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The Significance of Beauty Consumption

– The gaze of performing and observing beauty

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This study is a development of previous work and experiences on the subject of beauty. Having already obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Fashion from the University of the Arts London I developed an interest about the power of appearance in a social context. I also have a qualification as a hair- and make up artist and a stylist the topic of beauty as an instrument got realized. Because I have previous experience of working in the beauty industry which gave rise to a curiosity about to what extent people consume beauty and why this is.

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Abstract

Beauty is a phenomenon situated within society that everyone is subjected to. A lot of people perform activities of beauty everyday and when interacting socially they observe how other people have performed beauty. Previous research on the topic of beauty declares how beautiful people get more out of life and are treated better in schools and by employers. People even trust beautiful people more compared to the individuals that are argued to not be attractive. Research also claims consuming beauty is an experience in expressing once self but also physical consumption has transformed into physiological experiences where for example the corset has developed into dieting.

The author's aim is to discuss the relationship between the consumption of beauty as an activity of performance and the activity of observing. Both men and women have been incorporated in the study, creating a better understanding of the society in total and also in declaring differences and similarities between the genders.

The study has a deductive approach and is based on a literature study including theories by Bourdieu, Foucault and Evans et al.. These authors are involved in topics such as dominant structures within society, the power situated in surveillance and the cause of motivation in consumption referring to Freud and Maslow. The investigation was performed using focus groups and had a qualitative method approach including interviews and questionnaires.

The collection of data was divided into four main areas of where the base was the literature study. The data was analysed on the bases of the theoretical framework, and further the results were summarized.

The results of this study demonstrate that for women the activity of performance and the activity of observing are just as important. Men also perform beauty but are less observant of others compared to women. Men having a higher level of education invest more time and money on beauty compared to those having less education. This division was not obvious among women who performed beauty more homogeneously. The gaze in the activities of beauty is female according to both men and women. The power within the context of beauty is situated within the dominant culture where the power is

trickled down to the individuals. However, the norms changes depending on what social place and part an individual has in a specific social context. The results are in line with previous research on the topic.

Keywords: beauty, consumption, activities, performance, observation, value, social interactions and power.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Methodology

Frame of Reference

Analysis & Results

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter will offer a brief overview of the chosen subject and describe its background and discussions. Further, this chapter will account for the aim and objectives and definitions of this study.

1.1: Introduction to the subject of Beauty

The emotive notion of beauty is part of our everyday life. The discussion surrounding this concept often results in personal experience as well as strong opinions. Everyone has an individual idea of beauty which is particularly important to the individual. The distinct idea of beauty differs in many ways. Some find it important to have shiny hair, others focus on beautiful nails and some people can not even step outside the door without applying make up to their eyebrows. However, beauty is not just always about the activity performing beauty, it is as well a subject of consumption of a cultural activity. Consumption of beauty is an activity of performance as well as the activity of observing, these activities link to each other. Berger (1973) wrote in *Ways of Seeing* ‘Soon after we can see, we are aware that we can also be seen. The eye of the other combines with our own eye to make it fully credible that we are part of the visible world.’ (p. 9) Because people have the knowledge of their own visibility there is an understanding of how to behave in reality. Jhally (1990) explains that we express ourselves and our lives in the materialistic of the concrete world and ‘We continually take what exists outside of us, and, by our activity, make it a part of our daily existence.’ (p. 2) The cultural activity of beauty is here an exercise performed collectively in the society.

Understanding what beauty is and why it is important for individuals are central to this study. Millard (2009), among others, declares that beautiful people get more out of life, because ‘beauty is highly valued’ (p. 150) Research shows that beauty is perceived to be correlated with intelligence, social skills and health. (See Belk et al. 1982; Mobius et al. 2006) Mobius et al. (2006) argues that the physical attractiveness stereotype can ‘become a self-fulfilling prophecy’ where for example ‘teachers expect better looking kids to outperform in school and devote more attention to children who are perceived to have greater potential.’ (p. 223)

This returns in building confidence as well as social and communication skills. In an experiment, accomplished by the same author, when comparing the beauty premium that arises from the wage negotiation process between employer and worker shows that being beautiful is an advantage for the worker. (Mobius et al. 2006.)

Millard (2009) points out that *'beauty is still not something one has but something one does'* and she maintains that beauty requires effort and manipulation of *'semiotic resources.'* (p. 150) Social norms are dominant here and affect the potential of these semiotic resources. Millard (2009) continues the argument by implying that one's *'performance of beauty is limited by skills, financial resources, anatomical attributes and many other components.'* (p. 150) Beauty is a process of activities performed by the individual, but like any other investment it has a price. Although beauty is biological and evolutionary, the physical appearance interacts with culture and society and determines what features are defined as beautiful and what are not. Within society the appearances *'have been found to affect other people's impressions'* of individuals *'as it conveys information about a person.'* (Belk et al. 1982, p. 6) Beauty moreover, can give the impression of being a process in social interactions.

Millard, (2009) has been a major inspiration for this study. She has written about Doves "Real Beauty" campaign and according to her *'Beauty standards are the equivalent of a "beauty script," in which audiences expect actors to wear masks (make up) and costumes (fashion) that fit the characters they are portraying. To be (act) beautiful is to play one's role in line with expectations.'* (p. 154) Using beauty can be one way of creating an identity for an individual. It can also be used to situate this identity within a social group. According to Millard (2009) it is the culture and society that determines what is considered to be beautiful and what is not. (p. 150)

The topic of beauty is discussed well in our society today. We can read about beauty through media and other reports with strong focus on the amount of money spent and possible reasons for high consumption. Söderqvist (2011) wrote that in the year 2008, 200 million pounds (almost 2.5 billion SEK) was spent on beauty products in the world. This figure can be compared to the military budget of China in the same year. (Söderqvist, 2011) According to a survey from a British insurance company, Co-operative Insurance, the average

British woman will have spent 180 000 pounds (about 2.1 million SEK) on beauty products in a lifetime, and spent about 16% of her income on creating a beautiful body. (Co-operative Insurance, 2007) The beauty industry today is enormous, and these figures have an affect on women's life today. However, the beauty industry is not only for women and the trend of beauty products for men has increased over the past few years. In an interview P. Jansson, at Kemisk-Tekniska Leverantörsförbundet (The Chemistry-technical supplier federation) conveys that the growth in the cosmetic market for men is increasing at a much faster rate than the market for women cosmetics. (Byström, 2006) However, the discussions in today's society are more focused on the topic concerning women, and that is why the majority of the information on the topic in this report relates to female relations to beauty. Although, the author believes the information can be applied on the phenomenon on beauty in general.

Studies show, from the British drugstore Superdrug (2010), one out of three British women will not leave the house without any make-up, even when they are only shopping for groceries and 48 % admitted they would feel lost without it. One third of the 2 000 polled would rather apply their make up than clean their teeth in the morning if they were running late. Also half of the women even said they think make-up is a necessity they need to spend their cash on even if they can't really afford it. (Superdrug, 2010)

These figures speak for themselves, as the aim of being beautiful might be institutionalised in our society. Söderqvist (2011) describes how attractive people have the possibility to receive a "beauty premium" in life as they get more attention from teachers, parents, better jobs, greater salary etc. Similarly, new research from Lund University (2011) has found that prejudice is the reason for people treating beautiful people better than others. The research claims that our memory cheats on us when treating beautiful people better than non beautiful and that is because society thinks we remember beautiful people as nicer compared to others. (Lund University, 2011) This might obviously be a good reason for investing in a beautiful body.

A study carried out by Wilson et al. (2006) indicates that people not only trust strangers, but also that trust is based on a stranger's appearance. Attractive people are trusted more than non attractive people. Although, when

those expectations are unfulfilled, attractive individuals are punished. This punish is larger when disappointing trustier is attractive. (pp. 199-200)

Wilson et al. (2006) explains further, that there is a common opinion between people concerning what is an attractive look. He exemplifies that symmetry, clean skin and shiny hair announces health, fertility and good genes. Likewise, he suggests men are attracted to women that beyond previous attributes, for example have big eyes, little nose, little chin and plump lips. An hourglass figure is attractive because it is marker of child bearing capacity. (p. 200) Consider the idea that beauty is biological and attractiveness is evolutionary. Then, why are we consuming beauty products to achieve something that is out of our control? This is an interesting point of view for further studies of this subject of matter, and therefore, this discussion of evolutionary attractiveness may continue with the distinct knowledge of the subject at some other time and not in this study.

Both the male and the female gender are situated in the same society where beauty is a cultural phenomenon. One famous example on how the look of men can change the opinion on people is in the debate between Nixon and Kennedy, where the radio listeners had the intention to vote on Nixon but after a debate in TV Kennedy won the election. (Wilson et al. 2006, p. 191) But there are many differences to how men and women are perceived in the subject of beauty. As Berger (1972) is writing *'men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at...The surveyor of woman in herself is male.'* (p. 47) and according to Jeffreys (2005) *'Woman incorporate the values of the male sexual objectifiers within themselves.'* (p. 8) Consider the idea that a woman, attracts both men and women, as women view other women in the same way men do. The result might be that beauty is not only a power in the activity of attracting the opposite gender. It might also be a power within society in general. Berger (1972) also argues that men's appearance is dependent upon the promising power which he embodies. The appearance might be fabricated but it always reflects the power he intends to use on others. How a woman appears to a man can determine how she will be treated. *'A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her self image of her self.'* (p. 46)

1.2: Problem Discussion

To understand the value of beauty and consumption as a cultural phenomenon the theories of Veblen and Bourdieu have been mentioned. In the work of Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure class* (1899) he argues that individuals emulate the consumption patterns of other individuals situated at higher positions in the hierarchy. Trigg (2001) argues that the “trickle down” consumption pattern from the top of the social hierarchy is too restrictive. The pacesetters might instead “bubble up.” (p. 99) Trigg does as well put forward the criticism concerning Veblen’s theories of consumer behaviour that are no longer shaped by positions of social class but by lifestyles that cut across the social hierarchy. (2001, p. 99) In contrast to Veblen, who dealt with consumption in coherence of “showing off” *‘which normally would be a conscious act’*, Bourdieu instead argues *‘most signals are sent unconsciously because they are learned through dispositions, or habitus (...) or are results of cultural codes.’* (recited in Trigg, 2001. p. 109) According to Bourdieu, in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984) the notion of values in society can be described as capital. The capital can be in the notion of beauty and the value depends on the lifestyle of the individual. (p. 206)

According to Weber (2003), consumption should be viewed instrumentally rather than as a social action carrying a meaning in it self. Status groups are *‘stratified to the principles of their consumption of goods as represented by special style of life.’* (p.193) For individuals, Zukin, et al. (2004) is arguing that the consumption is an experience like a *‘project of forming, and expressing, identity’* (p. 173) and his work does strongly suggest that *‘mass consumption was produced by manipulating consumers’ desires to be well dressed, good looking, and beloved; to surround themselves with visions of beauty; and to surrender common sense and sobriety to individual dream of self-enhancement.’* (2004, p. 176) This dream of self-enhancement is an ongoing project that has its roots in urbanization and industrialization that has developed into a freedom of individual choices of his or her own path toward self-realization. But there is constantly a risk of getting it wrong, and anxiety attends to each choice when each individual faces the need to “become what one is”. (Zukin et al. 2004, pp. 180-181)

According to Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish* (1991), in order to be disciplined, one must invest knowledge and continue to exercise these investments of knowledge. In the case of beauty, knowledge that is well executed will lead to power. This discussion leads to the subject of cultural power within society where beauty is well exercised. Steel (2001) who investigates the topic of corsets argues that corset has simply become internalized in a transformation of disciplinary regimes and she refers to Foucault's description of a shift from the "fleshy" to the "mindful" body. Steel (2001) points out that '*It is popular to believe that the fashion of the past constrained and "deformed" the body, while the twentieth century gave birth to a "free," "natural" body.*' (p. 164) Instead the notion of beauty became considered internalized in transforming discipline regimes in opposition of previously physical activities. (Steel. 2001. p. 165) According to Foucault the discipline is not only coming from above, but it '*has to bring into play the power relations, (...), inside the very texture of the multiplicity, as discreetly as possible*'. (1991. p. 220) Beauty can be argued to be disciplined activities in order to, very discreetly, lead to power.

Bourdieu also examines the concepts of power in society where beauty is a value that needs to be invested in, both in time and money, as it represents social class. Bourdieu (1984) argues that women that are not aware of the dominant norms of beauty have less knowledge of the market value of beauty. (p. 206) In accomplishing beauty you have to be disciplined and according to Kunzle (2004) '*Dieting has become almost as universal in the twentieth century as wearing a corset was in the nineteenth, and in extremes, almost as fetishist as tight-lasing*'. To have self-control is to engage in some kind of psychological body binding. (pp. 253-258)

Marx (1972), considered consumption to be a social need induced by capitalism a "Commodity fetish." He acknowledged that both men and women like to look nice and described these acts as "Animal functions." (p. 60) Marx argued that goods are not satisfying any needs instead commodities creates an illusion of happiness. (p. 152) Evans et. al (2008) writes that marketing contributes to communication of symbolic significance that relates to who we are and how we can relate to others within society. Motivation constitutes an

activity that is concentrated to reach a goal. All individuals have the same structure of needs but what need that is current depends on individual factors. (pp. 16-17) Furthermore Evans et. al (2008) discuss motivation by referring to Freud and Maslow and argues that marketing does not create needs. Instead marketing designs the expressions. (pp. 13-17) Csikszentmihalyi (2000) investigates what motivates the behaviour of consuming and finds *'that an excessive concern for material goals is a sign of dissatisfaction with life'* and also associates with lower levels of self-esteem (p. 271) Although, according to Langmeyer (1994) beauty sells and beauty changes attitudes toward products and people (p. 33) Research also shows that beauty can increase the opportunities for individuals. (See Belk et al. 1982; Millard, 2009; Mobios et al. 2006; Wilson, 2006)

1.3: Question at issue

What is the relation between the consumption of beauty as an activity of performance and the activity of observing?

- 1) What relations do women have to the consumption of beauty?
- 2) What relations do men have to the consumption of beauty?
- 3) Where is the power situated in the notion of consuming beauty?

1.4: Aims and objectives

This is a descriptive study aiming to analyse the phenomenon of beauty in present society incorporating both men and women as practitioners as well as observers. The objectives are to situate the concept of beauty into a cultural context and to find to what extent young adults (aged 20-30) consume beauty through social interactions.

1.5: Definitions

The significance of the term beauty is not predetermined by the author but will be defined by the participants of the focus groups discussing the subject of matter. Although, the limitation of the term beauty is physical beauty and not internal attributes. The definition the author got inspired from and based the

research topic on is that physical beauty is *'dominated by what can be seen externally; this include visible features such as face, body proportions, and body shape and visible traits such as poise, grace and presence'*. (Langmeyer et al. 1994, p.30)

Chapter 2: Methodology

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Methodology

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In this chapter the author will declare what methods have been used in this study and what approaches in collection of data this study has utilized. Important aspects this chapter will account for are the research approach, methodology design, sampling and what analyses approach has been used. Further this chapter declares for validity and reliability of the study.

2.1: Research approach

This scientific research aims to integrate significant theory and relevant empirical research to find results distinct to the question asked. The approach used in this study is deductive and will therefore test relevant theories to empirical data. The research approach conducts the general, to the more substantial of the phenomenon executed. This approach has been chosen prior to others, since theory about consumption as a cultural phenomenon is substantial and the author's aims to distinguish if the theories can be applied on a distinct consumption object to find what relation beauty has to its consumers.

Inductive approach on the other hand, that is where empirical research is collected and analyzed to find a general pattern to be compared to the theory. This approach is an alternative as well, and had resulted in a more explicit and objective study with no restriction of theory. Although, using theory like a framework, it assists the author in situating the empirical research into the scientific field.

A third research approach that has been considered for this study is the abductive approach. The approach is mainly inductive but it also uses elements of the deductive approach. This approach could have been used in addition to the others, although for this study it does limit the impact of the theory that is the intention of the author.

2.2: Study of literature

The base of this study is literature and scientific studies of relevant topics within the subjects of sociology, fashion, cultural studies and marketing consensus to the deductive approach. The literature was obtained through

Stockholm University Library, University of the Arts London Library and Södertörn University College Library as well as library for e-resources, through JSTORE and Emerald using keywords such as beauty, consumption and culture that connect to the research topic.

The topic in discussion was chosen based on the author's personal interest as well as a development of previous studies. Having knowledge about Michelle Foucault and his theories about surveillance and power in the context of bodies this developed into curiosity about consumption of beauty and the interest of Pierre Bourdieu's discussions concerning capital, habitus and field. In his theories, he explains the dominant power structures within society and what values that is important when considering cultural activities.

The speculation of why the consumption of beauty matters to individuals reflected in the theories of motivation declared by Evans, Jamal and Foxall who referred to Freud and Maslow.

Having undertaken this material of these authors and so created an understanding of the general theories, scientific articles were collected. They created a significant body of information about beauty as a cultural phenomenon and situated the research topic into the scientific field which was further examined in a deductive approach. This theoretical research developed into a discussion about accurate topics before examined to empirical research to find answers distinct to the question asked.

2.3: Strategy

According to Denscombe (2007) what gains in one direction will bring with them losses in another '*and the social researcher has to live with this.*' (p. 3) According to Denscombe (2007) there is an option on surveys, Case studies, Experiment, Ethnography, Phenomenology as well as Grounded Theory. When choosing strategy for this study, which is the survey, case studies were deliberated as they can provide an in-depth account for events. Case studies, brought together can create a broad approach to social research. Although, the purpose of surveys are to map things out and usually relates to the present state as well as providing a snapshot of how things are. This study carries out a survey because the aim is to find answers about a specific phenomenon which is

identified in our culture and aims to map out the results in relation to theory conducted.

2.4: Methodology Design

There are four main methods according to Denscombe (2007) and those are the questionnaires, interviews, observations and documents. (p. 133) Each one provides an alternative tool for the researcher which does not link automatically to a specific strategy pursuant to Denscombe. Instead the researcher has to evaluate which one is found to be the most useful in the investigation. They all have strengths and weaknesses and that can increase the advantage of using more than one method. (pp. 133-134)

The choice of method for this study is both questionnaires and interviews. The participants are the same in all investigations, this is a cross-section investigation, but the results will differ concerning on the data submitted. In this cross-section investigation the analysis took place at one point in time. A weakness with this kind of investigations is that the results will not differentiate through time related divergences. On the other hand this study does not consider the development over time or differentiations of situations etc. Because of time limitations longitudinal investigations, when data is submitted at more than one occasion, is not an option in this study but might be of interest of further studies. This study used methodological triangulation, different techniques when collecting the information. That can stimulate new interpretations and benefit differentiation of current questions asked. It will allow the researcher to see things from a widely different perspective as possible.

A quantitative approach can deliver theoretical variables that transform into measurable codes when operationalized, thus the flexibility of the statistic generalisations can benefit a study. (Johannessen et al. 2003, pp. 67-69) Since the quantitative approach is less flexible in contrast to the qualitative research approach it makes it easier when comparing the information. Holme et al. 2006, p. 50) A qualitative approach, on the other hand, may convey context, feature motives, intensions and plans that make people act in a certain manner according to the development of social phenomenon. (Johannessen et al. 2003, pp. 74-76) According to Holme et al., (2006) the qualitative research approach

will contribute to a more understanding and closer relationship to the unit of investigation. (p. 52) Alvesson et al. (1994) agree when arguing that a qualitative research approach predicated perspective of the object of study. When in reality, creates an incredibly important foundation for conducting further development of knowledge rather than a fixed scientific notion of the truth. (1994, p. 150)

Two questionnaires were carried out for this study. The aim of the questionnaires was to create background information about the participators of the interview and a foundation of the data submitted in the interview. The questionnaires had a qualitative approach to contribute to more understanding about the participants of the interview.

The interviews, on the other hand, were descriptions of the participants' daily activities and were obtained to create portrayals of the phenomenon conducted. The structure of the interviews had for that reason also a qualitative approach not to become all too fixed about the knowledge of the author.

Both methods were performed using focus groups, one sort of group-interviews. The benefit of this technique for this study is that it produced much data in a short time for a fairly low cost. This was found to be appropriate for this study concerning the results were instantly and it produced much data compared to doing the interviews one by one. It also favoured the study that the participants' could develop thoughts and ideas by other angle of approaches.

2.5: Construction of the questionnaires

Two questionnaires were carried out for this study. The aim from the beginning was to only do one. But after analysing the first one the author identified limitations in the material to be able to produce a full analysis. This generated a second questionnaire to be able to fully perform the analysis of the study. The design of the questionnaires was non-structured, including open ended questions where the participants' answered by themselves instead of a pre-structured format where answers are fixed. Semi-structured questionnaires contain a combination of both open and fixed answers. The open questions increase the opportunity for the researcher to derive from more information compared too

set alternatives. According to Johannessen et al. (2003) there is a good chance that some participants might not express themselves very well in writing and that would have been unfavourable for this study. Open questions do not allow a generalization in the same way that a pre-structured questionnaire does. (p. 150) As discussed earlier this questionnaire's aim is to gather background information about the participants to build a foundation of data based on the information received. Also, having open answers to the questions can benefit when the phenomenon is well known for the participants. (Johannessen et al. 2003, p. 150) According to the author the phenomenon examined was evaluated to be familiar to the participants.

Furthermore, the design of the questionnaires aimed to be questions of relevance, simple formulations and unambiguous to increase the understanding for the participant. The layout of the first questionnaire was simple [See Appendix 1], one A4 paper and the questions were numbered in sequences. The participants received one questionnaire each when attending the focus group and handed them in before they left. They did not take part of the questions before the event. The questions that were labelled from one to ten began by asking about personal facts such as name and age etc. and continued by asking about personal routines and experiences about the research topic and finally a question about whether the participant was satisfied or not with his or her routines.

The design of the second questionnaire [See Appendix 2] also aimed to have questions of relevance and simple formulations. The layout of the second questionnaire was three A4 papers including twenty six questions. The participants received the questionnaire by e-mail and after answering on the questions they sent them back by e-mail. The questions began by asking about personal information about the individual such as what condition he or she was brought up in and family information. Further the participants were about how they understand beauty.

2.6: Construction of the interview guide

The design of the interview guide [See Appendix 3] was structured, containing fixed questions where all the participants got the opportunity to answer as well

as discussing the questions. This structure allowed no alternative answers. Instead the participants could express themselves with their own words thus decreasing the influence of the researcher. The same interview guide was used for both women and men participants, facilitating the analysis. The analysis does become less time consuming when the author can operate the material concentrated in one question at the time. Although, standardising of the interview guide, and by that limiting the flexibility relevant knowledge that the participants possess might unfortunately be missed. (Johannessen et al. 2003, p. 97)

Before deciding the design of the interview guide both the non-structured and the semi-structured interview guides were considered as options. The design of the non-structured was that none of the questions was determined beforehand. Thus improving the flexibility of the interview as well as creating an informal atmosphere. (Johannessen et al. 2003, pp. 97-98) In this study this design was not an option as this was a deductive study and the researcher aimed compare the theory and the questions. The lack of structure in this design should have complicated the work of the author. The third option considered was the semi-structured interview guide. This can be a list of themes instead of questions and intends to create a balance between the structured design and the non-structured design. (Johannessen et al. 2003, pp. 97-98) Although, the risk of losing the impact of theory made the author choose the structured interview guide.

The study of literature is the base of the interview and in agreement to the deductive approach. The questions of the interview emerged from the questions asked in this study and were developed through the work of the theories. The investigation used more than one theory. Theory triangulation, that involves more than one theoretical position in relation to the data, was used. This created a wider perspective on the phenomenon examined. Different theories can shape the kind of data that are collected and the way the data is interpreted. (Denscombe, 2007, p. 136) Simultaneous to the process of literature the questions were written down for the interview. They were further categorised into four sections. The complete interview guide included five sections open up with an "Introduction" of what was expected to happen

followed by section two, “Motivation of beauty”. Further, “An individual activity,” “A social activity” and “Perspectives on beauty” were obtained.

Two days before the interviews took place all the participants received an e-mail containing information about location, description on how to get there and the theme of the interview. The participants had no further knowledge about the event.

On the seventh of May 2011 the interviews took place in the home of the author in an apartment in Stockholm. There were two groups, one including eight women and later one including 6 men. Each session lasted ninety minutes. The place of the interview was considered to be a reasonable place as the location was relatively easy for the participants to get to and the space was relaxed. According to Johannessen et al. (2003) there can be risks such as partners, children and pets interfering (p. 100) and therefore the author ensured to be the only one together with the participants in the apartment during the interviews. To ensure confidentiality of the participants they were asked if the pseudonyms were approved to be used in this study and that turned out to be accepted.

The interviews were recorded on Mp3 and transcribed by the author during both the interviews. They were all performed in Swedish with the reason that Swedish was the native language of the participants.

According to Johannessen et al. (2003) the informants always become influenced by the interviewer. (p. 98) The author therefore attempted to use neutral dress as well as the use of beauty products. Furthermore the researcher was aware of her own appearance, the relation she had to the participants, and that gender could influence the participants as well as the results of the interview. In addition, because of the relationship and the similarities of age this may also create a positive situation as it may have limited the tension between the participants and the researcher.

2.7: Sampling

The majority of the participants in the study were friends of the author which were recruited through telephone or facebook. According to Denscombe (2007) there are two kinds of sample techniques that can be used in social research,

probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The notion of the probability sampling is that the researcher has the knowledge of the probability that these will be representative of people in the whole population of study. Non-probability sampling on the other hand, which was used for this study implies that the sampling is conducted without such knowledge about whether those included in the sample are representative of the overall population. (p. 13) This study used purposive sampling, which is one kind of sampling within the non-probability sampling. This technique intends that the sample is handpicked for the research acknowledge the researcher already know something about the specific people.

The people in the sample of this study were chosen with a specific purpose in mind, this purpose being that they all had particular qualities and relevance of the topic of this investigation. The participants in this research had some similarities, for example age (20-30 years old) and geographical location (all of them lived in Stockholm). The sampling however did differentiate according to gender (even if they were divided into two separate groups), background (different conditions in upbringing, areas, family, economical conditions) and education (some had upper secondary school education when some had post-secondary diploma and other had university qualifications). Style divided the participants as well. However, this identifies the differentiation of the sample. The qualities, on the other hand, that relate them to the research topic, were that they all consumed beauty in one way or another. The researcher chose non-probability sampling approach based on her knowledge of the subject in question.

All participants told they were heterosexual. This was not paned or specified before the interviews were taking place but does of cause influence the results of this study.

2.8: Approaching the data analysis

When approaching the qualitative data submitted in the interviews the foundation was the study of literature, in agreement to the deductive approach. The intension of a data analysis is according to Johannessen et al. (2003) to compress, systemize and to organize the data submitted. Another intension is to

develop interpretations of the perspectives about the data. (p. 106) Denscombe (2007) argues that the process ‘*involves the search for things that lie behind the surface content of the data*’. (p. 247)

The aim of the questionnaires was to use the information like a foundation to the data conducted in the interview. The results from the questionnaires was mainly analysed in relation to the part where the theories of Bourdieu was current. This will be further declared below.

In approaching the data submitted in the interview the answers from each part of the interview was divided into four main areas. “What beauty really is” describes the definition of beauty according to the participants. “The value of beauty” was the second area declaring the value of beauty in a social context. This part has the theories of Bourdieu as a foundation. The third section was “Beauty in the spotlight.” This area intended to discuss the theme of social interaction and surveillance within society using theories of Foucault as a foundation. “Conspicuous consumption of beauty” was the last section and aimed to describe the factors motivating the participants to invest in products in the context of beauty using the literature by Evans, Jamal and Foxall as a foundation.

Further the author looked for themes and connections between the data and the categories that appeared. The generalized explanations of the phenomenon were then compared to existing theories of on the topic.

The analysis will be presented in the chapter Analysis and Results where each section is presented separately. Further the chapter concludes with a summary of the analysis presenting the results of the study.

2.9: Validity & Reliability

Validity involves to what extent data and methods are “real”. In scientific research validity treat concepts concerning if data reflects the truth and the real world. To what extent a study is considered to be consistent and trustworthy is graded through levels of reliability. According to Denscombe (2008) the criteria for a high level of reliability is if the instrument is neutral, and if the same results can appear at other moments in time. (p. 250)

Qualitative research includes the researcher's personal existence that becomes integrated into the research instrument. Therefore, if instead asking if someone else performed the same investigation, would that lead to the same results and conclusions is a better question. (Denscombe, 2000, p. 250) This study in matter therefore gives an account for aim and objectives and an explicit methodology describing discussions behind the decisions that have been made to increase the reliability.

The sampling that has been done might influence the reliability and validity negatively as it is a small selection of people and if investigating other individuals the experiences and cultural backgrounds might inspire them to perform and observe beauty differently and the result of the study might come to differ. Using interviews reduce the level of validity of the study as the individuals are unique according to Denscombe. (2000, p. 162) On the other hand, previous research on the topic indicates similar results increasing the reliability and validity of this study.

In agreement to the deductive approach theory was the foundation approaching the data submitted. This secondary research has been interpreted by the author and someone else might understand the material differently. However, the majority of the theoretical framework used for this study is recognized scientific literature and journals increasing the reliability of the study. This estimation is in agreement to Denscombe (2007), when examine the reliability in research. (pp. 302-303) This study has utilized method triangulation, this choice gives the opportunity of increasing validity concerning results can be confirmed in different perspectives and might conform between the methods utilized. (Denscombe, 2000, p. 103)

The appearance of the interviewer can limit the level of trustworthiness when carrying out an interview. (Denscombe, 2000, p. 162) Therefore the researcher made conscious choices in dress and other beauty activities but the author can not change gender age of cause.

The questionnaires and the interview were tested before carried out on the participants. Having the perception about how someone not conversant in the topic compared to author lead to changes in terminology to make the questionnaires and interview more understandable to the participants.

Chapter 3: Frame of Reference

Introduction

Methodology

Frame of Reference

Analysis & Results

Discussion & Conclusion

Theories relevant to this research topic concerning beauty and consumption is presented in this chapter. This frame of reference has carefully been chosen to contribute an overview and further understanding to the reader about the main subject and for later contribute to the analyse of this study.

3.1: Social and Cultural Capital

Bourdieu used the terms capital, habitus and field in his work. An estimated translation of the term capital is values, assets or recourses. (Broady, 1991, p. 169) Different types of capital can be symbolical or economical capital. The symbolic capital is the one of interest in this study and according to Broady (1991) it can be defined as the capital that social groups recognize as valuable. The symbolic capital is ‘*a relational concept*’ and can only exist in the condition that the objective structures and systems of dispositions work together. There has to exist a market for specific asserts and there has to be people dispositional to understand that the particular achievement or title has a value. (pp. 169-170) Within the concept of symbolic capital there is the notion of cultural capital and social capital. Cultural capital can be said to be in opposition to economic capital and has according to Bourdieu had the function in the design of power relationships within society. Trigg (2001) address that ‘*cultural capital can be defined as the accumulated stock of knowledge about the products of artistic and intellectual traditions, which is learned through educational training and (...) also through social upbringing.*’ (p. 104) Examples on cultural capital are titles, examinations, institutions and laws. Although, cultural capital can be acquired, for example in the system of education, it can also accumulate or concentrate in the forms of alliances of marriage or through the field of profession recruiting cultural prosperous proselyte. (Broady, 1991, pp. 171-175) The social capital is that each one takes positions, accumulates cultural capital or economical capital and establish contacts, which in all contribute a specific kind of assert and that all the member of the group can benefit from. (Broady, 1991, p. 177) According to Bourdieu (1990) habitus is the capital’s form of existence and it is the system of dispositions that are the results from social experiences, collective

memories, way of movement and thinking that is carved into individual's bodies and senses. A system of *'principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcome without presupposing a conscious aim at the end or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them'* (p. 53) Everyone has the talent of a habitus, but it is the market that decides what parts of this habitus that can work like capital. (Broady, 1991, pp. 225-226) A social field exists, when a defined group of individuals and institutions are all fighting about something and are constructed by relations between positions and these positions can correspond to institutions. (Broady, 1991, pp. 266-271)

Bourdieu demonstrates how knowledge of status codes allows individuals to display "good taste" and thus established by their own distinction. His research confirms that tastes of specific kinds of consumer goods are implicitly socialized by social class and status. (Zukin, et al. 2004, p. 181) Bourdieu examines the role of the middle classes, aspire the tastes of the upper class, although insufficient cultural capital means they specialise in less legitimate areas of culture. Using the concepts of cultural capital and habitus, Bourdieu is able to build a theoretical framework where the lifestyles of different social groups can be understood in relation to the social hierarchy.

3.2: Normality and Power

Foucault, a French philosopher, social theorist and historian of ideas is major to discuss on the subject of power relations within society. He is writing about the disciplined society that according to Foucault (1991) is predicated on the metaphor of Jeremy Bentham's (1789) design for the perfect prison, the Panopticon. The Panopticon is a prison that is a round building and is having a tower in the centre. Around the tower prisoners have been placed in individual cells. The cells *'have two windows, one to the inside corresponding to the window of the tower; and one to the outside, allows the light to cross the cell from one end to the other... That creates an effect of backlighting...'* All prisoners are *'perfectly individualized and constantly visible.'* (p. 200) The tower is constantly in shadow and that result in that the prisoners do never know when they are being watched, but they have to assume they always are. This metaphor is used by both Foucault (1991) and many others in their works when trying to

understand the representation of individuals in society. According to this theory we have to assume we are being watched and judged at all time, we are constantly walking in a spotlight never knowing when we are being observed or not of the secret power of knowledge that is around us everyday. The power *'acts directly on individuals; it gives power of mind over mind.'* (p. 206) By exercising and invest in knowledge a person accomplish power.

According to the theory of Foucault's (1991) we have to maintain disciplined not to be accused of being abnormal and being excluded from the society with the reason that we do not have the knowledge of being disciplined enough to follow the dominant norms of the disciplined society. There are thou a *'...constant division between the normal and the abnormal, to which every individual is subjected'* (p. 199) and to what every person has to be aware of. On the distinction of beauty Wilson (2006) argues that *'people develop stereotypes about attractiveness (...) based on expectations about what attractive people are like'* and this subjected supervisions of individuals, based on evolutionary animal behaviour that suggest that attractiveness might be something that catches the human eye (p. 191) can be an explanation to the importance of discipline on the notion of beauty. To invest and exercise the knowledge of beauty through consumption is the one way to accomplish power and a beauty premium. According to Belk et al. (1982) *'there is a long history of evidence and observations establishing the fact that we attempt to encode messages about ourselves through at least some of our consumption selections (...) and a persons choice of beauty services and styles of grooming also affect appearance and have been found to affect other people's impressions'* and judgements of the individuals. (pp. 5-6)

3.3: Motivation for consumption of beauty

In motivating the consumption of beauty, the "need" of investing in the physical attractiveness, Evans et al. (2008) points out that consumers do not purchase because of the function of the product, they consume since the symbolism of social and psychological satisfactory come into being significant. (p. 16) Evans et al. (2008) and Passer et al. (2009) are moreover describing the concepts of negative and positive motivation that is depicting as a "make advances" and "avoidance". Positive motivation involve that people become

burdened with what offers pleasure, physical satisfaction, social support, intellectual stimuli etc. Positive motivation can be the result from advertising stress the positive image of the individual after using specific product. Negative motivation, on the other hand, contributes individuals to avoid or escape from discomfort and negative situations. Within the commercial marketplace, for example, the consumer wants to receive a warranty protecting any failure on the product. Evans et al. (2008) and Passer et al. (2009) are further discussing the Freudian motivation by implying that motivation comes out of external or internal forces. The internal motivation concerns psychological that is found on sex drive, instincts and feelings etc. when external motivation instead discusses exterior stimuli that attracts an individual or not.

Motivation	Internal	External
Positive	Pleasure, comfort	Attractive goods and services, attractive situations
Negative	Discomfort, inconveniences	None attractive goods and services, none attractive situations

Figure 1: Different types of motivations (Evans et al. 2008 p. 19)

Moreover, according to Maslow's theory of needs there are five levels of satisfactory needs for humans. The theory will be pronounced using the model by Maslow (1970, p. 56) and the text written by Csikszentmihalyi. (2000, pp. 268-269) The lowest need "Physiological needs" includes the needs for food, water and shelter, sex etc. When these needs are not met, the person will turn all of his or her psychic energy to the task of satisfying them. But as soon as they are met, a higher set of need will usually attract a person's attention. Next on Maslow's hierarchy are the "safety needs", that embodies security, protection, predictable environment and to be free of anxiety. Midpoint in Maslow's scheme is the "social needs" including a sense of belonging and love rooted in our fear of isolation and loneliness. Thus, this set of needs for

consumer behaviour is many and diverse, for example places that provides opportunities to mix with others, to see and be seen. The many ads that shows masses of people has subtexts saying, you will not have to be alone ever again. Another example is when people dress according to fashion and they feel belonging to a group. The need to belong is also served by conformity. The higher need is “Esteem” that implicates self-esteem, recognition and status. At that point we can indulge in purchasing goods that shows our uniqueness and goods that fulfil esteem needs are symbolic in nature. The goods can however, often serve other motives as well. Not all objects purchased for esteem reasons are competitive status symbols and many are acquired because they allow the person to practice a specific skill which is important for the identity such as musical instruments. The top need in the hierarchy is the “Self-actualisation” needs containing self-development and realisation that according to Maslow becomes preeminent after the other needs are satisfied. To aim for the need of self-actualisation does not mean the person has to be a major spender, in contrast Maslow used models like Eleanor Roosevelt and Albert Einstein to demonstrate. Many consumer decisions may be driven by self-actualisation today. After all, to have visions about beauty is an individual dream of self-actualisation (Zukin et al. 2004, p. 176)

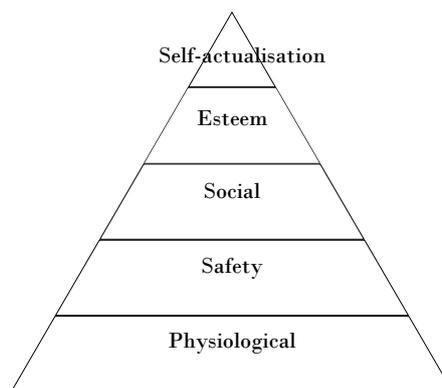


Figure 2: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970, p. 56)

Chapter 4: Analysis & Results

Introduction

Methodology

Frame of Reference

Analysis & Results

Discussion & Conclusion

In this chapter, findings conducted through focus groups are presented. The chapter is divided into four main areas that all were discussed during the previous interviews and what contexts evolves from the literature study accounted for in chapter three, Frame of Reference. The findings are analysed in relation to the theory where the interviews were conducted. This chapter aspires to declare the aim of the study when discussing the questions asked. First a definition of what beauty is according to the participants is explained and this definition is the foundation of following sections. Further, the understanding of the construction of the value of beauty will be declared and then normalisation and surveillance in the context of beauty is analysed. The last section, before a summary of the analysis is executed, is aiming to discuss how forces of motivation affect individuals to consume beauty products.

4.1: What beauty really is

Before undertaking this study a definition of the concept of beauty was not predetermined by the author. TB, one of the female participants, illustrated that *'beauty can be viewed like furnishing a room, the room is the functional body where the furniture's are the beauty that shapes the identity.'*

Furthermore, when asking the participants to describe what physical beauty means to them, the women discussed how symmetry created harmony on face and body and how "natural" beauty, beauty that did not look as there was any activity performed, was higher valued compared to if more beauty activities had been carried out. TH described that *'beauty is to be born to the ideal of natural beauty, which is more beautiful in contrast to the fact that you alter the body later in life. That is more real beauty even if the results are the same'*. The ideal of beauty according to the women differentiate a lot according to the lifestyles of the individuals. One ideal that was put forward was to be thin and tall. Although, LL for example identified the ideal of beauty as to be fit, that included toned muscles. She herself is an athlete gave an example on the beautiful body of Carolina Klüft. TB on the other hand pointed out that her ideal is to be

slimmer than what is natural for a body, like fashion models and refers to Kate Moss. All the women had their own perspective but at the same time “the natural body” and “natural beauty” are arguments that arise repeatedly. AA was telling that the ideal of beauty has to be functional, that the body illustrates the lifestyle of the person. *‘If you see a person looking healthy then you know that this person is taking care of him or her self. If you see a person that has a specific employment that is physical demanding then the body may be perceived to be beautiful as it is supposed to be a functional body.’* All women agreed that the norms of beauty in society today are the kind of beauty that is the hardest to maintain. This can be illustrated as a Greek god or goddess, but slimmer. MH argued that *‘because we can afford to eat much food and sweets, of course the ideal are to be slim.’* Other role models in the context of beauty were Jessica Alba, Megan Fox and Marilyn Monroe.

The male participants’ discussion on the definition of beauty was very different compared to the women’s. The researcher never mentioned what gaze the participants were supposed to use when answering the questions. The male participants automatically started to refer to women and to ideals like Hollywood actresses, retouched H&M models that can be seen in marketed adverts. They also suggested those ideals are individual but agreed that the symmetries and proportions are important. According to the male participants beauty is a feminine word and that the attributes of beauty are feminine. They pointed out that beauty is when someone is attractive and when a person is a pleasure to look at.

The aim of this interview was to investigate what relation men has to beauty and even if this was an interesting angle that they defined beauty to be female the researcher had to interrupt. Instead the researcher changed the direction of the discussion to include how they describe male beauty. For further studies, the discussion about women as the objects to look at could be interesting to investigate. However, further the men described that the notion of beauty for men is to be handsome in comparison to females that are beautiful. The norms of male beauty SA described as *‘calvin klein models, having a six pack on their stomach and two percentage body fat.’* The men were aware of that the ideal of beauty might differ depending on geographical location, pointing out that the ideals in north parts of Sweden might not be the calvin klein models that

probably are more common in Stockholm. Other ideals of the male participants were actors appearing in action movies and James Bond.

The male participants agreed that you can not measure yourself to these defined ideals of beauty. If you could have done so these norms would not have been the ideals. Although, they do inspire the choices the men do involving beauty, for example DL said *'I do shave my head like Van Diesel.'* The female participants agreed they either can not measure themselves to the distinct ideal of beauty. The women argued that they do not want to do what it takes to maintain this ideal. AA implied that there are biological aspects like height that she can not change but continued by saying that she does not want to limit herself in life to maintain the ideal of beauty. IF followed the argument by saying *'It's not worth doing it just to look good.'*

4.2: The value of beauty

The definition of beauty has been discussed in previous section and develops here into an analysis extracting the notion of beauty. The aim is to situate the concept into a cultural context to find out how individuals interact with beauty and consumption.

Beauty is a value according to the participants of this study and they were aware of the norms and ideals of beauty today. They all have different habitus that are results of social experiences which makes each one act differently. When discussing the ideals of beauty the participants had significant ideas that differ from the others in the group. The participants believed the ideals related to their own individual identity. For example LL is a female professional athlete and her ideal of beauty is to be toned and muscular. TB instead is a trendy female journalist who likes clubbing and desires the look of thin fashion models. DL on the other hand is a man and his interests are metal music and computer games and his ideals of beauty are the actors in action movies. And JS argued that he admires the handsome James Bond as he is interested in computers and dance.

Beauty, according to the participants is also a capital, a symbolic capital because it is acknowledged as valuable to this group of individuals. Even though the notion of beauty differed between the participants, the consumption

of beauty still is an activity and performance of major importance for all of them. Both men and women perform beauty activities everyday and even more at special occasions like parties and festivals. Moreover, beauty is of the highest value when it is described to be “natural”, similar to a habitus that each one of us are gifted to possess, but all habitus can not be valuable. It is the marketplace that determines what is valuable and what is not. If the marketplace recognises this specific attribute of beauty to be valuable then it can work as capital. (See Broady, 1991, p. 226)

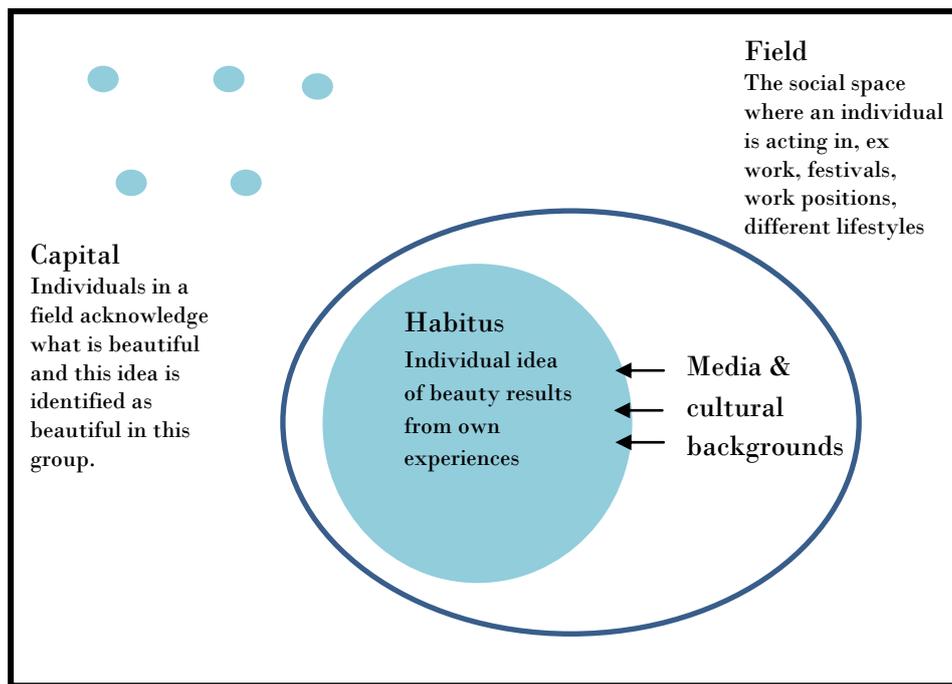


Figure 3: Model interpreting an individual’s idea in a social context of interactions.

Different fields that the participants are entering can be recognized as marketplaces. These fields require different activities of beauty and TB told, one of the female participants, ‘*you adjust your fashion depending on what people you are meeting, what age they are and what specific style they have*’. And as one of the male, SA, pointed out ‘*it depends of who is the observer*’. There are many different fields that the participants enter more or less and they all agreed that the ideal of beauty differs depending on what field one is deciding to occur. In the interview the researcher exemplified different fields where the symbolic capital might differ. All the participants agreed simultaneously that they did

differ at all the given examples. The alternatives were, different social classes, lifestyles, cultural backgrounds, educational levels, work positions and companies. The participants were all aware that there might be positive consequences if they change their appearance when leaving one field intending to enter another. There can be fields within another field, for example if changing work position in a company. The new role has to be functional. If gaining status within a hierarchy the individual becomes a role model for the co-workers on lower positions in the hierarchy. That involves changing capital in the context of beauty and to accumulate some capital when also investing in others to be able to create authority. The symbolic capital change as the individual change position and beauty is a result of the changed capital.

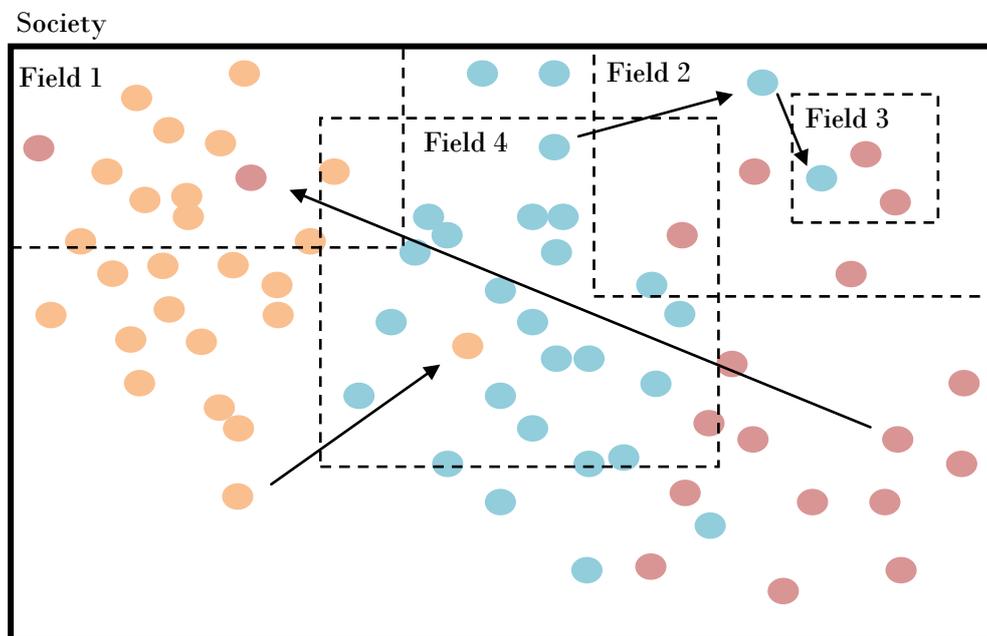


Figure: 4 Model of ideas in different fields and movements within society.

When investigating further, using the back ground information of the questionnaires [See Appendix 4] an analysis of capital about the participants was performed. The notion of beauty in relation to educational capital, one form of cultural capital, [See Appendix 4 and for more details on educational capital on men see Appendix 5] resulted in the discovery that the male participants with a post-secondary education performed more activities on beauty in the morning compared to the once that had none. This information is

in agreement with the theory where Bourdieu and his research on how French women used beauty in relation to class. This study shows that the male participants of the study consume beauty depending on what educational experiences they have. It is only the men that have a degree on the university that spend £ 45 (500 SEK) or more on beauty activities in a month. All females performed similar activities and the level of education did not matter [See Appendix 4]. On the other hand the females with less education prioritised beauty ahead of other activities in addition to the once with a higher education. The female participants, in addition to the men, wish they had more time to spend on activities of beauty. According to the theory of Bourdieu the women of a higher class had a greater understanding of the importance of beauty (1984, pp. 203-206) but in this research this can not be agreed. However, this study can not further analyse this when the participants in this research are in the same age where some are still student and the earnings do not differ that much. The aim of the study is to understand the relation the participants have to beauty and this analysis can still illustrate that within this selection. Women are spending more money and are consuming more activities compared to the men but men with a higher educational qualification are more aware of their look than men with lower education and less educational capital. Everyone seemed to be happy with their routine of beauty today but all women answered with a “but” followed by comments like they wished they had more knowledge about how to perform beauty activities better, they wish they had more time in the morning and that investments in products operated better.

Furthermore, analysing educational capital in relation to beauty the second questionnaire was used [See Appendix 6]. In this analysis where both genders were represented the answers did not differentiate very much. Although for the participants with a university qualification the results were of major importance consuming beauty but the others categories were divided between arguments about effort versus results and which one is of most importance.

The female participants were more concerned they did not perform enough beauty activities even if the ideal of beauty was “natural beauty” [See Appendix 4]. But because none felt they could measure themselves to the ideal of beauty they consume beauty having the objective of investing in their looks. Charm and charisma is according to Bourdieu what designate the power of a

person, and the objectification can also be implied on a group of people (1984, p. 208) The participants of this investigation agreed that they can increase their self-confidence and self image undertaking the activities of beauty and by consuming appropriate products and therefore increase their capability of performance and as a leader in social context. In consuming beauty, the participants can increase their symbolic capital. LL, one of the female participants, pointed out *'having the appropriate look of the situation increase my self-confidence and I feel safer in a situation and can therefore act more ambitiously.'*

In analysing this topic, the author has taken into consideration educational background and topic of concern [See Appendix 7]. The results of this table do not demonstrate a major difference in the choice of subject, instead it illustrates the homogeneity there is in consumption of beauty. Although, the participants that were in some way involved in art, economics, political science or law were more goal oriented. They found the results when performed beauty to be more important compared to valuing the effort trying to achieve the aspired look. The participants involved in police work, construction or nursery school were represented in both alternative options and none were more dominant than the other.

Furthermore, a development of the analysis resulted in this table which divides the participants into three groups concerning what social capital the participants possess [See Appendix 8]. But the groups also demonstrated their differences in economical capital as some have been brought up in more expensive areas and have parents earning more money compared to the other groups.

Capital 1 (7 persons): These individuals were brought up in a house or tenant-owner flat where both parents had qualifications from university. They are all present students at university or have just graduated. They have been brought up in areas like Älvsjö and Lidingö in Stockholm and also in Staffanstorp and Karlstad (in Skåne and Värmland). These participants are students or graduates in subjects like media, law, political science, business studies and police work. All of them have been active in some sport like tennis, hockey, handball, football and gymnastics. One of these participants is adopted from the Middle

East and the others have the Swedish culture as the only culture and are not sharing it with any other cultures.

Capital 2 (4 persons): These individuals were grown up in a house or tenant-owner flat where one or none of the parents had qualifications from university. None of them has qualification from university and are brought up in areas like Huddinge, Hägersten and Skarpnäck and also one is from Vagnhärad (80 km south from Stockholm). At present they work in a shop, construction or in childcare. One of them was performing sports in a younger age, gymnastics and floor hockey but none of the others. One is having influences by the culture of south Asia. The others have the Swedish culture as the only culture and are not sharing it with any other cultures.

Capital 3 (3 persons): These individuals were brought up in a rental apartment where none of the parents had qualifications from university. Two of them are at present studying at the university on the subject of economics and business studies. One is working in a shop and is also a qualified make up artist. They are brought up in areas like Vårby Gård and Hagsätra in Stockholm and one in Sala in Västmanland. They have been involved in sports such as dancing, football and combat sport. One has the Swedish culture as the only culture and the other two persons have influences from south Europe and from south east Europe.

The participants in the group “Culture 1” spent less money on beauty activities and products in a month (3/7 spent £45, 500 SEK, or more) compared to the individuals in “Culture 2” where 2/4 spent the same amount in a month. “Culture 3” spent the most money where 3/3 spent £45 a month. This line of evidence points in the opposite direction too where none of the individuals in the group “Culture 3” finds beauty more important than 7 on a scale 1-10. The people in “Culture 3” finds beauty less important compared to the other two groups but they spend more money on it compared to the others. Also, the group “Culture 3” do not find themselves being treated differently depending on their look. Although, 1/3 in “Culture 3” believed people was treating her differently and one factor might be that she is a woman and the other two

participants in the group were men. The participants in the group “Culture 3” argues there is possibilities of accomplishing more success in life if they look beautiful. This argument is shared with the other two groups indicating they all find beauty to be an aspect increasing opportunities for the individual.

The majority of the participants find the results from undertaking beauty to be the most important for them but when observing others 4/7 in the group “Capital 1” argues they notice the results on others instead of their effort trying to look good. The other two groups do not agree together with the other half of “Capital 1”. Relating this table to the previously table [Appendix 7] the majority of the participants in “Capital 1” are involved in art, economics, political science or law and were demonstrated to be “goal” oriented and that can be illustrated in this table as well. On the other hand, the group “Capital 3” is aware of investments of educational capital when 2/3 are studying at the university when none of their parents have done so and they invest more economic capital in beauty compared to the other groups. The participants in the group “Capital 2” have both cultural capital and economical capital that is somewhere in between the other groups. This could be noticed in the table where their results also were in between the other group’s answers.

This part of the research indicates having different cultural capital and an upbringing containing more or less economical capital not necessary have to result in apprehending beauty as more or less valuable. This result demonstrates the homogeneity between these groups in society in how they are valuing beauty. Although, this research also demonstrates that the way individuals view beauty can differ based on if they value effort or mainly results. Having an upbringing including less economical capital and less cultural capital that is valuable in this particular group they value the effort in approaching activities like beauty and also invests more money into the process compared to the other groups. This can be related to their investments in education which their parents don not have. They might have had to work harder compared to the other group, “Capital 1” which has a more economical capital and more cultural capital that is understood to be more valuable in this particular group. The focus of this group was instead focused on the results of beauty instead of the process of accomplish beauty.

As stated earlier, beauty is one form of symbolic capital because individuals find beauty to be valuable and to be beautiful is valuable according to these individuals. Beauty can here be compared to a person's title (for example doctor, lawyer or an artist). The title has different values in different fields and so has beauty where it is credited by the acknowledgement defined by the conception of a group. The cultural capital, that is part of the symbolic capital, influences how beauty is acknowledged and what is valuable. Everyone in this investigation understood beauty to be valuable but because their cultural capital differed the way they consume beauty vary. Although, consumption of beauty among women is less affected by cultural capital and there is more results on differences among men.

4.3: Beauty in the spotlight

The notion of beauty as a value and a cultural phenomenon has been discussed in previous section based on the definition of beauty defined by the focus group. Beauty in the context of capital can be adapted and changed depending on what field it is entering or leaving, but it can also be accumulated. This chapter will further declare for how social interactions and surveillance within society or a group of people are designed in the context of consuming beauty.

According to the participants' beauty is a social activity taking place everywhere in society. SA, one of the male participants stated '*you get impressions everywhere, for example on the tube on the way here*'. The females described they are aware that they are looked at when they are out and it do make them a bit scared. TB argues '*I observe others terribly much and I am afraid that others observe me the same way.*' MH suggests that she would not mind to see herself on film to understand how others view her. The male participants said they were aware about how people around them look even if they do not grade each other. But even if they are aware that they also are seen they do not think about it when they are acting in social context. They do perform their activities before going out but after that they do not think about it much more. This continued into an interesting discussion about the people present in the room of the interview. The sum of the discussion was that the male participants had not

thought about the other men present in the room and the possibility the others might observe them during the interview. The male participants perform their activities before entering the door at home and after that their own beauty does not concern them. They argued that the activities are performed to create their self image that other will observe, but also for their personal self.

This shows a distinct difference between the men and women participating in the interview where the women started a wild discussion about experiences of beauty mistakes they have done and how this affected their self confidence negatively. The women are constantly aware about being observed at all time compared to the men even though the men still prepare them self of acting and to be observed in social situations. These finding's show that people that are acting in a social context are constantly visible. Although, the women are much more observing in addition to the men. The females observe both men and women even though they do it differently. According to some of the women in the interview men are observed more as a whole and the focus are more at details' upon women.

The gaze, when both women and men are consuming beauty, is according to the participants in the interview female. They all were not sure this was the real truth, there might be other aspects to this but they must be subconscious. The participants were aware about the opposite gender appreciates the individual and the men argued that how women view them is more important compared to how other men see themselves. Females on the other hand pointed out that how other women appreciate them is far more important compared to how men view them. But the females still care about how men see them, but they suggest it might be because of competition among women that what other women think is of such a high value.

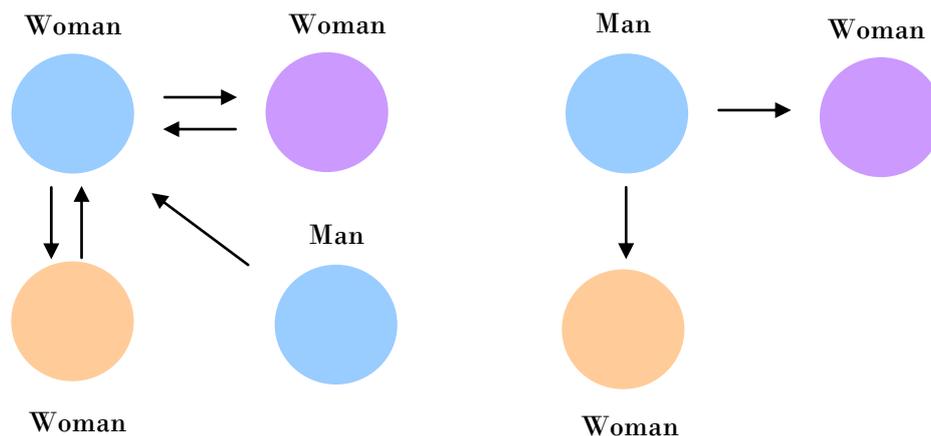


Figure 5: The gaze in observation and interactions.

The female participants said that they first learned about beauty at home and from their mothers. Later they got influenced by friends, TV and magazines. The men on the other hand, pointed out that their fathers and friends were their first inspirations. Later they argued that they unconsciously became inspired by films and advertising as well as friends. The power situated in the notion of beauty has a major impact from media and cultural backgrounds. This power and symbolic capital incorporated in society is according to the participants of high value and they find it worth investing in. All participants agreed that it is worth investing in a good look and argued that it benefits health, relationships and social interactions as for example employments. To follow the norms of beauty of distinct social context will benefit the individual positively as the person is more easily accepted in the group. In social context, SA pointed out that *‘my life would probably fall apart if I stopped showering as no one likes to be around that kind of person’*.

Activities considered normal when performing beauty were rated by men such as brushing their teeth, shower, hygiene and haircuts, go to the gym, waxing, looking after the eyebrows. Females did instead count for activities like shaving legs, exercise, hygiene, hair care, applying make up and choosing clothes. The performances were up to a point very similar and after that the women extended the list of activities. When discussing the consideration of non normal activities the men argued simultaneously that men applying make up seemed strange and one pointed out it relate to female activities. A “man bag” was also stated a non normal activity concerning men. TD said *‘when men are*

wearing specific female attributes, it is perceived as strange.' The women on the other hand argued that cosmetic surgery were not considered normal activities, even though it has become to be considered more normal in the past years. Eating disorders in the context of transforming the body was considered non normal even though dieting was normal if it was based on achieving a better health.

Foucault (1991) is discussing the concept of marginalisation and how abnormal individuals are marginalised. They are constantly marginalised until they adapt in order to fit with the norms of society, also described as normalization. (p. 227) According to LL, we all have different foundations of beauty '*some people are born ugly and some are not, and the people who are born ugly they can not do anything about it*'. The others agreed but further discussed that everyone can emphasise on the good parts of their body and use for example make up when trying to look better. The men instead argued that everyone got some kind of beauty, but then you can emphasise that beauty by performing activities. That is what females do the men argued.

To be aware of the normal activities of beauty and exercise this knowledge increase power that is situated in the notion of beauty. The powers, which according to the participants are situated in media and in each individual's cultural background, are worth investing in to accomplish power in the collective society. For individuals to have the knowledge about how men and women are taking care of themselves, even though the activities are different but still are important for each gender, the persons shape their individual identity within their own spotlight in the collective society. The power, however, that is situated in the media and in cultural backgrounds is according to Foucault (1991), not only coming from above, it '*have to bring into play the power relations,..., inside the very texture of the multiplicity, as discreetly as possible,...*' (p. 220) The ideals of beauty have to interact between the individuals as well as from the dominant culture. When the participants of this study consume beauty they do it constantly knowing that others will observe their performance and judge them at all time. Even though the men said they did not think about how others viewed them when they were out they still knew others would look at them when they perform their beauty activities. According to the participants there is a minimum limit and a maximum limit of beauty

activities that can be carried out within the limits of normality in the context of beauty. Both men and women declared that hygiene was the minimum limit, and that included brushing teeth and showering and for the men to shave some time in a while. The maximum limit was cosmetic surgery and for men also to wear make up.

Considering that the ideal of beauty was “natural beauty” and too much altering was abnormal, there has to be a shame in some activities performed in the process of altering the body and investing in knowledge. The female participants admit that they sometime lie about how much time and money they spend on beauty. They also admit how products like fake hair, fake nails and how a bra can change the form on a body, and even if they use it they feel embarrassed. MA, one of the men, admits using fake tan can be embarrassing ‘*you wish it was natural*’. TD continues the discussion saying he might not feel embarrassed about any beauty activity, instead he ‘*feels more ashamed if he has not done it*’. Maybe it is the activity of undertaking beauty that is the important and not specifically what you do. To invest in knowledge and to be disciplined is according to Foucault the major instruments to accomplish power. In the focus groups they need beauty to improve self-confidence, to express their identity in a social context where they have the choice of differentiate themselves from the norms of beauty or following the norms of beauty depending on what field they are in. Further the men also argued they need beauty in order to attract the opposite gender.

The participants are aware of the power of surveillance, and the power situated in beauty might be institutionalised within society. Beauty affects the individuals and their actions constantly. According to the female participants if they meet a person that they perceive is more beautiful than themselves the females felt inferior and provoked by the appearance of the other woman. It also stated irritation among some of the females. The men argued they might apprehend a man they meet is more beautiful than them, but it does not affect them. Although, this arguments insisting that beauty is an instrument of power that through surveillance and social interactions influence how people are acting in social situations. Even if females are further situated in the field social interactions in the notion of beauty, this is a power that through the dominant culture has leached into power relationships among individuals. Through

investments of knowledge and consumption of beauty, individuals can manipulate their appearances and accomplish power.

4.4: Conspicuous Consumption of beauty

This analysis has been discussing the value of beauty as a cultural phenomenon and later analysed beauty as an instrument of power and how it is objectified through surveillance. This part of the chapter is devoted to declare the factors motivating the consumer to invest in products in the context of beauty as a performance as well as an observer.

This study has declared that the participants find it worth investing in beauty as they are aware of their own visibility in social context and also awareness of their own health. Exploring what motivates individuals when consuming beauty products and situate these products into the significant relation to an individual's life can be illustrated through models demonstrated in this section. Positive and negative motivations are according to the participants the results of beauty in relation to pain and costs. TB, one of the female participants exemplifies that *'using the cross trainer on the gym is boring, but prevents me of getting fat.'* Other motivations are uncomfortable fashion such as waxing legs. These activities hurt but the activities results in feelings of pleasure and the benefits in social interactions. The men argued in the same way as the women but the activities included waxing and grooming. The discomfort in consuming beauty conducts into pleasure and comfort. The investment of the activity performing beauty might be uncomfortable but the results of the investment increase the power situated in the context of beauty when interacts socially and in the notion of surveillance. The positive motivation of consuming beauty products is according to the participants the power within the dominant culture of media and cultural backgrounds. When using beautiful people in advertising these products becomes symbols of the ideal of beauty and motivates the consumers to invest in them. Negative motivation according to the participants is for example the cosmetic surgery where the warranty protecting any failure is creating a discomfort for these individuals. Make up for the men was argued to relate to a female activity and was apprehended as strange and was perceived given rise to discomfort according to the men. The same reasons were pointed

out concerning the “man bag”. The female participants also argued that eating disorders caused negative motivation as it contributed discomfort and pain.

Furthermore, when analysing the internal and external forces of motivation the participants experienced that external forces such as family and friends and also media and advertising inspires them to consume beauty. In addition to the external forces the participants also discuss how internal forces such as self-confidence solidarity to a group, identity and also sex-drive are major forces when investing in beauty.

Motivation	Internal	External
Positive	Results after activity are performed is related to pleasure. Positive feelings and increased confidence. Group identity and belonging.	Advertising using beautiful people. Inspiration from media, family and friends motivating good results after activity are performed.
Negative	Beauty activities where the risks of negative consequences are major create discomfort. Activities occurring pain in relation to results that is not worth it. Risks such as negative influences on self-image, group belonging and sex-drive.	Family, friends and media identifying risks and activities occurring pain in relation to results that is not worth it. Family, friends and media influencing a improper image of an activity not suitable for the individual.

Figure 6: Model inspired by Evans et. al: Different types of motivations (Evans et al. 2008 p. 19)

According to Maslow’s theory of needs there are five levels of satisfactory needs of humans. The participants of the interview argued that they need beauty because of many reason, and some of them has already been discussed in this analysis. Although, this illustration will benefit in comprehend a greater

understanding on how the participants grade their beauty activities in relation to other needs in their lives.

Physiological needs

All participants doubted there was any activity in the context of beauty that was insignificant with the physiological needs such as water, food and sex. Although the females discussed that basic hygiene was a necessity as the opposite can result in illness. And the men also argued that one of the major reasons they was taking care of themselves was to attract women.

Safety needs

In the discussion whether the participants' activities of beauty can generate safety they argued that beauty makes them feel civilised and this creates comfort when interacting socially. Beauty according to this discussion might not generate safety in the form of protection. Although, the activities of beauty still embodies a safety barrier as the participants arguing they feel anxiety if not performing their beauty activities before interacting socially. These activities also make the participants adapt to the predictable environment, which is part of the safety needs, as they perform beauty and observe others affected by the dominant culture and in awareness of the power situated in social interactions.

Social needs

The social need is rooted in out fear of isolation and loneliness. Beauty is according to the participants an instrument creating each individual's identity. Beauty helps the people to determine whether they want to belong to a group or not. The male participants instantly divided themselves into two groups while discussing this question. The groups were based on how they used beauty. One group spent more money and performed more activities and the other group spent and performed less. They argued that style divided them, but because they are mature now compared to when they were younger, they have no problem to consort people they feel belong to other groups.

They also discussed that if a person does not know how to interact socially in the context of beauty this person might be marginalised. IF who is a female

sales representative explained that not long time ago there was a woman in the shop who was demonstrating some new products for the customers. She had purple hair and piercings. She was according to IF, not representative for the brand she was working for. Because of that reason, the next day the brand sent someone else instead. All female participants argued that the personnel in a shop have to look presentable for the brand they are working for or the customers will not have confidence in that person. These arguments imply that the appearance not only embodies the interactions between physical persons. The appearance also interacts with the specific field itself that the physical person is entering and its image.

Esteem needs

The activities the participants are performing and the products they purchasing do improve their self-confidence as they distinguishing their identity. The females argued that through performing activities of beauty it results in improved independency and increased confidence in taking responsibility in different situations. The men agreed but believed this happens unconsciously and it was nothing they aimed for when performing activities of beauty.

Self-actualisation

According to Maguire, et al. many consumer decisions are driven by self-actualisation today. (2004, p. 176) The participants in the interview agreed that the vision of achieving beauty is self-actualisation based on the importance of expressing their own identity in social context as well as to the requirement of feeling good about themselves. All women in this study and 50 percent of the men perform beauty to look better, according to the survey. This indicates the vision the participants have in the context of beauty. However, according to the interview they all declared they have ideals of beauty, but they do not want to do what it takes to achieving them. The aim of the ideals is not the self-actualisation. Instead, it is the power within undertaking the activity that creates an aim resulting in self-actualisation.

4.5: Summarize of the results: Beauty is what beauty does

The aim of this study was to investigate the phenomenon of beauty in a descriptive study and analyse how men and women consume beauty. In this chapter the notion of beauty has been broken down into different theoretical frameworks. What beauty means for an individual and how an individual interacts socially in the context of beauty, both as a consumer and an observer, has been discussed in this chapter. Also the power situated in the phenomenon of beauty has been analysed.

This study shows that men and women have ideals of beauty involving a high value. Beauty is according to the participants of its highest value when it is argued to be “natural”. The norms of beauty are determined by the dominant culture, from media. If an individual looks natural similar to these norms the person is defined to be beautiful. Above of the dominant culture’s ideal there are ideas that are created by the individuals’ own experience and cultural background. This ideas shapes the persons individual ideal of beauty. These aspects of beauty are not natural and have to be invested in to accomplish. Although, to maintain beauty at its highest value is according to the men not possible and the women argued that beauty is not worth all sacrifices.

The definition of beauty differs depending on what social space a person is in. The distance between the ideals of beauty in different social places has to be acknowledged by the individual that decides to adapt or differentiate to the norms of normal in a specific space. The idea of appearance, which is understood to be beautiful in one social context, might not be acknowledged to be beautiful in another. Having the knowledge about the norms of beauty in specific situations, the appropriate look can come to increase the power when a person interacts socially.

All women participating in the study performed similar activities of beauty and educational level did not matter. Men on the other hand increased their performance on activities and spent more money on beauty in relation to their level of educational background. All men and women were happy with their routines of beauty but the women also revealed they wished they had more knowledge and time to spend on beauty.

Having cultural experiences, such as educational backgrounds and educational levels and growing up circumstances divided the participants when situating the aim of performing and observing beauty. The participants having a higher degree of education, families having more economical and educational capital or backgrounds in art, economics, political science or law resulted in more goal oriented behaviour. This is in relation to the participants having less education, and families having less economical and educational capital or backgrounds in police work, construction or nursery school that was divided. They appraise both results and the effort for trying to obtain the aspired look.

The female participants were all aware of the impact of surveillance as they observed other people all the time. The gaze when performing activities of beauty was female according to the women, but they were not sure this was the truth, the truth might be subconscious. The females find how other women view them is far more important compared to how men view them. This was argued to be because of competition among women.

The men in this study argued that they are aware of how both genders observe them but the way women look at them are far more important compared to when men are looking at them. The men perform their activities in preparation of social interactions but do not think about their appearance much more after that.

Activities that are considered normal to both men and women are important knowledge as the result of doing it “wrong” or not doing it at all might lead to marginalisation of the individual. Activities categorised as hygiene were the minimum limitation. Too much altering of the body such as eating disorders, cosmetic surgery and make up for men was suggested to be abnormal activities. According to the participants everyone has a foundation of beauty and then everyone has the opportunity to emphasise the good parts of their body to improve the look. Both men and women lie about some of their routines as they wish it was a natural part of their appearance. However, not to perform the activities might instead involve more shame than to admit they are performing them. To lie about products, time and money, seemed like something all participants did. Although, to alter the body as discreetly as possible can be understood to be the discreet way to accomplish the norms of “natural beauty”.

Within social interactions among individuals the power is situated. Looking at each other and judging individuals based on their appearance increase the significance within the activity of beauty itself. The dominant culture is trickled down to each individual where the power becomes efficient in the form of interactions.

Motivation factors influencing investments in activities of beauty are motivated by the results of beauty in relation to pain and costs. Positive results can be influenced by advertising using beautiful people, inspiration from media, family and friends motivating good results. Negative results might inspired by the same factors but the pain and cost are higher in relation to the results.

In concluding the five levels of satisfactory needs, beauty can be stated to interact differently on different levels. Although, the notion of beauty is still of importance on all levels even thus the activities vary. Through investments of beauty the participants enhance their identity individually but as well collectively in a social group.

Chapter 5: Discussion & Conclusion

Introduction

Methodology

Frame of Reference

Analysis & Results

Discussion & Conclusion

This chapter will present a discussion concerning the findings and results presented in chapter four. The results are discussed in relation to other scientific research on the subject of matter. Further a conclusion concerning this study is presented. At last reflections and thoughts concerning this study and ideas regarding further studies on the subject are featured.

5.1: Discussion on the results

According to the results in this study people are aware of their own visibility and therefore they perform activities of beauty before entering a social context. Interactions between individual's eyes and the eyes of others make us aware of our own visibility. (Berger, 1973, p. 9) People interact with each other when entering different social contexts. People understand the reality visually through their eyes as they constantly observe the surroundings in an attempt to search for knowledge about the dominant norms in specific contexts. This research demonstrates how people are aware of the different ideas of beauty in different social contexts, and how people have to make choices in assimilating to a specific culture or not. By the activity to continually observe and understand what exists outside a person, he or she can make this part of his or her daily existence. (Jhally, 1990, p. 2)

According to previous research on the topic, beautiful people get more out of life (Millard, 2009) and beauty is perceived to be correlated with intelligence, social skills and health. (See Belk et al. 1982; Mobius et al. 2006) This study indicates similar results. Without routines of beauty social interactions can become impossible. Activities have to be performed even if the extent of activities might vary. According to Millard (2009) expressing beauty requires elements of performance. Various degrees on performance can influence the presentation of the self, individually as well as in a group. (p. 165) Mobius et al. (2006) also demonstrate how children receive more attention if apprehended to be beautiful and also attractive employees are considered to be more able to perform a better job by the employers (p. 222) This evidence is in line with the results in this study. If an individual knows how to appear depending on social

situation this does tend to benefit the individual positively. To be beautiful indicates the person has knowledge about ideas and norms in social situations and is able to engage with the power situated within the notion of beauty in this context. This study is also in agreement to research made by Belk et al. (1982) whose study indicates that consumption of beauty creates a visual illustration of a person. (p. 6) Consuming activities of beauty generate the image others will apprehend about an individual when observing him or her. Every individual has to make the best he or she can based on the foundation of the person to receive the benefits.

These authors, as mentioned earlier in the introduction, do not account for the difference in female and male consumption of beauty. Instead they incorporate both male and female behaviour in consuming beauty if not only the female activity. The exception are Jeffreys (2005) and Berger (1972) who are arguing that women's gaze is male and women include men's sexual values in their appearance. The results presented in this study indicate that both men and women have female gaze instead when performing beauty in contrast to Jefferys and Berger. On the other hand, the female participants argued that this might be subconscious actions and further research might have to be performed to fully understand the phenomenon. Berger (1972) also argues that men's presence is dependent upon the promise of power they embody. The results of this study show that men investing in educational qualification spend more money and perform more activities on beauty compared to those who have less education. Also, the results indicate both men and women change activities of beauty when changing power positions for example within a company and this is in line with the theories of Berger.

Women are always observed and are therefore constantly accompanied by their self image, in a way that men are not. This is also argued by Berger. (1972) Men on the other hand, are performing their activities to represent themselves in the eyes of others and particularly in the eyes of women. When entering a social space they are not thinking about their self image as well as other men's look, but they do look at women.

The topic of beauty is discussed well in our society today. We can read about beauty through media and other reports. This study is demonstrating the impact media has on consumption of beauty as media has been declared to be

one of the major powers of ascendant. The power within the communication of media is trickled down to society and exercised in the conformation of interactions between individuals.

Consumption is according to Zukin et al. (2004) an experience in expression and an instrument in shaping one's identity. (p. 173) Csikszentmihalyi (2000) is declaring consumption to be a signal of unsatisfactory in life. (p. 271) This study shows consumption of beauty as an instrument of shaping what people want to enhance in their appearance and a tool to create an identity to fit within different social contexts. Consumption of beauty is working differently on different levels. It does express identity, but it is also a part of something with a greater impact on individual's lives. There are different levels in the performance involving activities of beauty where the minimum activity of beauty is hygiene where health and the possibility of social interactions are in focus. Zukin et al. (2004) argue that there is a constant anxiety of consumption of getting it wrong when each individual faces the need to "become what one is". (pp. 180-181) Not having the knowledge, discipline or resources of performing the minimum limit an individual can not act within social context. There is a maximum limit as well. The ideal of beauty according to this research signifies the look is natural. If people perform activities to the extent of looking artificial then the maximum limit is crossed. To cross the minimum limit or the maximum limit can be a signal of unawareness of social norms or unsatisfactory in life, as stated by Csikszentmihalyi. (2000) Consequences can be marginalization and disadvantages in social coherence.

According to Steel (2001) and Kunzle people are altering bodies psychologically instead of physically. This argument can be argued as people do perform plastic surgery and use cosmetics etc. But the power is situated within psychological relations between people in society and even if people do not get physically punished for not following the norms there are activities that are abnormal and people do situate themselves to belong to a specific look. By situating themselves they marginalize others that are not part of this group.

The norms of beauty are not fixed, instead they are changing over time and place. Individuals have to invest in knowledge about beauty constantly not to decline previous investments and to gain new property. Beauty does sell and changes attitudes towards products and people. (Langmeyer et al., 1994, p. 33)

This research is in line with previous research on the topic stating beauty activities increase possibilities for people. (See Belk et al. 1982; Millard, 2009; Mobios et al. 2006; Wilson, 2006)

5.2: Conclusion

This research demonstrates the relation between the consumption of beauty as an activity of performance and the activity of observing. Investigating how young adults consume beauty through social interactions this study situates beauty into a cultural context. The research is in line with previous research on the topic but incorporates a new angle of approach when investigating the relation between performance and observing of beauty. This study also investigates both females and men to be able to situate differences between genders when consuming beauty something other studies have been insufficient to do.

The results of this study demonstrate that the activity of performance and the activity of observing in the notion of beauty are just as important for women. Simultaneously women perform activities and judge others in the context of beauty within social interactions. Men also perform beauty but are less observant of others compared to women. The gaze in the activities of beauty is female and both genders apprehend the female opinion to be of most value.

The power within the context of beauty is situated within the dominant culture where media is a major source of power. The power is trickled down to the individuals who execute the power within social interactions. There are both minimum and maximum limits related to what is accepted as normal and abnormal activities. However, the norms change depending on what social place and part an individual has in a specific social context.

5.3: Reflections & thoughts

This study has created a major contribution to the author's research within the topic of beauty, fashion and marketing. Interesting discussions about the topic together with fellow students, teachers, friends and the participants in the focus groups have helped the author to situate this study within society.

Accomplishing this research, the author has developed ideas about further research. This study has used several theories which all are comprehensive. To investigate further with an immerse understanding of each theory might result in a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

To be more selective about the participants might also result in a more detailed survey. Using different age groups and carefully choosing people having different cultural experiences might deliver increased value in the results.

All participants told they are heterosexual. This was not planed or specified before the interviews were taking place but does of cause influence the results of this study. To do the same investigation using people having different sexual orientation might give a different result.

In performing the focus groups the male participants started by defining beauty to be feminine. After a short discussion the author changed the direction of the discussion as she had the intension to focus on how men perform beauty themselves. In reflecting about this decision the author thought about what might have happened if she did not interrupt and changed the direction of the discussion. The result might have been interesting and might be a task for future research.

After all, the author is very happy about the process of the research and finds the results very interesting. Many people are interested to read the study and the author wish the study will influence how they view the phenomenon of beauty in society and also how they value products and activities in the future.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire 1

Questionnaire

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Occupation:
4. Level of education:
5. What is the average amount of money you spend on beauty products in one month?
.....
.....
.....
6. What are your objectives when performing beauty?
.....
.....
.....
7. How far have you gone when aspire to archive beauty? (More than one answer is possible!)
.....
.....
.....
8. Describe your morning routine when you perform activities of beauty:
.....
.....
.....
9. Does your routine change at occasions of festivals, work and when you are free from work? Motivate your answer:
.....
.....
.....
10. Are you happy with these routines or is there something you wish was different? Motivate how:
.....
.....
.....

Thanks for participating in this study!

Appendix 2: Questionnaire 2

1. Name:

2. In what area have you been brought up? (If not in Stockholm note what town as well)

3. In what area in Stockholm do you live now?

4. In what type of house/apartment are you brought up in?

5. Have you been active in some kind of sport when you were younger? If yes, what sport?

6. Are you doing any sports now? If yes, what sport?

7. What educational qualifications do your parents have?

8. What do your parents do for a living?

9. What educational qualification do you have? (Describe)

10. How many years have you been studying after finishing the gymnasium/upper secondary school?

11. Within what subject have you been studying or/and been working?
12. What is your interest? (What do you do when you do not work?)
13. What kind of music do you like? Please give some examples on artists.
14. Describe your style? (Motivate)
15. What makes you feel engaged or interested? (Broad interpretation)
16. Do you have another culture except the Swedish culture? If yes, what culture? How does it differ from the Swedish culture in the context of beauty? (Motivate)
17. Do you consider yourself being “less attractive” than the average person? (Motivate)
18. What do you consider to be the best advantage: rich or beautiful? (Motivate)
19. Do you have a favourite brand within beauty? If yes, what brand?
20. What do you find most important: That you have done an effort to become beautiful or that you succeed to accomplish an optimal result? (The activity or the result) (Motivate)

21. When you meet another person, what do you notice? Do you notice that the person done an effort to become beautiful or that the person accomplished the optimal result? (Motivate)

Does it differentiate if you meet a man or a woman?

22. Does your appearance affect how others treating you? Does it differ in various situations? (Motivate)

23. Can you become more successful in life if you are beautiful? (It is your definition of beauty and success that is counted for!)

24. What or whom is your ideal of beauty? (Motivate)

25. How important is beauty for you on a scale 1-10?

26. Is beauty more or less important for you if you are in a relationship with someone? (Motivate)

Appendix 3: Interview guide

1) Introduction

This is a qualitative study and will deal with consumption of beauty and about people's appearances. Although, this will not consider inner aspects and biological aspects of beauty. Consumption in this study signifies using something and intends that people consume beauty both as an activity as well as observation of other people. This interview include five parts, "Introduction", "Define Beauty", "Beauty as an individual activity", "Social interactions in the context of beauty" and "Perspectives of beauty".

The interview will be recorded on Mp3 and I will also take notes. I have finished questions that I will read for you, but feel free to take your own initiative regarding questions or give examples on concrete events or your own experiences in the subject of matter.

The aim of this interview is to develop a discussion and not an absolute truth. Instead it is your own experiences and thoughts that will develop a map of how the phenomenon of beauty is consumed in this specific group, today and at this moment in time.

2) Define Beauty

2.1 Describes visually what physical beauty, or appearance is, and what it means to you?

2.2 Can you describe the ideal of appearance and beauty?

2.3 Do you have some role models that fulfil this requirements?

2.4 Who is deciding this ideal of beauty, what are the sources?

2.5 Do you recognise these characteristics at you? Can your measure yourself to this ideal of beauty?

2.6 What according to you are normal activities within the context of beauty?

2.7 What according to you are non normal activities within the context of beauty?

2.8 Can something that apprehend as non normal develop to an activity that can be considered as normal?

2.9 Is beauty something a person has or does it get influenced by what the person does?

3) Beauty as an individual activity

3.1 What do you consume in this category of beauty?

3.2 Where did you learn about beauty the first time?

3.3 Where do you learn today?

3.4 Why do you need beauty?

Can beauty be compared to some other need?

3.5 Can you feel that you belong to a group depending on how you are use beauty?

Can someone differentiate from that group depending on other understanding?

Does that create an uncomfortable feeling?

3.6 Do you feel more confidence when performed this activities and you look "nice"?

How do self-confidence and beauty depend on each other?

3.7 When performed beauty, does your self-confidence and independence increase?

Does it improve your capability of taking more responsibilities?

3.8 Is there any beauty activities that you can not live without?

3.9 Is there any beauty activities that generates safety and security?

3.10 Does beauty products/activities lead to a feeling of pleasure for you?

Or

Do you feel discomfort?

Motivate how...

3.11 On occasion when you meet a person that you apprehend as more beautiful in comparison to yourself, do you feel pleasure or discomfort?

On occasion when you meet a person that you apprehend as less beautiful in comparison to yourself, do you feel pleasure or discomfort?

4) Social interactions in the context of beauty

4.1 Where do beauty come into play for you? Is it everywhere or in specific situations?

4.2 Does the ideals of beauty differ in different social contexts? How do you adapt to that?

4.3 For example, do the ideals of beauty differ depending on;

Social class

Lifestyles

Cultural backgrounds

Educational levels

Work positions

In different companies, ex. Media, shops, business, construction work etc.

Do you change your performance of beauty depending on these situations?

4.4 If you change your position in an organisation (ex. in a company or in a school) that results in increased or reduced power, do you adjust your appearance according to this?

4.5 To what extent are you aware about how beautiful others are?

To what extent are you aware about how others view you?

How does this affect the way you use beauty?

4.6 Is beauty, to look good, worth working for?

Is there any positively consequences?

Is there any negative consequences?

4.7 What do you think about "Remake" programs?

4.8 If you choose to challenge an ideal of beauty, why do you do that?

4.9 Is there any difficulties or barriers incorporating the activities leading to beauty?

4.10 Is there a minimum limit for what a person expects to accomplish within beauty?

4.11 Is there a maximum limit for what a person expects to accomplish within beauty?

4.12 Is there any embarrassments or dishonours incorporating the activities performed to accomplish beauty?

5) Perspectives of beauty

5.1 What perspective do you have when performing these activities of beauty? (Male or female?)

5.2 Do you think about how the opposite gender will apprehend you? Do you think about how individuals of the same gender to you will apprehend your look? Which one is the most important?

5.3 Do you judge the opposite gender based on their beauty?

5.4 Describe visually the ideal of the opposite gender in terms of physical beauty and what it means to you? Why is that? Do you know any person that fulfils these requirements?

5.5 How aware do you think the opposite gender is about beauty in comparison to you?

5.6 Do you believe the opposite gender change their activates of beauty depending on social situations the same way you do?

5.7 Do you believe the opposite gender them selves”believe they need” more or less activities of beauty than you?

5.8 Who do you think decides the ideal of beauty of the opposite gender?

5.9 Who do you think has the power of consumption of beauty?

Appendix 4: Results based on educational capital

Women and Men	University/College	Qualified vocational education	Gymnasium/Upper secondary school	Nine-year compulsory school
Spending £ 45 or more in a month (+500 SEK)	2 2 <hr/> 4		3 <hr/> 3	
Happy with their routine of beauty All women, but they continued with a “but...”	3 <hr/> 3	1 <hr/> 1	1 <hr/> 1	
Doing it to look better, better self-esteem and prevent aging	4 2 <hr/> 6	1 1 <hr/> 2	3 <hr/> 3	
Spending time on hygiene only in the morning	1 <hr/> 1		1 <hr/> 1	1 <hr/> 1
Spending time on hygiene, hair and perfume in the morning	2 <hr/> 2	1 <hr/> 1		
Spending time on hygiene, make up & hair in the morning	4 <hr/> 4	1 <hr/> 1	3 <hr/> 3	
Wish they had more time to spend on beauty	2 <hr/> 2		2 <hr/> 2	
Prioritize beauty ahead of other activities	1 <hr/> 1		3 <hr/> 3	

Appendix 5: Results based on men and their educational capital

Men	University/College	Qualified vocational education	Gymnasium/Upper secondary school	Nine-year compulsory school
Spending £ 45 or more in a month (+500 SEK)	2/6			
Happy with their routine of beauty	3/6	1/6	1/6	
Doing it to look better, better self-esteem and prevent aging	2/6	1/6		
Spending time on hygiene only in the morning	1/6		1/6	1/6
Spending time on hygiene, hair and perfume in the morning	2/6	1/6		
Spending time on hygiene, make up & hair in the morning				
Wish they had more time to spend on beauty				
Prioritize beauty ahead of other activities				

Appendix 6: Results based educational capital from the second questionnaire

	University/College	Qualified vocational education	Gymnasium/Upper secondary school	Nine-year compulsory school
Spending £ 45 or more in a month (+500 SEK)	4/7		3/4	
The importance of beauty is between 1-4 on a scale 1-10	1/7			
The importance of beauty is between 5-7 on a scale 1-10	3/7	1/2	2/4	
The importance of beauty is 8 or higher on a scale 1-10	3/7	1/2	2/4	1/1
People treat me differently depending on the appearance	5/7	1/2	4/4	1/1
More successful in life if are beautiful	6/7	1/2	4/4	1/1
It is an advantage to be rich instead of being beautiful	5/7	1/2	4/4	1/1
It is the activity undertaking beauty that is most important for you		1/2	2/4	
It is the results from undertaking beauty that is most important for you	7/7	1/2	2/4	1/1
It is the effort to look beautiful that is noticed in others beauty	3/7	1/2	2/4	1/1

It is the optimal results of beauty that is noticed in others appearance	4/7	1/2	2/4	
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Appendix 7: Results based on educational background and topic of concern

	Art	Economics & Engineering	Political Science & Law	Police	Construction work	nursery school
Spending £ 45 or more in a month (+500 SEK)	2/2	3/5	1/2			1/1
The importance of beauty is between 1-4 on a scale 1-10		1/5				
The importance of beauty is between 5-7 on a scale 1-10	1/2	2/5	1/2	1/2	1/2	
The importance of beauty is 8 or higher on a scale 1-10	1/2	2/5		1/2	1/2	1/1
People treat me differently depending on the appearance	2/2	3/5	2/2		2/2	1/1
More successful in life if are beautiful	1/2	4/5	2/2	1/2	2/2	1/1

It is an advantage to be rich instead of being beautiful	2/2	3/5	2/2	1/2	2/2	1/1
It is the activity undertaking beauty that is most important for you				1/2	1/2	1/1
It is the results from undertaking beauty that is most important for you	2/2	5/5	2/2	1/2	1/2	
It is the effort to look beautiful that is noticed in others beauty	1/2	3/5	2/2	1/2	2/2	1/1
It is the optimal results of beauty that is noticed in others appearance	1/2	2/5		1/2		

Appendix 8: Results based on social capital

	Capital 1	Capital 2	Capital 3
Spending £ 45 or more in a month (+500 SEK)	2/7	2/4	3/3
The importance of beauty is between 1-4 on a scale 1-10			1/3
The importance of beauty is between 5-7 on a scale 1-10	3/7	1/4	2/3
The importance of beauty is 8 or higher on a scale 1-10	4/7	3/4	
People treat me differently depending on the appearance	5/7	4/4	1/3
More successful in life if are beautiful	6/7	3/4	3/3
It is an advantage to be rich instead of being beautiful	4/7	4/4	3/3
It is the activity undertaking beauty that is most important for you	1/7	2/4	
It is the results from undertaking beauty that is most important for you	6/7	2/4	3/3
It is the effort to look beautiful that is noticed in others beauty	3/7	3/4	3/3
It is the optimal results of beauty that is noticed in others appearance	4/7	1/4	

