

h e g

Haute école de gestion
Genève

How do social media influencers influence Generation Z to buy a brand's product in the French speaking part of Switzerland?

**Bachelor Project submitted for the degree of
Bachelor of Science HES in International Business Management**

by

Sandra VARELA MUÑOZ

Bachelor Project Mentor:

Dr. Timothy CONNERTON, HEG Adjunct Professor

Geneva, 2nd June 2021

Haute école de gestion de Genève (HEG-GE)

International Business Management

Disclaimer

This report is submitted as part of the final examination requirements of the Haute école de gestion de Genève, for the Bachelor of Science HES-SO in International Business Management. The use of any conclusions or recommendations made in or based upon this report, with no prejudice to their value, engages the responsibility neither of the author, nor the author's mentor, nor the jury members nor the HEG or any of its employees.

2nd June 2021

Sandra Varela Muñoz

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my mentor Dr. Timothy Connerton for his support and guidance during the whole process of writing this research paper. Thank you for your advice, comments and believing in me.

Moreover, I would like to thank all the people who agreed to participate in this project by accepting to be interviewed and whose answers and comments were valuable to this research. Without their contribution, it would not have been possible to complete this thesis. I would also like to thank Sheila and Jenisha for their help in proofreading this document.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, friends and classmates for their encouragement and support throughout my studies.

Executive Summary

This research aims to analyse how social media influencers can influence the purchasing decision of a member of Generation Z in the French speaking part of Switzerland. To do so, studies and psychological factors are explored to understand the relationship between Generation Z, social media, and its influencers.

The literature review attempts to understand the history of social media and how the job “influencer” was created. The research covers different topics. The first part of the literature review is to analyse Generation Z. What makes it different, unique from the previous generations and its attachment to social media. The second part investigates social media influencers and their power of persuasion. How social media became to be a key channel to attract consumers globally. The last part discusses the relationship between Generation Z and social media influencers.

A qualitative method is used to collect the data and includes in-depth interviews. Twenty members of Generation Z were interviewed for this project. The purpose of these interviews is to discover the feelings and emotions experienced on seeing social media influencers promoting a product. The goal is to discover what triggers the decision to buy a product when the product is presented by a social media influencer.

Findings show that Generation Z admires social media influencers for their authenticity and honesty. Although social media influencers are well liked, the love and affection do not always lead to the purchase of the product. Many of the respondents were tempted to buy products in different categories like beauty, gaming and food.

Furthermore, the findings discovered that there are some differences of interests between gender and age. For instance, men prefer gaming YouTubers while women prefer beauty Instagrammers. Choosing the right type of influencer for the right target based on age, gender, and interest can boost the awareness and sales of brands.

The last chapter of this research aims at giving recommendations to brands on how to select the right influencer to attract Generation Z.

Contents

How do social media influencers influence Generation Z to buy a brand's product in the French speaking part of Switzerland?	1
Disclaimer	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Executive Summary	iii
Contents	iv
List of Tables	vi
List of Figures	vi
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Context	1
1.2 Aim of the study	3
1.3 Research question	4
1.4 Research objectives	4
1.5 Organization of the thesis	5
2. Literature review	6
2.1 Generation Z	6
2.1.1 <i>Use of social media networks by Generation Z</i>	10
2.2 Social media influencers	12
2.2.1 <i>What are social media influencers?</i>	12
2.2.2 <i>Social media platforms</i>	14
2.3 How does Generation Z engage with social media influencers?	20
2.4 Literature Review Conclusion	21
3. Methodology	22
3.1 Qualitative research	22
3.1.1 <i>Interview organization</i>	23
4. Results	24
4.1 Qualitative research analysis	24
4.1.1 <i>Engagement with social media</i>	24
4.1.2 <i>Respondents knowledge and opinions on social media influencers</i> 26	
4.1.3 <i>Respondents affinity and closeness with their favourite social media influencers</i>	27
4.1.4 <i>Key factors of connection between social media influencers and Centennials by type</i>	29
4.1.5 <i>Interaction between social media influencer and follower</i>	31
4.1.6 <i>Social media influencers as role models</i>	31
4.1.7 <i>Trust based relationship</i>	32
4.1.8 <i>Impact of social media influencers in a Centennial's life</i>	33
4.1.9 <i>Purchase behaviour</i>	34
4.2 Analysis Conclusion	36

5. Discussion	37
5.1 Centennials and their low self esteem	37
5.2 Centennials and their thirst to succeed	38
5.3 Social media influencers and the use of emotions	39
5.4 Similarities between Generation Z and social media influencers	41
5.5 Discussion Conclusion	42
6. Conclusion.....	45
<i>6.1.1 Centennials' motivations to purchase a product endorsed by social media influencers.....</i>	<i>46</i>
6.2 Recommendations.....	48
6.3 Limitations and direction for future research	50
Bibliography	51
Appendix 1: Qualitative research questions	60
Appendix 2: Qualitative research interviewees preferences.....	62
Appendix 3: Qualitative research answers.....	64

List of Tables

Table 1: Average annual dollars spent by generation	9
Table 2: Average annual retail spend	9
Table 3: Favourite application.....	25
Table 4: Favourite content.....	27
Table 5: Type of Influencers	28
Table 6: Favourite influencers	28

List of Figures

Figure 1: Swiss population by age in 2021	7
Figure 2: Annual Consumer Spending, by Generation.....	8
Figure 3: Reasons for using social networks, by Generation	11
Figure 4: How Youth Feel About Social Media Influencers	20
Figure 5: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs	45

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

The internet was the revolution for communications in the early 2000's and is now what people use daily to communicate. People use the Internet for almost everything, simple things like ordering a pizza, buying a product, requesting a service, sharing a moment with friends and families, sending a picture or message that the other person will receive instantly. Before the Internet, one had to wait the next day to know the news of what happened the previous day. People had to go out, and buy a newspaper whereas, with only one click, at home, it is possible to read the local paper and any other news as it occurs, thanks to the Internet. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Internet was mostly used by IT universities and research centers, and, later on, by public entities, institutions, and private enterprises from everywhere (Dentzel 2014).

In the early twenty-first century, the rise of social media began. The Internet was not only an information exchange, it was now also a tool for individuals to create content, communicate, and even escape reality. Today, individuals living from one end of the world can send data to the other in a matter of seconds. Businesses can now make online presentations, individuals can create a parallel world in different games, and create content with their pictures, videos, sound, and text. Social media platforms are loved by a lot of individuals, and mostly by the youngsters (Dentzel 2014).

The Web not only helped individuals, but also companies. The traditional marketing model changed to become social media marketing.

Firstly, what is marketing? "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large" (Price 2017). Marketing is not only selling and advertising, marketing is more about how to satisfy customer needs. The goal is to sell easily. For this, marketers must understand the needs of their target, build customer relationships, develop products that provide superior customer value, distribute, and promote them well. Previously, consumers relied on TV, billboards, magazines, mailing lists and newspapers (Kotler, Armstrong 2016a). However, due to globalization and the digital phenomenon, traditional marketing is becoming old and ineffective for the new generation. In recent years, marketers used a different approach from websites, mobile phone apps to blogs, social media and online videos. These new

approaches aim to reach people directly, personally, and interactively. Marketers want to be part of the customer's life, they want impassioned consumers to *live* their brands (Kotler, Armstrong 2016a).

The last generation, Generation Z, born after 1995, is a generation that has lived with the ease of technology, the Internet, and are gadget-friendly since small children. According to Sarah Silvia, a Master degree graduate in London School of Public Relations, teenagers aged from 15 to 18 years old may not even watch television anymore, teenagers would rather watch YouTube videos, or streaming services like Netflix and DisneyPlus (2017). That is why traditional marketing is not effective to attract a young generation. Mass marketing like advertisements on TV, mails, newspapers are not enough for a Centennial to be seduced by a product. Generation Z spends most of their time with their smartphone, and their social media applications. Social media and digital marketing are useful for brands. Brands can be closer to their target, know their opinion about the products, build their reputation, and know who support them and who hate them (2017). All those things are harder to get with traditional marketing. Brands can track people's behaviour and create a database. Brands can choose the age, gender, location, and even the shopping style to advertise directly to their target. According to democraticmedia.org, "young people rely particularly on mobile devices for many services such as phone, web access, maps, entertainment, and more." Facebook is great for the width of marketing strategy, however, for the depth connection to the younger generation, Instagram is the best platform. Teenagers get easily bored. To get their attention, an advertisement must be quick. Marketers have the difficult task to create a quick but effective ad to grab their target's attention and avoid them from skipping the content. For that, brands need pictures, visually attractive content, personal-related stories, and the less text, the better. Brands have to create an interesting story based on the product they want to sell (2017).

Social media platforms almost tripled their total users in the last ten years, from 970 million in 2010 to 3.81 billion users in 2020 (Dean 2020). This growth is due to the fact that more and more people spend a lot of time on the internet, mostly Millennials and younger. Commercial social networks have arisen that give consumers online places to socialize, share, exchange views and information. Almost everyone is using social media networks. Even companies and marketers are using it as part of their marketing mixes. Social media platforms are *targeted, personal, interactive, immediate, timely and cost effective*. The perfect combination to reach customers anytime, anywhere, join their conversations, and create content to their likes. Furthermore, the biggest advantage is

the creation of the customer engagement and community, how to get customers involved with the brand (Kotler, Armstrong 2016a).

However, many marketers do not know how to use social media effectively.(Kotler, Armstrong 2016b). How can brands find experts in social media? How can marketers build trust thanks to social media networks? How can companies grab Generation Z's attention?

The solution of those three questions is the same: the rise of influencer marketing on social media. These now called, "influencers", are the stars on social media applications. The boom of social media started in 2010, with Facebook as the favourite app. All teenagers were captivated by Facebook, the youngsters loved meeting new people and sharing their pictures and moments with their friends (*The History of Influencer Marketing* 2020). After sharing pictures on Facebook, some of the young adults preferred sharing videos on YouTube which created a new job, being a YouTuber. Instagram also became the social media platform of beautiful pictures and Snapchat was loved because of its filters and Snapchat's stories. All social media platforms look the same but are unique at the same time. According to *Business Insider*, influencer marketing is likely to become a 15\$ billion industry by 2022 (*The History of Influencer Marketing* 2020). There are now YouTubers, Instagrammers, TikTokers and Twitch streamers. These experts on social media are the perfect marketing tool for brands. To be a social media influencer does not need much than a mobile phone and the power of influence. People want to listen to authentic voices, not some actors shown in advertisements. Any recommendations or endorsements from social media influencers are valuable for brands (*The History of Influencer Marketing* 2020).

1.2 Aim of the study

This new trend of social media marketing strategy has taken over the traditional marketing. It is important to understand how the influencer job works and why social media marketing is more successful than traditional marketing. Studies have shown that there is a positive return on investment (ROI) with this strategy being social media strategy. Understand how influencers are helpful to brands and how they build and create this special bond that makes customers purchase the products influencers advertise, is crucial for companies.

This paper should discover why social media is the key channel to promote products when targeting Generation Z. The aim of the study is to expose that social media

influencers are the most effective, advertising wise, to create trust and long-term relationships with the younger consumers.

1.3 Research question

The main research question is “*How do social media influencers influence Generation Z to buy a brand’s product in the French speaking part of Switzerland?*”. To answer this question, two sub-questions are explored. These are:

- *What triggers the decision to buy after watching an influencer promote a certain product?*
- *What personal characteristics do influencers have to attract the young audience?*

Individuals have always wanted to know the experience of someone else, different opinions, arguments before taking the decision of which product to buy, where to buy, or which brand to buy. What has changed is the rise of social media. Different platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat or YouTube have given voice to everyone who wanted to share pictures, videos and/or recommendations (Brooks 2019).

Partnering with influencers has been an essential part of marketing strategies. By the end of 2020, brands are estimated to spend around \$15 billion on influencer marketing (Taher 2019). Online and digital markets are building their empire, improving every day, and taking part of the market thanks especially to a young target group that cannot live without their smartphone and digital applications like YouTube or Instagram. This young generation could become new potential customers.

1.4 Research objectives

This study will help understand the bond between influencers and consumers by focusing on Generation Z. The goal of this study is to discover what kind of emotions and feelings such as friendship and trust, the Generation Z has for influencers. The research aims to determine the psychological aspects that influencers use to attract their audience. Finally, the research will explore the effectiveness and impact that influencers have on the purchase behaviour of a specific generation, namely the Centennials.

1.5 Organization of the thesis

The first part of this study is to identify who the influencers are, and why brands trust them to advertise their products. The second part will be dedicated to the relationship and connection between consumer and influencer. Finally, the findings will help understand what the impact of social media influencers in the purchase behaviour of young Generation Z is. The study will focus on Generation Z (people born from 1996 to 2007) living in the French speaking part of Switzerland, Swiss Romande.

The author is trying to measure behaviour, feelings, preferences, opinions, and attitudes, which is why qualitative research is needed. In-depth interviews will be conducted to bring a more complete understanding of why consumers act in a certain manner. The research aims to explore why the individual chooses to buy a product promoted by a social media influencer and understand the relationship between Centennial and social media influencer. Interviews should be conducted face-to-face, however in view of the current situation (COVID19 crisis), video meeting will most likely be the necessary communication channel.

2. Literature review

2.1 Generation Z

There are many assumptions and researchers have different opinions on the years the members of Generation Z were born. According to the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, Centennials were born in the late 1990s and early 2000s (*Definition of Generation Z* 2021), while *Australia's McCrindle Research Center* defines Generation Z as those born between 1995 and 2009 (McCrindle 2020?). According to Eric Briones and Nicolas André, writers of the book "Le choc Z" (2020), Generation Z is the generation born between 1996 and 2006 (2020a). There is not as yet, a clear end year, but researchers claim it is the early 2010s (Williams 2015). For the purpose of this paper, the study will be based on the years between 1996 and 2007, which means that, in 2021, people from Generation Z are aged from 13 to 24 years old. There are many nicknames referring to Generation Z e.g.: Centennials, iGeneration, Post-millennials (Wikipedia 2021). Generation Z is the generation that succeeds Millennials and precedes generation Alpha. Centennials are the children of Generation X (Williams 2015), but some are children of Millennials (Quigley 2016). According to *Kasasa*, there are 68 million Centennials in the world, who on average received their first mobile phone at the average age of 10 years old. Generation Z were nurtured playing with mobile phones and tablets, spending almost 3 hours a day on their mobile phone, which is their favourite pastime. As far as finances are concerned, Generation Z is similar to their parents, generation X, with the only difference that they fear more debts after seeing the struggle that Millennials had for money (*Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained* 2021).

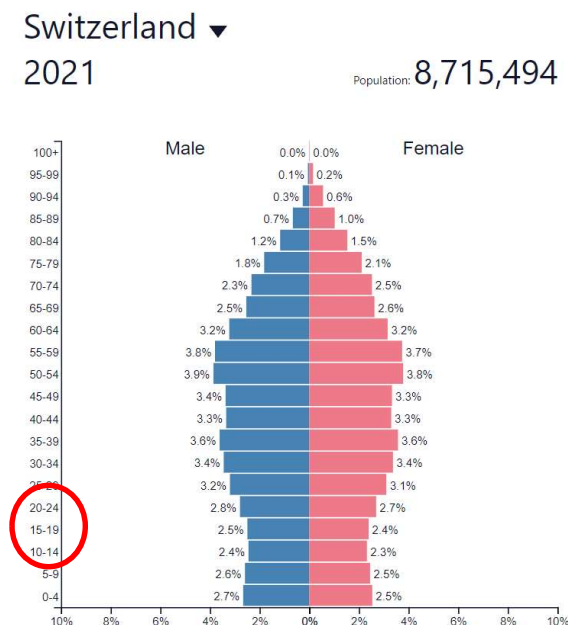
Furthermore, Generation Z is the first generation that has not experienced life without the Internet. Centennials had access to digital technology at a young age. Studies have also discovered that adolescents and young adults are more likely to be diagnosed with mental health problems, sleep-deprived and psychiatric disorder (Buckley, Glasson, Chen 2020). Members of Generation Z are spending more time with their mobile phone than reading books, compared to other generations (Leigh 2019). According to *the Economist*, members of Generation Z are more educated, well-behaved, stressed, exam-obsessed and depressed compared to previous generations (*Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed* 2019). Another study headed by psychologist Jean Twenge in the United States discovered that teenagers spend more time online than reading books, magazines and watching television. Adolescents born mid-2010s would rather spend time texting, social networking, or gaming during their free time

(Twenge 2017). Generation Z has not lived horrific events like wars. However, Centennials were influenced by big events like the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001 (McEvoy, Kulesh, Cooper 2018?), the economic crisis in 2008 (*Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained* 2021), and lately by the coronavirus crisis in 2020 (Strauss 2020).

Unlike the previous generations, Generation Z has little or no memory of the terrorist attack in 2001, Centennials were too young or were not even born. However, the members of Generation Z felt the insecurity coming from their parents and family (McEvoy, Kulesh, Cooper 2018?). Moreover, the subprime crisis can explain why Generation Z is more careful with debts (*Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained* 2021). Finally, the coronavirus crisis has had an impact on their education with a new way of teaching at distance and online (Strauss 2020).

A meta-analysis conducted in 2020 found that the most common psychiatric disorders among teenagers are anxiety, behavioural disorders, sleep deprivation and depression. According to the OECD PISA surveys, it is more difficult for Centennials to make friends and Generation Z tends to be more isolated. The number of hours in front of screens, intrusive parents and concerns about education and professional work might be the cause of all those problems (Leigh 2019).

Figure 1: Swiss population by age in 2021



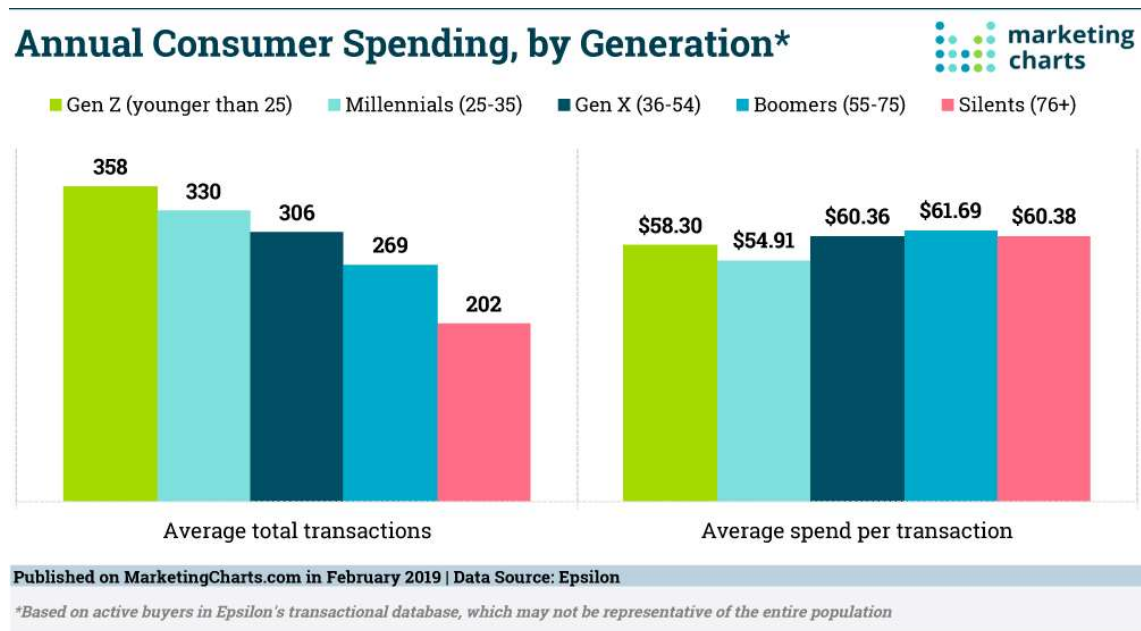
Source: Population Pyramids (2021)

In 2021, 20,2% of the Swiss population are part of the Generation Z (Figure 1). There are less Centennials than Millennials. The Swiss birth rate has decreased over the years, mainly because the number of young mothers is decreasing (*Naissances 2020*).

Even tough Centennials are all part of the same generation. There are different groups of age like the young adults aged from 18 to 24 years old, and the adolescents aged from 13 to 17 years old.

Globally, Generation Z counts for 40% of global consumers as of 2020 (Maguire 2020) and are likely to surpass Millennials as the largest consumer in the United States by 2026 (*Generation Z characteristics: What businesses should know about the next wave of consumers 2020*), which is why it is very important to know how to attract them.

Figure 2: Annual Consumer Spending, by Generation



Source: Marketing Charts (2019)

Baby boomers spend the most on an annual basis (\$548.1 billion annually) (*Who's Spending Their Money? Some Surprising Answers. 2019*). Given the age of baby boomers, most of them have no or less debts compared to other generations. Moreover, children of this generation are all grown up adults who do not need the financial support of their parents which leaves baby boomers a more disposable income. However, as we can see in the figure above (Figure 2), Generation Z makes more transactions than older ones. Younger people are expected to spend more on entertainment, retail, automotive, financial services and travel as shown in Table 1 and 2 (*Who's Spending Their Money? Some Surprising Answers. 2019*).

Table 1: Average annual dollars spent by generation

Average annual dollars spent by generation

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Silents
Automotive	\$1,176	\$978	\$1,034	\$950	\$735
Communications service providers	\$1,963	\$1,681	\$1,795	\$1,642	\$1,377
Education	\$124	\$174	\$169	\$183	\$248
Entertainment	\$939	\$840	\$887	\$761	\$624
Financial services	\$1,940	\$1,431	\$1,555	\$1,578	\$1,500
Food/convenience/ drug store	\$3,431	\$3,017	\$3,133	\$2,978	\$2,645
Other retail	\$3,215	\$2,989	\$3,006	\$2,700	\$1,969
Restaurant	\$2,765	\$2,529	\$2,460	\$2,090	\$1,651
Retail	\$6,768	\$5,928	\$6,137	\$5,562	\$4,137
Services	\$245	\$218	\$234	\$245	\$214
Travel	\$3,827	\$3,112	\$3,414	\$3,431	\$3,000

Source: V12 (2019)

Table 2: Average annual retail spend

Average annual retail spend

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers	Silents
Apparel	\$1,267	\$1,051	\$1,103	\$934	\$722
Department stores	\$1,237	\$1,061	\$1,149	\$1,106	\$876
Discount stores	\$206	\$189	\$200	\$198	\$181
Electronics	\$1,032	\$884	\$967	\$845	\$697
Home improvement	\$1,996	\$1,849	\$1,853	\$1,841	\$1,334
Mass merchandiser	\$1,883	\$1,787	\$1,762	\$1,557	\$1,316
Plus size	\$349	\$339	\$359	\$331	\$299
Warehouse clubs	\$2,133	\$1,895	\$2,145	\$2,039	\$1,804

Source: V12 (2019)

As we can see in the two tables above (Table 1 and Table 2), Generation Z is the generation that spends the most on different categories (*Consumer Shopping Trends and Statistics by the Generation: Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers and the Silents* 2019). Centennials grew up in a world with economic instability, social change and digital

innovation. According to a report written by CASSANDRA, 93% of parents say that their children influence the household purchases (Fromm 2018a). Members of Generation Z pay attention to ratings and reviews they see on social media mostly given by their trusted influencers. Generation Z is a generation that loves exploring and discovering. The curiosity of Generation Z makes the youngsters consume many products in categories such as toys, candy, and video games. Furthermore, Generation Z cares more about personal success and being perceived as successful compared to previous generations and are willing to pay more for a product that helps build a positive image (Fromm 2018a).

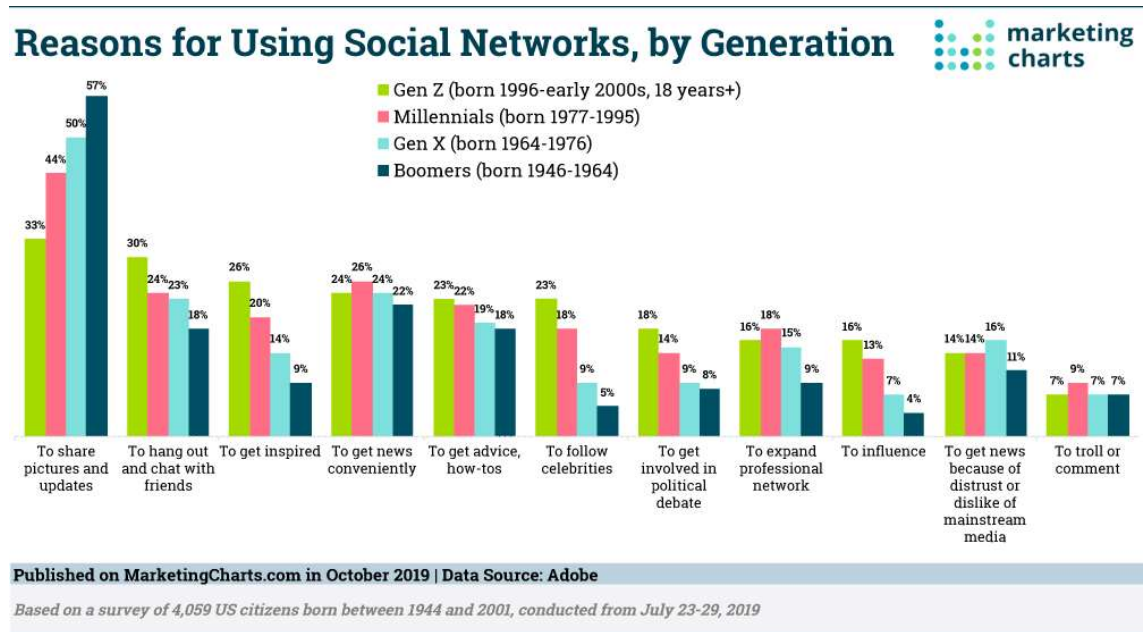
2.1.1 Use of social media networks by Generation Z

If there is one thing that all Centennials have in common, it is their love for technology. According to Anthony Turner, Generation Z has a “digital bond to the Internet” (2015) because the youth needs to escape from emotional and mental struggles, they live every day (Turner 2015).

The primary use of social media is to keep in contact with friends and family and develop new relationships. According to Jean Twenge, professor of Psychology in San Diego State University, members of Generation Z are less “face to face”, thus lonelier and more left out (2017). The favourite social media applications are Twitter and Instagram among the youngsters. Mostly because parents are not using it. Snapchat has also attracted Generation Z because of the filters, slow motion, and speed options. A survey made in the United States and answered by teenagers revealed that most adolescents are concerned about the opinions of their friends and other, thus are careful with what they post on their social media profiles. 72% of the teenagers interviewed said they were using social media daily and 43% had regrets about previous posts (Thompson 2017).

According to *GlobalWebIndex*, young people aged from 16 to 21 years old spent on average 7 hours per day online in 2019, of which three hours were devoted to social media. Moreover, Generation Z is leaving Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat for TikTok which has seen an enormous success since 2019. Generation Z uses social media mostly for entertainment, so young people do not feel bored. The gaming community has dramatically increased with members of Generation Z, who love playing online because they can be themselves without the fear of judgement. A lot of brands were aware of the impact that the gaming industry had and decided to partner up with some famous games titles for promotion purposes (Maguire 2020). Examples like Nike and Fortnite (Maguire 2020), and The Sims with make-up brand Mac Cosmetics (Watts 2021).

Figure 3: Reasons for using social networks, by Generation



Source: Marketing Charts (2019)

As we can see in the figure 2 above, members of Generation Z are more willing to follow celebrities, which supports the theory that influencer marketing is effective in attracting a young audience. Generation Z follows people on Instagram to feel inspired. This is the opportunity for brands to advertise their products, considering that a survey demonstrated that Centennials are more likely to look for new products on social media than other generations. Generation Z, formed by the youngest people, does not have a high household wealth, however, members of Gen Z make more purchases and find the inspiration to buy from their favourite influencers (*Why Do Different Generations Use Social Media?* 2019).

To conclude, Instagram is the favourite social media application because Generation Z prefers visuals. The youngsters do not like reading a lot of text thus use considerable amount emojis to express their feelings. Therefore, Centennials spend more time on Instagram creating, and engaging with photos and videos. Moreover, members of Generation Z use their mobile phone for far more than maintaining contact with friends and family (Salamader 2020). Centennials use it for entertainment, e.g., playing games or watching videos. Some members of Generation Z know that social media affects their emotional wellbeing. Feelings like low self-esteem, insecurity, and fear of missing out are the emotional states that can be caused by social media (Salamader 2020). Nevertheless, the young people still love social media and spend up to ten hours a day online (Salamader 2020).

The young audience like being represented when they are surfing on their social media homepage. To avoid depression and anxiety that can be caused due to excessive use of social media, it is important for brands to create inspiring and uplifting content to attract the young audience (Salamader 2020).

2.2 Social media influencers

2.2.1 What are social media influencers?

There already were influencers back in 1760. In the United Kingdom, Josiah Wedgwood, an English potter, made a tea set for Queen Charlotte. The royalty was very happy at the outcome and named the potter “the father of modern marketing”, making him a role model in the luxury brand sector. In 1920, Coco Chanel was a top influencer in the fashion industry thanks to her little black dresses and trouser suits. In 1984, Nike sold custom-designed Air Jordans worth \$70 million when the brand signed with famous basketballer, Michael Jordan. In 1997, the perfect hair of Jennifer Anniston in the famous series “Friends” made the actress the perfect face for L’Oréal, a cosmetic brand. In 2004, people started blogs where individuals could share their thoughts, pictures, recommendations and build an audience. And we arrive in 2010, the launch of Instagram and the start of a new full-time job, influencer (Brooks 2019).

The most successful advertisements in the marketing history were promoted by the Coca-Cola Company in 1931 with Santa Klaus who has always been a loveable persona. Everyone had this image that Santa was an old man with a white beard dressed in a red outfit. Another successful advertisement in 1950 was The Marlboro Man. Marlboro, a cigarette brand, portrayed an actor who looked trendy and very masculine. Thanks to this portrait, the sales of the cigarette company highly increased. The most successful brands were helped by a person that had an impact on a large audience (*The History of Influencer Marketing* 2020). Globally, an influencer is someone who has an impact on the purchase decision of others. It could be because of her/his authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with her/his community.

A social media influencer is a person who is very active on social media; he or she has an account and a community of followers that feel inspired by him/her. We can find influencers on YouTube, blogs, Instagram, Tik Tok and celebrities (TV-reality stars, amongst other). These experts on social media reach the niche market directly, which makes them very useful for brands (Fromm 2018b). Influencers are called “influencers” because of their power to affect the purchasing decisions of people following them on

social media. Influencers on social media have built a reputation for a certain topic. These influencers post pictures and videos on their social media channels for their impassioned audience. Brands love this relationship with influencer-consumer. It is an easy way to promote products (*What is an Influencer?* 2020).

We can categorize influencers by the number of followers, the level of influence or the content.

Influencers with more than 1 million followers are **mega-influencers** (*What is an Influencer?* 2020). Mega-influencers are celebrities like movie stars, athletes, singers, and reality television stars. Those celebrities do not partner with every brand. Only major brands can have access to these celebrities. Their services could cost up to \$1 million per post (*What is an Influencer?* 2020). The profiles of mega-influencers are viewed by more than 1 million social media users. If a brand works with this kind of persona, it gives the brand prestige with potential sales increases (*What is an Influencer?* 2020).

As of January 2021, celebrities with the most followers on Instagram are Cristiano Ronaldo (254M), Ariana Grande (216M), Dwayne Johnson (212M), and Kylie Jenner (210M) (Wikipédia 2020).

Influencers with followers ranking between 40'000 and 1 million on a social media platform are **macro-influencers**. Macro-influencers consist of known celebrities albeit not as big as the mega-influencers. This kind of influencer is less expensive than the mega-influencer but still useful for product awareness (*What is an Influencer?* 2020).

People with 1'000 and 40'000 followers are **micro-influencers**. A micro-influencer is someone who has knowledge about a certain topic and has a close relationship with his/her audience. The relationship between micro-influencer and user is very close. Micro-influencers would not sign a deal with a brand that does not respect its values or would harm his/her audience. Micro-influencers are becoming more common and famous. Local YouTubers that started five years ago are now big stars. This is mostly due because Generation Z spends more time checking Instagram and YouTube than going out or watching television (*What is an Influencer?* 2020).

Finally, the **nano-influencers** have a small number of followers, less than 1'000. Nano-influencers share their thoughts on a very specific field and attract loyal users passionate by it. Nano-influencers are not the favourites of brands because of the lack of influence even though they are the cheapest (*What is an Influencer?* 2020).

2.2.2 Social media platforms

There are many social media platforms like LinkedIn, Pinterest, Tumblr, Snapchat, Reddit, Twitter, Telegram and Facebook. However, this study will primarily focus on the social media platforms where influencers are working as social influencers e.g.: YouTubers, Instagrammers and TikTokers, and which are also the favourites of Generation Z. A study conducted by *Business Insider* revealed that the three most used social media platforms among members of Generation Z are Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube (Green 2019). These platforms are used every day by young adults and teenagers.

- Instagram

Instagram, the number one photo-sharing application, is the biggest success story in the history of social media. Instagram was launched in 2010 by Kevin Systrom, a 27-year-old in Stanford University graduate. The primary focus was to feature photographs, mostly taken with a mobile phone. In one day, 25'000 users downloaded the application on their mobile device. Mike Krieger, also a Stanford graduate, later teamed with Kevin Systrom. Both graduates were amazed by the filters the Hipstamatic app offered. However, it was lacking something for it to be successful, social media sharing tool. This is the moment when the team saw a potential, a combination of Facebook and Hisptamatic. A combination of social media and photographs with filters. Like Facebook, the application had the photo, comment and “likes” options. Thus, the name “Instagram” gave rise from a combination of “instant” and “telegram”. In February 2011, Instagram raised \$7 million, many investors saw potential in the app. Twitter wanted to buy the application, but the creator, Kevin Systrom, declined. In March 2012, Facebook bought the application. At that time, there were approximately 27 million users (Blystone 2020).

As of today, in 2021, there are more options like video sharing, Instagram stories, that are features to compete with Snapchat. There is also the purchasing option where we can buy products sponsored by the accounts we follow, such as the Reels which are mostly TikTok videos. There are 1 billion active monthly users on Instagram, and 500 million Instagram stories users. On average, Cristiano Ronaldo, soccer player, who has the most followers on Instagram, could earn \$985'441 per post (Clement 2020a). Moreover, 76% of brands say that thanks to their influencer partnerships, their sales have grown rapidly. 79% of brands use Instagram for influencer campaigns, compared to Facebook (46%), YouTube (36%), Twitter (24%) and LinkedIn (12%) (Zhang 2020).

In Switzerland, there are 3'528'000 Instagram users as of December 2020 (Tankovska 2021).

The Instagram influencers, referred to as "Instagrammers", share their content to connect with their followers. There are creators of travel, photography, fashion, beauty, fitness, gaming, food, comedy and many more. Their high success is thanks to their personality and authenticity. Even though, everything looks perfect on Instagram, there are Instagrammers who speak honestly to their followers, which is appreciated by everyone in their community. Brands use Instagram influencers to boost brand awareness, promote specific products or events, and drive engagement. The Instagram influencer is used to share and talk about the products he or she uses, the audience look at the influencer's post as an inspiration and recommendation rather than an advertisement. The most popular way to work with influencers is sponsored content. It could be a product placement or sponsored experiences. Moreover, brands and influencers make partnerships where the influencer is an ambassador and can have access to the control of the brand's account and content for a set period of time to drive interest and engagement (*WHAT IS AN INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER? DEFINITION, EXAMPLES, & INSIGHTS 2020*).

- YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing service where users can watch, like, share, subscribe to YouTube channels comment and upload videos (*Explained: What is YouTube? 2021*). The youngsters use this application to watch music videos, shows, hacks, recipes, and video bloggers, known as YouTubers. YouTube was created by three former Paypal employees, Chad Hurley, Steve Chen, and Jawed Karim, in February 2005 (Helft, Richtel 2006). The application was bought by Google in November 2006 (Helft, Richtel 2006) and is the second most-visited website in the world after Google (*Classement des sites les plus populaires 2021*). There were 1.68 billion users worldwide in 2019 (Clement 2020b).

There are many types of YouTubers who provide different content.

- Comedy/Humour: Comedy YouTubers try to make their community laugh. These YouTubers talk about a certain topic in a humorous way.
- Beauty: Beauty YouTubers explain their skincare routine, have makeup skills, and give their opinion about the products they use.

- Gaming: Gaming YouTubers create content focused on video games. These YouTubers record themselves playing and live the experience with their followers.
- Family: Family YouTubers share their joy and challenges. Typically parents and children post vlogs and showcase their daily life.
- Lifestyle: Lifestyle youtubers talk about their personal lives, discuss about certain topics, and share their interests and hobbies. We can see different topics in their channels, like recipes, vlogs, challenges, and interactions with other YouTubers.
- Fashion: Fashion YouTubers talk about clothes and accessories. They show their haul, different outfits, and give advice like what to wear in a party to be trendy.
- DIY: DIY YouTubers are very creative. These YouTubers teach their viewers how to decorate, new tricks like how to colour their phone case, or how to revamp an old pair of jeans. They help their followers preparing for Halloween for example giving them decoration tutorials.
- Health and Fitness: These YouTubers show their workout routines, what they eat, they motivate their viewers to follow a healthy routine.
- Vloggers: These YouTubers showcase their daily lives, what they do and provide engaging commentary as they record themselves.
- Cooking: Cooking YouTubers teach their viewers how to prepare meals and show cooking tutorials.
- Music and dance: YouTube musicians share their songs.
- Pranks/challenges: There are many challenges that go viral. Therefore, YouTubers use this to entertain their viewers with daring exploits or eating unusual food.
- Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response (ASMR): These YouTubers use soothing sounds to relax their viewers. They help people to relax and sleep well.

There are many other contents like conspiracy, sports, technology, travel, learning, art, design, and animation videos(*THE 20 MOST POPULAR TYPES OF YOUTUBERS 2021*).

As of today, January 2021, the most popular YouTubers are PewDiePie (108M), Kids Diana Show (73.2M), Like Nastya (67.9M), Vlad and Niki (61.5M), and Dude Perfect (54.9M) (Leskin, Haasch 2021).

According to a survey conducted by *Visual Objects*, YouTube is the most-visited website by people aged from 18 to 24 years old, all members of Generation Z. Like mentioned previously in the literature review, members of Generation Z feel depressed, anxious and are low on self-esteem (*Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed* 2019). Social media gives them a standard that is impossible for them to maintain, young adults and teenagers feel exhausted not living up to these high expectations. Moreover, 80% of Centennials feel overwhelmed by the work and activities required of them (Bradley 2019). YouTube is a way to decompress, distract and destress. There are various contents that Centennials can watch, comedy, or gaming videos, so they can feel better. Generation Z watches an average of 68 videos per day (Bradley 2019). Moreover, according to a study conducted by *Pearson*, close to 60% of Generation Z prefer learning on YouTube than with textbooks, or group activities (Bradley 2019).

Brands should avoid content that might hurt the already-existing insecurities of the youngsters, publish reviews, and create authentic, trustworthy, storytelling content to grab Generation Z's attention.

- TikTok

Before being the fastest growing social media application, TikTok was called Musical.ly. Musical.ly was a 15 second video streaming and sharing application with close to 100 million users, in August 2018 (*What is TikTok? – The Fastest Growing Social Media App Uncovered* 2020). Users could lip sync and make funny, entertaining videos.

Some creators gained popularity and shared their videos on Instagram, which have made TikTok videos go viral. A Chinese company, ByteDance, bought the application in 2018. All the content and accounts were transferred from Musical.ly to the new application TikTok. There are over 500 million active monthly users. In October 2018, TikTok was the most-downloaded photo and video application in the Apple Store. In the United States, which is the country where people use the most TikTok, the app has been downloaded over 80 million times (*What is TikTok? – The Fastest Growing Social Media App Uncovered* 2020).

The application has gained popularity thanks to celebrities like Jimmy Fallon, host of a famous show called "The Tonight Show". TikTok has paid celebrities to promote the app

to their audiences. The celebrities ask their audience to post videos of them doing a Hashtag challenge like the #TumbleweedChallenge, organised by Jimmy Fallon or singers that ask their audience to dance to their songs like Shakira and Jennifer Lopez. Jimmy Fallon's challenge gathered over 10.4 million engagements, within a week. For each country, TikTok made partnerships with local celebrities. For example, in Japan, it was Kinoshita Yukina, Japanese model and actress, who promoted TikTok. The use of celebrities and influencers skyrocketed the expansion strategy of TikTok. Thanks to social media influencers, TikTok's videos went viral. Moreover, thanks to Hashtags, the app capitalises on local trends and generates viral content on its platform (*What is TikTok? – The Fastest Growing Social Media App Uncovered 2020*).

Another successful feature is the ease of creating and sharing content. When the user opens the application, he or she is entertained by many funny and addictive, easy to watch videos for hours. TikTok is an incredible success for Generation Z. Brands saw TikTok's potential. Brands like Guess, a clothes, and accessories company, invited TikTok influencers to promote their clothes thanks to the hashtag #InMyDenim. The purpose was to record themselves wearing the logo "denim" and using the hashtags (*What is TikTok? – The Fastest Growing Social Media App Uncovered 2020*).

The future of TikTok is still quite uncertain. When we look at the application "Vine" which was very similar to TikTok and was very successful back in 2015, now, anyone remembers it. It is unsure that TikTok will dethrone Instagram and Facebook. For TikTok to stay on the spotlight, the Chinese application must keep innovating and entertain its audience, which is primarily members of Generation Z.

The most popular TikTokers, in December 2020, are Charli D'Amelio (103.6M), Addison Rae (51.3M), Spencer X (50.3M), Loren Gray (50.2M), and Bella Poarch (49.1M) (Leskin, Haasch 2020). An interesting fact about these TikTokers is that the most popular girls are all under 21 years old, making them Centennials. It is the application with the most celebrities or social media influencers, under 21 years old, which means these young women started TikTok as minors.

- Twitch

Twitch was founded by Justin Kan and launched in 2011. The application was bought by Amazon in August 2014 for \$970 million (Cook 2014). Twitch is a social media platform very famous for the gaming industry. Twitch is a live-streaming platform for gamers and other lifestyle casters that have built a community around the same interests as the streamer in mind. There are broadcasts about music, talk shows, sports, travel, and food.

Livestreaming has become one of the most popular forms of online entertainment. According to *Newzoo*, the video game industry was estimated at \$138 billion in 2018 (Geeter 2019). When Twitch was still a start-up in 2011, the company focused on esports and gaming. Streamers on Twitch stream their activity and let the users watch what they are doing in real-time. Twitch has partnered with many gaming companies. Streamers receive sales commissions when they give links to purchase games or promote products (Delfino 2020).

The audience can comment live, and the streamer can answer to the comments while he or she is streaming. Moreover, there is an option to support your favourite streamer. By paying \$4.99 to \$24.99 per month, the user can have access to ad-free channels, and chat badges (Delfino 2020).

During the lockdown between March and April 2020, live streaming increased to 45%, and Twitch increased by over 50%. This is mostly due to members of Generation Z who spent a lot of time watching streaming videos on Twitch. A study found that 96% of Generation Z use mobile-focused streaming media, and that video consumption is up since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic. The young audience is comfortable with engaging online from all mobile devices. Not only are they consumers, members of Generation Z are also creators. Teenagers love being at the place of their favourite influencers. Centennials also love commenting on their streamer's videos and receiving responses from them. It motivates them to follow the streamer on all their social media platforms (Petrocelli 2020).

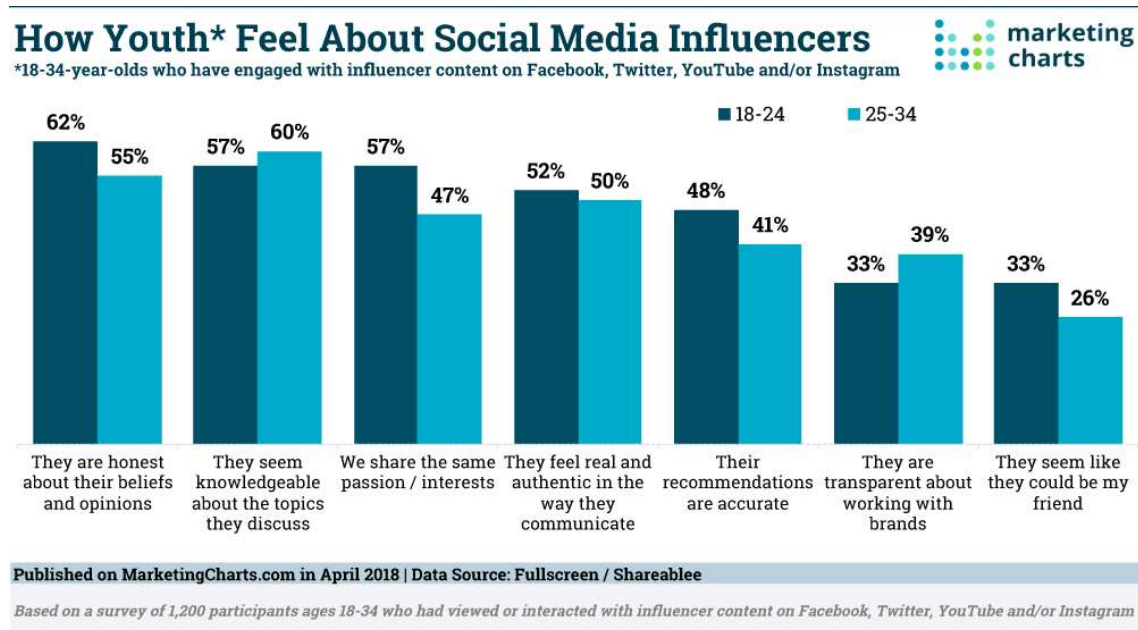
As a brand or sponsor, it is important to build a relationship with the young audience. Online streaming, being live and close to the influencer is one of the best key methods to interact with Generation Z. In this way, Twitch is valuable in building connections with the youngsters.

In December 2020, there were more than 15 million daily viewers, 140 million monthly visitors, and 2.2 million gamers who share their experience. The most popular streamers on Twitch are: Ninja (12.08M), Shroud (4.75M), TSM_Myth (4.47M), Tfue (3.38M), and Summitlg (3.33M) (Barker 2020).

2.3 How does Generation Z engage with social media influencers?

A study from *Fullscreen and Shareablee* discovered that the youth audience trusts the influencers' content (*Influencer Content Sways Youth Who Engage With It: 4 Insights* 2018). People aged below 34 years old are more likely to trust an advertisement shown by an influencer than a brand's advertisement. As shown in figure 3 below, influencers are believed to be honest. The young audience trust them. The realness and authenticity that influencers show in their social media profiles are good news for brands. For members of Generation Z, influencers are not advertising but rather creating content for self-expression and provide interesting content that will make their fans happy. Moreover, 57% of people aged from 18 to 24 years old said that they felt the influencers shared the same passions and interests as them. It is not surprising that the young audience purchases products shown by social media influencers when we look at the high level of trust and belief members of Generation Z has for influencers (*Influencer Content Sways Youth Who Engage With It: 4 Insights* 2018).

Figure 4: How Youth Feel About Social Media Influencers



Source: Marketing Charts (2018)

As mentioned before, Centennials were born in the digital age. Those part of Generation Z use social media for everything, be it for news, sharing content, or communicating with others. Men and women have different interests. According to the *Influencer Report* in 2019, men prefer gaming, and sports influencers while women prefer beauty and fashion influencers. The survey was answered by young adults and teenagers in the United

States. The results found that Centennials love YouTube influencers as much as celebrities. 95% of men who love gaming, are familiar with the famous YouTuber PewDiePie, whilst 86% of women love the YouTuber Shane Dawson. The data analysed showed significant differences between the two generations, Y and Z. It looks like the younger the consumer, the more the consumer knows about influencers. For example, 62% of Centennials knew who Shane Dawson was, whilst 60% of millennials never heard of the influencer (Taher 2019).

2.4 Literature Review Conclusion

This section of the paper presented a review of what social media and influencers are and how social media has become a crucial part in marketing nowadays. According to the literature, multiple surveys conducted in the United States showed that Generation Z is a big user of social media and are well versed in the world of influencers. Moreover, according to many researchers, Generation Z is more depressed than other generations (*Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed* 2019). Yet, there are still some gaps as we do not understand the psychological aspects used by social media influencers to attract Generation Z. There is no explanation as to why Generation Z is more isolated and stressed than the previous generations. Is social media a key factor in the low self-esteem of the young adults and teenagers? Are social media influencers using this low confidence to attract Generation Z? The literature review confirms that influencer marketing is useful to attract Generation Z but does not explain why. Finally, there is no academic research for the French speakers who might be influenced by other social media influencers than American influencers.

Therefore, in answer to the research question, the author conducted in-depth interviews focusing on Generation Z in Swiss-Romande.

The next part illustrates the methodology used to answer the research question.

3. Methodology

3.1 Qualitative research

The research method used is qualitative and allows the researcher to “uncover trends in thoughts and opinions, and dive deeper into the problem” (DeFranzo 2021). This is done by focusing on groups like group discussions, individual interviews, or observations. For this study, interviews will be conducted. The purpose of this qualitative research is primarily to understand why members of Generation Z buy products recommended by social media influencers and what is the connection between influencer and young consumer. The answers help clarify what Generation Z thinks about influencers, their thoughts, opinions, how influenced the youngsters are, and why they follow influencers on social media. The sample chosen is based on people born between 1996 and 2007, social media user, located in Swiss Romande. Before starting the interview, all interviewees were explained the goal of this thesis. Verbal approval to use their responses for this research was requested and granted. The questions were asked in a logical order for a good understanding of the topic and for a smooth and natural conversation. The interviews started with personal questions like age, name, and education, and continued with three sections. First, their engagement with social media, second, their connection with the influencers they follow, and finally, their purchase behaviour.

Quantitative research was not considered because this research method will not allow the study to measure behaviour. To fully understand the needs and the feelings that the members of Generation Z have, the research needs more than numbers. The goal is to explore the emotions transmitted by social media influencers that might lead to the purchase of a product. The qualitative research helps the study to uncover the emotions and goes deeper to the understanding of why the interviewees buy products. It is also very complicated for the respondents to answer why they buy products as they might not be aware that they are influenced and mostly why. With surveys, it would have been difficult to understand the emotions of the interviewees and would not have answered the research questions.

3.1.1 Interview organization

The questionnaire consists of three parts (Appendix 1). The first part are questions related to their engagement with social media. The interviewees were asked why they use social media, what their favourite social media applications are and how many hours they spend on social media in order to know how much time influencer and Centennial spend together. Social media is a crucial part of a Centennial's life, Generation Z was born with digital and grew up with social media applications. It is important to understand the attachment and why young people are so fascinated by social media. Without social media, influencers would not exist.

The second part consists of questions related to their interaction, connection with their favourite influencers. These questions help the study understand which social media platform is the most successful, and why. The answers will give an overview of the different content the Centennials from Swiss Romande watch and what type of influencers, like YouTubers, TikTokers, Centennials like the most. Interviewees were asked questions about their feelings, thoughts, and opinions on the subject such as how inspired they are, and what do they feel for influencers. Globally, how impactful are influencers in their lives. Furthermore, interviewees were asked what they like about their favourite influencers to understand if personality is important to build a connection between influencer and consumer. Analysing the love and attachment Generation Z has for influencers helps determine if the trust that is built between followers and influencers lead to the purchase of the product. This part concluded with a question related to an article written by Anthony Turner who talked about Generation Z and social media relationship. Interviewees were asked to share their thoughts on what was said on the article and the studies conducted on Generation Z.

Finally, the last part are questions related to their purchase behaviour. The answers will help understand why they buy the products shown by influencers, what kind of products influencers promote and who has the most influence in the purchasing decision of Centennials.

4. Results

4.1 Qualitative research analysis

This qualitative research was answered by members of Generation Z born between 1996 and 2007, all based in Swiss Romande. Twenty persons aged from 13 to 24 years old participated in the research with their full verbal agreement (Appendix 1 and 2). The average age is 18.6. The mean age for women is 18.3 and the mean age for men is 18.9. The purpose of this study was explained to them before starting the interview. Among the participants, there are 10 women and 10 men (Appendix 2). Moreover, 2 of them are unemployed, 6 are working, and 12 are students. 60% of the interviewees are 18 years old or more while 40% are less than 18 years old. All of them use social media and follow influencers.

4.1.1 Engagement with social media

This part of the analysis is based on the section “engagement with social media” questions that can be found in Appendix 3.

When the interviewees were asked why they use social media, all of them claimed that it was for entertainment and connecting with friends and family. Some interviewees confirmed they also used social media for the news and for learning (interviewees 2,9,14, Q2). For Centennials, social media is more than applications where we post pictures, it is a resource of information. For others, it has also become a habit, or a hobby because they love sharing and posting content (interviewees 3,4,5,1,9,12,15,18,19, Q2) and can find content of their interests like cars, video games, and animals (interviewees 5,6,9,10,11,13, 6,20, Q2). Centennials have access to everything on social media. Surfing on social media is a hobby, a distraction, time where Centennials can be who they want and watch what they like.

Table 3: Favourite application

Favorite application	Number of interviewees
Instagram	11
YouTube	5
Snapchat	4
TikTok	2
Twitch	1
Twitter	1

All social media applications were mentioned with three clear favourites (Q4).

As we can see in Table 1, 11 of the 20 interviewees answered that Instagram was their favourite application mostly because Instagram is all social media applications in one (interviewees 1,2,8,9,11,18, Q4). As mentioned in the literature review, Instagram has various options like shopping, reels, and stories. Instagram is a combination of all social media applications. Centennials can watch IGTV videos, mini videos which are similar to the YouTube platform, the reels option, which is TikTok videos, Instagram users can also post stories, use filters which is the option that looks more like Snapchat features, the “likes”, and comments feature like Facebook, and finally, they can follow profiles of brands or people they like. Moreover, there is also the option to call and chat which could be considered a feature of WhatsApp. Regarding the age span, we discover that young adults (aged from 18 to 24) favour Instagram more while young boys aged 13 to 17 are more akin to YouTube. The male interviewees responded that they watched gaming and art content. This is perhaps because young boys find more interesting and passionate content on YouTube than on Instagram. Centennials use social media applications to disconnect. Hence, spending time watching and learning something they are passionate about is crucial for them.

Of the interviewees questioned, 75% (15/20) claimed they spent 3 to 4 hours on social media per day. While 20% (4/20) claimed they spent 5 hours and more. Only one person spent less than one hour on social media per day (Q5). Centennials on average spend at least half a day on social media. Interviewees claimed they spend some time creating and watching content but most of them prefer watching than posting content because they claim they do not have anything interesting to post.

Is Generation Z addicted to their mobile phone? There is a clean split in the middle, 50% said yes, 50% said no (Q8). For the interviewees who responded affirmatively, they felt preoccupied when they did not have their mobile phone with them. Some were of the view that they did not depend on social media, but mainly had everything on their mobile phones, log of calls, messages, emails, diary, and calendar, and without these hands-on resources, they felt stressed. While for the interviewees who answered negatively, they claimed they had other things to do and could live without it.

Finally, when the interviewees were asked what they do when they are bored (Q9), 70% of the interviewees answered they watch social media, while 30% said they prefer to watch streaming platforms like Netflix. Interviewees were also asked if they watched TV, only one person (interviewee 1) confirmed but that it was very rare, the others answered they did not like TV anymore because there were a lot of advertisements (interviewee 17). Social media is the favourite pass time because it is more entertaining, there is always something new to do or watch and people are in control of the content they watch (interviewees 1,2,9,13,15,17,19).

4.1.2 Respondents knowledge and opinions on social media influencers

This part of the analysis is based on the section “connection between social media influencer and Centennial” questions that can be found in Appendix 3.

Everyone interviewed heard about influencers. Some of the Centennials have a rather reluctant opinion on social media influencers and describe influencers as people who work for brands because they have some notoriety and became famous because the viewers are “*making fun of them*” (interviewee 1, Q10), they are “*entertainers who try to charm you, and just want to make money*” (interviewee 2, Q10), interviewee 6 defined them as “*people who scam*”, and interviewee 8 defined them as people who like to show off and tell you how to be perfect “*I live in Dubai, look how successful I am*”, while others have a positive opinion and say that “*influencers promote local products, help small brands to gain awareness, give their opinions and promotion codes to their fans*” (interviewee 4, Q10), and “*are funny people who are not mean and agree to take pictures with us*” (interviewee 17, Q10).

Some Centennials have a neutral opinion and see them more as people who influence to buy, think, and start a new trend like being vegan answered by interviewees 5 and 10.

Others think that social media influencers share everything on social media, their life, what they do and show only the positive sides (interviewees 2, 8, 15, 16, Q10).

Finally, influencer marketing is defined as a job (interviewees 9, 11, 12, 14, 20, Q10), and purely advertisements (interviewee 7, 12, 18, Q10).

These findings show that the respondents know very well what influencers are, as many of them described influencers as people who work for brands and try to sell their products.

4.1.3 Respondents affinity and closeness with their favourite social media influencers

This part of the analysis is based on the section “engagement with social media” questions that can be found in Appendix 3. A little summary of the preferences (channels, influencers, and content) of the interviewees are found in Appendix 2.

Table 4: Favourite content

Content	Number of interviewees
Humor	16
Lifestyle	11
Gaming	7
Beauty	6
Vlogs	5
Cooking	4

The content most viewed by interviewee’s is comedy. 80% of the respondents watch social media influencers who make them laugh. Everyone in the sample said that they used social media mostly for entertainment and as a distraction. Most of the members of Generation Z are students, disconnect and think about something other than work or studies is important for the respondents. Lifestyle is the second most voted. TV-reality stars live very public lives, their every-day movements are on show, what they wear, where they go etc., and members of Generation Z seem to appreciate watching this content. The gaming and beauty content were chosen by both the male and female gender, respectively. Centennials watch videos to learn and for entertainment. Based on these findings, the study discovered that social media and its influencers is a source of joy for the members of Generation Z. Social media is a place where they learn, share, and are simply happy.

Table 5: Type of Influencers

Type of Influencers	Number of interviewees
YouTubers	13
TV-reality stars	9
Celebrities	5
Tiktokers	3
Streamers	3

The analysis also discovered the type of influencers that the members of Generation Z in Swiss Romande follow the most. 13 out of 20 interviewees watch YouTubers. As previously mentioned in the literature review, YouTube is the second most visited website after Google (*Classement des sites les plus populaires 2021*) and members of Generation Z like learning with YouTube videos. Furthermore, most social media influencers have a YouTube account, even those influencers who did not start with YouTube. For instance, Addison Rae who became famous thanks to TikTok has a YouTube account where she shares more videos with her fans.

Table 6: Favourite influencers

Favourite Influencers	Number of interviewees
Squeezie	6
Jessica Thivenin	4
Nabilla	3
Jazz Correia	3
Thibault Garcia	3
Addison Rae	3
Charli D'Amelio	2

Seven influencers have been chosen as a favourite influencer more than once. Squeezie, a French YouTuber, is the favourite of 6 interviewees. The respondents liked his personality “he is so funny, nice, always positive” (interviewees 3, 11,16, Q18). In addition, he is also particularly liked because he is in the same age group (interviewee 8, Q14) as the members of Generation Z and share the same interests such as thread horrors and gaming (interviewee 3, 8, 10, 11, 16 and 20, Q18).

4.1.4 Key factors of connection between social media influencers and Centennials by type

- YouTubers

More than half of the respondents prefer YouTubers as their favourite social media influencers. For Centennials in Swiss-Romande, YouTubers are honest, “*she is honest, I trust her 100%*” (interviewee 2, Q18), “*Léna is transparent, she has no filters*” (interviewee 3, Q19) give good advice (interviewee 2, Q18), are positive, funny, inspiring (interviewees 2, Q21, 5, Q18, 9, Q18). Moreover, they follow YouTubers because they share the same interests “*he has the same passions*” (interviewee 6, Q18) “*we share the same passion, video games*” (interviewee 8, Q18, interviewee 10, Q14, interviewee 11, Q14, interviewee 14, Q18). They also like following YouTubers who are the same or near the same age “*she is my age*” (interviewee 3, Q17), “*we are almost the same age, we have evolved together*” (interviewee 8, Q14). Finally, interviewees 10, and 14 love YouTubers because they learn from them “*I follow them to learn how to play video games*” (interviewee 10, Q14), “*they are like masters*” (interviewee 14, Q20).

Generation Z seems to appreciate YouTubers for their positive messages, personality, sharing the same passions, and for being themselves. YouTubers transmit emotions by teaching Centennials how to love themselves, how to play video games, how to be positive. The emotions transmitted are what connects the YouTuber and the follower. Centennials admire YouTubers for their ability to show their true self and love being welcomed to their world of sharing and learning.

- TV-reality stars

For the interviewees who particularly like French TV-reality stars, respondents love them because these influencers “*started being no one to become businessmen/women, have their own businesses and are rich*” (Interviewee 1, Q18). While others love them because they like their personalities and character “*I love who they are, they are funny, positive, and nice*, (interviewees 3,7,12,17,18, Q18), “*I like his style, he is fashion*” (interviewee 6, Q18). Respondent 4 replied she followed TV-reality stars because she liked the scandals and rumours that surrounded them.

TV-reality stars are very popular because of their success and the positivity and humour they transmit. These French influencers are admired for being rich, and the joy they transmit. Compared to those who prefer YouTubers, some Centennials who watch TV-reality star content want to be like them. Interviewee 6 said he wanted to participate in a

TV-reality show (Q21) and Interviewee 4 said *“they are lucky, they can buy everything, if I had the talent, I would be influencer”* (Q17).

- Celebrities

The definition of a celebrity according to Cambridge dictionary, is “someone who is famous, especially in the entertainment business” (*“celebrity” definition* 2021). Celebrities can be social media influencers if they use social media as a channel to promote their products and services. Social media influencers like YouTubers or TikTokers can also be celebrities. Social media influencers like YouTubers can be considered famous as they also have millions of followers. The difference is how the celebrities became famous. YouTubers, TikTokers and TV-reality stars who use different social media platforms to work with brands depend on social media to make a living. While celebrities like actors, athletes, and singers already have their career and do not depend on social media to make revenues. Many Centennials admire celebrities for what they do and are influenced by them. Two celebrities cited are singers who have helped the interviewees to feel better thanks to their songs. Interviewee 5 (Q18) loves Becky G, and explained that with her songs, she helped him build who he is today, and he particularly loves her because she fights against gender inequalities. Moreover, interviewee 15 (Q18) talks about how happy she is to watch people from her country succeed. Respondents seem to admire celebrities for their contribution to society and the world. For instance, interviewee 2 (Q18): *“I like what he does, I admire him, [...] he motivates me to take better decisions about the environment”* talking about Hugo Clément who is an environment activist.

- TikTokers

TikTokers were named as favourites only by the young girls born in 2005, 2006 and 2007. Addison Rae and Charli D’Amelio are the biggest TikTokers and are very well known in this platform. These young Centennials love them because TikTokers motivate them to dance and dancing brings them *“joy and positivity”* (interviewee 15, Q18), *“they like their job and are passionate”* (interviewee 17, Q18), *“they are young, pretty, and famous”* (interviewee 19, Q18). Appearance is once again cited, the attractiveness of influencers seems to be an important criterion for followers. Success is another factor that comes back, *“famous, pretty”*. Interviewees 15 and 19 also said that these TikTokers motivated them to dance and post more TikTok videos.

- Streamers

Streamers on Twitch are like YouTubers but are recording live. Streamers are liked for the same reasons than YouTubers *“they are funny and share the same interests”* (interviewee 10, Q18).

4.1.5 Interaction between social media influencer and follower

70% of the respondents never tried to interact with influencers by commenting or talking to them. Most of interviewees are silent and reserved. Some respondents claimed to be happy when influencers interact and notice them while other respondents claimed that they did not feel anything special. Influencers repost stories of their fans, like their tweets, and very rarely respond to comments. The more followers the influencer has, the less the interaction with the fans (Appendix 3, Q15 and Q16).

4.1.6 Social media influencers as role models

50% of the respondents answered that influencers were idols, while the other half responded, influencers were not role models to follow. The Centennials who look up to influencers responded that the influencer was special, supportive, *“it is inspiring to see how female singers fight against misogyny”* (interviewee 5, Q17), *“he finds solutions and motivates people”* (interviewee 11, Q17) and transmitted something (interviewee 3, Q17). Interviewee 3 admires Nabilla for becoming a businesswoman, having started her career as a loathsome TV-reality star. For the respondents who do not consider influencers as role models, Centennials claim that influencers are fake, and use their notoriety to make money (interviewees 1, 17, Q17). Others say that they like influencers but not to the level of idolization.

Moreover, 65% of interviewees do not feel connected to influencers, while 35% answered that they were. Centennials do not feel specially connected as the relationship is mostly one-sided. Members of Generation Z mostly feel admiration and trust.

When the interviewees were asked if social media influencers inspired and motivated them, 90% of the respondents agreed. Centennials admire influencers for their journey to fame (interviewee 1, Q21, interviewee 16, Q17). Social media influencers help respondents to make better decisions (interviewee 2, Q21, interviewee 12, Q21), to learn, be a better person (interviewees 13,14, 17, Q21), to be themselves (interviewee 5, Q21, interviewee 7, Q21), while others admire influencers for their standard of living *“I want to have the same life as them like they can buy anything”* (interviewee 3, Q21), *“They can buy everything. If I had the talent, I would be influencer travelling everywhere with luxury brands. They are so lucky”* (interviewee 4, Q17). Success is another factor of

admiration by Centennials *“influencers motivate me to succeed, if they did it, why cannot I?”* (interviewee 6, Q21), *“I feel like I could succeed too”* (interviewee 9, Q21).

In conclusion, Centennials admire influencers for what they do, the positive messages they send like “be yourself”, to overcome obstacles and for being successful.

4.1.7 Trust based relationship

40% of the respondents answered that they felt they knew the influencers personally because influencers post everything on social media. 35% of the interviewees answered “more or less” to this because they only know the person who appears in the screen but not the real person when the camera is off, while 25% felt they did not know the influencers because social media influencers only show the character but not the real person (Appendix 3, Q19).

An important factor for an individual to buy a product is: trust. Like all relationships, trust is key to influence a potential buyer. Centennials have access to all classes of reviews and are particularly careful with what they buy. 50% of respondents only trust a few influencers, those are mostly YouTubers and do not trust TV-reality stars. 40% trust influencers at 100% and 10% do not trust influencers at all (Appendix 3, Q22).

The following comments can be found in Appendix 3, Q22.

- Why Centennials trust influencers

For some Centennials, they do not think that influencers need to lie or would scam their fans, *“they already have a lot of money, they do not need to do product endorsements, if they do, I know it is for real”* (interviewee 1), *“I cannot see her cheating people out”* (interviewee 2), *“I cannot see them lying to their fans. If Squeezie or TibolnShape tells me that a product is good, I would not question it.”* (interviewee 16), *“I do not see them lying. They play video games they like and are not doing it for money.”* (interviewee 20).

- Why Centennials partially trust influencers

Interviewee 2 evoked that there are influencers who promote useless gadgets just to make money, however, others really show good products and give advice. Interviewees 3, 6, and 11 mentioned honesty and transparency, they trust YouTubers but not TV-reality stars who *“love their money more than their fans”, “I trust Akram because he started from nothing, [...] while TV reality stars, they buy luxury brands just to show everyone how rich and powerful they are”*. Interviewees 4, 7, and 12 trust influencers who are seen using the product *“If I see that they are using the product, showing how it*

is used, I will be more likely to trust than someone who shows the product but does not use it." Interviewee 10 trusts streamers because they are neutrals and are not promoting for brands like other influencers. Interviewee 14 also trust streamers and YouTubers who give sources and are well informed. Interviewee 18 had a bad experience with products that never arrived but still trusts YouTubers who do not sell just for money. Finally, the fact that it is purely work for remuneration is a barrier for trustworthiness "*Sebydaddy does too many partnerships so it feels like it is a job so I would not trust him*" (interviewee 12).

- Why Centennials do not trust influencers at all

One of the reasons mentioned is that the respondents do not trust someone who they do not know personally "*No, because I do not know them. For me, they play a character and they do not show who they truly are.*" (interviewee 15). Another reason is because influencers do not seem to be neutral "*I am not sure I can trust them*" (interviewee 19).

Respondents seem to trust more YouTubers than TV-reality stars working for brands. Moreover, the fact that influencers promote products for money bothers them. Centennials prefer the stories YouTubers share with their videos, giving advice and sharing their experience with the product. Finally, the respondents also seem to trust more influencers who are seen using the product than those influencers who only show the product but are never seen using it.

4.1.8 Impact of social media influencers in a Centennial's life

The following comments can be found in Appendix 3, Q23.

The interviewees who were born after 2004 did not know how to answer question 23 of the interview. Depression is rather a complicated subject and unknown for these young respondents. The answers from these interviewees are less elaborate but still helpful for the study to understand the joy that social media influencers bring to this young generation. Social media evolved with these young interviewees who were born after 2004. YouTubers were already around in 2010, when these respondents only were 3 to 6 years old. Social media influencers are not new to them, and it is normal for them to see these influencers work with social media platforms.

Although it was a complicated question that required much thought and deep reflection, all respondents shared their thoughts and opinions on social media and how social media influencers contributed to their well-being.

Most of the respondents answered that depression in members of Generation Z was linked to social media. Instagram, which is the favourite application of most of the respondents, was criticized for its beautiful pictures and people with perfect lives. Instagrammers like TV-reality stars post pictures of themselves with luxury brands trying to show off. Young people feel somewhat harmed by this “*we feel like we are a failure*” (interviewee 1), “*we feel we are less*” (interviewee 9).

Furthermore, some respondents talk about identity and personality. “*we can identify with them*” (interviewees 2,5,9). Influencers seem to help Centennials to discover, love and accept themselves thanks to their positive messages, by sharing stories and personal experiences, joyfulness, and funny videos (interviewees 3,8,9,10,12,13,15,16). YouTubers appear to be once again the favourites, as they seem more honest, more subtle than TV-reality stars who are impressed with their own success and show it. Respondents 4 and 5 affirmed that videos of social media influencers talking about their experience helped them to feel good, understood, and not alone.

Most of the respondents complain that they live in a society where everyone criticizes, and they cannot be themselves because they fear the negative comments they might receive (interviewees 3,4,13,15,16). Moreover, interviewees seem to consider pictures on Instagram to be perfect and if you do not look like someone in these pictures, you will be criticized. Some respondents talked about high expectations, and that it is one of the reasons why members of Generation Z are depressed, because the young users of social media cannot look like the persons in the beautiful pictures (interviewees 7,16). Watching social media influencers being unafraid to be themselves and talking freely about different subjects inspire Centennials to do the same.

4.1.9 Purchase behaviour

This part of the analysis is based on the section “purchase behaviour” questions that can be found in Appendix 3.

16/20 of the respondents have purchased a product promoted by a social media influencer, 3/20 have been influenced but never purchased, and only one person (5%) never was influenced and never purchased, (Q24).

80% of the sample has purchased a product promoted by a social media influencer. Most of the interviewees are influenced by what social media influencers show on their social media platforms, (Q24).

An interesting data is that most interviewees have bought body products. The study discovered that Centennials watching perfect bodies and faces on social media were made to feel insecure about themselves which might explain why most of the purchases are products to improve one's physical appearance.

Three interviewees bought products to lose weight. *"cold cream [...]I wanted to try to see if I could lose a little bit of my belly"* (interviewee 1, Q25), *"products to get thinner, Soshape which is powder to lose weight"* (interviewee 4, Q25), *"I purchased the nutrition products [...] because she lost weight with it"* (interviewee 7, Q25).

Another body product is cellulite oil bought by interviewees 2 and 4. Makeup are also products bought by the respondents *"An eyelash serum"* (interviewee 2), *"makeup"* (interviewees 9, 15, Q25).

Moreover, respondents bought products because the influencer *"sold well the product"* (interviewees 9,12,14, Q25). Boys were influenced to buy video games because they wanted to see for themselves how fun the game was (interviewees 10,15,20, Q25). Interviewee 18 bought the whole collection of her favourite YouTuber because she is a fan and likes having something from her favourite social media influencers. Finally, there are respondents who bought food because the meal looked good when the influencer presented it *"it looked so good, I had to try"* (interviewee 5, Q25), *"the influencers showed the ingredients and the result looked so good"* (interviewee 16, Q25).

One of the reasons why Centennials buy body or face products is because the influencer looks good, and members of Generation Z want to see if the products will work on them too (interviewees 3, 7, 18, Q25).

Social media influencers seem to know how to sell their products. Most of the interviewees were prompted to buy products because either the influencer looks good when using the product or the product looks good in their videos, pictures which influence people to try. Interviewee 12 admitted she was influenced by all the products she saw on TikTok *"TikTok influences me a lot with different goods that look cool to use"* (Q26).

For the respondents who did not buy products shown by influencers, the respondents said that is mainly because they wanted to spend their money on something else or could not afford it (interviewees 6,11,19, Q24).

9 out of 20 respondents answered that influencers had the greatest impact in their purchasing decision, 9 others had no external influence, 8 respondents answered their friends, 4, their families, and 2, celebrities. Thus, most of the respondents are influenced

by social media influencers when making a purchase, which is not surprising when we look at the previous data, 80% of them bought products from influencers. The term “influencers” takes all its meaning. Moreover, all interviewees who purchased a product from influencers were satisfied, (Q26).

Finally, 14 out of 20 respondents research a product on Google before buying. 12 use YouTube, 5 look on other social media platforms like Instagram to read the reviews, 3 go directly to the store and 2 of the respondents preferred to ask to their friends, (Q28).

Generation Z is the internet generation who have always had access to everything since childhood. Social media is also used a lot to discover products, YouTube is very popular in this regard as Centennials enjoy watching YouTubers pitch their product before buying, (interviewees 1,10,13,14, Q28), to learn how a product works (interviewee 1, Q28) and for tutorials (interviewee 9, Q28). Instagram is another popular social media platform as respondents like reading reviews before buying a product (interviewee 4, Q28).

4.2 Analysis Conclusion

In conclusion, based on these analyses, the study discovered that social media is a key factor in the influence of Centennials. Many of the products bought by the respondents were endorsed by influencers. Although there is a certain attachment and admiration, it does not always lead to the purchase of the product. Purchases were made mainly if the influencer sold the product well, made the product look attractive, and/or funny. The endorsements shown by social media influencers made Centennials want to try the product for themselves. For the most part these are beauty products to enhance mind and body wellness of the buyer.

5. Discussion

By combining the literature review and the primary research, the study discovered that members of Generation Z in the French speaking part of Switzerland are known to be fully digital and fascinated with social media. In addition, the respondents agree with the research conducted that their generation is subject to depression (Turner 2015) (Appendix 3, Q23). Some of the interviewees were astonished to see the number of hours they had spent on social media. Respondents also discovered and learnt by themselves and their generation as some of them admitted they did not realize they were under the influence. Social media influencers are a huge part of a Centennial's life, more than TV and streaming platforms. 98% of Centennials have a smartphone and use it to shop. 85% use social media for learning and research. Clearly, social media influencers have a bigger impact on Generation Z than the older generation Y, the Millennials (Briones, André 2020a).

5.1 Centennials and their low self esteem

Interestingly, Centennials are seen to be more depressed, according to "Le choc Z", 54% of Centennials are discontent with life (Briones, André 2020a) and 51% of Centennials are stressed and feel they are suffering from mental health issues (Briones, André 2020b). When the interviewees were asked why their generation was more depressed, they replied "*because of social media*" (Appendix 3, Q23). More specifically, the famous social media application, Instagram. Most of the interviewees voted Instagram as their favourite platform but also claim Instagram has contributed to a depressed generation. Many other factors could come into play, such as parents, studies, and work (Appendix 3, Q23). The literature review did not say much about why the youth was more depressed than other generations (Leigh 2019). However, the primary research seems to have found that Generation Z has lived with a code of beauty and lifestyle, which some of the interviewees believe, come from social media influencers like Instagrammers. Respondents said that their generation tend to compare themselves with what they see on social media and might think that there is something wrong with them when they see beautiful people on Instagram (Appendix 3, Q23). As mentioned in the literature review, social media is an entertaining platform and Generation Z are fascinated by it (Maguire 2020), there are amusing videos, people to meet, new friends to make, and people can be themselves (Salamader 2020). Behind the smiles, however, there is this negative side on social media where this young generation feels they are lesser beings when they start comparing themselves to the life of social media influencers as many respondents

claimed in the primary research (Appendix 3, Q23). As mentioned by many respondents in the qualitative research, Centennials are sensitive to criticism, for them, not being on par with the pictures on Instagram can lead to insult and rejection by others (Appendix 3, Q23). Therefore, when the user views photos of others and their lavish lifestyle on Instagram, the user feels sad to not be able to equal this success and to post the same pictures, and in turn, feel a failure, as mentioned by some of the interviewees (Appendix 3, Q23). The fact that members of Generation Z do not have anything to be proud of to share, could explain why the interviewees post so little on their social media profiles. Another reason why young social media users avoid posting content on their profiles is to avoid negative comments and judgements (Appendix 3, Q7). Members of Generation Z appear to be under the influence of the “like”. If you have many likes on your social media profiles as many social media influencers do when they post pictures of themselves, means you are successful and not criticized. The author discovered thanks to the interviews that the lives of social media influencers seem to be perfect and admired by the respondents (Appendix 3, interviewee 4, Q17, and Q23, interviewee 6, Q18).

Moreover, the amount of time the Swiss-Romand interviewees spend on their social media applications (Appendix 3, Q5) is less than what other experts discovered in the literature review who mentioned that Generation Z spends up to 10 hours online (Salamader 2020). The literature review also mentioned that social media affects the confidence of users (Salamader 2020) which was validated by the primary research. Social media and its influencers could be a determinant of why Generation Z has a low self-esteem. By watching people on social media, some of these influencers being from the same generation and same age, succeeding, being beautiful, with a perfect body, with luxury brands might affect the perception of Centennials that they are the problem and that they are missing out (Appendix 3, Q23). Separate what is real and what is fake is complicated for this generation who seem to believe and trust in their favourite social media influencers.

5.2 Centennials and their thirst to succeed

Social media influencers are successful in the eyes of Generation Z, interestingly, wearing luxury brands is sign of success. Having money and travelling around the world is important for the members of Generation Z in Swiss Romande interviewed. Equally, it also seems that Generation Z is more careful with their savings. As said before in the literature review, the struggles of the parents during the subprime crisis could be a factor

(*Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained 2021*), and another factor could be the fact that this generation is more entrepreneur (55%) (Briones, André 2020a).

Social media influencers are attractive, famous, rich, and display this to their community. To purchase products shown and worn by these influencers helps Centennials to feel they belong to this code of beauty. Identity is a word used by many interviewees, “*we can identify with them*”. The similarities are a factor of purchase as shown in the primary data. Perhaps, Centennials are trying to find similarities with a famous persona, or social media influencers to have that adulation and popularity. Centennials might believe that with beauty, money and their profile of fame, there is no place for criticism. Therefore, by purchasing the same products than the influencers, this Generation feels more confident, a sense of belonging.

Success has been cited many times by different interviewees. It is important for Centennials to be successful, which might be linked to the fear of being criticized and the tendency to depression due to lack of confidence (Salamader 2020). Millennials have chosen their career by passion while Centennials prefer to work for big companies where they can earn a good income (Briones, André 2020c).

We can see that many social media influencers are successful at a young age. Kylie Jenner, a powerful Instagrammer, born in 1997, a Centennial, is one of the richest persons in the world (Warren, Borden 2020). Moreover, TikTokers like Charli d’Amelio, born in 2004, Centennial, is already a millionaire just by posting content on her social media profiles (Trollion 2020).

Centennials watch daily, people of the same age from social media networks succeeding and doing well in their lives.

5.3 Social media influencers and the use of emotions

Social media influencers are admired by their community. Different key factors were cited during the interviews.

- SUPPORT

Generation Z is a generation that fights against inequalities and is more open minded (78%) than other previous generations, (Briones, André 2020a). Generation Z needs support to feel accepted. Social media influencers understand their community well. Influencers share their experiences, talk about personal experiences (harassment), and relate to their community. YouTubers have helped Generation Z to feel better about their

bodies, to accept themselves, and remain positive as mentioned by many respondents (Appendix 3, Q23). Influencers transmit emotions to their fans via videos on YouTube, also engage in friendly chat on Instagram. Many interviewees said that influencers contributed to something positive in their lives thanks to their positivity, joy, stories, and empowering messages (Appendix 3, Q23). Social media influencers spend some time reading and “liking” the comments of their fans as cited by some of the respondents. The study discovered during the interviews that some influencers replied to their fans and that the Centennials were very happy to be mentioned and seen by their favourite social media influencer (Appendix 3, Q16).

- IDENTITY

Generation Z are teenagers and young adults who are still finding themselves and who they want to be. As the literature review and the interviewees in the primary research mentioned, it is difficult for Centennials to be themselves because they fear the negative comments they might receive (Thompson 2017) (Appendix 3, Q23). Watching influencers talk about their experience like coming out as a gay person has helped one of the interviewees to feel better (Appendix 3, interviewee 5, Q23). Generation Z is a generation that is very isolated and struggle to show who they truly are (Leigh 2019). Therefore, watching social media influencers being themselves and talking freely about difficult subjects such as harassment helps them to feel accepted. Interviewee 11 said “*what our parents do not understand, influencers do*” (Appendix 3, Q23). Social media influencers seem to help Centennials to accept themselves and to find their identity as cited by the respondents (Appendix 3, Q23).

- HONESTY/TRANSPARENCY

TV-reality stars are known to love sharing absolutely everything about their lives. Social media influencers cry, laugh, and scream at their screens. There are respondents who affirmed they know social media influencers because TV-reality stars show absolutely everything and are very open with their private lives. Centennials struggle to trust others thus appreciate seeing real non airbrushed bodies like Shera (Appendix 3, interviewee 3, Q23), and Juju Fitcats (French YouTubers) (Juju Fitcats 2018). We see many YouTubers proudly posting photos of their cellulite bodies on Instagram, and breaking gender stereotypes. Shera, a French YouTuber, said she wanted to help people to accept themselves (Birenbaum 2017). This body positivity connects with the support influencers give to their fans. Thanks to the honesty and transparency, according to the respondents, mainly YouTubers, social media influencers are trusted by Generation Z

and can target their products. Social media influencers are seen as “transparent” when they show their imperfections, which can be subject to criticism.

Centennials in Swiss-Romande appear to be closer to YouTubers because YouTubers show their human side, their imperfections. These influencers dare posting pictures and videos of themselves with defects risking receiving negative comments. In a society where teenagers and young adults feel they have to prove something, Generation Z feels good to know that they are not alone and that there are people who understand and accept them.

5.4 Similarities between Generation Z and social media influencers

The study discovered that Centennials follow social media influencers who are more or less the same age and can better relate to. For instance, the oldest respondents following YouTubers were born between 1996 and 1999 and the youngest following Tiktokers were born between 2000 and 2004. Moreover, social media influencers share the same passion as their community. The study discovered varied interests such as gaming, beauty, cooking, horror, and humor. Centennials follow social media influencers with the same humor. For instance, interviewee 5 likes the sarcasm her favourite YouTuber uses in her videos (Appendix 3, Q18). Comedy is the first content chosen by interviewees (Table 2). As previously discussed, Generation Z is a stressed generation that uses social media to escape (Turner 2015) (*Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed* 2019). The young girls follow beauty influencers because they share the same passion: make-up. Young boys follow streamers and gaming YouTubers because they love video games. The hobbies/interests, the personality, and age seem to be elements that the respondents interviewed in the primary research easily identify with the influencers. This data validates and confirms the research made in the literature review by the *Influencer Report* (Taher 2019). The participants in the survey of the *Influencer Report* (2019) were all American Centennials. By comparing the data of this thesis and the data discussed in the literature review, the author discovered that Centennials in Swiss-Romande also prefer YouTubers more than celebrities with the difference that the favourite YouTuber is not PewDiePie (Taher 2019) but Squeezie (Table 4), a French YouTuber very well known in the French speaking cities. Moreover, the literature review showed that women tend to prefer beauty and fashion influencers while men prefer gaming and sports influencers (Taher 2019). The primary research confirms that women tend to follow beauty influencers and men tend to follow gamers and streamers.

However, what the literature review did not mention, is that both genders love comedy (Table 2) and see social media influencers as entertainers. The respondents do not follow influencers only because they share the same interests, Centennials follow influencers whom they can connect with and who have a funny and nice personality. Centennials in Swiss-Romande appear to feel a certain attachment to influencers who show their human side, motivate, and help their followers.

5.5 Discussion Conclusion

To conclude, this part will summarize the differences and similarities between the literature review and the data collected by the qualitative research.

Instagram seems to be the favourite application as shown by both the literature review (Salamader 2020) and the primary research (Table 1). The respondents particularly prefer Instagram because Instagram is a combination of all social media applications (Appendix 3, Q4). Social media influencers have a rather positive impact on Generation Z as some of the respondents affirmed that they felt supported by influencers. Social media is a place where Centennials are happy watching humorous content and videos of their choice. One of the reasons why the respondents love social media is because they have access to everything and never get bored (Appendix 3, Q9). However, the literature review showed that Generation Z was a generation that was very stressed and insecure (*Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed* 2019) (Bradley 2019). When the author discussed with the interviewees about this depression topic, all respondents agreed that their generation was under a lot of pressure coming from social media and society. According to the respondents, social media reflects what perfection is, what people should look like which harms the youngsters who struggle to find themselves and be accepted (Appendix 3, Q23). A survey made in the United States revealed that most adolescents are concerned about the opinions of their friends and other (Thompson 2017), the primary research confirms that Centennials seem to fear what people think of them, thus explains why the respondents rarely post on their social media profiles (Appendix 3, Q7). The literature review made it clear that Generation Z is a big user of social media and can spend many hours a day connected (Salamader 2020). The primary research confirms that members of Generation love social media although not all respondents declared that social media was fundamental in their lives (Appendix 3, Q7 and Q8).

Social media influencers are respected for being themselves, for being authentic, and successful according to the primary research. Figure 3 in the literature review shows a

graph that reveals how youth feel about social media influencers in the United States. The results are similar with the data collected in Swiss-Romande. Social media influencers are believed to be honest, share the same interests as their followers, give good recommendations and are transparent. However, this study discovered something else. There is no doubt that social media influencers are loved by their followers and that social media is a big part in a Centennial's life. However, in this research, the respondents did not seem to appreciate all social media influencers. For instance, Instagrammers and TV-reality stars were highly criticized for showing luxury brands and how rich and beautiful they are (Appendix 3). The respondents claimed that these kinds of pictures were doing more harm than good. Brands should be aware of the emotions felt by Centennials when this young generation sees posts from social media influencers.

Moreover, this generation seems to love the power of having money and be able to buy anything which is one of the primary reasons why Centennials admire social media influencers.

Furthermore, members of Generation Z are very prudent with what they buy. As the study discovered in the primary research, Centennials do not trust easily. This generation does a lot of research and is very impatient (Appendix 3). Centennials seem to not appreciate advertisements, and unfortunately for digital marketers, Generation Z knows how to block ads (Briones, André 2020d). Generation Z are adept at social media, a lot of famous YouTubers and TikTokers are Centennials and are very good at their job. Posting ads on social media is not enough to attract Generation Z. Which is why the power of influencers is needed. The primary research discovered that Generation Z trusts a face more than a brand. A respondent defended influencers by saying that influencers were only doing their job and the scammers were the brands (Appendix 3, interviewee 4, Q22). Social media influencers seem to be very good storytellers and know how to captivate Generation Z. It could be by playing video games or sharing their experience using products from different brands. Social media influencers know who is watching them and what their community likes. Many of the respondents claimed that influencers made them want to try the products (Appendix 3, interviewee 4, Q26, interviewee 5, Q25 and Q26, interviewee 11, Q21, interviewee 12, Q24).

Finally, members of Generation Z living in Swiss-Romande seem to prefer watching French influencers content than famous American celebrities as shown in Table 4 compared to the studies done in the United States (Figure 3) (Taher 2019). People in Swiss-Romande mostly speak French which is why the Centennials in Swiss-Romande prefer watching French influencers who speak the same language.

Although some respondents in the primary research claimed that influencer marketing was a pure strategy to manipulate followers to buy a product from a brand, some of them admitted they admired social media influencers and were influenced by the endorsements of influencers.

6. Conclusion

Prior to any recommendations, it is important to highlight that the diverse analysis and findings have answered the research question “*how do social media influencers influence Generation Z to buy a brand’s product?*”. The aim of this thesis was to explore why the individual chooses to buy a product promoted by a social media influencer, understand the connection and relationship between Centennials and influencers, and finally, to analyse the psychological aspects that influencers use to attract their target. To reach this objective, the author was able to conduct in-depth interviews with members of Generation Z in Swiss-Romande and collect qualitative data to answer the research questions:

- *What is the impact of influencers on the purchase behaviour of Generation Z in the French speaking part of Switzerland?*
- *What triggers the decision to buy after watching an influencer promote a certain product?*
- *What personal characteristics do influencers have to attract the young audience?*

Influencer marketing seems to be very useful for brands to attract Generation Z. Members of Generation Z are digital and are always connected. Centennials follow social media influencers to feel inspired, motivated, and be entertained through their posts and content. This generation shares the same interests and passions than their favourite influencers and can relate to them in terms of personality, age, and taste. There are many channels and influencers to select depending on the goal of the influencer’s marketing strategy. Centennials know that social media influencers are not friends and are people working for brands. In the qualitative research, the study discovered that their love and admiration does not always lead to a purchase. However, social media influencers by showing and sharing their experience create a bond with their followers. This bond is built based on the trust when a Centennial feels the support given by an influencer. The low self-esteem and the thirst for success could be a key factor of purchase. The study discovered that most of the products purchased are beauty and body products. Another factor is the way in which influencers sell their products that makes Generation Z want to try for themselves. The emotions such as joy, surprise, disappointment that influencers transmit while they talk about the product, grasps the interest of the Centennials. The author also observed that some influencers discuss with their followers with a motherly approach which has been stated by some interviewees

that social media influencers care for them and only want the best. For instance, during the pandemic, many social media influencers were active on their social media accounts to lift moral. Using the same products as an influencer brings confidence. Social media influencers are skilled at selling a product with their personality alone, as their approach is neither forced nor pushed. Many interviewees said they buy the products shown by influencers because the products as they looked good and because the influencer sold the product or service well, it did not feel like it was a promotion.

6.1.1 Centennials' motivations to purchase a product endorsed by social media influencers

Figure 5: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: SimplyPsychology (2020)

The real motivations to purchase a product endorsed by a social media influencer is to fulfil a need. As we can see in the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Figure 5), there are five levels to achieve. Needs from the bottom must be satisfied before going to the next level. When the primary needs are satisfied (physiological and safety), human beings want to fulfil other unmet needs and go higher to the hierarchy. The motivation to grow is not always linked to the lack of something but rather from a desire to be a better person and grow as a person (McLeod 2020). Generation Z motivations to purchase a product are highly centred in the fourth level, Esteem, of the hierarchy. Members of Generation Z living in Swiss-Romande have all basic needs met. Most of the respondents purchased products from influencers because they are developing confidence and self-esteem. The youngsters know what they want: being trendy and fashion. Generation Z is a curious

generation that likes trying different products and loves discovering. Wearing, having and eating the same products than the most popular people on social media makes them feel they belong or could reach the same level of status and prestige than social media influencers.

Most of the respondents who purchased a product were satisfied. The emotions such as pleasure post purchase is a determinant for a consumer to acquire another product from the same brand. After trying the product, respondents felt satisfaction and were in a good mood. Interviewee 18 purchased the whole collection of L'atelier de Roxane because she was happy to have something from her favourite YouTuber (Appendix 3). With new products, members of Generation Z feel good to have something valuable that will help them feel the same emotions such as excitement, joy, fear as shown by their favourite influencers. Generation Z are tempted to purchase when they see social media influencers have a positive experience with products. When Centennials end up buying the product endorsed and do feel the same emotions than influencers, they feel they made the right decision. According to psychologist Regan A.R. Gurung "buying is a coping response and is tied to stress and depression" (Gurung 2019). Having the same products than social media influencers makes Centennials feel special (Gurung 2019).

Centennials seem to love being fashion and be accepted in society. By purchasing products, Centennials fulfil the need of belonging, feel more confident to have the same perfect skin or any other products than famous influencers. But what happens when these young consumers have everything they want? To reach perfection is complicated and some might say impossible. When arriving at the Esteem fulfilment of the Maslow pyramid (Figure 5), Centennials would like to have more.

Self-actualization can hardly be bought. Self-actualization comes with maturity, there will come a time when products from influencers will not fulfil any need. There are risks that young people might feel they have lost themselves to please others because they wanted to be as good as influencers (Thomas 2016). Moreover, social media is an escape for many users who do not want to work on their own issues, therefore, create a parallel world on social media where they can present themselves in the way they want to be seen (Thomas 2016). When growing up, Centennials might feel they had wrong priorities by focusing too much on unnecessary details such as having the same body or products than famous influencers, thus feel they lost valuable time with the right priorities such as education and family (Thomas 2016).

6.2 Recommendations

Key factors of connection to consider while choosing the influencer

The author recommends brands to select influencers who have a large community of followers to have at least one of the criteria mentioned below to connect with Generation Z.

- Similarities (same age)
- Support (positive messages)
- Same interests (gaming)
- Entertainment/Humour
- Inspiration/Admiration
- Personality

These factors of connection are key to build trust. Members of Generation Z are still searching for their identity, watching someone on their screen that looks similar to them will help Centennials feel connected to the influencer. The primary research showed that the respondents seemed to prefer following people similar to them and who had the same interests rather than celebrities.

Work with more than one influencer and choose the right category

The study discovered that some influencers such as TV-reality stars were the most criticized influencers. TV-reality stars however are very powerful in terms of influence and know how to promote a product naturally. These influencers are admired, stylish and the youngsters buy their products to mirror them. Their downfall is that they are not 100% trusted by Generation Z. The bad image of an influencer can negatively impact the image of the brand. Therefore, the brand should try to work with different influencers to target as many Centennials as possible.

Although members of Generation Z are all from the same generation, they have different interests. The study discovered that men and women do not have the same hobbies and do not buy the same products from social media influencers. For instance, for **beauty** products, opt for TikTokers, beauty YouTubers, and TV-reality stars (Instagrammers) and for **video games**, gaming YouTubers and streamers.

The study discovered that women mostly purchased makeup and body products from social media influencers. These influencers are attractive, know how to wear makeup and Centennials want to try the products for themselves to see if the product also looks

good on them. Men appear to buy more from YouTubers who play the same video games, as YouTubers are seen to be entertaining and comical in their videos.

How to build trust

As previously indicated, Centennials dislike ads and know how to block them (Briones, André 2020d). This generation does not like to spend money on useless goods. Members of Generation Z also do not trust everyone and know exactly how and why social media influencers promote products. If the promotion of a product is seen as pure marketing, Centennials will not buy the product, as shown in the data collected. If the goal is to build trust, the author recommends brands to work with YouTubers as they are the most trusted influencers. Generation Z is a generation that needs to be reassured. YouTubers appear more transparent and honest than Instagrammers for instance and know how to make the product look part of their day-to-day life. It is important that the influencer is seen using the product as the study discovered that Centennials were more likely to trust influencers who were seen using the product endorsed.

How to raise awareness and conversion

Instagrammers like TV-reality stars have a big community with more than one million followers which means that their product is seen by more than one million users. TV-reality stars with gregarious personalities captivate their audience with their selling skills. These influencers put their lives on display and are constantly posting on their social media profiles to share with their followers. Posts from TV-reality stars are constantly being shared and talked about mostly by the media. The author recommends that brands work with macro-influencers as they have a larger audience. The product can be seen by many people but might not lead to a purchase as the primary research showed that the respondents are more likely to purchase products shown by influencers they trust.

If the goal of the influencer marketing is to convert buyers, brands should contact French YouTubers who seem to care for their community. As shown in the primary research, some of the respondents felt a certain attachment to influencers who responded and “liked” their comments. These influencers seem to understand their community which is crucial for this specific generation that appears to be sensitive to negative comments. YouTubers use the right approach to talk with their followers and know how to endorse a product naturally by showing different emotions. The product could have fewer views but will attract the right target that can identify with the influencer and the product.

6.3 Limitations and direction for future research

This study confirms that social media influencers have a certain power and influence in the buying decision of Generation Z. Nonetheless, the study needs expert interviewees like psychologists to determine the source of the trigger. Whether it is due to low self-esteem, or depression on seeing social media influencers succeeding, or other factors like finding one's identity with the help of social media influencers. Moreover, more respondents should be interviewed to validate these findings. It would be interesting to make a comparison with the next generation, Generation Alpha, to explore if there are any differences. Do influencers have a bigger impact on the general behaviour of Generation Alpha rather than the purchasing aspect?

Bibliography

BARKER, Shane, 2020. 15 Top Twitch Streamers to Follow in 2020 (Updated February). *Shane Barker* [online]. 23 December 2020. [Accessed 1 February 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://shanebarker.com/blog/twitch-streamers/>

BIRENBAUM, Guy, 2017. Shera Kerienski : “J’ai envie d’aider les gens à s’accepter tels qu’ils sont.” *FranceInfo* [online]. 24 October 2017. [Accessed 27 April 2021]. Retrieved from: https://www.francetvinfo.fr/replay-radio/mise-a-jour/shera-kerienski-j-ai-envie-d-aider-les-gens-a-s-accepter-tels-qu-ils-sont_2411433.html

BLYSTONE, Dan, 2020. The Story of Instagram: The Rise of the #1 Photo-Sharing Application. *Investopedia* [online]. 6 June 2020. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/102615/story-instagram-rise-1-photo0sharing-app.asp>

Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z Explained, 2021. *Kasasa* [online]. [Accessed 27 January 2021]. Retrieved from: [https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z#:~:text=Gen%20Z%3A%20Gen%20Z%20is,68%20million%20in%20the%20U.S.\)](https://www.kasasa.com/articles/generations/gen-x-gen-y-gen-z#:~:text=Gen%20Z%3A%20Gen%20Z%20is,68%20million%20in%20the%20U.S.))

BRADLEY, Rhonda, 2019. Why Generation Z Loves YouTube. *The Manifest* [online]. 22 January 2019. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: https://medium.com/@the_manifest/why-generation-z-loves-youtube-ec64643bd5b2#:~:text=YouTube%20Keeps%20Them%20Informed%20and%20Knowledgeable&text=According%20to%20a%20study%20by%20Ipsos%2C%2080%25%20of%20teens%20say,videos%20are%20tutorials%20or%20training.

BRIONES, Eric and ANDRÉ, Nicolas, 2020a. Introduction. In: *LE CHOC Z*. Paris. p. 17–19. ISBN 978-2-10-080706-2.

BRIONES, Eric and ANDRÉ, Nicolas, 2020b. Le choc émotionnel. In: *LE CHOC Z*. Paris. p. 56–65. ISBN 978-2-10-080706-2.

BRIONES, Eric and ANDRÉ, Nicolas, 2020c. Le choc business. In: *LE CHOC Z*. Paris. p. 41–46. ISBN 978-2-10-080706-2.

BRIONES, Eric and ANDRÉ, Nicolas, 2020d. Le choc stimulation. In: *LE CHOC Z*. Paris. p. 67. ISBN 978-2-10-080706-2.

BROOKS, Aaron, 2019. [Timeline] A Brief History of Influencers. *SocialMediaToday* [online]. 9 May 2019. [Accessed 9 December 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/timeline-a-brief-history-of-influencers/554377/>

BUCKLEY, Nicholas, GLASSON, Emma J and CHEN, Wai, 2020. Prevalence estimates of mental health problems in children and adolescents with intellectual disability: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *SAGE journals* [online]. 30 May 2020. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0004867420924101>

“celebrity” definition, 2021. *Cambridge Dictionary* [online]. Retrieved from: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/celebrity>

Classement des sites les plus populaires, 2021. *Similarweb* [online]. [Accessed 4 May 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.similarweb.com/fr/top-websites/>

CLEMENT, J., 2020a. Instagram - Statistics & Facts. *Statista* [online]. 14 May 2020. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/topics/1882/instagram/>

CLEMENT, J., 2020b. YouTube - Statistics & Facts. *Statista* [online]. 8 April 2020. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/topics/2019/youtube/>

Consumer Shopping Trends and Statistics by the Generation: Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, Boomers and the Silents, 2019. *V12* [online]. [Accessed 12 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://v12data.com/blog/generational-consumer-shopping-trends/>

COOK, James, 2014. Twitch Founder: We Turned A “Terrible Idea” Into A Billion-Dollar Company. *Business Insider* [online]. 20 October 2014. [Accessed 1 February 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-story-of-video-game-streaming-site-twitch-2014-10?IR=T>

DEAN, Brian, 2020. Social Network Usage & Growth Statistics: How Many People Use Social Media in 2020? *Backlinko* [online]. 12 August 2020. [Accessed 26 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://backlinko.com/social-media-users>

Definition of Generation Z, 2021. *Merriam-Webster* [online]. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Generation%20Z>

DEF FRANZO, Susan E., 2021. What's the difference between qualitative and quantitative research? *SnapSurveys* [online]. 2021. [Accessed 9 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.snapsurveys.com/blog/qualitative-vs-quantitative-research/#:~:text=Qualitative%20Research%20is%20primarily%20exploratory,hypotheses%20for%20potential%20quantitative%20research.>

DELFINO, Devon, 2020. "What is Twitch?": Here's what you need to know about the world's leading live-streaming platform for gamers. *Business Insider* [online]. 11 June 2020. [Accessed 1 February 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.fr/us/what-is-twitch>

DENTZEL, Zaryn, 2014. How the Internet Has Changed Everyday Life. *OpenMind BBVA* [online]. 2014. [Accessed 25 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/en/articles/internet-changed-everyday-life/#:~:text=The%20Internet%20has%20changed%20business,communication%20are%20of%20particular%20significance.&text=The%20Internet%20has%20removed%20a%20communication%20barriers.>

Explained: What is YouTube?, 2021. *Webwise* [online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.webwise.ie/parents/what-is-youtube/>

FROMM, Jeff, 2018a. How Much Financial Influence Does Gen Z Have? *Forbes* [online]. 10 January 2018. [Accessed 12 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2018/01/10/what-you-need-to-know-about-the-financial-impact-of-gen-z-influence/?sh=5d48739256fc>

FROMM, Jeff, 2018b. Under The Influence: How To Engage Younger Consumers Through Social Media. *Forbes* [online]. 26 June 2018. [Accessed 9 December 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jefffromm/2018/06/26/under-the-influence-how-to-engage-younger-consumers-through-social-media/#51f9aea32753>

GEETER, Darren, 2019. Twitch created a business around watching video games — here's how Amazon has changed the service since buying it in 2014. *CNBC* [online]. 26 February 2019. [Accessed 1 February 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.cNBC.com/2019/02/26/history-of-twitch-gaming-livestreaming-and-youtube.html#:~:text=When%20Twitch%20launched%20back%20in, tried%20to%20acquire%20the%20site.>

Generation Z characteristics: What businesses should know about the next wave of consumers, 2020. *NCR* [online]. [Accessed 12 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ncr.com/blogs/generation-z-characteristics-what-businesses-should-know-about-the-next-wave-of-consumers>

Generation Z is stressed, depressed and exam-obsessed, 2019. *The Economist* [online]. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2019/02/27/generation-z-is-stressed-depressed-and-exam-obsessed>

GREEN, Dennis, 2019. The most popular social media platforms with Gen Z. *Business Insider* [online]. 2 July 2019. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-loves-snapchat-instagram-and-youtube-social-media-2019-6?IR=T>

GURUNG, Regan A.R., 2019. Want Stuff? Why We Are Driven to Buy More. *Psychology Today* [online]. 10 June 2019. [Accessed 17 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-psychological-pundit/201906/want-stuff-why-we-are-driven-buy-more>

HELFT, Miguel and RICHTEL, Matt, 2006. Venture Firm Shares a YouTube Jackpot. *The New York Times* [online]. 10 October 2006. [Accessed 4 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/10/technology/10payday.html>

Influencer Content Sways Youth Who Engage With It: 4 Insights, 2018. *Marketing Charts* [online]. [Accessed 29 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.marketingcharts.com/digital/social-media-82957>

JUUU FITCATS, 2018. Mes plus gros complexes... [video recording]. *YouTube* [online]. 23 July 2018. [Accessed 27 April 2021]. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__R7yQsXlv0

KOTLER, Philip and ARMSTRONG, Gary, 2016a. What is Marketing? In: *Principles of Marketing*. Global edition. Boston: Pearson Education. p. 29. Sixteenth Edition. ISBN 13: 978-1-292-09248-5.

KOTLER, Philip and ARMSTRONG, Gary, 2016b. Social Media Marketing. In: *Principles of Marketing*. Sixteenth edition. Boston: Pearson Education. p. 544–546. ISBN 13: 978-1-292-09248-5.

LEIGH, Thomas, 2019. Education levels stagnating despite higher spending: OECD survey. *Reuters* [online]. 3 December 2019. [Accessed 4 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-oecd-education/education-levels-stagnating-despite-higher-spending-oecd-survey-idUSKBN1Y70Q8>

LESKIN, Paige and HAASCH, Palmer, 2020. Charli D’Amelio has taken over as TikTok’s biggest star. These are the 40 most popular creators on the viral video app. *Business Insider* [online]. 24 December 2020. [Accessed 31 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/tiktok-most-popular-stars-gen-z-influencers-social-media-app-2019-6?IR=T#4-loren-gray-502-million-37>

LESKIN, Paige and HAASCH, Palmer, 2021. These are the 30 most popular YouTube stars in the world, from PewDiePie to Ryan Kaji. *Business Insider* [online]. 26 January 2021. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/most-popular-youtubers-with-most-subscribers-2018-2?IR=T>

MAGUIRE, Lucy, 2020. Gen Z is reinventing social media marketing. *VogueBusiness* [online]. 8 January 2020. [Accessed 28 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.voguebusiness.com/consumers/gen-z-reinventing-social-media-marketing-tiktok-youtube-instagram-louis-vuitton#:~:text=Gen%20Z%20primarily%20uses%20social,take%20share%20from%20social%20media.>

MCCRINDLE, Mark, 2020. Gen Z and Gen Alpha Infographic Update. *Mark McCrindle* [online]. 2020. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://mccrindle.com.au/insights/blogarchive/gen-z-and-gen-alpha-infographic-update/>

MCEVOY, Ben, KULESH, Alina and COOPER, Rich, 2018. Generation ‘Fear’: How bad news has created an anxious generation. *CBC* [online]. 2018. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from:

<https://www.cbc.ca/documentarychannel/features/generation-fear-how-bad-news-has-created-an-anxious-generation>

MCLEOD, Saul, 2020. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. *SimplyPsychology* [online]. 29 December 2020. [Accessed 13 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Naissances, 2020. *Office fédéral de la statistique* [online]. Retrieved from: <https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/population/naissances-deces/naissances.html>

PETROCELLI, John, 2020. Why Livestreaming Is the Way of the Future for Generation Z. *LinkedIn* [online]. 8 September 2020. [Accessed 1 February 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-livestreaming-way-future-generation-z-john-petrocelli/>

PRICE, Linda, 2017. Definitions of Marketing. *American Marketing Association* [online]. 2017. [Accessed 25 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/>

QUIGLEY, Mary W, 2016. The Scoop on Millennials' Offspring — Gen Z. *AARP* [online]. 7 July 2016. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/info-2016/technology-and-millennials-children-mq.html>

SALAMADER, Gil, 2020. Gen Z And Social Media: 3 Ways Their Use Is Different. *eClincher* [online]. 2020. [Accessed 28 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://eclincher.com/gen-z-and-social-media-use/>

SILVIA, Sarah, 2017. The Importance of Social Media and Digital Marketing to Attract Millennials' Behavior as a Consumer. *ResearchLEAP* [online]. 2017. [Accessed 26 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://researchleap.com/importance-social-media-digital-marketing-attract-millennials-behavior-consumer/>

STRAUSS, Valerie, 2020. 1.5 billion children around globe affected by school closure. What countries are doing to keep kids learning during pandemic. *The Washington Post* [online]. 2020. [Accessed 1 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/gdpr->

consent/?next_url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.washingtonpost.com%2feducation%2f2020%2f03%2f26%2fnearly-14-billion-children-around-globe-are-out-school-heres-what-countries-are-doing-keep-kids-learning-during-pandemic%2f

TAHER, Alina, 2019. Influencer Marketing: Engaging Centennials & Millennials. *Digimind* [online]. 26 November 2019. [Accessed 9 December 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://blog.digimind.com/en/insight-driven-marketing/centennial-millennial-marketing-influencer-engagement>

TANKOVSKA, H., 2021. Distribution of Instagram users in Switzerland as of December 2020, by age and gender of users. *Statista* [online]. 28 January 2021. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1022016/instagram-users-switzerland-age-gender/>

THE 20 MOST POPULAR TYPES OF YOUTUBERS, 2021. *MediaKix* [online]. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://mediakix.com/blog/most-popular-types-of-youtubers/>

The History of Influencer Marketing, 2020. *GRIN* [online]. [Accessed 26 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://grin.co/blog/the-history-of-influencer-marketing-how-it-has-evolved-over-the-years/>

THOMAS, Sherry, 2016. A virtual life: How social media changes our perceptions. *The Chicago School* [online]. 7 October 2016. [Accessed 17 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.thechicagoschool.edu/insight/from-the-magazine/a-virtual-life/>

THOMPSON, Walter, 2017. CONSUMER INSIGHTS, J. WALTER THOMPSON INTELLIGENCE Meet Generation Z. *Wunderman Thompson* [online]. 22 May 2017. [Accessed 5 February 2021]. Retrieved from: https://www.wundermanthompson.com/blog/consumer_insights/meet-generation-z-in-j-walter-thompson-companys-latest-trend-report/

TROLLION, Capucine, 2020. TikTok : qui est Charli d'Amelio, première utilisatrice à atteindre 100 millions d'abonnés ? *RTL* [online]. 23 November 2020. [Accessed 27 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.rtl.fr/culture/medias-people/tiktok-qui-est-charli-d-amelio-premiere-utilisatrice-a-atteindre-100-millions-d-abonnes-7800927620>

TURNER, Anthony, 2015. Generation Z: Technology and Social Interest. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*. Volume 71. Texas, 2015. p. 103–113.

TWENGE, Jean, 2017. With teen mental health deteriorating over five years, there's a likely culprit. *The Conversation* [online]. 14 November 2017. Retrieved from: <https://theconversation.com/with-teen-mental-health-deteriorating-over-five-years-theres-a-likely-culprit-86996>

WARREN, Katie and BORDEN, Taylor, 2020. Kylie Jenner just turned 23 years old — and she's already worth \$900 million. Take a look at how the mogul built her empire. *Business Insider* [online]. 11 August 2020. [Accessed 27 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-does-kylie-jenner-make-money-2018-7?IR=T>

WATTS, Steve, 2021. The Sims Partners With Makeup Brand MAC For Branded Eyeshadow. *GameSpot* [online]. 4 January 2021. [Accessed 28 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.gamespot.com/articles/the-sims-partners-with-makeup-brand-mac-for-branded-eyeshadow/1100-6485858/>

What is an Influencer?, 2020. *Influencer Marketing Hub* [online]. [Accessed 9 December 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://influencermarketinghub.com/what-is-an-influencer/>

WHAT IS AN INSTAGRAM INFLUENCER? DEFINITION, EXAMPLES, & INSIGHTS, 2020. *MediaKix* [online]. [Accessed 30 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://mediakix.com/blog/instagram-influencer-definition-examples/>

What is TikTok? – The Fastest Growing Social Media App Uncovered, 2020. *Influencer Marketing Hub* [online]. [Accessed 31 January 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://influencermarketinghub.com/what-is-tiktok/>

Who's Spending Their Money? Some Surprising Answers., 2019. *Marketing Charts* [online]. [Accessed 12 June 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.marketingcharts.com/customer-centric/spending-trends-107347>

Why Do Different Generations Use Social Media?, 2019. *Marketing Charts* [online]. [Accessed 28 January 2021]. Retrieved from:

<https://www.marketingcharts.com/digital/social-media-110652>

WIKIPÉDIA, 2020. Liste des comptes Instagram les plus suivis. [online]. 5 December 2020. [Accessed 9 December 2020]. Retrieved from: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_des_comptes_Instagram_les_plus_suivis#:~:text=Cristiano%20Ronaldo%20est%20la%20personnalit%C3%A9,d%27abonn%C3%A9s%20en%20d%C3%A9cembre%202020.

WIKIPEDIA, 2021. Generation Z. *Wikipedia* [online]. 2021. [Accessed 27 January 2021]. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Generation_Z#Family_life

WILLIAMS, Alex, 2015. Move Over, Millennials, Here Comes Generation Z. *The New York Times* [online]. 18 September 2015. [Accessed 4 April 2021]. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/20/fashion/move-over-millennials-here-comes-generation-z.html>

ZHANG, Yahong, 2020. LE MARCHÉ DU LUXE EN 2020 : 20 CHIFFRES À CONNAÎTRE. *Hapticmedia* [online]. 9 April 2020. [Accessed 8 November 2020]. Retrieved from: <https://hapticmedia.fr/blog/le-march%C3%A9-du-luxe-en-chiffre/#:~:text=M%C3%A9dias%20sociaux%20et%20influenceurs,-%E2%96%A0&text=15%20milliards%20de%20dollars%20%2D%20c,8%20Md%E2%82%AC%20de%202019>.

Appendix 1: Qualitative research questions

Age:

Gender:

Profession/Study:

Date:

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
3. What social media applications do you use?
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
7. How many publications do you post per month?
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
14. Why do you follow them?
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?

19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?

Appendix 2: Qualitative research interviewees preferences

N°	Birth year	Gender	Channels	Content	Favourite Social Media Influencers	
1	1996	M	Instagram YouTube TikTok	Vlogs Lifestyle Story time Humor	Jessica Thivenin Thibault Garcia Nabilla	French TV-reality stars
2	1997	F	Instagram Snapchat YouTube	Children (family) Lifestyle Kitchen Humor Paranormal	Daniela Martins Sissy MUA Hugo Clément	French TV-reality star French YouTuber French Environment Activist
3	1997	F	Instagram Snapchat YouTube	Lifestyle Challenges Humor	Léna Situations Squeezie Nabilla	French YouTuber French YouTuber French TV-reality star
4	1998	F	Instagram Snapchat YouTube	Lifestyle Fitness	Jeremstar Nabilla Jessica Thivenin	French TV-reality stars
5	1998	M	Instagram Twitter YouTube	Music Lifestyle Sarcasm-humor	Becky G Soyunapringada MimiXL	Hispanic singer Spanish YouTuber Spanish YouTuber
6	1998	M	Instagram Snapchat YouTube TikTok	Lifestyle Challenges Pranks Humor Cars Barbershops	Thibault Garcia Akram	French TV-reality star French YouTuber
7	1999	F	Instagram Snapchat	Lifestyle Beauty	Sarah Fraisou Jazz and Laurent	French TV-reality stars
8	1999	M	Instagram YouTube	Gaming Humor Horror	Squeezie Joueur du Grenier Conkerax	French YouTubers
9	2000	F	Instagram Twitter YouTube TikTok	Lifestyle Beauty Vlogs Paranormal Cooking	AhoraONunca	Spanish YouTuber
10	2001	M	Instagram YouTube Twitch	Gaming Humor Sport	Skykart Squeezie	French Streamer French YouTuber

N°	Birth year	Gender	Channels	Content	Favourite Social Media Influencers	
11	2001	M	YouTube	Gaming Humor Kitchen Soccer Anime	Riles Squeezie	Algerian YouTuber French YouTuber
12	2002	F	Snapchat	Lifestyle Beauty Vlogs Humor Music	Sebydaddy	French TV-reality star
13	2003	M	YouTube Instagram	Gaming Humor Fashion	Travis Scott	American singer
14	2004	M	YouTube Instagram Twitch	Critique/analysis Humor Fun facts	Alt236	French YouTuber and Streamer
15	2005	F	Instagram Tiktok YouTube	Fashion Humor Beauty ASMR	La Liendra Karol G Addison Rae	Colombian YouTuber Colombian singer American TikToker
16	2005	M	Twitch YouTube Instagram	Gaming Humor Fitness	Dwayne Johnson Squeezie Ninja	American athlete/actor French YouTuber American Streamer
17	2006	F	Instagram Snapchat YouTube TikTok	Lifestyle Beauty Vlogs Humor Gaming	TeamCroutons Jazz, Thibault and Jessica Charli d'Amelio and Addison Rae	French YouTubers French TV-reality stars American Tiktokers
18	2007	F	Instagram Snapchat YouTube TikTok	Lifestyle Cooking Vlogs Humor	Jazz Jessica Thivenin	French TV-reality stars
19	2007	F	Instagram TikTok	Beauty	Charli d'Amelio Addison Rae	American Tiktokers
20	2007	M	YouTube Twitch	Gaming Humor	Polo Squeezie	Canadian YouTuber French YouTuber

Appendix 3: Qualitative research answers

Interviewee 1:

Age: 24 years old (1996)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Administrative clerk

Date: 16 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Mostly for entertainment.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Between Instagram and TikTok. There are funny publications. I can talk to people, post content. Instagram brings it all together, I can even call. It is like all social networks in one. TikTok because it is so funny, and I cannot live without it anymore. I can spend the whole night looking at TikTok videos.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
Circa 3h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Yes, because everyone does it.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Instagram: between 10 and 20. I am not very active on other apps.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, I feel like something is missing. I feel weird when I know it is not close to me.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
I still watch TV, but I prefer to watch videos on TikTok. I never get bored.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who have nothing special. A video of them went viral, and they are being made fun of. It has brought them notoriety and brands take advantage of these people to endorse products. Influencers take these partnerships too seriously, like they know what they are talking about and we are just here to follow them.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Products endorsement, vlogs, lifestyle, story time, humor.

14. Why do you follow them?
I got them as a suggestion, and mostly because they post funny content.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
An Albanian singer liked my comment on Instagram, and a French influencer answered me.
For the singer, I was very happy, and for the other one, I did not feel anything.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, it looks like their life is perfect. I do not believe the life they show, like it is too easy. Not all of them but some influencers just want to create a scandal like Kim Kardashian with her tape, so brands contact them. Life is not that easy.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Jessica and Thibault who are a couple, and Nabilla (French TV reality stars). I follow them only on Instagram and Snapchat. It is enough. I follow them because they gave the image of superficial stupid bimbos, when the reality is, they are not. They are different, they have invested, have their own brand, Thibault has opened his own businesses. They have no money problems compared to those who buy luxury brands who are now homeless. A couple even tried to sponsor their wedding because they could not afford it. While Nabilla makes a living on her own, has managed her own business. They went from superficial bimbos to mature women. They can show everything they have; it has been invested. Even my children I would let them take their example, they created a character and now they are very well known.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Not at all, because they show what they want, you cannot really know them. We do not know the person behind the screen.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Not especially, I only feel admiration.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, to invest in certain projects. Make money in one area and invest in another. It is inspiring that they started as TV reality stars and became successful businesswomen.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, but I would not necessarily buy what they recommend. They already have a lot of money, they do not really need to do product endorsements so, if they do, I know it is for real.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
I think it is true because social media reflects perfect lives. So, when we look at beautiful pictures, nice cars, luxury bags. We think "his life is better than mine". We feel like we are

a failure, and it affects our self-esteem. We are humans, we compare ourselves to their perfect lives. Some influencers do way too much to impress.
I think some influencers might help because they are positive and transmit their joy but not all of them.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, but not often. Only once.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Cold cream to put on the stomach. It is a cream that helps to slim down and I wanted to try it to see if I could lose a little bit of my belly. Yes, I was very satisfied.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
For purchases nobody influences me.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Internet, rarely on YouTube (to see how a product works).

Interviewee 2:

Age: 23 years old (1997)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Administration and HR Assistant

Date: 20 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To be informed, to see the news, share with my friends, talk with my family who live in Peru.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, because it regroups everything. There are news accounts like RTS, that gives worldwide news coverage, I can talk to my friends, it is also very entertaining, and addictive.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Not a lot. I do not have time; I would rather watch other content.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
0 to 2.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?

Yes, because I feel like all my sources are missing. I spend a lot of time; it is like an addiction. The first thing I do waking up is getting on my phone. I do not know what I would do without screens.

9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media, I do not watch TV. It is more entertaining.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are entertainers, smooth talkers, very appealing. They show everything they do, even though it is not good. They just want money. I question their moral sense.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Children (family), lifestyle, kitchen, humor, paranormal
14. Why do you follow them?
Entertainment, and it is interesting.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Only for their contests.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, I do not rely on them to build my life.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Daniela Martins (French TV-reality star), she is honest, and I trust her 100%. I know her products are good. Sissy MUA (French Fitness YouTuber) gives good advice about healthy food and sport. Hugo Clément (Environment Activist) I like what he does. I follow them on Instagram and YouTube. I follow them because they seem honest and share the same interests.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Daniela, yes. The other ones, more or less.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, but I trust them, and I specially admire Hugo Clément.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, they motivate me to take better decisions about the environment. Daniela inspires me and shows me how to take care of children.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?

Not everyone. I know there are influencers who promote products that are not good quality and push people to overconsumption, like useless gadgets. And for the others, they show good products and good advice.

23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
I agree. Social media helps people to forget about reality like the coronavirus. It is like a bubble that is very positive. It can help anxious and stressed people.
I think influencers can help young people to have an identity. We can identify with them. Sometimes, it is difficult to be who we are, and watching these influencers show their personality and character, who are not afraid to show who they are, not afraid of the critics, it inspires us to be ourselves. However, there are French TV reality stars who only show off luxury goods, this is not the reality, it harms the young people who are not emotionally strong.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, but rarely.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Period underwear. A lot of influencers show them, but I never bought them until Daniela promoted them. There was also a reduction code. And the second product I purchased was cellulite oil. I wanted to try because the period underwear is more ecological than tampons and for the cellulite oil, I also wanted to try to get rid of my cellulite. Yes, I was satisfied.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
My friends.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Sometimes, my friends do not really like French TV-reality stars and make fun of me for watching TV-reality shows.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Internet or I ask to my family and friends.

Interviewee 3:

Age: 23 years old (1997)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Student at Collège du Soir Alice-Rivaz

Date: 16 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To communicate, I love sharing my life, it is a hobby when I am bored.
3. What social media applications do you use?

Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube.

4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Snapchat, it is easier to communicate.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
Between 11h et 12h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
I post a lot on Snapchat otherwise no, I do not take many pictures of myself.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Snapchat: 10'000 snaps
Instagram: 0
Twitter: 30 Tweets
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I like social media, but it will not kill me if I do not use it. I like enjoying the moments I share with my friends.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
It depends on my mood, sometimes Netflix otherwise social media. I do not watch TV. I watch the TV-reality shows on the YouTube platform.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they influence people to buy.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, Tik Tok, YouTube)
Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Lifestyle, Challenges, and Humor.
14. Why do you follow them?
They love what they do, I love the way they are, it is like I want to be friends with them.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, by Bilal Hassani (French singer). He has followed me on Twitter. Nabilla (French influencer) liked one of my tweets. I did not feel anything special, but it is still cool.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, Léna Situations. She is my age, very positive, gives off something, so cute and is always there for her fans.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts?

Léna Situations (French YouTuber), Nabilla (French TV-reality star), Squeezie (French YouTuber). Yes, because I love who they are. I like their personality, I could be friends with them, they are so funny and nice.

19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes, because they share a lot, you can tell how they are, how they would react to something. For example, Nabilla, I know she is faking being silly and Léna is very transparent, like she has no filters. I know they are all being themselves.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, I do not really feel connected, I just feel admiration.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
I want to have the same life as them like they can buy anything. But I am too lazy, it is a lot of dedication.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
It depends on which influencers. Léna Situations is very transparent, but reality TV stars are not. I trust YouTubers like Squeezie and Léna more than the TV reality stars. Squeezie and Léna do not lie, what you see is what they are. I know they only want the best for us. While TV reality-stars, love money more than their fans.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
Yes, and I think it is because of social media. When you post a picture, you can get a rush of negative comments. There are people that use social media just to criticize. Nastiness is everything for them. They will tell you they do not like your picture when nobody asked them. Who cares? I am not posting it for you. There is a lot of cyber-bullying. The other generations only had bullying, while our generation has to confront bullying at school AND cyber-bullying.
I think influencers help us indirectly. It is like an escape, for a certain time, I am going to enjoy watching videos. There is a YouTuber, Shera, who posts pictures of herself in a swimsuit and give positive messages like love yourself, love your body, nobody is perfect, and it helps a lot.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, I was also influenced to buy books from YouTubers like Léna Situations but I never bought them.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
An eyelash serum. I wanted to try it because it looked good on the influencer and I wanted to see if it looked good on me too. Yes, I was satisfied.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Mostly myself. I like to test by myself, I am open to suggestions, but I do not really pay attention to reviews.

27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I go to the store, otherwise Internet.

Interviewee 4:

Age: 22 years old (1998)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Customer advisor

Date: 23 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
For entertainment.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Snapchat, because I can be myself more, and I post everything I do while on Instagram, I just post beautiful pictures.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
2h-3h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
It depends, it is rare, but I try to be active on social media. I like feeling pretty, also photography is one my passions, and I like sharing it with my friends.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
1 to 2.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I feel stressed in case someone needs to call me for an emergency.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
If I am with my boyfriend, platform streaming otherwise social media. Streaming platforms are more for long hours of relax while social media is quicker, if you have 10-15 minutes break you look at your phone and you watch pictures or videos on social media.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who give their opinions on certain topics, they try products and give promotion codes to their fans. They promote local products and help small brands to gain awareness.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Snapchat, YouTube, and I follow brands on Instagram.

13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Sport, lifestyle, product endorsement
14. Why do you follow them?
For distraction, healthy tips, I like watching how TV-reality stars are doing after the show.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
I like their life. They can buy everything. Just for one picture, they are paid millions. If I had the talent, I would be an influencer travelling everywhere owning luxury brands. They are so lucky. I also respect TV-reality stars like Nabilla who started being hated to become a businesswoman and loved by everyone.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
During quarantine, I liked watching Jujufitcats and TibolnShape (French YouTubers) for working out, but they are not my favorites. Otherwise, I follow TV-reality stars like Jeremstar, Jessica Thivenin, and Nabilla. I follow them because I am interested in what they do, sometimes there are rumors or videos that go viral, and I like the scandals.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes and no. I know their lifestyle but not them personally. I think they hide who they truly are and show only the positive.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, I just feel jealousy (laughs).
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Only to do sport otherwise I know that I cannot succeed as an influencer, I keep realistic.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
If there are more than one person talking about the product, I trust them. If I see that they are using the product, showing how it is used, I will be more likely to trust than someone who shows the product but does not use it. It is more like I do not trust brands because influencers are paid and show what the brand wants. The brands can give good products to the influencer but when an individual buys it, it is poor quality.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
Social media can affect us because there are a lot of negative comments. If you are sensitive or have a low self-esteem, being on social media can be hell. In my opinion, I like social media, because I love posting pictures of myself and feel beautiful and confident. But for others, they do not have this confidence and watching someone who has more, like beauty, or money, it can affect their self-esteem.

I think YouTubers are helpful because they are funny, they show you how to train and it helps us morally. Others talk about bullying, harassment, share their stories, give advice and we feel less alone and understood. While Instagrammers are funny, but they share content showing a perfect life, and it just makes people feel depressed. Instagram is full of perfect bodies, people with money, travelling, luxury brands, surgical bodies and it is not healthy for depressed people.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, many times.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Anticellulite, products for slimming, Soshape, a powder to lose weight, and a candle to remove wax from the ears. I was satisfied with all products except for some powders from Soshape, there are flavours that do not smell good and the influencer kind of lied about it.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Mostly myself, but I listen to different opinions like influencers and friends, if they sell it well, I can be influenced to purchase.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Yes, to everyone. I just recommend the products that I try and some of my friends say that they will try it too and others say that I should not trust what is promoted on the Internet.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Google, forums, websites, if the brands have accounts on Instagram, I also look at the comments on Instagram. Once, I looked on YouTube, but the YouTuber did not help me decide if I really wanted to buy the product.

Interviewee 5:

Age: 22 years old (1998)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Université de Genève (Sciences)

Date: 15 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To keep in touch with my friends, follow the news, celebrities, for my interests in animals and nature, and entertainment.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Twitter. To interact with people, for news and information about the world. It is like Instagram but with more features.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
If I have nothing to do, 5h, but if I study, 1h30.

6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Yes, on all social networks except TikTok. Because you have to post content of yourself dancing and you have to be funny while on the other networks you can be yourself.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Instagram: 1 time every three months but on Twitter I tweet daily.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Not really. If I am having a good night, I do not think about my phone. It is only when I am bored.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
If I have time, streaming, if not, social media. I do not watch TV anymore. It is for people who do not use streaming platforms.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes. They are well-known people on social media and because they are known they can influence a relatively young community. Basically, they are famous people who can influence the way you buy and think.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Not a lot.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Twitter, Instagram, YouTube.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Lifestyle, Sarcasm-humor
14. Why do you follow them?
I love their music, it helps me to accept myself as a person, have fun. I love their art. It entertains me, it helps me think of other things.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes, sometimes. I talk to them privately, comment on their posts.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, Becky G reposted my story on Instagram. She also "liked" and retweeted on Twitter. I was euphoric, I was very happy, I cannot even explain. Ana Mena replied to my messages. Soyunapringada liked my comment. I did not expect her to do so, I screenshotted her "like" and sent it to my friends. Oto Vans talked to me and blocked me afterwards (laughs).
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Somewhat, female singers who fight against misogyny. It is inspiring to see. When male rappers or singers talk about their sexual life, no one complains but when it is a woman, everyone destroys them, talk about their look, how they dance, I love watching them sing and dance the way they want without fear of what others might say.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Becky G (Hispanic singer). Because she does what she wants and dances the way she wants. She does not care about what people might say about her.

Soyunapringada (Spanish YouTuber) does make-up in her own way, she uses sarcasm and is very funny.

MimiXL (Spanish YouTuber) follows a body positive movement, talks about her life, shares her views on series she has watched, and she is funny to listen to. They are all about empowerment.

Yes, I follow them on all their social media profiles.

19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
A little, but not a lot. YouTubers expose their lives more than singers, they look cute, but YouTubers look more real than celebrities.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Yes. I am a big supporter. I am like "Go on queen!" (laughs). I am a fan so, I feel admiration, a little bit of love. They send a positive message, their videos help me even if they are not in front of me, they have helped me to be who I am today.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, they motivate me to accept myself, that it is okay to be yourself.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Not 100%. Pringada, yes, I trust her a lot, I cannot see her cheating people out.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
The population is already basically depressed except that now, people take depression more seriously like they are more aware that depression is an illness. There is also cyberbullying, and this coronavirus pandemic, but it is mostly because people realized that depression is serious. We can escape from this thanks to social networks by watching series, videos etc., but we also receive hate from others. It is true that we can be more isolated and alone too.
Yes, influencers are helping, clearly. They helped me a lot too. To study, I listen to music, watch videos, I like keeping my mind busy and not think about negative things. It makes me feel good to know that I am not the only gay, I can love myself. I listen to stories of influencers that went through the same thing and it feels good to know that I am not alone.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, I have been enormously influenced but rarely bought. I find the products too expensive + delivery costs, it is not worth it.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Waffles, yes, it was very good. The influencer showed the shop where they sell the waffles and it looked so good, I had to try.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
I do not ask others, but I can be influenced by fashion, I like being trendy. I look in song videos, or Twitter, Instagram.

27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Not really.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
On store websites.

Interviewee 6:

Age: 22 years old (1998)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Cleaning and security

Date: 20 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Passion, I love social media, to communicate, entertainment.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, it is more entertaining. There is everything.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
2h-3h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
No, nobody needs to know what I am doing.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Two months ago, just one story, not much, close to 0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
It's not a need, I always have something else to do even though I like social media a lot.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Netflix, it keeps me busy and YouTube. I feel more relaxed watching videos or movies.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who work and scam others.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Cars, humor, barbershops, lifestyle, challenge, pranks
14. Why do you follow them?

Entertainment, they share the same passions, and hobbies, I like what they do, the content they post.

15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes. I commented on one of Akram's posts.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Akram liked my comment, I did not feel anything.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Not really, I like their lifestyle, but I won't copy them.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Thibault Garcia (French TV-reality star), Akram (French YouTuber). Yes, I like what they show. Thibault, I like his style, what he wears, he is very trendy. I follow Akram because he has the same passion for cars. He always shows and talks about new cars and I just want to have the same life as them. I wish I could work with luxury cars.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Not really, they show what they want.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, they are just funny, for me, they are entertainers.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, to move forward, and to succeed. Watching them, I am like « if they did it, why can't I? » I would also like to participate in a TV-reality show like "Bataille des couples".
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
No, in my opinion, they are salespeople doing their job. I trust Akram because he started from nothing, he has good values and is posting on social media because he is passionate. While TV reality stars, they buy luxury brands just to show everyone how rich and powerful they are.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
For some, social media is an escape. They "tweet" to get away from things, they have no one to talk to, so they try to make social friends. They are afraid of being criticized and thanks to the networks they can be themselves.
It depends who, when you see that someone else has the same passions as you, it makes you feel good. They urge you to try. Influencers who just show off do not help at all.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Influenced yes, but I never bought because I have other things to buy that products shown by influencers.

25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
No.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
My girlfriend.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
With my sister and girlfriend but just the rumours and scandals about their products. We all have the same opinion; some influencers are big manipulators who sell cheap Chinese products at an expensive price to their fans.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
YouTube, Instagram, Internet.

Interviewee 7:

Age: 22 years old (1999)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Administrative assistant

Date: 10 March 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment, communication
3. What social media applications do you use?
Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook (rarely), YouTube
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, there are beautiful pictures, I can see the news, I follow celebrities and I am more connected.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Yes, I like posting pictures of myself and getting “likes” and comments.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
1 publication per month on Instagram but around 10 stories per day.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
No, I do not depend on my phone, I can feel bored, but I do not use it a lot.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
I work during the day so when I am free its more streaming videos or social media. I do not watch TV.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?

They are TV-reality stars and sell products to their community. It is more advertising for me, I see them as ads.

11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Snapchat, Instagram
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Lifestyle, products endorsement, beauty
14. Why do you follow them?
I liked them on their TV reality show, so I have started following them to see what they do after the show, see what they advertise, and get their news.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Maybe one person, Sarah Fraisou because she has evolved, she explains her weight loss story, what she eats. She was overweight and succeeded to lose weight.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Sarah Fraisou Jazz et Laurent (French TV-reality stars).
I follow them on all their accounts. I admire Sarah for her motivation, she never gave up. She was dedicated and succeeded. Jazz et Laurent, I like them, I like how they take care of their children, they seem nice.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I feel like I live with them because they show everything. I think they hide something, but their personality and life are real.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
It is just one directional because they do not know me even though they speak to their audience. For me, I appreciate them, I like their personalities, they are funny, and I have a good time watching them.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Sarah Fraisou motivates me to take care of myself, to believe in myself, to feel that I can succeed. She gives me confidence, to keep going, and never give up.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
I do not know because it is advertising. Sarah Fraisou only does ads for the products she has tried while others do not even try, and they say it is good when they do not even know what they are selling.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than

the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)

A lot of people depend on social media, they cannot live without it. It is true. It is sad because they compare themselves with beautiful women that do not even exist. I think it is because of these high expectations, we need to be perfect, and it is impossible.

It depends on who. Sarah Fraisou, I think yes but others only want to be famous and do not care about their people, they just want to work.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often? Yes, but rarely. 3 max.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Shampoos, goat face soap, nutrition. I wanted to try because the influencers looked good when using these products, so I wanted to try on my skin and hair too. I have purchased the nutrition products of Sarah Fraisou because she lost weight with it and I wanted to try. I was very satisfied.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
If it is not something I really like, I will not buy it, so it is more myself. I know what I like, and I know where to find my products.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Google.

Interviewee 8:

Age: 21 years old (1999)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Haute école de pédagogie (Lausanne)

Date: 16 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To communicate, entertainment.
3. What favourite social media applications do you use?
Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, because it is a combination of all social media applications.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Yes. I like sharing what I do with my friends.

7. How many publications do you post per month?
Very rare, 1 every three months.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, I use it pretty much for everything, even more than for social networks.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media because I can stop whenever I want. When I am watching Netflix, I hate to stop suddenly, I feel frustrated. I take very few breaks. I do not watch TV anymore, at all.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, perfect life, "I live in Dubai, look how successful I am", they try to show you how you should be, how to succeed in your life, have the most beautiful villa, perfect body, healthiest life. It makes you dream but you also feel jealous.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
A few.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, YouTube.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Gaming, horror, humor.
14. Why do you follow them?
If I take Squeezie as an example, it is because we are almost the same age, he was born in 1996. I have watched him for a long time, we have evolved together, at the same time.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, I cannot see myself doing the same thing as them.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Squeezie, Joueur du Grenier, Conkerax (French Gaming and Humor YouTubers) I just follow them on YouTube. Their life does not interest me more than that. I like them because they are funny, they play and talk about video games. We share the same passion.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I guess they are fans of video games and like sharing their passions. I do not know more than what they show.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No. For me, it is a program.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)

No.

22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, but I do not buy what they recommend. I do not trust everyone just the YouTubers I follow because I know they are honest.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
It is true. Social media is like a vicious circle, there are people that make you laugh but you also see pictures that make you depressed. Our parents did not have this window into the lives of others, like our generation does. We see the success of others and feel sad to not be able to equal them.
I think influencers can help thanks to their positive messages, however, when they start showing how rich they are with luxury brands, they do quite the opposite.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Only once.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
I bought candies but it was just for fun. It was good but not "wow".
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
My family and friends.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No. But I work with children and I know that YouTubers are big stars and idols, I am sure that the next generation is a lot more influenced than ours.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I know what I like, therefore I go directly to the website. I like watching video games videos on YouTube, but I do not buy them.

Interviewee 9:

Age: 20 years old (2000)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: EMS auxiliary

Date: 20 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
It has become a habit, to keep in touch with people, learn, entertainment, follow the news.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok
4. What is your favourite application? Why?

Instagram, it combines everything. I can keep in touch with my friends, look at what they do, there are stories 24/24h, messages, and see what the influencers post.

5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
No, I have nothing to post.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Very rarely, like I only have 3 TikToks since January 2021.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, I am an addict. Even when I am not bored, I am on my mobile phone.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media because there is always something to do. I do not watch TV anymore.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, people who work as entertainers in social media.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Lifestyle, Beauty, paranormal, vlogs, cooking.
14. Why do you follow them?
I like it, I learn, and it is entertaining.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No, only for a contest.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, they are not role models that I would follow. I do not want to be like them.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
AhoraONunca (Spanish YouTuber). I like how she thinks, her philosophy on life. I like what she shares, it is very inspiring.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I can't say I know them; I don't know if they play a character for their camera.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)

No, I respect what they do. I know some of them really struggled to get where they are, but I do not want to be like them.

21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, they motivate me to have a good life. I feel like I could succeed too.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Not for everything, it depends. There are influencers who lie, like some of them were selling products from AliExpress twice their price to their fans.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
It is possible, it would not shock me. It is true because we are hiding behind social media. More than ever, we are talking about depression now. For the previous generations, it was not a disease. There are youngsters that lock themselves up in social media and it becomes their life. Influencers also play their part because they show luxury goods, and we are like "I have nothing" and we feel we are lesser beings. We forget that they show what they want and not the reality.
They can help by talking about their real experiences like bullying or harassment. Stories that we can identify with. NickyTutorials has helped a lot of transgenders thanks to her story.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, rarely.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Makeup, shampoo, shower gel, candies, food. I am easy to influence, the influencers know how to sell and I wanted to try the products on myself. Yes, I was satisfied with all purchases.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Myself. It's rare that I get influenced.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Yes, sometimes. After I tested the products.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Internet, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube for tutorials.

Interviewee 10:

Age: 20 years old (2001)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Sabbatical year

Date: 17 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.

2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To communicate with friends, follow trends, to see the pictures of my friends, watch funny videos.
3. What favourite social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, Twitch, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
YouTube, Instagram. For the huge selection of videos, news, movies, there is a lot of gaming, and mostly for entertainment.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-5h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Close to never. I only publish important moments like travelling.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Close to 0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I can live without it, but I really like my phone, watching videos etc. But I am not totally addicted.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
There is nothing interesting on TV, therefore platform streaming. There is a lot of choice.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who make you want to buy a product or try a service or follow a new trend like being vegan.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, YouTube, Twitch.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Gaming, Sport, Humor
14. Why do you follow them?
To learn how to be good at video games, entertainment, have a good time, and there are YouTubers and streamers that share the same hobbies and interests like basketball and soccer.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No, just a Basketball channel, I asked them when they would publish a new video.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, Teddy (YuDoka) who is the French Judo champion commented and liked. I did not feel anything,
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.

No, their work is interesting like the soccer analysis, but it is not something that I would do. I just watch them for entertainment.

18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Skyart Domingo (French Twitch streamer), Squeezie gaming (French YouTuber). No, I do not care about their private lives. I follow them because they play the video games I love. They are also very funny, and it is entertaining to watch them play.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I do not know what to say. I do not think they are different off screen.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Admiration, they make me feel good.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, some of them. They motivate me to try, it can be for a game or another subject, they are very creative, talk about a lot of interesting things. We share the same interests.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, but not all of them. Streamers are correct like they give a neutral opinion, they do not push us to buy.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
It is true, a lot of people who use Instagram are depressed. They find peace on other social media networks like YouTube. On Instagram, there are just beautiful pictures and perfect lives. Influencers can help because they have the same hobbies and give good advice. It is cool to watch people having the same interests and sending good messages.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, maybe twice.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
I liked the video games and phone cases I have bought. I purchased it because I wanted to try.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Myself. I do not care what other people think.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Once to my mother, I showed her a video but she did not say anything special.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I like watching on YouTube to learn the pros and cons, but I think a lot about it before buying.

Interviewee 11:

Age: 19 years old (2001)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Sabbatical year

Date: 15 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment, distraction, it has become a habit.
3. What social media applications do you use?
YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitch
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, because it is more entertaining. It has everything like funny tweets from Twitter, messages, pictures, videos and the funniest TikTok videos.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
8h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Instagram, yes. To follow the movement, but it is very rare.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
3 posts on Instagram per year, Snapchat: 1 snap per day
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, in case I need it, but I am not desperate.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
YouTube, and sometimes TV. I like watching mangas and animes, and I watch them on YouTube. I can spend hours on YouTube.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who endorse products and influence a community to buy.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes, mostly YouTubers.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
YouTube.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Gaming, Anime, Humor, kitchen, soccer, opinions
14. Why do you follow them?
I like their content, they share the same interests and hobbies, they are loyal, funny. I love the analysis of the soccer teams. I feel like they understand me.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Never.

16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, Riles (Algerian YouTuber) gives good advice, his topics are interesting, he listens to his community, he finds solutions and motivates people.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Riles (Algerian YouTuber), Squeezie (French YouTuber), I follow them only on YouTube. I like them because they are funny, share interesting stories. I feel like they understand us and are very nice.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes, Squeezie, for example, I know he likes to ruin the game for his friends. I know somehow, he will try something to make them lose. He cheats and kills them on the game « Among us » to annoy them. He is so funny.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Yes, I admire them. They seem honest and human.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Maybe the advice they give, they motivate me to do well, otherwise no, they only make me want to play video games.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, it depends on their interests. I think YouTubers like Riles and Squeezie, we can trust them, but we have to be careful with other influencers.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
Yes, I feel like everything happens to us like the coronavirus crisis. But I think it will help us grow. We learn from our parents, I know I have to be careful with my money, I try to save. They want us to be perfect, what parents do not understand, influencers do. That is why our generation idolizes them.
Young people feel inspired by influencers, I see comments like “thank you for your videos, it helps me a lot”. So yes, they help. They help us escape from our reality.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
I have been influenced many times, but I never ended up buying. I save my money for other things like food (laughs).
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
No.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)

For multimedia, my friends otherwise my family.

27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Not really, we exchange videos but not purchases.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Google or I ask a friend.

Interviewee 12:

Age: 18 years old (2002)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Student at Collège Sismondi

Date: 27 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment, it is a habit, also to communicate.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, Houseparty
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Snapchat, it is easier to communicate, it has everything like stories, news in the homepage like tutorials, but mostly for communication.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
4h-5h, and on weekends a little bit more maybe 5h-6h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Not really. I prefer watching what people do, my life is not interesting.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
It depends, I can live without it but in case someone needs to reach out, I will feel stressed. It is question of habit.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media because I love all applications, I do not watch TV, and if I have time to spend, Netflix.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they do partnerships, like they know everything about the product. A lot of children follow them, and they partner up with brands that do not really target children. They must be careful with what they show. For me, it is normal to see them advertise, it is their job.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)

Snapchat.

13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Humor, beauty, lifestyle, vlogs, music
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they are entertaining, funny, and interesting. Mostly when I am bored, I know they have exciting content.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
On Instagram, I followed fashion girls and I felt inspired, but I do not see them as role models. For me, they are people like us. Just because they are famous, it does not mean they are better than us.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Sebydaddy (French TV reality star) because he is funny, he is always positive and in a good mood. His life is a whole reality show. I only follow him on Snapchat.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes, I feel like I know them well because they are really open. For example, Camila, a French TV reality star, posted on social media the moment her water broke instead of being stressed because her baby was coming.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
It depends. When they give advice, it creates a certain connection. I like and respect what they do.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, fashion and beauty influencers inspire me a lot, and they also motivate me to make better decisions.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
It depends on who, Sebydaddy does too many partnerships, it feels like it is a job so I would not trust him but those who advertise occasionally and use the product, I trust them. It is important not to forget that it is a job, and they are paid to do that, they would do anything for money even if the product is not good.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
I think we live in a society where we cannot escape from social media, and we only have that. We do not have any other resources. It is part of our generation, and it is a big thing for us. On social media, you watch people succeed and it makes you happy, it motivates you to do the same. However, if you have a low self-esteem or are already depressed, it might hurt you to see others succeeding.

I think influencers are funny and help a lot with their videos on YouTube. The stories that YouTubers tell can give positive messages. They talk about different subjects and their positivity helps a lot.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, TikTok influences me a lot with different goods that look cool to use.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Libertyplay, because the influencer really sold well the product, he made me want to buy. I was satisfied but the original AirPods are better.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Fashion influencers could inspire me and my friends because I know them, at least I know my friends are not paid. Maybe that is why TikTok influence me because the TikTokers are just showing the product and not trying to sell.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Yes, we recommend each other's products.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
YouTube, Google, websites.

Interviewee 13:

Age: 17 years old (2003)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Ecole de Culture Générale Jean-Piaget

Date: 21 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment, I like watching videos.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
YouTube, it is more entertaining and artistic.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
5h-6h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Not at all.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, I feel insecure like I've lost something.

9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media, there is everything. I do not watch TV at all.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, people that influence young people. They have visibility and their community trust them.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram and YouTube.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Humor, Gaming, fashion.
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they are funny, they teach me, and they are very entertaining.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes, in a "live", I interacted with a YouTuber who is not famous.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, a YouTuber answered me. I just felt like it was a simple conversation.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, an artist Youv Dee. He raps and is trendy. He knows how to wear his clothes and I like his songs.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Travis Scott (American singer), yes in all social media platforms. I like the person he is, how he works, his passion, he gives his heart when he sings.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes, he seems passionate, funny, and motivated.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, only admiration.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, his journey. For example, when he was a child, he liked going to an amusement park, it was destroyed, and he sang a song about it and he is rebuilding his childhood. I love what he does for people, and the messages he sends with his songs.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes and no. Because I do not know him personally. We only know the celebrity, the character but not the real person.

23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
It is true, we try to escape with humor and songs (YouTube). Social media can affect us, we can be criticized by people on social media, and it affects our self-esteem.
I think influencers help youngsters a lot, because they give positive messages and motivate us to pursue our dreams.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, once.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
A book, because the influencer said it helped him discover himself, and I was curious to read what the book was about. I am satisfied, but I still have not finished it.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Celebrities.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Yes, I like talking about the merchandise of Travis Scott. My friends and family know me, they are used to listening to me talking about Travis Scott.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I look on the Internet (Google) and I also see what people say about the product on YouTube.

Interviewee 14:

Age: 16 years old (2004)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Ecole de Culture Générale Jean-Piaget

Date: 20 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment and to communicate, rarely for learning (YouTube).
3. What social media applications do you use?
YouTube, Discord, Instagram, Twitch.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
YouTube. It is interesting, and I like the way things are displayed for learning.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
No, I have nothing to show.

7. How many publications do you post per month?
0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
No, I have other things to do, like watching TV or reading.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Streaming platforms because I love watching series. Or YouTube.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, people who use social networks for work and make partnerships to sell or show to their community.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
YouTube, Instagram, Twitch.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Reviews, analysis, humor, educational (facts).
14. Why do you follow them?
I find it interesting. It suits my personality, we share the same interests and I learn from them.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes. I comment on their lives and give explanations or add other comments to their reviews.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, by YouTuber critic (JenlosOne life), he liked my comment. I was happy. I also played with YouTubers in the Geneva Gaming Convention.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, YouTubers critic like JenlosOne. I like their way of thinking; we have the same taste and knowledge of criticism.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Alt236 (French Gaming and Critic YouTuber and Streamer on Twitch), I only follow him on his YouTube and Twitch account. I love the way he thinks, the games he plays, we share the same interests.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I do not know everything, just what they show. I cannot say I know them personally.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Somehow, yes. Admiration, I feel I can learn from them, they are like masters.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)

Yes, I see things with a different perspective, I reflect on things and learn.

22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, but not 100%. I'm still critical. When they speak, they are informed, they give sources. They give their opinion, but I can still think differently, it does not mean they are liars.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
For some people, yes. Social media is helpful, they enter a world that is positive for them. Their life can be cruel and spending some time on social media can help them disconnect. There are more people diagnosed with mental health because now, we know it is a real problem. For previous generations, depression was nothing, just people who were not motivated but depression is deeper than that.
Yes, they help. There are influencers that transmit emotions, values and help their community.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, if it's something with good arguments, and if I like it, I will buy it.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Books, games, movies, mangas, series. Yes, very satisfied. I purchased them because the influencers really sold them. I wanted to try for myself, feel the same emotions.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Influencers, with their arguments. I trust their sources. They make good points, criticize, dissect the subject. I like to experiment, but I often disagree.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No, my friends and parents do not really understand my world.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Internet, YouTube, I look at the comments, different opinions.

Interviewee 15:

Age: 15 years old (2005)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Cycle d'Aubépine

Date: 12 March 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To pass time, for entertainment, to talk with my friends and family.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Tiktok, YouTube

4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, and TikTok, for the videos they are very entertaining, and I do not feel bored.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
6h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
I post lots of "stories" and pictures of myself because I like sharing with friends. We all post.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
30.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I spent 6 months without a phone, and I just felt disconnected, but I am not totally addicted.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media because there is always new content, but I also like watching series on Netflix.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, these are people who put themselves on show, they share everything with their audience and show only the positive side of their lives.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, TikTok, YouTube
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Fashion, humor, beauty, ASMR
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they are famous and I want to know more about them, they are funny, I can identify with them.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, a Colombian singer Samantha reposted me on Instagram, I was so happy.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, it is very complicated to be famous and they do not show who they really are.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
La Liendra (Colombian YouTuber), Karol G (Colombian singer) Addison Rae (American Tiktoker), yes, in all their social media profiles. I follow them because I like what they transmit. I identify with them, La Liendra and Karol G are Colombians and I love watching my people succeed. Addison Rae is the best TikToker, she motivates me to dance and brings joy and positivity.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?

No. I think they are acting.

20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Sometimes, I can identify with what they say. The way they are and what they say, they transmit closeness. I feel admiration.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, but only to dance and post more on my social media profiles.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
No, because I do not know them. For me, they play a character and they do not show who they truly are.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
I think it is true. We have been facing difficult times, everyone struggles with something. It is difficult to be accepted in a society that loves to criticize.
Yes, influencers are very nice. We see on social media that they help homeless people, and they transmit positive messages. They are entertaining and make me laugh.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, I have been influenced a lot. I purchased maybe once or twice.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Makeup from a beauty influencer, and yes, I was very happy. I wanted to try this gloss because makeup does not stay wearing a covid mask but with this gloss, it does not come off, it stays fixed on the lips.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
My friends, sometimes influencers because they endorse cool and innovative products.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
It depends on the product, but I mostly go directly to the store.

Interviewee 16:

Age: 15 years old (2005)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Collège Rousseau

Date: 13 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.

2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Mostly for entertainment and keep in touch with friends and family.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Twitch, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
I love the three of them, but I think I am more active on Twitch and YouTube. I love watching gaming videos, I would rather spend time watching gaming videos than looking at pictures on Instagram.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
Between 3 to 5 hours.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
Not a lot. I am very reserved. I prefer watching what other people post than posting myself.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
I only post pictures when I attend a big event like concerts or festivals. Before coronavirus, maybe 3 to 5. But now, it is close to 0. However, I do like reposting posts in my stories, but it is still very rare.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
Yes, I think I have an addiction problem (laughs). I like having my mobile phone around even if I am not using it. I cannot live without my earphones and smartphone. I cannot really explain why but part of my life is in there.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
I do not watch TV anymore. If there are good tv shows on Netflix, I would choose Netflix otherwise YouTube and Twitch videos.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes. They are YouTubers or other social media influencers that post content about their life and share their content to a community.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
On Instagram, YouTube, and Twitch.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Gaming, Humor and Fitness.
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they are funny, and I have a good time watching their videos.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes, I comment on their pictures on Instagram and write to them when they are live.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, by TiboInShape. He "liked" one of my comments. I was so happy! I screenshotted his "like" and shared it with all my friends. When I received the notification, I showed it to my

mother. I could not believe it. It was just a "like", but I have followed him since he debuted on YouTube, it meant a lot to me.

17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, Dwayne Johnson and Squeezie. Dwayne Johnson because he is one of the best actors in the world, and the nicest person. I have followed him since his prime time in wrestling and watched all his movies. He was poor before getting a wrestling contract and fought to help his family to earn money. I will always respect him for that, for proving everyone wrong and always believing in himself. His strength and motivation inspire me to follow a healthy fitness routine.
Squeezie is a French YouTuber who makes me laugh. He also started being absolutely no one, to become the richest YouTuber in France. Both inspire me to pursue my dreams, to never give up and believe in myself.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Dwayne Johnson (American athlete/actor), Squeezie (French YouTuber), and Ninja (Streamer on Twitch). Yes. I follow them on all their profiles. I love watching their stories and watching what they are doing. They also alert us when they are going to be live or post a new video on Instagram and I like being informed, so I can watch them.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I think so... I cannot really say that I know them, but they seem nice and funny. I do not think they are faking a persona. They seem real to me.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
I do not love them like my friends. But I do care for them. When Dwayne Johnson's dad passed away, he gave a speech and it made me so emotional. I wrote a comment on his post telling him that I was sorry for his loss. It is complicated to define an exact feeling. I like watching them being successful, I think they deserve it. What I feel for them is pure admiration.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
YES. I love what they do. I love playing video games, I wish I could make it my job, but I am not funny like Squeezie or Ninja, so I do not think I could be a famous streamer (laughs). However, I love watching fitness videos like TibolnShape and it motivates me to eat healthily and start doing crossfit.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, I do. They are still promoting a brand so I think they can be trusted at 85%. I cannot see them lying to their fans. If Squeezie or TibolnShape tells me that a product is good, I would not question it.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
What can I say... am I surprised? No. I think our parents and society do not want us to fail. We are not allowed to fail. Like, our parents, the older generation, made a lot of mistakes and they do not want us to make the same ones. I also think depression is related to Instagram, although I love this app. We are told that perfection exists. Girls have to be thin; boys have to be muscular; we must have a car; we even have deadlines. You have to finish your studies at 25 and get married at 30. I have already felt bad looking at photos of fit boys and asking myself, why can't I build muscles? It looks so simple on Instagram. I think our generation wants to be perfect, so we don't get criticized. I just want to be told "be yourself".

Influencers give very good messages; they tell us to be ourselves and to have confidence in ourselves. Streamers on Twitch make me laugh, when I put on my headphones, I escape and am in my quiet world.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, many times I have been influenced.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
In the game "Fall Guys", I bought the Ninja skin because it represented the Twitch streamer Ninja. Many video games I bought were shown by gaming YouTubers. I have also bought healthy food promoted by TibolnShape. I was satisfied with all purchases. When I watch gaming videos, it makes me want to try it. Influencers seem to have a lot of fun playing the video games. And for the food, I bought it because I want to have muscles and eat healthy.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
I would say friends and influencers.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
My friends are just like me, they buy the same products, but my parents think that influencers are vendors, and we are their clients.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
For video games, YouTube, and Twitch. Otherwise, Google.

Interviewee 17:

Age: 14 years old (2006)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Student at Cycle d'Aubépine

Date: 20 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To communicate, watch posts, entertainment.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube.
4. What is your favourite application Why?
Instagram, there is everything, and more people use it.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
No, the TikToks I make I keep for myself.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
On Instagram, rarely, 2 per month, I was more active before.
TikTok, 10 per day so 30 per month.

8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
It depends, during classes, I am comfortable but at home I need it with me all times.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media, there are less advertisements, and there is always something new to watch.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are funny people who are not mean to us. If we ask them to take pictures, they accept even when they are busy.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube rarely.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Humor, vlogs, lifestyle, beauty, life story, a little bit of gaming.
14. Why do you follow them?
They have a good mood, are positive, and passionate.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
No, some of them are liars and influence people to do bad things. Others give good advice, but I am careful with what they say.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
TeamCroutons (Inoxtag, Michou) (French Humor and Gaming YouTubers), Jazz, Thibaut and Jessica (French TV reality stars). I follow them in all social media accounts. I like what they post. They are funny and post good content. The TikTokers I follow are Charli D'Amelio, and Addison Rae (American TikTokers), they like their job, they are passionate TikTokers, I kind of want to be like them but it is complicated.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Yes, somewhat. We see what they do and who they are on social media.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No. I just like watching them, they are entertainers.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, to become a better person.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?

Yes, the gamers show how they play, and we can see that they are not lying, they show who they truly are. They have their personality and are not afraid to show it.

23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
It can be true. I do not know what to say. We must be careful with social media; it helps us in a way but can destroy us in another way. Yes, influencers can help, they make us smile.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, rarely.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Food and yes, I was satisfied. The influencers showed the ingredients and the result looked so good, I wanted to eat it.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Influencers and my brother.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
With my friends, we share the same interests.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Internet, YouTube, Instagram.

Interviewee 18:

Age: 13 years old (2007)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Student at Cycle de Florence

Date: 12 March 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
To follow what people and my friends do, to share what I do and talk with my friends and family.
3. What social media applications do you use?
Instagram, Snapchat, Tiktok, YouTube
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Instagram, because it is the whole package, I can watch TikTok videos, stories, and my friends are most active there.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
2h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?

Sometimes, when I have beautiful pictures because I like sharing with my friends.

7. How many publications do you post per month?
10.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I feel bored but I can live with it. I am fine doing other things.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media, because there is more news, like what is happening in the world, and my hobbies and interests are all on social media.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes. They endorse products; they are positive and talk about them.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Cooking, vlogs, lifestyle, humor
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they are interesting, I like watching what they do, their tutorials, I am curious to see what they post.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
Yes, I sent a message to l'atelier de roxane on Instagram. I saw her in Balexert, Fnac and in the Youtubers Convention. I took a photo with her four times.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
Yes, l'atelier de roxane reposted me and answered my comment. I was very happy! It was in 2018 and it meant a lot.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, Jazz because I like how she cares about her children, she shares positive content and it helps me to feel better, Jessica because she is funny and went through a lot in her life and overcame all the obstacles.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Jazz, and Jessica (French TV reality stars) yes in all of them. I love what they post, their positivity and humor.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
I know what they show but not personally, it is complicated to answer. I know their personalities behind the screen, but I cannot say that I know them like my friends.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
Not really, mostly admiration.

21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Not really, I just like what they post.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Not really, sometimes I ordered products and they never arrived. I would only trust Roxane because I know she is not doing it for money.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
I think social media is a place where people can be themselves and that is why it makes people happy. You can photoshop, lie about who you are and become the person you want. Yes, for instance, Roxane did a lot of lives to entertain us when the pandemic started, so I think yes, they helped a lot. They all tried to make us laugh and forget what was happening during quarantine. We could not go out, we only had social media, they knew we were struggling and tried to help. Influencers are very nice to us; they take care of us in their own way.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, many times like I have l'atelier de Roxane's whole collection.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
Shampoo, Roxane Magali and Jessica's books. I have all Roxane's collection her notebook, diary, and calendar. I am a big fan of theirs, and I like having something I know they have created. It is like I have something of theirs. There is a link between us, and I can learn more about them.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Influencers like Roxane because she shows clothes and looks good wearing them. It makes me want to try.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
Google and in the store.

Interviewee 19:

Age: 13 years old (2007)

Gender: Female

Profession/Study: Student at Cycle des Coudriers

Date: 24 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)

Communicate, entertainment.

3. What social media applications do you use?
Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
Snapchat, it is better to talk with my friends. We talk by sending messages and it is funnier with filters.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
I post stories on Instagram only, so people can see what I do.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
Every day. It depends on the day, on average 30.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
It depends, because I use it for everything like listening to music, but it is not the most important thing, I like more spending time with friends and family.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media like TikTok, it is more entertaining.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, people who tell you what to do and try to influence you in doing or purchasing something.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
TikTok, Instagram.
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Beauty
14. Why do you follow them?
They are young, thanks to them I know how to dance, and they are very active on social media, there is always content to watch.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Not really, I do not like everything they do. I like having my own personality.
18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?

Charli D'Amelio and Addison Rae (American TikTokers), yes on all their social media accounts. I follow them because they are young, pretty, and famous. I love their moves, and how they dance.

19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
No, I just know how they dance but not personally.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
No, I just like them. I feel admiration, I wish I could dance like them.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, they motivate me to dance and do more TikTok videos.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Not really, because they have their own opinions, and I am not sure if I can trust them.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
Social media is a place where we find a lot of pleasure, dances, we share things, our interests, we meet other people, it is our little world. I think it is true that there are people who use it to escape from something.
It depends on who. I do not think TikTokers are helpful, they only dance and publish videos but do not give out any good messages. It really depends on who. The ones I follow, I do not feel like they help me emotionally.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
No, because I do not have money and I have my favourite makeup brand, I wont buy other products just because influencers promote them.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
No.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
Myself.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
No.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I rarely buy. It is always my family or mother who buys me products.

Interviewee 20:

Age: 13 years old (2007)

Gender: Male

Profession/Study: Student at Cycle des Voirets

Date: 27 February 2021

Engagement with social media

1. Do you use social media?
Yes.
2. Why do you use social media? (entertainment, work)
Entertainment, and chatting with friends and family.
3. What social media applications do you use?
YouTube, Twitch, Instagram, Snapchat
4. What is your favourite application? Why?
YouTube, because I love the gaming content.
5. How many hours do you spend on social media on average per day?
3h-4h.
6. Do you post pictures, or videos on your social media profiles? Why?
No, because I do not have anything to post.
7. How many publications do you post per month?
0.
8. Do you feel uncomfortable in the absence of your mobile phone? Why?
I like playing video games on my Nintendo Switch, so I am OK without my smartphone. If I'm not playing on my smartphone, I'd be playing on my consoles.
9. If you are bored, what would you choose? Watch TV, watch streaming platforms like Netflix, or watch videos on social media? Why?
Social media because I like watching gaming content.

Connection between social media influencer and Centennial

10. Have you ever heard about influencers? What do you know about them?
Yes, they are people who create content to entertain their fans. They are hard workers.
11. Do you follow any social media influencers?
Yes.
12. Through which channels do you follow them? (ex: Instagram, TikTok, YouTube)
YouTube and Twitch
13. What kind of content do they provide on social media? (ex: Gaming, Humor, Beauty)
Gaming, Humor
14. Why do you follow them?
Because they share the same interests, like gaming and they are very funny.
15. Have you ever tried to grab their attention? (ex: commenting on their posts expecting them to like the comment, commenting on their lives so they answer you)
No.
16. Have you ever been noticed by someone famous? If yes, what did you feel? (ex: they liked your comment, reposted your story, answered you)
No.
17. Do you have an influencer as your role model? Explain why.
Yes, Polo because he is a very good player, and I would love to have the same skills and be a good player on different video games.

18. Who are your favourite social media influencers? Do you follow them on all their social media accounts? Why?
Polo (Canadian YouTuber), and Squeezie (French YouTuber). I only follow them on YouTube. They are my favourites because they are funny, they are good players, and they play the same video games like Among Us and Fall Guys.
19. Can you tell which type of person they are through their posts, by the way they communicate, and present themselves? Do you feel like you know them?
Polo and Squeezie yes because they show their face and how they truly are. They are natural, 100% themselves, they scream, they laugh in front of the camera, they do not hide anything.
20. Do you feel connected to these persons? What do you feel for them? (ex: Friendship, admiration, trust)
More or less. I feel admiration. I admire what they do, and I am thankful they make me laugh.
21. Do you feel inspired by them? Do they motivate you? (Being a YouTuber, start a healthy routine)
Yes, they motivate me to learn and be good at games, and maybe to become a YouTuber.
22. Do you trust these persons? Why do you think they can or cannot be trusted?
Yes, because I do not see them lying. They play video games they like and are not doing it for money. And when they do, they say that it is a sponsor.
23. According to an article written by Anthony Turner (2015), members from Generation Z are big users of social media because they want to escape from emotional and mental struggles. Moreover, other studies revealed that Generation Z are more depressed than the previous generations. What are your thoughts on this? Do you feel like influencers help you emotionally? (give positive vibes, make you laugh, give good advice)
Most of us are students and we have a lot of homework, when we are sad, or stressed we like using social media as a distraction. I agree with the article.
Not really, they do not have that much of an impact on my life.

Purchase behaviour

24. Have you ever bought a product that was promoted, recommended by an influencer, or being influenced to buy because you saw her/him wearing it or talking about it? How often?
Yes, many times.
25. If you answered yes to the previous question, what did you buy and why? Were you satisfied with the purchase?
A mini arcade, video games, Jellybeans. It looked so funny when they showed it, I wanted to try. Yes, I was satisfied.
26. Who has the greater influence in your purchasing decision? (family, friends, celebrities, influencers)
YouTubers.
27. Do you talk about the endorsement of a social media influencer with a friend or parent? If yes, what do they think about it?
Yes, I tell them what I buy, and we exchange comments on the videos we see. We all like the same influencers.
28. Where do you look for information to buy a product?
I get the inspiration from YouTube.