the study had its limitations. Finding participants turned out to be a limiting factor in the research. Furthermore that the study was limited to Portugal narrowed the field of participants. Also, adding that the participants had to be non-white influencers/content creators and the digital marketing agencies had to work within influencer marketing as well, limited the access to people.

Even though many people said yes to participate, when they learned about the subject, many stopped replying back to the emails, showing the sensitivity of the subject as a limitation. Meaning that the research didn't manage to get enough empirical data to draw a conclusion, only gave an insight into a field of research for the future.

Therefore, a limitation to the analysis is that the questions regarding race, representation and diversity are not given in dept, which means that they won't provide in dept insight knowledge. Consequently, leading to limitations in the analysis.

4. Data Analysis

The research data analysis will in his section de divided into three parts, based on the three objectives. They will be analyzed in a construction between the theoretical framework, interviews, and content analysis. Furthermore, a discussion of the findings will aim to give an insight into the different aspects and issues of the according subject.

4.1 The Current State of Race Representation Within Influencer Marketing

1. Understand racial structure and inequality in the Digital Media landscape to understand how these structures effect the current state of race representation within influencer marketing in Portugal.

From the theoretical framework understanding racial structure and inequality gave an insight into the relevance of how the Platformization and algorithms operates to maintain racial structures online. Understanding how these platforms decide visibility for their users is relevant to understand how they shape norms and maintain biases (Van Dijck et al., 2018). The new code (Benjamin, 2019) a concept that relates to this idea of discriminatory designs being coded into the algorithm. Taking old discriminatory design and adding it into new ones. Defaults is found in processes that is designed around personal biases, created by systemic racial injustice (Pasquale, 2016).

Understanding how these structures can affect the current state of representation by looking into the selection process of the influencers. From the interviews we got an understanding that this could be the most difficult part of influencer marketing. Respondent 3 states that there is a lack of representation in the platforms (Appendix 3), which effect the selection process, because other indicators in the end is more important for the brands than being representative. Understanding from the theoretical frame work (Van Dijck et al., 2018) that we produce and engage with, keep being produced, and the algorithm understand that it is what we want to see, leading to the less representation we have, the less we produce. Which is coherent with big data becoming more powerful in shaping choice and pushing behavior attitudes (Beer, 2017), creating circulation attitudes (Matamoros-Fernández, 2017), meaning if that is possible, how do we get to push

representation into the circulation? Though the challenges of creating inequality in influencer marketing, which effect the current state of representation is connected to the selection process. Because of the fast development of influencer marketing there isn't a selection process developed, and many agencies have created their own database through organic search, meaning that often the same influencers will be used repeatedly. We see now that it is more difficult for the agencies to gain access to these influencers because of the platforms, which respondent 1 states as a trend:

“Influencers are becoming all part of agencies so there are no more influencers that you can work directly (besides nano influencers)”(Appendix 1).

All respondents (Appendix 1, 2 and 3) stated that it was a difficult process selecting influencers. These structures effect the current state of representation which we can see in the findings from the content analysis, where only seven out of one hundred influencers were non-white. From the interviews we can understand how the representation of non-white influencers are perceived from an agency perspective. Doing the interviews respondent 1 expressed;

“There is no kind of discrimination when selecting influencers nor there is obligation for selecting minorities. It always depends what it is to communicate” (Appendix 1)

And respondent 2 said:

We don't have this “race” feedback as we haven't experienced any situation of “exclusion for any campaigns” (Appendix 2).

Analyzing this with the theoretical framework it gives an understanding of that the problem does not lie within the agencies, but that it is a deeper structural issue.

When asking the non-white content creator is they ever experienced difficulties working with brands they answered;

“As incredible as it may seem, because whether you like it or not when it comes to money, brands are still very skeptical about betting on what is “different”, always ending up wanting what is more conventional for them, even if it presents positive results for skin color is still an exclusion factor” (Appendix 4)

Additional when asked about difficulties faced in the influencer industry as a non-white content creator, they stated;

“The difficulty of being the face of a physical corporation or commercial product, the lack of invitations for live interviews, among other things, but this turns out not to be the most important because we ended up building our means of communication” (Appendix 4)

The answers give to contradictory notions based on the perspectives. Which indicates that though the agencies to not discriminate the non-white content creators are still experiencing discriminatory behaviour, which can be related to racial structure and lack of representation in the current influencer marketing landscape.

When asked if they found lack of representation in regard to people of color they answered differently. Where respondent 2 said no (Appendix 2), respondent 1 said yes (Appendix 1) and respondent 3 also said yes (Appendix 3) indicating that, they do see there is an issue. Similar, they were asked if they thought that the influencer industry truly represents the audience in Portugal, and here they answered;

“Not at all, maybe if you are from the countryside. But if you live in bigger cities like Lisbon, Porto, Aveiro and Braga you will see that there are a lot of people who certainly are not Caucasian.”(Appendix 3)

Where respondent 1 answered yes (Appendix 1)m and respondent 2 answering;

“Yes, we believe that with the Micro Influencers and sometimes with the Nano Influencers there are profiles able to connected with big range of Social Media Users” (Appendix 2).

From the answers we can recognize that the agencies have different experiences in regard to the subject, and that there isn't a coherence between the answers. Seeing, respondent one think that there is lacking representation, but doesn't find that the audience it not represented, where respondent 3 thinks that there is a lack of representation and the influencer marketing industry doesn't represent the full market, and then respondent 2 who didn't find that there is a lack of representation, and also did find, that the audience was not represented. Also, when they were asked about if non-white influencers struggled more to

find partnerships, they again disagreed. Here respondent 1 and 2 answered no, where respondent 3 believed there probably did (Appendix 3).

Connecting this to the interview with Manuela Botelho (Appendix 5), who admits that this is something that is not researched enough, and they are missing knowledge on this subject. Therefore, right now APAN is participating in a survey to understand the current state of representation and diversity. She states;

“because advertisers and the advertising industry can't promote this diversity and inclusion if they are not diverse and inclusive. So, I think that is first step to really bring that reality home.”(Appendix 5)

Meaning that without knowing the current state, they cannot figure out what needs to be done to change it. The survey is set to understand the level of representation in all aspect of the industry, all the way into advertising agencies as well. Manuela Botelho states;

“So, the objective is to notice what is the state of the art in in the marketing and advertising industry in terms of increasing inclusion, equity and, and diversity. And the idea is, and, and the purpose is to really to know, what is this state of the art and, and, and eventually create programs to improve diversity and inclusions and inclusion in, in the agencies and in the marketing departments” (Appendix 5.)

She believes the way to push forward a change is to create programs which actively can take part in changing the way we think about inclusion and diversity. She is hesitant to talk about the diversity within influencer marketing, where she would like to wait for the results of the survey, though she does recognize the number of influencers in Portugal in high (Appendix 5).

Turning back to the agencies stating they do not discriminate, Manuela Botelho agrees that is not the issue in influencer marketing, and when asked if non-white influencers struggle more, she states;

“I don't think that if because they, they have a different color”, “But the problem is they have to have that opportunity.”(Appendix 5)

Understanding that it is not a problem about race, but about opportunities created for non-white influencers, which can be related back to racial injustice. Manuela Botelho sees it as a way of creating this opportunity and helping push that agenda, but also stating that if that succeeds, she doesn't see racial injustice as the issue, it's just about creating the opportunity for people. Though when following asked, if she thinks the opportunity is there, non-white, and white influencers would have the same access to opportunities, she does recognize that she believes maybe non-white influencers would struggle a little bit more, and she is hopeful that things are changing (Appendix 5). She sees this change in the companies, stating that brands;

"I think companies now are, are, are more, more, how can I say? More aware that, that they, have to they have to show real people in their in their advertising." (Appendix 5)

She does believe that brands want to be more diverse, and that in Portugal racial injustice is not an issue, though they must show that they are actively taking a part of pushing more representation and diversity into the marketing industry, and she thinks that responsibility lies with the brands. They must ask for more diversity and help society becoming aware that we need more diversity. Brands are an important voice to push this agenda (Appendix 5). Which relates to Benjamin (2019) and Davis (2018) who both enhances that to see change it must come from inside the organizations. Therefore, the agencies and brands must take a stand, taking on the responsibility of seeing more diversity, meaning calling out the platforms and their biases.

4.1.1 Summary of Findings

Based on the interviews, there was a clear indication that racial injustice was difficult to talk about for the agencies. Only is it possible to assume different scenarios, why that is. If racial injustice is the reason, that is not certain, maybe even the opposite. Potentially it could also be the fear of a lash back on the company if something could be interpreted in a wrong way, like seen before.

Though it's a subject with many perspectives, which also is indicated in the findings above. An insight the interviews has given is that these questions of race and representation are not something the agencies are used to consider in their daily marketing

effort. Indicating it's not something that the brands are requesting. As Manuela Botelho stated this is something that must be done within the brands, in order for it to change. If no one is taking the responsibility actively it will not change.

Though it is clear that racial structure effect the current state of representation. Though it is undefined within the industry, there is a structure that have left out non-white influencers in the current state of the influencer landscape. Making it an uneven balance, where in order for it to change, responsibility needs to be taken, and actions need to be planned out.

4.2 Best Practices to Promote Representation and Diversity in Influencer Marketing

3. Understand what best practices can be set as a way to promote representation and diversity in influencer marketing.

To give an insight into suggested best practices, its ideal to look at the current selection process among the agencies. Understanding the practices of the current process, can potentially be beneficial in the best practices strategy to understand do's and don'ts. The 3 agencies who were interviewed all have similar approaches, all focusing on statistics. When asked about the process of finding influencer respondent 3 answered:

"Before analyzing the aesthetics/content/message of the influencers we look at their numbers first. And when I say numbers we usually mean the rate of interaction of the account; rate of followers/likes/comments on their posts. We use platforms like Primetag, Swonkie and Brinfer. The benefit of using these platforms is that they take into consideration every influencer (as long as they have open accounts) and even allows us to find new ones we were not thinking of in the first place. We analyze whether these influencers have "healthy" accounts and have a solid/interactive public before actually seeing the type of content they produce (considering the platforms we use already categorize them into what we are looking for exactly). After they fit our "numbers" criteria we look into their content and whether their image/message fits into the brand we are trying to help."(Appendix 3)

Similar respondent 1 said:

“It is sometimes a big effort that it is not recognized by clients. However, there are now some software’s that already helps making this matches by influencers niche (lifestyle ,gaming, cuisine, etc.).” (Appendix 1).”

Both these processes are mainly done on influencer platforms, where only the influencers who are available, are the ones the platform offer. Even though the interviews indicates that there goes a lot of time into analyzing the influencers profile, making sure that they are a match. Respondent 2 also stated that it is not an easy process;

”It’s not an easy and quick process of finding influencers, mostly because we don’t have an exclusive list of influencers. We have to search on our database and also do the “stalker” search through the platform chosen by the brand to develop the campaign. Depending on the brand we set 2 work days to do this search job.” (Appendix 2)

Based on these answers it could indicate that the process of finding influencer could need a simplified solution, despite the platforms, it indicates it’s still a hard process, because the analyzing of the content, is still done manually by the agencies. Which would explain why agencies often use the same influencer repeatedly.

When the agencies where asked what the key factor was when parring brands and influencer they stated:

“As cliché as it sounds, mainly whether we can see the influencer being a costumer. (Appendix 3)”

“We would say that the key factors are the content created by the influencer and engagement with his own audience.”(Appendix 2)

”Tone of voice, audience”.(Appendix 3)

Also, these answers are an indicator that right now, a best practice method do not exist. Its, all an individual process within the agencies. Though it seems there is a consensus to a similar practice.

The same apply when analysing the influencers target group. Data plays the biggest role, meaning it could be an understand of why marketers tend to use platforms. Given them access to all the data collectively. Which is consistent with the respondent answers;

“We ask the influencers for their “insights” (Instagram/blog/youtube public statistics) when we are already in the process of contacting the influencers we want to work with.”

(Appendix 3)

”Segment, positioning”(Appendix 1)”

“Usually we consider as macro analysis the audience size, the type of content created (in which segment they have better content) and the audience statistics; as micro analysis the demographic details such as age, gender, city of residence.” (Appendix 2)

To understand if the brands ask for diversity within the influencer marketing efforts, the agencies to describe what criteria brands describe in the influencer the look to match with their brand. The agencies replied;

“I don’t believe the brands we are currently working with (from a small city in the countryside) still understand the power of Social Media Influencers so before we give our suggestions taking into consideration the budget, we ask for names of people they would want to work with. So they always mention celebrities instead of influencers who solely work online. They are yet to see the power of the online over the traditional media”

(Appendix 3)

“Brands are usually concerned with the content, audience size and some demographic criteria’s such as influencer’s age.” (Appendix 2)

“Number of followers, budget, and audience.” (Appendix 1)

Based on these answers and indication that brands to not request diversity is found. What seems to be a concern of the brands is the audience and the performance. This could indicate two things, that brands do not discriminate and therefore, it is not important to them the skin tone of the influencer, but more data focused. But also, it indicates a lack of awareness about the audience, which from (Alcantara, 2021.) we know that the audience request diversity in the advertising, and 54% do not see themselves represented. Which

also is coherent with the answers in response to being asked about if the brands ask for any visual criteria, where all agencies answered no, or refers to other things;

“Mostly NO. Until now we haven’t received any briefing where the visual criteria have been mandatory or even a requirement.” (Appendix 2)

*“Only if it’s more fashion related work that is trying to reach a bigger audience”
(Appendix 3)*

”When it becomes to last selection, yes it will always be part of the decision. P.E. if an influencer use bad language or dresses that are not within the brand positioning they will not be selected.”(Appendix 1)”

A part of creating a best practice is also an awareness about previous failures in regard to misrepresentation in marketing. Awareness can help prevent the same mistakes in the future, furthermore they can help to teach the agencies what not to do. When the agencies were asked if they aware of any failure regarding misrepresentation they answered;

*“Not in a particular way but when we have some influencers working with different brands of the same segment on a very short time, we consider as a failure for the brands.”
(Appendix 2)*

“Yes. Sometimes ad campaigns have a big team behind them trying to work with an even bigger message, say for example “black lives matter” and because they are doing them for the wrong reasons they will mistakenly use stereotypes to represent a community. This can rapidly become offensive and be detrimental towards the brand, in other words “cancelled” Also, Portugal has a very big community of Romani people and the only person I can think of that is well known in Portugal and is Romani is Ricardo Quaresma (Famous football player).”(Appendix 3)

These answers are two good examples of the different dynamics that exists within the agencies, where respondent 3 shows an awareness towards misrepresentation and is aware to avoid, primarily because being aware of what has been a failure in the past. Which also is coherent with the answers they gave, when asked what they would take away from it;

“To always learn from past mistakes from other brands, understand what they did wrong and try to get someone within the community who is vocal on certain racial issues than can give your insight as to why these were major problems and always be open to be educated, especially if you are white and are not aware of the privilege.” (Appendix 3).

Focusing on the selection process, they answered

“it can be a hard task to find the best influencer only because our influencer industry it’s growing but not as segmented as we wish. We usually have some micro influencers, the ones that we work more with, creating content for different types of areas and difficulty the segmentation needed to find the best influencer for the brand.”(Appendix 2)

“Yes, because they are all spread around different agencies.”(Appendix 1)

“Yes! Especially if it’s niche.” (Appendix 3)

Which could indicate that they are struggling finding influencers within the segmentations and niche groups.

Establishing the new procedures, it is needed to be found within the industry. Procedures that take into consideration representation and how to rethink them into best practices. Respondents 1 and 2 said no to if it is harder for people of colour to match the brand, which is a good indication that the problem is not matching non-white influencers with brands, but that there is not enough representation of non-white influencers.

Manuela Botelho similar talked about best practice, and states that as an industry they should hold each other accountable, also by sharing best practices amongst one another. Believing it’s the responsibility of the bigger companies to go in front and be a guidance to smaller companies (Appendix 5). Also stating that it should be the brands demanding the change, and coming up with the best practices, for the rest of the industry, since they are the ones who decides what messages to be passed on to the market and what kind of image the industry and brands want to give off.

For brands to do this, Manuela Botelho says, it’s not possible the brands to ask for representation and diversity if they can’t live up to it themselves within the company. Creating best practices can’t just be suggestions, it must be incorporated into the brand and

adopting it into their brand identity and their communication (Appendix 5). This also applies in influencer marketing where she states;

“It's in all points of contact with, with your, with your consumers. And, and you must be we have to be coherent. And you must have the same message, the same approach, and the same principles. So, you must be consistent in in everything that that you are and saying. So that's why that's why I said. That first, you must have it in house, everything very well settles in home.” (Appendix 5.)

Giving her take on the solution to the diversity issue, and what could be a best practice, she states that she believes it's a matter of training, combined with a lack of voices. Combining those into a solution that could be training influencers, like teaching people in school or the workplace Appendix 5). Not only does she suggest education influencers, but she also suggest looking into quotas. Which is important when wanting to push equality, representation and diversity, and which quotas could help to improve. She believes if doing so, then we would start to see more representation, which will consequently push the representation forward in society as a whole (Appendix 5).

She points out again that this also needs to happen within the brands, and they need to for this ask for this diversity, and that they should demand it by the agencies, pushing to take a stand on this. She give the example for casting for influencers within the agencies, having quotas within these casting and trainings, that could change the current state of representation and increase diversity among influencer marketing in Portugal (Appendix 5). Coherent with the interview conducted with the content creator, who states we need representation, it is important part of feeling like you belong in a space (Appendix 4), and without having someone to reflect in was an important part of becoming a content creator. Reflection also played a part, when working with brands, where seeing representation in partnerships increase the idea, that there is a space for everybody (Appendix 5). When asked about the brands responsibilities in this, and what they could do to push more inclusion, they answered;

“Stop seeing us as part of a community and treating us as people. Do not put any other conditions ahead of the work because we also get good or better results by the conventional method.” (Appendix 5).

4.2.1 Summary of Findings

The findings indicate in order to collect a portfolio of best practices brands needs to become more aware and take on a responsibility to actively change it. When about criteria from the brands, none of them included diversity and representation.

A best practice should take focus in the selection process, where it seems to be the initial issue. The agencies express that it is a long and difficult process, and therefore they are starting to look towards the influencer marketing platforms for an easy solution. Though the issue occurs when these platforms doesn't have representation among their influencers either. Creating an influencer landscape without no representation. As the current state is now, the finding indicates that there is a lack of representation. Though Manuela Botelho suggests a best practices to change that, it can be done if the brands and agencies are not aware of the problem, and doesn't take an active stand to change it, calling out the platforms and their own biases to change it.

Therefore the responsibility lies within the industry as a whole starting with the brands demanding a structural change. Representation matter (Harwood, 2020) and if people do not see themselves representation, they won't be able to see, that there is a space for them.

Manuela Botelho suggested some initiatives for best practices that the theoretical framework supports. Looking into teaching influencer marketing within the agencies, creating the influencers they are looking for instead of compromising, creating quotas to push the numbers up, educate and demand change as a collective industry. Talk about it, instead of fearing it.

4.3 Diversity related difficulties for Digital Agencies

4. Gain insights into which difficulties agencies face when trying to create diversity in their Influencer Marketing efforts.

To understand the difficulties the agencies are facing when trying to create a more diverse marketing strategy, the agencies were asked about the challenges they were experiencing. There was found a lack of experience in regard to dealing with demands of diversity, which the answers reflected, only respondent 3 had a more in debt answer:

“The platforms we use do not have that many diverse influencers. We use them because it makes the process of selecting influencers easier, so if they are not there it’s just much more difficult to come across their profiles” (Appendix 3).

Stating that difficulties can be found based on the lack of selection in the platform. Which is coherent with the findings of the content analysis, where only seven out of one hundred was non-white. Also, expressing the accessibility to be found on platform, which in comparison to organic search is much less time consuming. Which is also coherent with respondent 3 answer when asked, of finding niche influencers was difficult, she answered;

“Yes! Which makes our job 10x much more difficult. We want these influencers to check all our boxes when it comes to the numbers but still have that more “human” and “real” aspect to them. Which make it harder, especially in a country like Portugal whose population is mainly Caucasian” (Appendix 3).

Which indicate, the more specific you need an influencer to be within a niche, the harder it gets to be diverse. Also stating that the match between having good statistics and authenticity, would be comprised.

When the 2 other respondents were asked about the difficulty of finding niche influencers, respondent 1 answered;

“We don’t have any experiences on that up to now” (appendix 1)

Similar did respondent 2 (Appendix 2) not give an answer. Following respondent 1 said to all questions regarding diversity and representation that;

“We don’t have any experiences on that up to now” (appendix 1)

And respondent 2 did not answer any questions regarding diversity and representation. Which indicates that both respondent 1 and 2 haven’t had any experience or given any thought to diversity and representation within their influencer marketing efforts. Indicating that it’s not been requested from a brand perspective. Only respondent 3 answered when asked if it was the brand or agency who request diversity;

“The clients have asked for more racially diverse influencers to be associated to their brand” (Appendix 3).

Though following this respondent 3 stated;

“Yes, even though I must say that in my opinion they mainly mention it because it’s considered a “trend” targeted towards younger generations, especially with movements like “Black Lives Matter” and “Stop Asian Hate”.(Appendix3)

Indicating that following the Black Lives Matter movement, the agency is seeing companies request more diversity, but unfortunately it feels more like a trend, than an actual awareness of the lack of representation. Making it more about profit which could indicate this as an example for a failure that Menon and Kiesler (2020) introduced. Meaning the efforts lack authenticity to the consumers, as it seemed to not take a stand, but seemed more like an action to profit from. Which is coherent with the brands awareness about added value where respondent 3 stated when asked about the added value in being diverse from the perspective of the brands;

“They are in the traditional way. Say we collaborate with a celebrity rather than an internet star. They see no added value towards the latter.”(Appendix 3)

Which could indicate that there wasn’t any thought process behind choosing non-white influencers, other than it appears to be trending among brands. Which could be the reason the added value was seen in a traditional way. Though the agency where respondent 3 works have experience in using non-white influencers with a positive result. In the interview, when asked to give an example of a campaign focusing on representation respondent 3 answered:

“We have done a photoshoot with a model/influencer who is black and another white model, we were still in launching the brand, so the results were still small in regard to selling. But social media wise, the results were positive.”(Appendix 3)

Here the campaign did not perform well in regard to sale, but had been received in a positive manner on social media, indicating it is something that the consumers see as a positive thing.

These findings are coherent with Manuela Botelho's thoughts on difficulties that can be found within the industry. She states that it's a cultural thing, and sometimes it is not easy for the advertiser, though she also states it's their responsibility to be aware and pay attention to behavior, such as stereotyping in advertising (Appendix 5). She indicates that advertisers should also educate themselves on matters in society, to make sure that they understand the landscape they work within. This is also a way for them to avoid any misrepresentation. She states by being representative and understand the society there is an added value for the brands when taking action in showing different aspects and people in the world we live in (Appendix 5).

4.3.1 Summary of findings

These findings indicate that the questions of diversity is not really developed within the agencies, furthering that into the platforms. Where a lack of representation was found. Which is also coherent with the findings of the content analysis where only 7 out of 77 beauty influencers were non-white. This could indicate that it is an overall problem within the influencers industry in Portugal, which is also something Manuela Botelho confirms, that the agencies do have difficulties, but also that it is their responsibility as well as the brands to ask for it, pushing this agenda forward. Though as the best practices experience, though for it to possibly change there needs to be done something collectively by the industry as a whole. As these answers could indicate the agencies haven't taken a stand, which as Manuela Botelho stated needs to be done, for a way to figure what needs to change and why.

Conclusion

This chapter aims to give an overview over the key findings, to furthermore conclude on the research questions based findings in this internship report. The study was effected by limitation, therefore suggested future research is given.

Summary of the Key Findings

Representation

This internship report set out to examine the current state of representation within influencer marketing, regarding race in Portugal. It was found, that based on the findings, it can be concluded that there is a lack of representation in influencer marketing in Portugal. Though the study has its limitations, the conclusion is a guide line for future research. When stating, that the study can conclude, that there is a lack of representation among non-white influencers in Portugal, it refers to the content analysis conducted in this report. Therefore, it is limited to that exact platform for influencers within that specific niche.

The content analysis found that there was only 7 non-white influencers out of 100. Where 73 if them were white female (Figure 5).

Based on the theoretical framework it can be stated that the representation is a reflection of multiple issues, that over time has been a direct consequent for the current state of representation of influencer marketing in Portugal. These issues can be found within the racial structure of society, and the adaption of them into new media. Holding the power through the algorithms and creating it as a form of platformed racism (Matamoros-Fernández, 2017). Created through governance that can reproduce inequalities. The rise of platformed racism was largely facilitated by the policies and practices of Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Giving these platform a power, that can main the structural issues towards race, to be found in our society and adapting it into the platforms, creating racial injustice, which also effect the marketing organizations.

Which is coherent with the “new Jim Code” (Benjamin, 2019) which is understanding how inequality can be encoded into discriminatory design. Given that ignoring social

divisions can be encoded into new technologies, creating engineered inequality, which elaboration the social hierarchies, Default discrimination, which refers to the fault in processes when it comes to designing around personal biases. These issues reflecting back on the marketing landscape, consequently creating a lack of representation based on biases among the marketers (Bolin & Andersson Schwarz, 2015).

Though marketers understanding how the social media platforms make things they want you to see visible, based on the things put into the algorithm, asking for representation and diversity, pushing data into the algorithm enhancing diversity and representation could customize the algorithm into changing the user stream and pushing more diversity and representation (Van Dijck et al., 2018). For this to be happen it have to be a collective decision for all marketers, giving the algorithm an assumption of it being newsworthy and pushing the visibility (Bucher, 2012).

Multiple studies concluded people are not seeing themselves represented in advertising (Alcantara, 2021; Lacey, 2018; Facebook IQ, 2021), and found that people wish for brands to show more representation in their advertising. Concluding that representation matter. Consequently if a group do not feel represented in the media, they are likeable to feel like they do not belong (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008), meaning that if non-white people do not feel seen in influencer marketing, they are not going to think, there is space for them there, coherent with what was found in the interview with the influencer (Appendix 4), that stated, because they had someone to see themselves represented in the industry (outside of Portugal), they felt like there could be a spot for them as well.

Understanding, that also in influencer platforms that can be found consequences of biases towards race (Bishop, 2021), which creates social and racial inequalities within the industry, also an effect to lack of representation among non-white influencers. Especially now, where more of the influencer marketing efforts are becoming streamlined (Bishop, 2021) into a database selecting the influencers, it is important that the brands and agencies are aware of their own biases, and is actively taking part in creating a change.

Lack of Awareness

Examine the subject, one of the findings found, was the lack of awareness within the influencer marketing industry in Portugal. A lack of awareness towards representation of non-white influencers. This is one of the most important findings within the report, because without awareness change can't be demanded. As contributor to cultural production and shaping attitudes in society, the marketing organizations as well as the marketers has a responsibility to reflect and showcase different areas of society from different angles, also the aspect of race (Davis, 2018). Which is coherent with the responsibility that Manuela Botelho (Appendix 5) stated, that she wanted the brands to take. Understanding that marketers have the tool of influence, meaning that marketing efforts can be used to support different aspect of society through messages and images, and can in the end ,be used to influence norms and values across cultural, political, economic, social, and psychological spectrums Davis (2018), and therefore, it is important that marketers are aware of that the advertising they promote are a part of shaping society.

The agencies interviewed did show, that there was a lack of awareness when it comes to race related issues in influencer marketing, only respondent 3 said that they found that there was lacking representation in non-white influencers. They found it especially to be a problem on the influencer platforms. Respondent 1 and 2 (Appendix 1-2) did not find any issues in regards to representation of non-white influencers. In general their questions reflected a resistance towards answering race related questions. Which can indicate a lack of awareness towards their own biases, and a fear of being discriminating, even also stated by respondent 1 (Appendix 1) that at the agency they do not discriminate, though without being aware, and not taking a proactive choice in creating representative and diverse marketing efforts, they are being un-consciously discriminating, because the current state of representation of non-white are discriminated derived from biases and discriminatory design on the social media platforms. Coherent with Dicks (1997) stating the individual prejudice is not the factor creating institutional racism, not at least until it is acted out against racial discrimination.

Manuela Botelho stated that racism is not the problem (Appendix 5) it's the lack of representation and options to choose from within the niche influencer marketing, which the findings of the report support, though without acknowledging the biases created from

structural racism in the platforms, and in society amongst ourselves as people, how can we change the way we see these issues, meaning that if we are not aware of our biases, how can we call out the algorithm pushing it (Beer (2017) and furthermore, change it within the brands and agencies, an active stand have to happen for change in the current state of representation in non-white influencers.

Best Practices

As concluded in the lack of awareness chapter above, consumers are demanding a change in regards to representation, and they want to it to happen within the brands (Menon & Kiesler, 2020). As do Manuela Botelho who stated, she wants the brands to take a stand (Appendix 5) , and create best practises amongst themselves to understand how representation and diversity can become a common practice. Also, if they want to keep the consumers happy. Consumers want and expect the brands to become more involved in fighting racial injustice, especially amongst young people (Menon & Kiesler, 2020). 71 % of consumers stated that they assume brands to promote inclusiveness and diversity in their marketing efforts. This will lead to a positive effect including driving purchase and loyalty towards (Alcantara, 2021).

So what can the brands do? First can foremost, they can look at similar failures within the industry. Though based on the interviews, it could indicate that this was not something that the agencies were aware about. Being aware that this could also have been a limitation of the semi-structured interviews being conducted in written form. But also, relating it back to an lack of awareness.

Though Boulton (2016) and Grier & Perry (2018) looked at studies that tried to create diversity in their advertising. What these studies have in common, are that they found initiatives done to create diversity, failed and ended up with negative consequences for the non-white participants. Reflecting that despite the companies effort, they were lacking the resources to understand the people they were trying to reach, creating a “Faux diversity”.

That is why a best practices handbook need to be shared among the brands and agencies, so that they can avoid it. Assuming, this is also why some agencies and brands, choose to not take a stand, the fear of negative consequences.

But looking at initiatives like Brim (Ormesher, 2021), a new framework that aims to provide a fair and inclusive representation of non-white people in the marketing industry for help and guidance, could potentially prevent that.

One of the biggest issues the report found among the agencies, are the difficulties of the selection of influencer process. Mallipeddi (2021) suggest a framework to help the agencies based on algorithm practices, Though the problems within the current model and platforms are, that they are based on data, and that doesn't measure authenticity and representation, which are the most important things for the consumer (Menon & Kiesler, 2020; Lou & Yuan, 2019). Coherent with the interview with respondent 3 stating that the platforms lacked representation (Appendix 3).

In correlation with the interview with Manuela Botelho and the theoretical framework. The reports suggest an action plan towards a hand book for best practices, that include breaking up the racial biases, forcing the agencies and brands to take a stand. Without that it's not possible, to create real change. Furthermore, looking into pushing quotas within the agency, and creating teaching programs for future influencers. Also, taken the power back from the difficulties in finding influencers whom matches brands, but instead creating them to match the brands, and at the same promoting representation and diversity.

Limitations found within the research

The report had its limitations being a sensitive subject to write and examine. Reflected in the lack of participates within the study, which turned out to be a limiting factor. Concluding based on the current empirical data, is possible, but wouldn't be able to stand alone without additional research.

Examine representation in non-white influencers in Portugal is limited by the lack of non-existent research or data among non-white people represented in Portugal, by this meaning, that there isn't any numbers indicating how Portugal measure representation, if they even do, or how people are represented within the intuitions, industries and organisations. Meaning also, that this study stands alone in concluding that there is lack representation within non-white influencer, a limitation also being, having no comparing or indication on how representation is measured in Portugal.

Because it was an exploratory study being able to conclude anything wasn't a given. Following the examination of exploratory development of the study, the report was left with no definitive conclusion on the subject, only with a conclusion that more research needs to be done.

Final conclusion

Though the report cannot provide a definitive conclusion, it is possible to conclude on the research questions based on the findings, which can give an indication on the overall landscape of representation of non-white influencers in Portugal, though taking into consideration, that further research would need to be done to have a final conclusion.

Based on the findings from the content analysis, which was conducted on a report from an influencer platform over 100 top beauty ranked influencers in Portugal. It was found that 7 out of 100 influencers were non-white females. In comparison there was found to be 73 white female influencers. If these findings are an indication to the current state of how non-white people are represented in influencer marketing in Portugal, there is a big gap in representation of white and non-white people. Creating a different set of issues, that needs to be solved in order to get a more equal state of representation between white and non-white influencers.

Relating this with the key findings, where these issues are given. Understanding that these findings are a consequent of lack of awareness, and actions from the brands and agencies, furthermore systemic racism also plays a part in how the current state of representation looks like.

Going forward, brand and agencies can take initiative in actions that could help change it for the future. As understood in the conclusion of key findings; best practices, brands and agencies need to start with being aware and take responsibility that there is an issue, that they can help solve. Taking on, understanding their own racial biases, and how that affects the current marketing efforts is the first step. Furthermore, looking into the negative effect of not taking a stand, is unconsciously leading to a discriminatory act, which maintains the effect of systemic racism on influencer marketing in Portugal. Even though, consumers are asking for change in representation and diversity, it will be difficult to obtain,

if the marketers are not pushing the change and breaks up their own biases, taking responsibility of the system, they helped remain, demanding a change.

A solution suggested in this report, is to create a best practices that aims to balance out the representation of white and non-white influencers. Following a more diverse and representative influencer landscape, creating more niche influencers to match with the brands. Suggestions for best practices starting with taking a stand, deciding that something needs to change. Encouraging each other, and supporting each other brands a like, asking for diversity within the agencies. A suggested idea is to push quotas, until more representation is succeeded. Doing this with education and awareness.

Future research

For this report future research is suggested. To conclude on the research questions more data needs to be collected and analysed. Given that more perspectives would be given, to understand the issues related to representation of non-white influencer in a broader perspective, also, given a more in dept knowledge about representation within the different groups of influencers, such as looking at the difference in representation in non-white influencers in nano, micro influencers in comparison to macro and mega influencers could be valuable.

Furthermore, a more elaborate understanding of the overall aspect of racial injustice issues in Portugal, could be researched in relation to understanding this topic, and further looking into how representation is measured in similar fields in Portugal, or if it even is measured. Since based on the research it was not possible to find anything measure on representation in Portugal.

A limiting factor in this study, and potential future research is not only looking into the agencies and influencers, but also shifting the perspective and understand from the point of view from the consumer. Looking into the effect of not being represented in media, both as an individual, but also as a community.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

RESPONDENT 1: Hugo Silva from Brand tellers studio

Background knowledge

I: What is your job title and what is your job description?

CEO

Managing all the aspects of the business

I: How long have you worked in the field of influencer marketing?

4 years

I: What brands do the company usually work with?

We work with several brands from B2B, to B2B2C and B2C.

I: What type of influencers do you specialize in? niche, generation etc..

From Macro to Micro influencers we work with them all.

Influencer Marketing

I: How would you describe the process of finding influencers for a brand within your company?

It is sometimes a big effort that it is not recognized by clients. However, there are now some softwares that already helps making this matches by influencers niche (lifestyle ,gaming, cuisine, etc).

I: What would you say are the key factors when paring a brand and an influencer?

Tone of voice, audience.

I: How do you analyze the target groups of the influencers?

Segment, positioning.

I: And make sure they match the brands target?

We always ask for followers stats.

I: Do you see a trend regarding influencer marketing in Portugal?

Influencers are becoming all part of agencies so there are no more influencers that you can work directly (besides nano influencers)

I: What Criteria do brands usually describe when they look for influencers?

Number of followers, budget, and audience.

I: Does this also include visual criteria? (Physical features, style of fashion, race etc.)

When it comes to last selection, yes it will always be part of the decision. P.E. if an influencer use bad language or dresses that are not within the brand positioning they will not be selected.

I: Is inclusivity a criteria that weighs in on your decision process when choosing influencers for a campaign?

There is no kind of discrimination when selecting influencers nor there is obligation for selecting minorities. It always depends what it is to communicate.

I: if yes, is this something your agency is asking for or the brands?

I: Do you experience that the clients request inclusivity?

No.

I: What are some challenges you face when looking for more diverse influencers?

We don't have any experiences on that up to now.

I: Do you find it difficult to be diverse if you are going into the different communities and niches of influencer marketing?

I: Can you give examples of campaigns that you did where you were aware of being inclusive in the representation, and how did it reflect on the results of the campaign?

We don't have any experiences on that up to now.

I: Which KPI's did you track within the campaign?

I: What is added value and do you think brands are aware of the added value?

I: In general are you aware of any failures regarding misrepresentation that happened in the industry

We don't have any experiences on that up to now.

I: what did you take away from it? (Best practices)

I: Do you think the influencer industry truly represent the audience in Portugal?

Yes.

I: do you often look to increase your spectrum of influencer to ensure representation?

Yes

I: How?

Almost all influencers

I: Do you think there is a lack of representation in regards to people of color among the industry?

Yes

I: if yes, why do you think that is?

Probably because they belong to minority

I: If no, how do you think this could be improved in the future?

I: Do you think it is harder for influencers of color to get agreements with brands and get recognized in Portugal?

Don't have any knowledge of influencers with a broad audience to have difficulty in getting agreements.

I: In your opinion, what actions could be taken from the side of the client, the agencies, and the influencers to become more inclusive in the future?

I: What would you say are some of the biggest challenges within the influencer industry in Portugal?

Price versus results

I: Do you struggle with finding influencers who match the brand?

Yes, because they are all spread around different agencies.

I: Would you say it is more difficult to find people of colour who match the brand?

No.

I: If yes, why do think that is?

I: Do you find it harder among influencer of colour to find people to match with a niche target?

No.

I: Do you often feel like you have to compromise something when matching an influencer and brand?

Yes. Sometimes it is a battle to intermediate what brand needs and wants and what some influencers want to say. (example, some influencers use curse words in their tone that brands don't want to be associated)

Appendix 2

RESPONDENT 2: Diana Alves Influenza

Background knowledge

I: What is your job title and what is your job description?

I: How long have you worked in the field of influencer marketing?

I: What brands do the company usually work with?

We usually work with brands connected to Maternity, Fashion and Food Segment;

I: What type of influencers do you specialize in? niche, generation etc..

At Influenza we don't work with exclusive brands or influencers what allows us to work with almost every type of influencer according to what it's the best solution for the influencer marketing campaign. However we usually work most with micro influencers (up to 100K followers).

Influencer Marketing

I: How would you describe the process of finding influencers for a brand within your company? **It's not an easy and quick process of finding influencers, mostly because we don't have an exclusive list of influencers. We have to search on our database and also do the "stalker" search through the platform chosen by the brand to develop the campaign. Depending on the brand we set 2 work days to do this search job.**

I: What would you say are the key factors when paring a brand and an influencer? **We would say that the key factors are the content created by the influencer and engagement with his own audience.**

I: How do you analyze the target groups of the influencers? **Usually we consider as macro analysis the audience size, the type of content created (in which segment they have better content) and the audience statistics; as micro analysis the demographic details such as age, gender, city of residence.**

I: And make sure they match the brands target?

I: Do you see a trend regarding influencer marketing in Portugal? **Yes, with the pandemic, we tend to see that influencer marketing is now a mandatory part of the marketing strategy of most of the brands, even the ones who already have their market position well defined. The final customer spent more than 6hours on their**

phone and a big part of them are very engaged with the content that they consume daily.

I: What Criteria do brands usually describe when they look for influencers?

Brands are usually concerned with the content, audience size and some demographic criterias such as influencer's age.

I: Does this also include visual criteria? (Physical features, style of fashion, race etc.) **Mostly NO. Until now we haven't received any briefing where the visual criteria has been mandatory or even a requirement.**

I: Is inclusivity a criteria that weighs in on your decision process when choosing influencers for a campaign? **Somehow yes. If we are talking about a fashion brand with some specific requirements we will have to find influencers matching them.**

I: if yes, is this something your agency is asking for or the brands? **Brands.**

I: Do you experience that the client's request inclusivity?

I: What are some challenges you face when looking for more diverse influencers?

I: Do you find it difficult to be diverse if you are going into the different communities and niches of influencer marketing?

I: Can you give examples of campaigns that you did where you were aware of being inclusive in the representation, and how did it reflect on the results of the campaign?

I: Which KPI's did you track within the campaign?

I: What is added value and do you think brands are aware of the added value?

I: In general are you aware of any failures regarding misrepresentation that happened in the industry. **Not in a particular way but when we have some influencers working with different brands of the same segment on a very short time, we consider as a failure for the brands.**

I: what did you take away from it? (Best practices) **Always analyse the content of the influencer, at least, 6 months before the date of the future campaign.**

I: Do you think the influencer industry truly represents the audience in Portugal? **Yes, we believe that with the Micro Influencers and sometimes with the Nano Influencers there are profiles able to connected with big range of Social Media Users.**

I: do you often look to increase your spectrum of influencer to ensure representation? **As we don't work with exclusivity, we are concerned on saving as much information about new influencers profiles as possible that may be a match on future campaigns.**

I: How? **Doing manual search on Instagram, Youtube and Facebook.**

I: Do you think there is a lack of representation in regards to people of color among the industry? **No.**

I: if yes, why do you think that is?

I: If no, how do you think this could be improved in the future?

I: Do you think it is harder for influencers of color to get agreements with brands and get recognized in Portugal? **No.**

I: In your opinion, what actions could be taken from the side of the client, the agencies, and the influencers to become more inclusive in the future? **We don't have this "race" feedback as we haven't experienced any situation of "exclusion" for any campaigns.**

I: What would you say are some of the biggest challenges within the influencer industry in Portugal? **Segmentation;**

I: Do you struggle with finding influencers who match the brand? **Sometimes it can be a hard task to find the best influencer only because our influencer industry it's growing but not as segmented as we wish. We usually have some micro influencers, the ones that we work more with, creating content for different types of areas and difficulting the segmentation needed to find the best influencer for the brand.**

I: Would you say it is more difficult to find people of colour who match the brand? **No.**

I: If yes, why do think that is?

I: Do you find it harder among influencer of colour to find people to match with a niche target?

I: Do you often feel like you have to compromise something when matching an influencer and brand? **Not really.**

Appendix 3

RESPONDENT 3: Anonymous Agency

Background knowledge

I: What is your job title and what is your job description?

A: I'm currently an Account Manager and I do Social Media Marketing, Content Marketing, Paid Ads and Influencer Marketing.

I: How long have you worked in the field of influencer marketing?

A: Over a year.

I: What brands do the company usually work with?

A: Fashion company, Automotive company and a pharmaceutical company.

I: What type of influencers do you specialize in? niche, generation etc..

A: It's usually a preference of ours due to budget and effectiveness of campaigns, but mainly niche influencers.

Influencer Marketing

I: How would you describe the process of finding influencers for a brand within your company?

Before analyzing the aesthetics/content/message of the influencers we look at their numbers first. And when I say numbers we usually mean the rate of interaction of the account; rate of followers/likes/comments on their posts. We use platforms like Primetag, Swonkie and Brinifer. The benefit of using these platforms is that they take into consideration every influencer (as long as they have open accounts) and even allows us to find new ones we were not thinking of in the first place. We analyze whether these influencers have "healthy" accounts and have a solid/interactive public before actually seeing the type of content they produce (considering the platforms we use already categorize them into what we are looking for exactly). After they fit our "numbers" criteria we look into their content and whether their image/message fits into the brand we are trying to help.

I: What would you say are the key factors when paring a brand and an influencer?

A: As cliché as it sounds, mainly whether we can see the influencer being a customer to the brand or not.

I: How do you analyze the target groups of the influencers?

A: We ask the influencers for their “insights” (Instagram/blog/youtube public statistics) when we are already in the process of contacting the influencers we want to work with.

I: And make sure they match the brands target?

A: It’s the most important part I would say.

I: Do you see a trend regarding influencer marketing in Portugal?

A: Yes, definitely!

I: What Criteria do brands usually describe when they look for influencers?

A: I don’t believe the brands we are currently working with (from a small city in the countryside) still understand the power of Social Media Influencers so before we give our suggestions taking into consideration the budget, we ask for names of people they would want to work with. So they always mention celebrities instead of influencers who solely work online. They are yet to see the power of the online over the traditional media.

I: Does this also include visual criteria? (Physical features, style of fashion, race etc.)

A: Only if it’s more fashion related work that is trying to reach a bigger audience.

I: Is inclusivity a criteria that weighs in on your decision process when choosing influencers for a campaign?

A: Considering we are currently working with small brands who are trying to transition to the “online world”, inclusivity is not part of the agency’s decision process, mainly due to a lack of diversity within the luxury industry in Portugal that fit into 1. The numbers we are looking for and 2. Our budget..

I: if yes, is this something your agency is asking for or the brands?

A: The clients have asked for more racially diverse influencers to be associated to their brand.

I: Do you experience that the clients request inclusivity?

A: Yes, even though I must say that in my opinion they mainly mention it because it's considered a "trend" targeted towards younger generations, especially with movements like "Black Lives Matter" and "Stop Asian Hate".

I: What are some challenges you face when looking for more diverse influencers?

A: The platforms we use do not have that many diverse influencers. We use them because it makes the process of selecting influencers easier, so if they are not there it's just much more difficult to come across their profiles.

I: Do you find it difficult to be diverse if you are going into the different communities and niches of influencer marketing?

A: Yes! Which makes our job 10x much more difficult. We want these influencers to check all our boxes when it comes to the numbers but still have that more "human" and "real" aspect to them. Which make it harder, especially in a country like Portugal whose population is mainly Caucasian.

I: Can you give examples of campaigns that you did where you were aware of being inclusive in the representation, and how did it reflect on the results of the campaign?

A: We have done a photoshoot with a model/influencer who is black and another white model, we were still in launching the brand, so the results were still small in regard to selling. But social media wise, the results were positive.

I: Which KPI's did you track within the campaign?

A: Number of followers gained, traffic to the website, number of likes/comments on the post.

I: What is added value and do you think brands are aware of the added value?

A: They are in the traditional way. Say we collaborate with a celebrity rather than an internet star. They see no added value towards the latter.

I: In general are you aware of any failures regarding misrepresentation that happened in the industry

Yes. Sometimes ad campaigns have a big team behind them trying to work with an even bigger message, say for example "black lives matter" and because they are doing them for the wrong reasons they will mistakenly use stereotypes to represent a community. This can

rapidly become offensive and be detrimental towards the brand, in other words “cancelled”.

Also, Portugal has a very big community of Romani people and the only person I can think of that is well known in Portugal and is Romani is Ricardo Quaresma (Famous football player).

I: what did you take away from it? (Best practices)

A: To always learn from past mistakes from other brands, understand what they did wrong and try to get someone within the community who is vocal on certain racial issues than can give you insight as to why these were major problems and always be open to be educated, especially if you are white and are not aware of the privilege.

I: Do you think the influencer industry truly represent the audience in Portugal?

Not at all, maybe if you are from the countryside. But if you live in bigger cities like Lisbon, Porto, Aveiro and Braga you will see that there are a lot of people who certainly are not Caucasian.

I: do you often look to increase your spectrum of influencer to ensure representation?

A: We, as agency, are always open to work with any influencer who fit the brands we are working with.

I: How?

A: We are always looking at the platforms mentioned above to understand whether new influencers are being added to it so we can analyze their profiles.

I: Do you think there is a lack of representation in regards to people of color among the industry?

Yes!

I: if yes, why do you think that is?

A: We are usually behind other countries when it comes to representation and other forward-thinking aspects. It could be because we are still old-fashioned

I: If no, how do you think this could be improved in the future?

A: -----

I: Do you think it is harder for influencers of color to get agreements with brands and get recognized in Portugal?

A: I would want to think otherwise, but it's most likely harder for POC influencers to get agreements.

I: In your opinion, what actions could be taken from the side of the client, the agencies, and the influencers to become more inclusive in the future?

A: I think from the clients and agencies sides, it's just important to consider everyone and be open-minded to who has a similar message to the brand.

From the influencers side, to me at least, it's just important to find your audience and produce the content you like. Also look for opportunities within these social media friendly platforms that are used to make collaborations happen.

I: What would you say are some of the biggest challenges within the influencer industry in Portugal?

A: The lack of trust from brands to work with influencers.

I: Do you struggle with finding influencers who match the brand?

A: Yes! Especially if it's niche.

I: Would you say it is more difficult to find people of colour who match the brand?

A: I wouldn't say it's difficult, I can name a few. But they are already people who are well established and not for the budget of the brands we are working with.

I: If yes, why do think that is?

A: Smaller POC influencers are still yet to be given space within the industry that is not through the traditional media.

I: Do you find it harder among influencer of colour to find people to match with a niche target?

A: Yes! Especially within a Fashion Luxury audience who is not necessarily the younger audiences. Influencers are usually younger, and that makes it more difficult.

I: Do you often feel like you have to compromise something when matching an influencer and brand?

A: Sometimes we must compromise the influencer's numbers just because their aesthetic fits well the brand even though their Instagram account was far from "healthy", but it's hard to find that niche influencer.

Appendix 4

RESPONDENT 4: Anonymous Content Creator

Background knowledge

I: How long have you worked as an influencer/content creator?

-I started 9 years ago but working seriously is 5 years

I: What is your Niche

All kinds of people who want to have fun, but obviously I end up attracting more attention from younger people

I: What is your main target group?

-No doubt the young adults

Content Creator/Influencer

I: Did you ever feel like you struggled to be seen or taken serious as a content creator?

I: If yes, why do you think that is?

- Of course we cannot think of it as a conventional job, we sometimes have more responsibilities and social weight than a so-called "normal" person with a normal job without many responsibilities, there is a lot of work behind a funny video.

I: Did you have anyone you could see yourself represented in, that inspired you to become a content creator?

I: If yes, who? and how you think that affected you?

Yes, I can say yes, but only outside the country, it affected positively because that way I wouldn't have become what I am today, fortunately it's something that has changed a lot day by day but that hasn't been eradicated yet.

It showed that I only have to dedicate myself a lot and work that I will have the same possibilities and opportunities as anyone else, even if I have to work 2x or 4x more.

I: If no, do you think it would have made a difference if you would have had?

I: Do you see yourself as a role model for other people?

I: If yes, what do you think it means for them to feel represented? (Also, for example for black kids that follows you)

I: And how does it affect your work?

Yes, as a result of the path and the work I've been doing, in this case they end up identifying and relating much better because they see something much closer to them, it shows that it's possible and with work everything happens.

Working with brands

I: What is your experience working with brands?

I: Are you finding it easy to find collaborations?

This changes from brand to brand, but it always ends up being something complicated because it brings together another entity, we have other goals and duties

I: Have you experienced any difficulties as a black content creator in working with brands?

As incredible as it may seem, because whether you like it or not when it comes to money, brands are still very skeptical about betting on what is "different", always ending up wanting what is more conventional for them, even if it presents positive results for skin color is still an exclusion factor

I: Have you ever experienced discrimination in the industry?

I: Can you tell any specific examples?

Indirectly I think so because directly they would never do it because we are a very strong source of communication, but it's like everything in life, heart that doesn't see, heart that doesn't feel

Challenges within the industry

I: Why do you think representation is important?

It will always be because the world is made up of unique people, with unique needs and unique dreams, it cannot simply be represented what would be perfect, but the reality of each person.

I: What are some of the biggest difficulties you find in the influencer industry as a black content creator?

The difficulty of being the face of a physical corporation or commercial product, the lack of invitations for live interviews, among other things, but this turns out not to be the most important because we ended up building our means of communication

I: What can brands do to be more inclusive when working with black content creators

Stop seeing us as part of a community and treating us as people. Do not put any other conditions ahead of the work because we also get good or better results by the conventional method.

I: Do you have any advice for business who want to work with black creators?

Never stop, and the most important thing is to be consistent at work, no matter how few we are, little by little we make a difference

I: Do you think there is problem with representation within in the industry?

There is and always will be, but gradually I think it will be something that improves rather than something that is "trendi"

Appendix 5

RESPONDENT 5: Expert interview with Manuela Botelho executive director APAN.

R: Good morning.

I: Good morning. Hello.

R: How are you?

I: Good. How are you? Thank you for meeting me. It was great. And can I... can I put it to record? I assume? recorded?

R: You can record

I: Thanks. You maybe have to approve it?

R: Yeah. I did it.

I: Okay. Perfect.

Okay, Are you ready? Let's start. And just notice that there will be some general questions that you also would be able to find online, but I need them answered here in correlation with the research together. So that's why... mmhh...and yeah, It is just a conversation you just answer how you feel, there's no right or wrong answers. I just wanted to hear about your thoughts and views for the influencer marketing in Portugal.

R: So, this study you are doing for? For.. For... what reason?

I: For my master thesis at Catolica.

R: Okay, yeah. Right.

I: Yes. Okay, so I just wanted to hear what your job title is, and your job description. To start..

R: Okay, so I'm at the Portuguese association of advertisers. So in Portuguese it is "Portuguese title". I am Executive Director, as you as you wish.

And, and I'm responsible for managing the association in every aspects of their mission.

I: Okay, perfect. Can you tell me more about what APAN is? You said a little bit, but just a little bit more descriptive.

R: Yeah, APAN is a corporate association that puts together all of the companies that use advertising and communication in their businesses and... and... and put together all the companies that are that have an interest in advertising and, and, and, and...and let me see if I can explain it in English.

put together all the companies that have interests in every aspect of the commercial communications.

So, everything related with regulation, with trends in advertising and communication and everything related with the effectiveness and efficiency of their marketing communications. And as always, those aspects related with advertising and communication.

I: Okay. So, for example, it would also be current issues that could be relevant for the marketers?

R: Exactly.

I: Okay.

R: Exactly.

I: Okay.

R: And we, we represent them in in various forums, governmental and social and political forums, and even in their partners forums’.

I: okay.

R: Like other associations, associations and agencies, or media agencies or advertising agencies. So, we defend and represent the advertisers’ associations interests.

I: What would you say are some of the more bigger current issues that you're targeting at the moment?

R: We have many issues that we run at the same time... like metrics. Metrics of different media. We run things like regulation. There are always new topics regarding regulation that we manage and that we have an interest on. So, and on the other... on the other hand, we are developing together with.. with our... our... How can I say said like we are, we are part of we are... we are part of.. we are part of a global. We are part of a global configuration, Wi Fi World Federation of advertisers. So, we integrate that consideration, and we discuss globally the main issues that affect advertisers and the main issues that are that are that are discussed globally because there are a lot of issues that are not local issues but are global issues, like the digital and, and the global... global companies that operate in in this in this environment and... and when and we bring to our country and to our members information and knowledge regarding those, those issues.

I: Okay. Now, I have some more generated towards Portugal. What would you say are some of the biggest trends that you're seeing in advertising in Portugal at the moment? And

would you also, then I have, would you also say that reflects on the way the influencer marketing is?

R: the major trends?

I: Yeah, the biggest trends right now you're seeing in advertising?

R: Yeah, the biggest trends are related with it with a digital. The digitalization of our lives and the digitalization of advertising.

Okay. And so, this... this is a big trend. And of course, that influencers the way that advertiser do their communication and reach their, their, their targets.

I: Okay. So, you can also say that actually also reflects on influencer marketing...

R: of course.

I: Because it's through a platform, okay.

R: But, but it's more and more a reality.

I: Okay. So, in going into influencer marketing, do you see any specific trends that apply on that? The bigger changes are that... that we face is that the number of influencers has grown a lot. And that it is not only the public figure, or the well-known football player or whatever. There are a lot. There is a big number of small influencers, medium influencers that have their own followers. And I think that is the biggest trend, that it's... it's not the well-known individuals, but... but the communities that are managed by less well-known persons, that, that that that I think is the biggest, biggest trend,

I: Okay

R: The biggest different trend...

I: Yes. Do you think this means that we also heading towards a more diverse influencer environment? Do you think that is the trend that is becoming more diverse?

R: Yes, yeah, for sure.

I: And what do you think provoke that trend? What was the trigger?

I: Yeah, I have some. Would you say that maybe? Was it because of the audience? Like, who's pushing this agenda? Is it Because we have more vocal groups now, and could it also be the big international brands, like that pushes this trend, more forward, the more diverse influence environment?

R: I think that it's because of the internet, it's much, much bigger now. And there are really more vocal groups and, and the segmentation, it's, it's, it's much bigger. People are not only following one person, or, and they're following many things. We can't put everything

in one or two boxes. The interests of people are very diverse. And, and, and, and that diversity brings a lot of interests. And, and, and people's follows those different interests. Yeah, I think it's mainly that.

I: okay. And would you say is inclusivity something you are promoting?

R: Sorry?

I: Is inclusivity and representation in this matter, something you are promoting? For? ads to become more diverse and as wide a broad representation?

R: Yeah,

I: People?

R: Yeah.

I: Okay. And in what way? Would you say you're promoting it?

I: Sorry, I'm not sure if understand.

I: It's inclusivity. And this diverse, more, being more diverse in your ads, in general, for other brands and companies. Is it something you're promoting? And in what way are you promoting it? If you are, of course.

R: Diversity and inclusion is something that is there. I did Not start with, with advertisers, but started in... in society and, and advertisers recognizes it... recognize it, that it is, is, is a reality. And as, as a reality, they have to reflect that in there, in their... not only in their advertising, but in their in their companies. And, and a couple years ago, the WIFI started a movement together with their members, and we are part of that movement in order to promote that diversity and inclusion in, in, in companies and in marketing departments in the... and in the partners of the advertisers. So, and recently this year, the FA f promoted a survey. A global survey related exactly with inclusion and diversity and equity globally and Portugal. APAN participated in in that survey, just to identify the situation in the advertising industry. Because, because advertisers and the advertising industry can't promote this diversity and inclusion if they are not diverse and inclusive. So, I think that is first step to really bring that reality home.

I: that they are within the Companies mean within the agencies they are more diverse themselves? This mean?

R: No...

R: What, what this survey is, is looking for is to, to understand what the level of diversity and inclusion in all the marketing industry is, advertisers, agencies, media agencies,

advertising agencies, everybody that works in the advertising industry.

I: Okay,

R: Including, including the advertising departments.

I: Interesting.

R: Including the marketing department. Sorry,

I: no, no.

R: So, the objective is to notice what is the state of the art in in the marketing and advertising industry in terms of increasing inclusion, equity and, and diversity. And the idea is, and, and the purpose is to really to know, what is this state of the art and, and, and eventually create programs to improve diversity and inclusions and inclusion in, in the agencies and in the marketing departments. Because we, that's for sure that because we recognize that we that advertising the advert, the advertisement, will, the advertising will reflect better. This reality. So, this is the way that we altogether, we in the industry, the marketing advertising industry, are promoting. I'm not saying that we in APAN, but because this is something that we need partnerships to advocate, and we can't do it alone. But this is the way that we altogether are promoting this. This inclusion and diversity.

I: Okay. Now, you actually yourself answered some of my next questions, but let me see. So, would you say right now is the way the influence of marketing looks at the moment? Do you would you say it represents how the audiences is in Portugal, how, truly represent the audience, the way it looks right now, in terms of diversity?

R: The influencer marketing?

I: Yeah.

R: I'm not sure. I'm not sure. That that is something that I would like to I would like to know, after the results of this, this study.

I: I will send it

R: And I'm not sure if the, if the, if the influencer, I don't know, at this moment how many, but I know that, that it is big. That it is quite big. The number of influencers in Portugal, but I'm not sure of the level of diversity. How diverse this group of influencers are...

I: Yes. I will let you answer because I don't want it to be fake. But then afterwards I can tell you some of my findings already. So, if not, do you think this could be a problem and in how way would it be a problem if people are not feeling represented within the advertising they're seeing?

R: Yeah. I don't have yet to the results of this survey. The results for Portugal. But... But I don't think I think the market is, that the industry is very diverse, and inclusive. I don't know exactly the reasons, but I will wait for the results.

I: I saw actually on your on APAN, I saw another. I don't know if this is the one, you're talking about. But it was also a survey. And I think it was also like International, where they looked at if people felt represented. It was a webinar you had, and you link to it. Where it was a survey that showed if people felt represented in advertising, which it already kind of showed that it didn't on a national plan, of course, I don't know if you remember this.

R: So, what was the Sorry, I'm not sure if I understood.

I: So, the survey that I found through a webinar on your APANS' website that already did look in look into internationally. If people felt represented in advertising, what it already showed what I could read from the findings that people didn't.

I don't know if you know which one I'm talking about. And it's okay. If you don't know, is this more, just to a few if you know, when?

R: They said they were not represented?

I: They Yeah, yeah. It's just showed how different groups of people how they didn't feel represented. And if they did, how often it was the stereotype of gender for example.

R: Okay.

R: Okay. There is yes, yes.

we launched we launched in 2018. A Guide regarding the... that was more related with woman representation. More related with stereotype.

I: Okay.

R: Woman in advertising,

I: okay, because the work of the blackfishing started exactly, by the representation of women in advertising. That's what it started in 2016. With a, with a survey, that (Advertising organization) developed with Cannes Lions. And they looked for they were looking to the older, winning advertising films, advertising S. And looking to all the advertising campaigns in the last 10 years, they noticed that... Really, the woman representation in advertising, were not fair.

I: Yeah,

R: Were not real. So. And that was that that was the first the first step in this in this journey

of representation. And in this journey of stereotyping the advertising.

I: Yeah. Yes. And would you say that's like, it's hard to say, because I know, you haven't researched this, but in general, would you say that could be a difficulty sometimes for the marketizer that it often become even in diversity or presenting diversity, it becomes very stereo, like stereotyped, the way people are represented.

R: Yeah, you know, it's not, it's not it's, it's a cultural and, and it's, sometimes it's not easy and sometimes is not It's, it's not done on purpose. It's, it's sometimes because people didn't understand very well those concepts. And, and, in fact, it's a perfect situation of behaviours and that we have the responsibility of paying attention, really. Because advertising, because advertising can be predicting, I don't know how to say... a lot of behaviours. And, and, and our job as an association is to, to remember that to, to draw members and, and talk about that and, and give them some guidance for them to avoid that trap, avoid them to, to fall in that trap. And that's what we tried to, to do with the help. It's not, It's not something only in Portugal, it's a global issue Yes. And we are doing our part with the support of (advertising organization).

I: As you said in just we talked about them the state of the art you were doing now to see where people are also in comparison to being more diverse within the agencies maybe that could also help shifted, you know?

R: yeah, there are companies there are some big companies that are already taking action on that. Like Unilever, like Procter and Gamble, they are taking a lot of initiatives on that area. And they have they have not only their own their own policy on that, but they are obliging their partners to comply with a lot of, a lot of new rules in terms of diversity. And, and this share this share of best practices is good for, for between companies, is good. Because if you see if you see and those companies are an example of those companies are very useful for the others because, because those examples in these are, are very helpful in in the development of new policies in the market.

I: Okay, so, meaning actually, some agencies are going forward and creating these best practices that they share with others to make sure that this is something that are more protected, like the diversity is more protected in the way that people try to forward it more, if it makes sense?

R: What I'm saying is the advertisers, no advertising agents, okay, no, advertisers. The company, the advertisers are the companies that do advertising. So, companies like

Unilever, okay, MasterCard, Procter and Gamble, the branch actually their best practices, and in those areas. They are not only advertising now, they're there, they are, they are taking actions, they are taking action in those areas. And, and in there and they advertise those, those policies of inclusion and diversity in their air. You know, and they demand to their agencies there in their in their the demand today in agencies sees that they have inclusive teams. Otherwise, they don't understand what their clients want to do.

I: actually very, very interesting point. And also actually some of the things I was going to ask you later that you just answered me. So it's I think in, it's very interesting that the brands now push to become the agencies to be more aware of this. So it also forces them to have a change.

R: Yes, I think, at this moment, are the brands that that are asking that, okay, but you know,

R: it has to be it has to be the brands. Because they are the ones that the owners of the brands have to decide what they want to what, what are the kind of kind of messages that they want to pass to the market, so... so.

I: just, then, what would you say are some of the main challenges that they have when they're trying to be more inclusive in their marketing efforts? And these brands? agencies?

R: Yeah, the main challenges are they have to do it in a way... They have, they have to, to do it in a very honest way. And they have to do it. Mmmh... Can I say that?

They just, they just can't advertise it, they have to be like that.

I: Okay.

It's not it's not just something that you can do an ad about that. You have to act internally as a company like that. Otherwise, you you can't, you can just put it in your head something. That you, You are not internally

I: Yes.

R: Because otherwise someone will, will discover that you act internally differently. differently, right?

I: Yes. Do you think...

R: This is when, when challenge you can't do something in turn. You have to put your... you have to put your home? You have to put out... you have to organize your home first Yes. Right. Yes.

And you have to believe in what you are saying you have to, you have to, you have to be

honest, internally first. And after you, you can talk about that. And, and, and the second challenge is to be sure that your history of advertising, if everything makes sense, or are you, are you how do you. how do you, how do you move from one, one, when advertising your previous communication to a new one without, without seeming that you are not being...

I: sincere is that the right word?

R: Yes.

I: Okay.

R: So, it has to be very well. Very well done. Alright.

I: Yes. But do you think also these challenges you just mentioned Do you think they also apply with when facing influencer marketing. When it comes to influencer marketing, the same things apply?

R: Yes, Yes, for sure. It's in all points of contact with, with your, with your consumers. And, and you have to be we have to be coherent. And you have to have the same message, the same approach and the same principles. So, you have to be consistent in in everything that that you are saying. So that's why that's why I said. That first you have to have in house, everything very well settles in home. Otherwise.

I: Yeah. So, basically, I also was going to ask you, and what are some of the initiatives that agencies brands can take in their efforts to become more inclusive in that much marketing strategy? So pretty much what you're saying is to be more to have to what do say, to proper standard throughout your whole, the whole brand, also at home in the agency, it needs to be represented diverse representation for them to be able to?

R: Yeah, in the agency, in the, in the, in the, in the marketing department and the client You know, everything needs to make sense. Otherwise, there will something missing. Yeah.

I: Okay. Yes, I think that I make sense. And then now becomes a little bit more specific, also with influencer marketing, just so you're aware. And do you think there is a lack of representation of race in influence of marketing in Portugal?

R: I don't have the yet the results of the studies there will be in. I think, two mouse's they will be vulnerable. Yeah, but I think so.

I: Yeah. Okay. And why do you think that is? What, what do you think the problem is?

R: I'm not sure. I was discussing that with, with someone recently. And, and that person

was saying that it's, it's a question of again, a question of training, training. The number of people that goes to school versus the number of people that go to work. What the problem is that.

I: Would you say so pretty much? Maybe it could you could say it's a lack of voices, voices within different niches, you know, so, as you said.

Yeah, the lack of the lack of what is there to work with to be become influences? Does that make sense?

R: Yep. You were asking if you're asking about influencers or about?

I: influencers, influencers in the industry, if you see there is a lack of representation of race within the influencer community.

R: In the influencers? I thought you meant in the industry.

I: No, no, no specifically influencers.

R: specifically in the influencers?

I: Because that is the angle i go with, to have a more specific angle. But I guess it could be broad as well, but it will be specifically influencing.

R: Yeah, I don't know the figures of the influencers, honestly. To be honest with you. But looking to the market, looking to the marketing market, and agencies market. If, if the influences marketing and market reflects the marketing market and the agency's market. Yes, I would, I would say yes.

I: Okay. Okay. Yes. And that's what I mean, do you think that is, as you also actually said, it's because the lack of voices like the lack of people that are diverse in their appearance? So, for example, I want to explain it to you.

For example, if I worked in an agency, I worked at an agency myself. And then let's say I want to go with, I want to be more aware of being diverse. But I've often found that was also lack of people I could choose from that match the brand; you know what I mean? So therefore, you often go with the same person or the person you match the brand, but because there's a lack of these voices within the community of influencer marketing and it was an issue to be diverse, because they were not existing. And I guess I'm also asking you why you think they are not existing? To be able to use?

R: Yeah. I don't know, exactly the process of our influencers emerges. If, if, if, if there are, if the forces are in the, in the in both sides, you know, the companies that needs influencers, diversity in influencers and influencers that match what company's needs.

I think the, I think the, the movement has to be in the both sides, you know, one needs the others and the other's needs, and if companies don't need diversity, diverse influencers, they never appeared.

I: Yeah. So it's also a request from the company that they need more diversity within the influences? Yeah.

R: Yes. Because it's like, something like the quarters, you know, something like the quarters, we need to push a little bit. Otherwise, things never happen, you know. I truly believe on that. You need to give an opportunity, otherwise, things do not happen. Just like that.

I: And how do you think the quotas can be pushed? Do you think it's a policy or from the government? Do you think it's the agencies that need to maybe train people to become, I don't know, like, different ideas.

R: I need the brands... And I think the brands, I think the brands need to look for this diversity in influencers. And ask those today that are already companies managing the influencers, and ask those companies that are looking for the market for those people. Like, like, with, like, like casting companies, you know. When the casting companies are in the, are in the streets looking for people.

I: Yes.

R: Right. And, and if companies don't ask to those casting influencers companies to look for those diverse people, they will never come.

I: No, I agree.

R: So, it has, you know, it has to start in the brands, brands have a very strong voice. Those are the ones that have the voice. So, it has to start there. I'm sorry. But it has to be.

I: So, you can, you can because I know you're relating it more general and that's okay. So, I'm just going to ask for influences, but you can relate it to the broader picture. And but do you think it's harder for inferences of colour to get recognized in Portugal?

Do you think they struggle more to gain the acknowledgement of the brands of the followers?

R: I think if they have, If... I don't think that if because they, they have a different colour.

I: Okay.

R: Right. They just have to have a point of view and they have to have an honest approach to okay if they had that and I don't think that is difficult.

Okay. But the problem is they have to have that opportunity.

I: Yeah.

R: Right. And probably they have to be helped today to have that opportunity. But up after having that opportunity, I don't think there is a problem after that.

I: So, you wouldn't say they would struggle more to get agreement with brands, as long as you have a wider width, as long as they get the opportunity to be there, among the rest, they can actually have the same?

R: Yeah, I think it's, it's turned out to be a little bit more Yes. Okay. I wouldn't, I wouldn't say that. No. But yeah, probably they have to struggle a little more, a little bit more. But, but probably not today, you know, thinks things are changing. Things are changing. Probably, if you, if you. if you were talking 10 years ago, or even five years ago, probably wouldn't be more difficult. But now, I think things are things are changing very fast. And now probably, probably is not so difficult.

Right. And, and, and we are talking about different colour. But we have to talk about age people. It's not only a question of colour, but you're talking about we have to talk about people with more than 50 or 60 years. It's the same. Because there's a lot of people of my age, for instance, that probably don't have a voice too. And they should.

I: Yeah

R: Right. Yeah. And so..

I: yeah, so in general...

R: Influences don't have to be just young people. With, with different, with different colour or different sexual Gender, you know. So there's a lot, there is a range of diverse diversity is a very open range of options that have to be considered. Yes. And again, and again. We've talked about colour, but age is another, another issue.

I: Yes, I found for this research I've been doing, I'm focusing on representation and influencer marketing, especially focusing on race in Portugal. But already now I have a long list of future research that could be done in this field. Also, this could be one but also the idea of what would it mean, when the brand's agency become more diverse, as you also talked about. That's also a future research that is lacking that could be done. So, I think there's many things that could be researched more to become more diverse, and not just the idea of colour. This is just the focus I have right now. Because that's also a lack of studies on this. So yeah, yeah.

I: Yeah. I have a few more questions, and then I won't take more of your time. And so, what would you say is the added value of being diverse? Would you say that is the added value for the brands when they are more diverse?

R: The head value is that they fit better in the in the society, you know. Because they reflect better the inner very, not only better but in a more honest and open way the society in where we are living. And, and, and that is the and, that is the, and that is the reason that, that is the reason we are all today. We are all aware of who we are. You know, I think the level of knowledge and information The Digital brought and given us this, this, this awareness of who we are. So there there's no reason for companies trying to, to show a different world.

I: Do you feel still there are some. Do you see the same? Do you feel like there's some brands agencies that still are holding back on going ahead and trying to become more diverse? Or would you say actually there's a big people who are engaging really well in trying to fight find out how can they become more diverse?

R: I think companies now are, are, are more, more, how can I say? More aware that, that they, they have to they have to show real people in their in their advertising.

I: And of course, companies like to see their ads with nice people, nice environments. Nice everything. But yeah, but I think that they are...

I: They are seeing the benefits from it now.

R: That they're not anymore holding back and have just just blue eyes and, you know.

I: Blonde hair?

R: Very beautiful people. Yes. Yes.

I: Okay. Can you mention some brands that you see are more active in the in this field in like is in the forefront of exclusiveness and showing more diversity? Do you see some brands here in Portugal that are being more the forefront of it that pushes the other brands to follow maybe?

R: yes, I see Unilever for instance. I see IKEA, I see many companies that are... even continental now is. Of course, mainly the companies that are, that are more oriented to more mass market they are all more. Even, even if even the cosmetic companies they are more that trying to be more diverse now.

I: Because they understood that that is there is an issue there and the consumers requested

that they are more diverse. Yes?

Yes. Okay. So yeah, we can, we can see most of the companies are now doing that.

I: Yes. Okay. Then I just have if there's anything you would like to add about the topic that you feel like, that's relevant, we haven't already discussed that you would like to add?

R: Yeah. I think that this is a very, I think this is a very important topic. Because in Portugal, we've always, we've always assumed that, that we, we don't have any, any, any problem with that, and I don't think we have, honestly. But we have to show that, we have to show, we have really to show that and, and again, I think the grants, the brands have a very important voice, of a very public voice. And they have that responsibility to, responsibility to help society to better accept diversity. I think that... not because they have to, but because they have a voice, an important voice. It's not a business issue. But can be a business issue too. Can be a business issue too. But it's a role. It's it's, it's, it's a role in society that we have they have to play.

I: Yes.

I: I think that's it. But thank you. I think it was, well, very valuable. I think you... I, of course, already did a research and I think a lot of the things you said I already had, like, an idea that could be how it was. But it was very nice to have someone that knew more about it to talk about it.

I still, I'm gonna, also gonna interview some agencies. So, let's say what, see what they say about it. Yeah, I think,

R: okay, yeah. My English is not very clear. Particularly. And under these concepts are.

I: Yeah, I know. But I think you were very clear. And I also struggled a little bit sometimes with finding the words in English. So it's, it's, it's okay. Um, but yeah, just one thing. Can I use your name? And APAN in my research?

R: Okay.

I: Perfect. I will, when I when I'm done, I will send it to you. So you can see what I found.

R: But, yes, when are you planning to find?

I: I'm planning to find that there. There is an issue with representation. But at the same time interested, what is the solution? And I think a lot of the point you talked about is the solution. And actually, my advisor and myself and she, she says she's a researcher in gender studies, and we talked about this, how could it change? If people are not feeling represented? How do you get someone to think I have a chance to become an influencer? If

they don't see other people being an influencer? that look like them? I guess, like everything else in advertising, if we don't see ourselves represented, how can you relate to it? I guess it's a little bit the same. And we also talked about the possibility of looking into if the change was that agencies actually, like you said, like casting people to become influences. I think that is. I think that see what agency says, but it looks like that could be that could be a conclusion, or like an idea to improvements. .

And what I can see now, based also my own experience in in an agency, that here in Portugal, you have a platform, I think you have several where you can go and where agencies can be a part of it are brands that like the agencies that work for the brands, and they can go and find influences. And what I found on the platform I was from was that, I could see that there was a lack of representation, especially right now, as I'm focusing on in people of colour.

R: Yes.

I: And right now, that is probably what the study will, will show. But I'm not only focusing on that, I'm also focusing on what can be done to be improved. And I think some of the solutions, you already mentioned, is good solutions to that.

R: Okay,

I: But let's see what the agency says. And then I'm still looking for influencers, because I would also like to hear their point of view on this. So, let's see.

R: Yes, yes, yes, it's important to, to listen to their point of view.

I: But I actually thought that the influencers would be the easiest ones, but they're the hardest ones to to get hold one. And you would be the hardest one, but you where the easy one. So, let's see it change, but I will keep trying. So, I hope I will find someone in the end.

Okay, but thank you so much for your time. It was really nice.

R: I also have the results of this global study, I can share with you.

I: That would be great. I would love that.

R: Okay Camilla

I: Thank you have a nice day

R: Thank you,

I: Bye, thank you.

I: thank you

Appendix 6

Influencer Ranking August 25, 2021 - August 31, 2021										INVALID	BLACK FEMALE	WHITE MALE	WHITE FEMALE	
RANK	Gender	Race	Country	Age	Categories	Followers (K)	Likes (K)	Comments (K)	Engagement (K)	Partnerships within the last month (Average Daily posts)				
1	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	520.735	100,300	2,497	856,000	11				
2	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Fashion, Lifestyle	375.278	355,300	490	355,300	0				
3	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	342,466	111	13	124	0				
4	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Fashion, Lifestyle	329,363	61,500	74	61,624	10				
5	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	293,754	177,500	326	177,500	0				
6	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	280,287	177,314	210	177,314	0				
7	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	273,616	35,497	146	35,603	5				
8	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	271,668	85,800	6,365	91,862	16				
9	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	255,652	2,804	61	2,805	7				
10	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Fashion	236,400	61,292	177	61,469	2				
11	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Beauty	230,982	3,461	90	4,041	5				
12	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Fashion	204,117	60,500	886	61,392	20				
13	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle	193,688	26,116	104	26,222	2				
14	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Beauty	181,517	13,132	48	13,200	4				
15	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Fashion, Lifestyle, Beauty	173,406	20,393	294	20,687	19				
16	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle	136,497	50,215	280	50,505	21				
17	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	131,109	1,220	411	1,635	0				
18	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	128,266	19	5	24	Invalid				
19	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	118,344	37	41	37	0				
20	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Travel	118,318	2,264	10	2,268	4				
21	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	118,039	1,519	69	1,618	Invalid				
22	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	107,688	17,033	300	18,338	0				
23	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Disruption, Beauty	107,569	15,026	367	15,393	1				
24	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Fashion	100,634	5,935	17	6,952	12				
25	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	100,653	1,097	24	1,121	Invalid				
26	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Fashion, Lifestyle	84,508	8,497	370	8,867	18				
27	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Fashion, Lifestyle	83,494	2,455	71	2,486	0				
28	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	80,406	1,498	54	1,552	Invalid				
29	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	77,857	310	3	313	14				
30	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Fashion, Beauty, Lifestyle	74,921	68,725	4,153	69,876	8				
31	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	73,167	2,434	634	2,448	3				
32	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	70,997	7,806	7	7,883	0				
33	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Fashion, Lifestyle	69,978	32,523	144	32,676	5				
34	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	66,068	360	2	362	1				
35	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	65,200	1,413	24	1,414	0				
36	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	64,820	26	20	27	0				
37	M	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	60,257	7,811	11,879	16,060	1				
38	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Fashion	62,766	1,391	75	1,466	8				
39	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Fashion, Lifestyle	61,220	1	1	2	0				
40	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Lifestyle	61,216	17,183	150	17,261	13				
41	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	61,118	2,284	24	2,288	0				
42	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	60,916	9,791	62	9,813	0				
43	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	60,743	63	10	74	Invalid				
44	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	60,687	187	34	221	4				
45	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	58,945	1,964	213	2,177	Invalid				
46	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	58,317	11,887	178	11,885	4				
47	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	58,215	6	6	6	0				
48	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	47,823	2,945	349	3,264	0				
49	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle	47,682	1,054	5	1,059	11				
50	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	47,401	1,474	4	1,477	4				
51	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	47,185	11,180	280	11,466	3				
52	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	46,808	7,706	195	7,903	0				
53	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Disruption, Fashion, Beauty	46,792	7,781	300	8,090	0				
54	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Beauty	45,873	1,224	42	1,265	4				
55	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	45,780	8,957	45	9,043	14				
56	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	44,781	-1	0	-1	Invalid				
57	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	43,833	831	76	807	Invalid				
58	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Family	43,416	13,110	53	13,163	1				
59	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	42,419	9,378	159	9,532	4				
60	M	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	42,278	611	115	1,066	Invalid				
61	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	42,277	28	0	28	0				
62	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Family and Pets, Beauty	41,956	166	3	169	3				
63	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Travel	41,291	20,025	86	20,111	2				
64	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	40,967	-1	0	-1	0				
65	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	40,812	-3	-3	-46	0				
66	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	40,761	12	1	13	Invalid				
67	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	40,733	1	0	1	1				
68	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Fashion, Beauty	40,535	712	33	746	8				
69	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	39,890	18	3	21	Invalid				
70	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty	39,765	19,608	173	19,811	13				
71	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	39,510	1,423	30	1,480	1				
72	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	38,211	16	1	16	Invalid				
73	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Fashion	37,211	28,017	312	28,309	9				
74	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	36,870	90	2	92	0				
75	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	36,833	3,413	34	3,445	0				
76	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Family and Pets, Beauty	36,273	16,093	6,365	16,456	6				
77	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	35,544	1,979	58	2,037	0				
78	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	35,476	2,408	136	2,744	0				
79	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	35,192	2,845	28	2,973	2				
80	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	35,182	4,770	83	4,853	Invalid				
81	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	35,086	1,363	58	1,421	4				
82	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Lifestyle, Fashion, Beauty	34,709	1,069	71	1,140	8				
83	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	34,165	14,251	127	14,378	2				
84	F	White	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	33,841	9,813	36	9,847	7				
85	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle, Travel	32,510	12	0	12	0				
86	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	32,200	708	34	742	0				
87	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	32,152	3	0	3	Invalid				
88	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	31,717	4,119	2,864	7,007	8				
89	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	31,595	10,917	629	11,486	6				
90	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty	31,423	1,445	60	1,505	Invalid				
91	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	30,916	425	17	442	5				
92	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	30,839	166	0	166	0				
93	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	29,513	2,660	39	2,698	0				
94	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	29,486	32	0	32	3				
95	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	29,487	1,792	123	1,915	2				
96	F	Non-white	Portugal	18-24	Beauty, Lifestyle, Beauty, Lifestyle	29,239	4,277	100	4,377	1				
97	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	29,006	4	0	4	0				
98	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	28,727	1,967	126	2,093	Invalid				
99	F	White	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	28,276	1,339	10	1,349	0				
100	F	Non-white	Portugal	35-44	Beauty, Lifestyle	28,146	18,314	462	18,391	1				
Average						52,745	18,565	763	19,748	6				
Non-white						99,201	23,651	880	24,031	5				