



# **Consumer Mindset in a Time of Crisis:**

## **Exploring the role of social media for Gen Z's fashion consumption in 2020**

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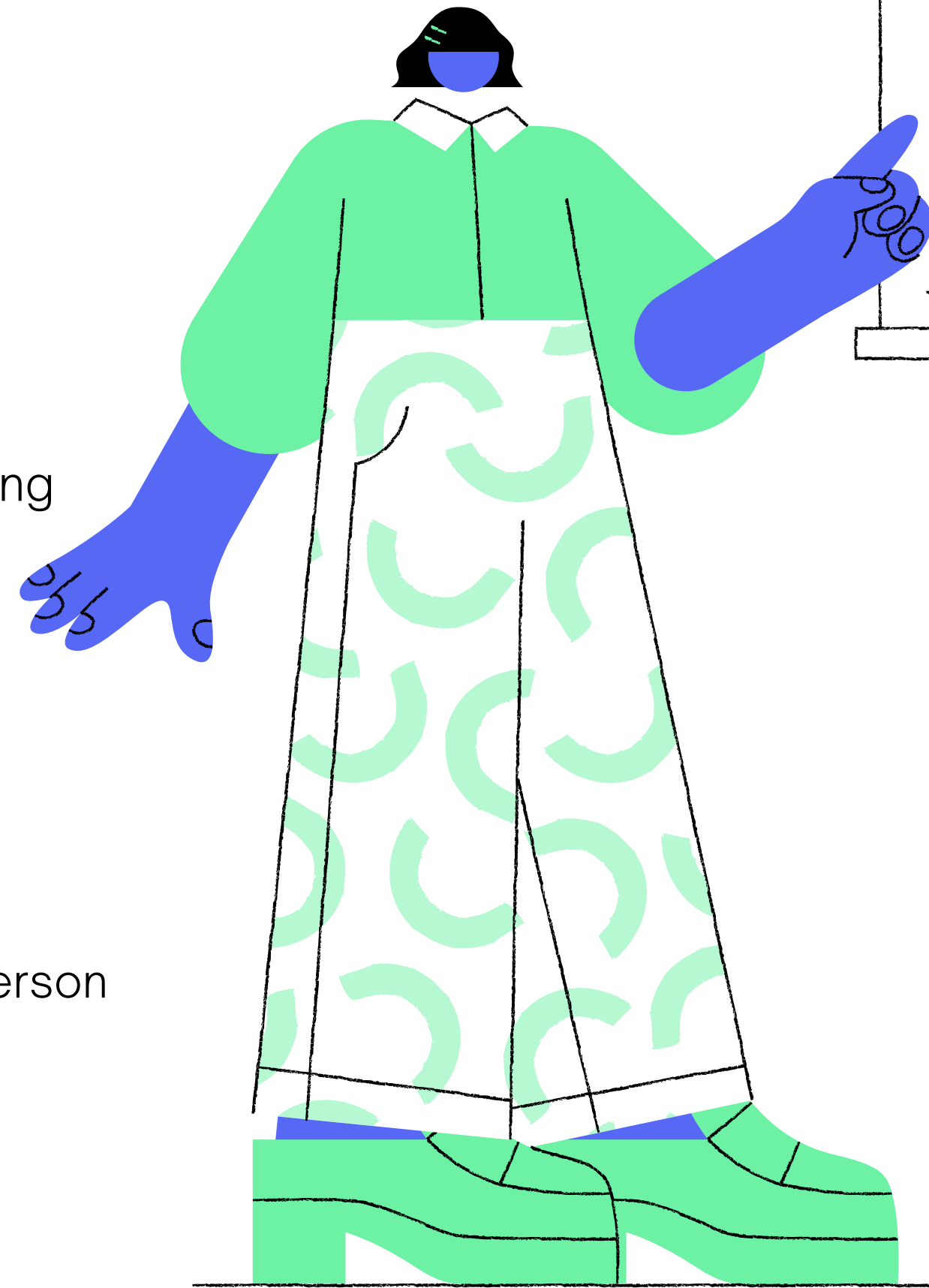


**In eight months, the fashion industry has seen an increase in e-commerce sales — from 18% to 29% — reaching levels of growth that had not been predicted until later in this decade.**

**(McKinsey, 2020)**

# Background and Research Aim

- COVID-19 has accelerated an ongoing trend in shopping behaviour.
- Shifts in consumer preferences lead towards digital interactions
- Online communications compensate for the lack of in-person interactions.



# Study Design

## REACH

A collaborative project between Cardiff Met x U.W.L.

## DATA COLLECTION

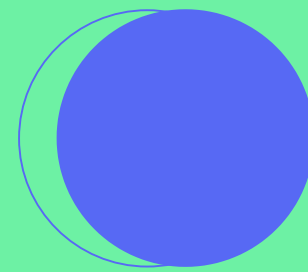
A total of N = 136 semi-structured interviews conducted with Gen Z consumers based in Cardiff, Wales, and London, England, in Q4 2020

A total of N = 44 Gen Z volunteers from Cardiff, Wales, logged consumer diaries for a period of three rolling weeks (Siemieniako, 2017).

## ANALYTICS

Transcribed and analysed using Thematic Analysis (Allen, 2017).

# Finding 1

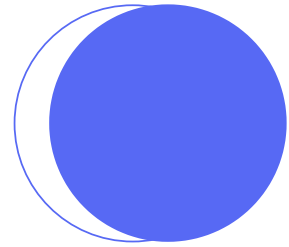


**SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT  
ENOUGH TO COMPLETE  
THE CUSTOMER  
JOURNEY**

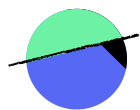


*"I tend to go to the website on my laptop and buy things rather than going on a direct link on social media, or if I have the app on my phone I'd open that instead and if want to buy it. I'm somewhat security conscious of direct links."*

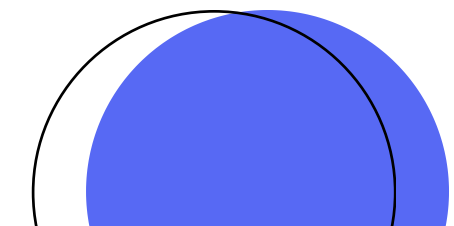
*(Interview Participant, 2021)*



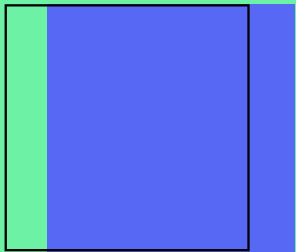
*"I never do. I never follow a link... I get off social media, and then I go on to the actual website or app itself. I will never actually follow a direct link just because I don't know I feel like I have trust issues and it's not a real website so I just go off and go on to the actual website to find the item myself."*



*(Interview Participant, 2021)*

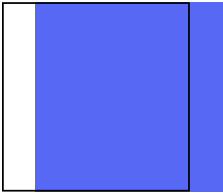


# Finding 2



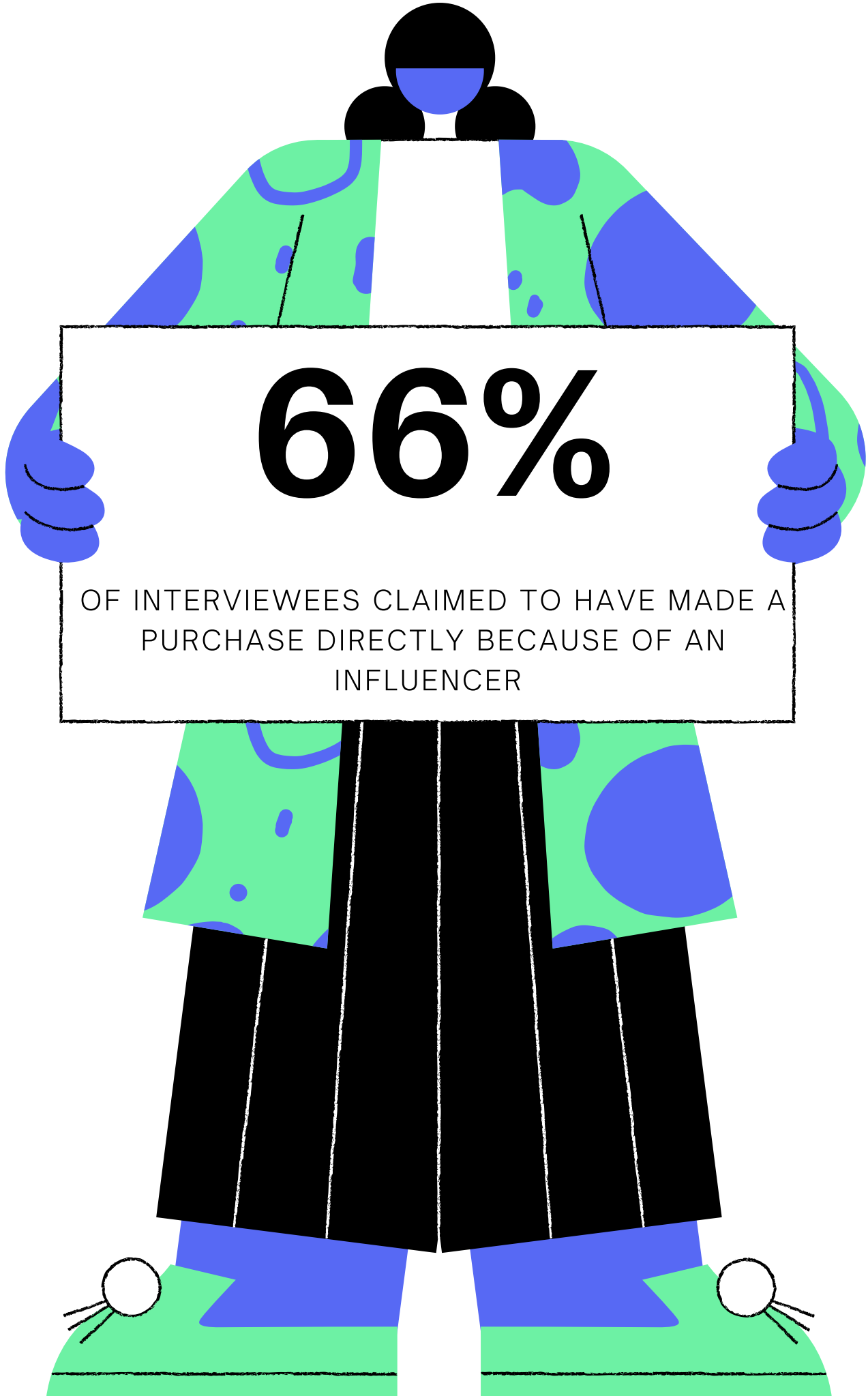
INCREASED SCRUTINY  
OF PAID INFLUENCERS

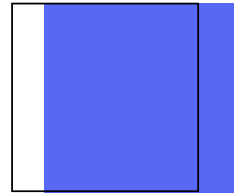




*"I also think if it wasn't for fashion influencers, I wouldn't buy half the things I do because they would not be in my mind."*

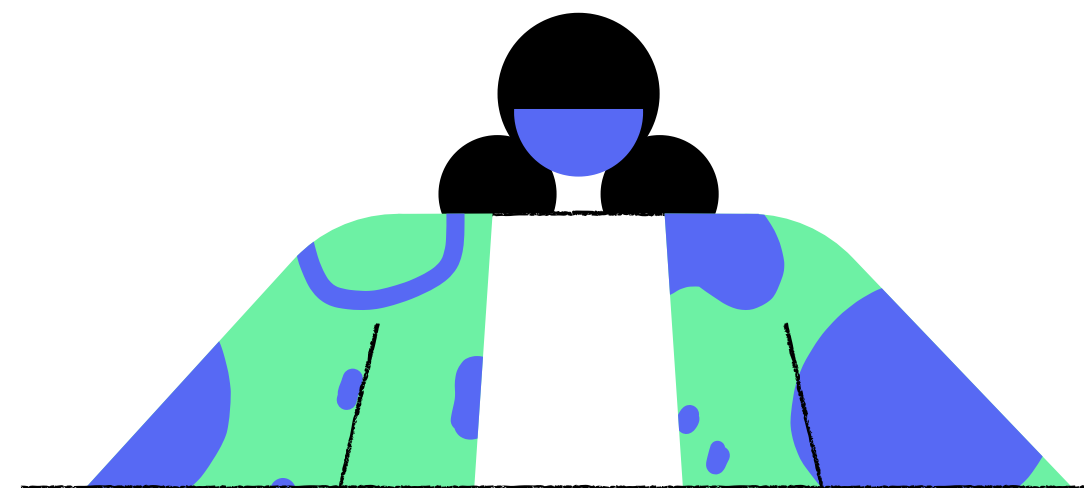
*(Interview Participant, 2021)*



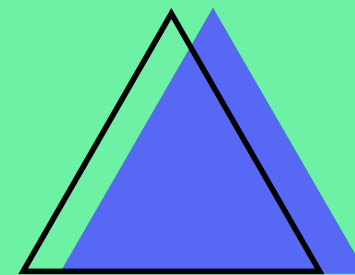


*"I think too often influencers putting out things simply because they're paid. I don't want to put something out there and unless I believe in it. I think that is something really important, because I follow influencers based on whether I think they can be honest or not"*

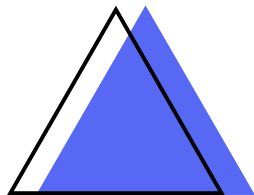
*(Interview Participant, 2021)*



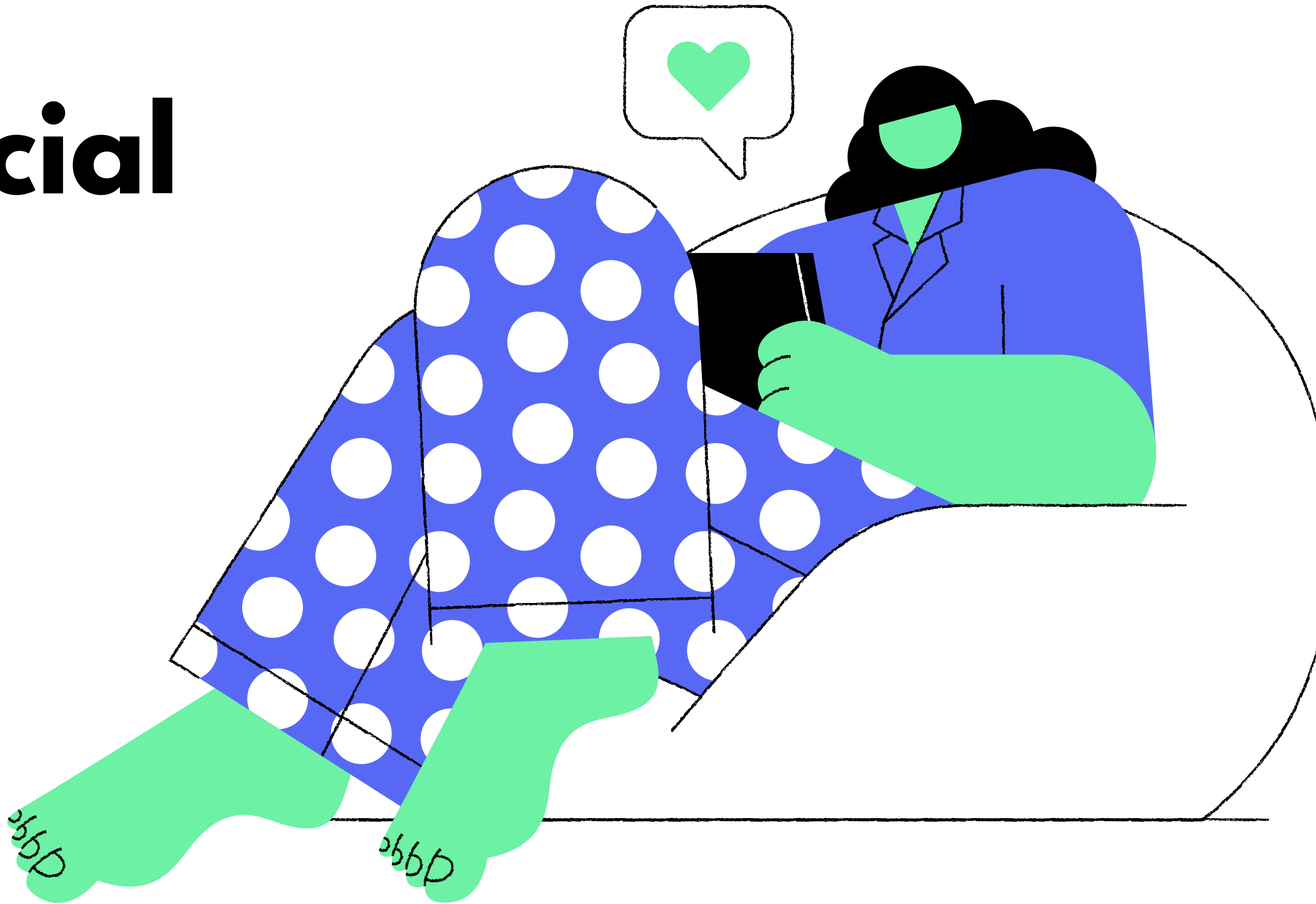
# Finding 3



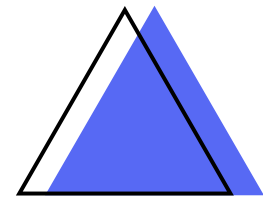
MIX OF PUBLIC CONTENT  
AND DARK SOCIALS



# Dark Social

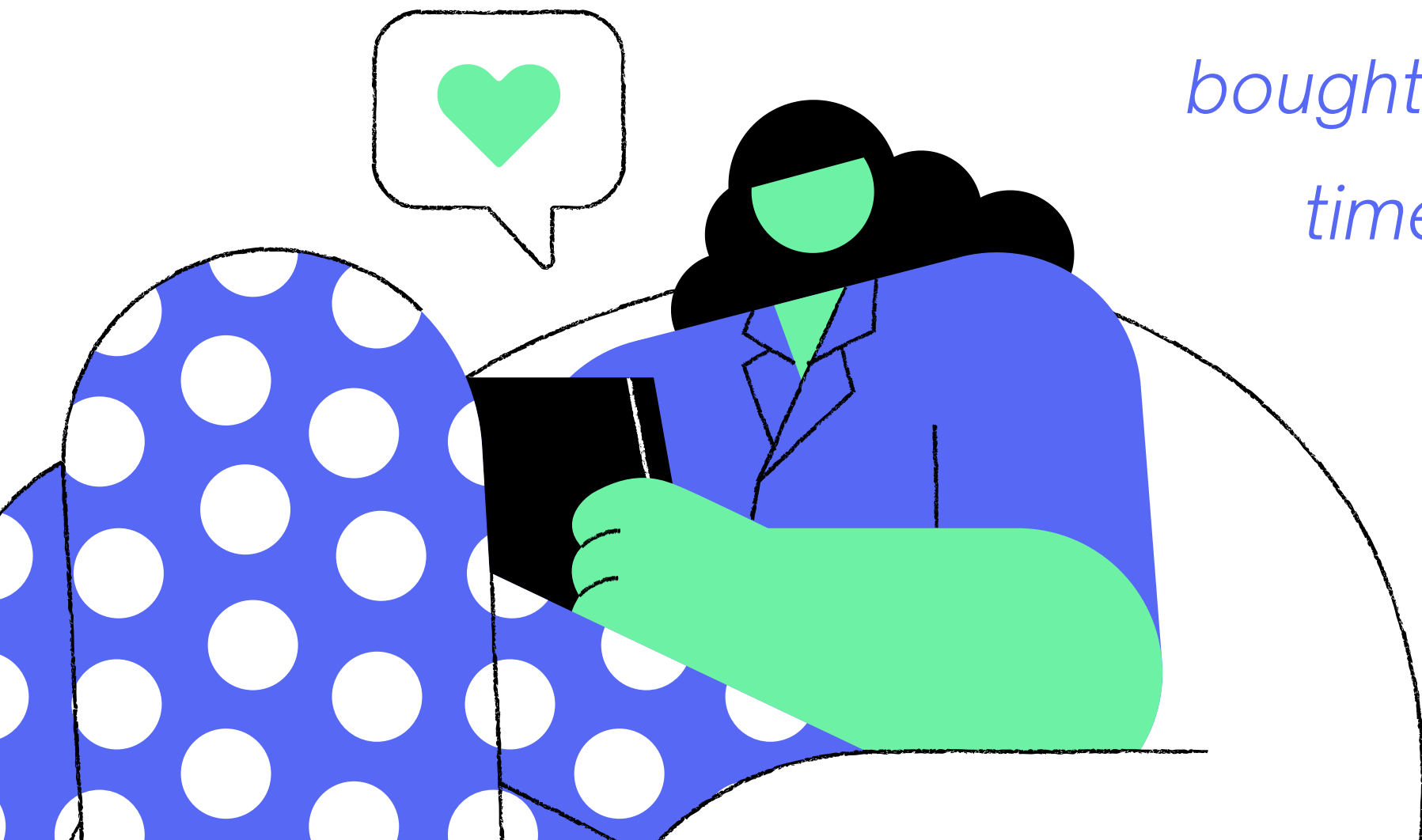


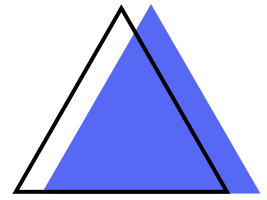
(Forbes, 2017)



*"I usually hear about new stuff from friends. Not through Insta though... Whatsapp and Snap. We send pics to each other to show what we've bought and whether we like it. We do that all the time. It's almost like small fashion shows."*

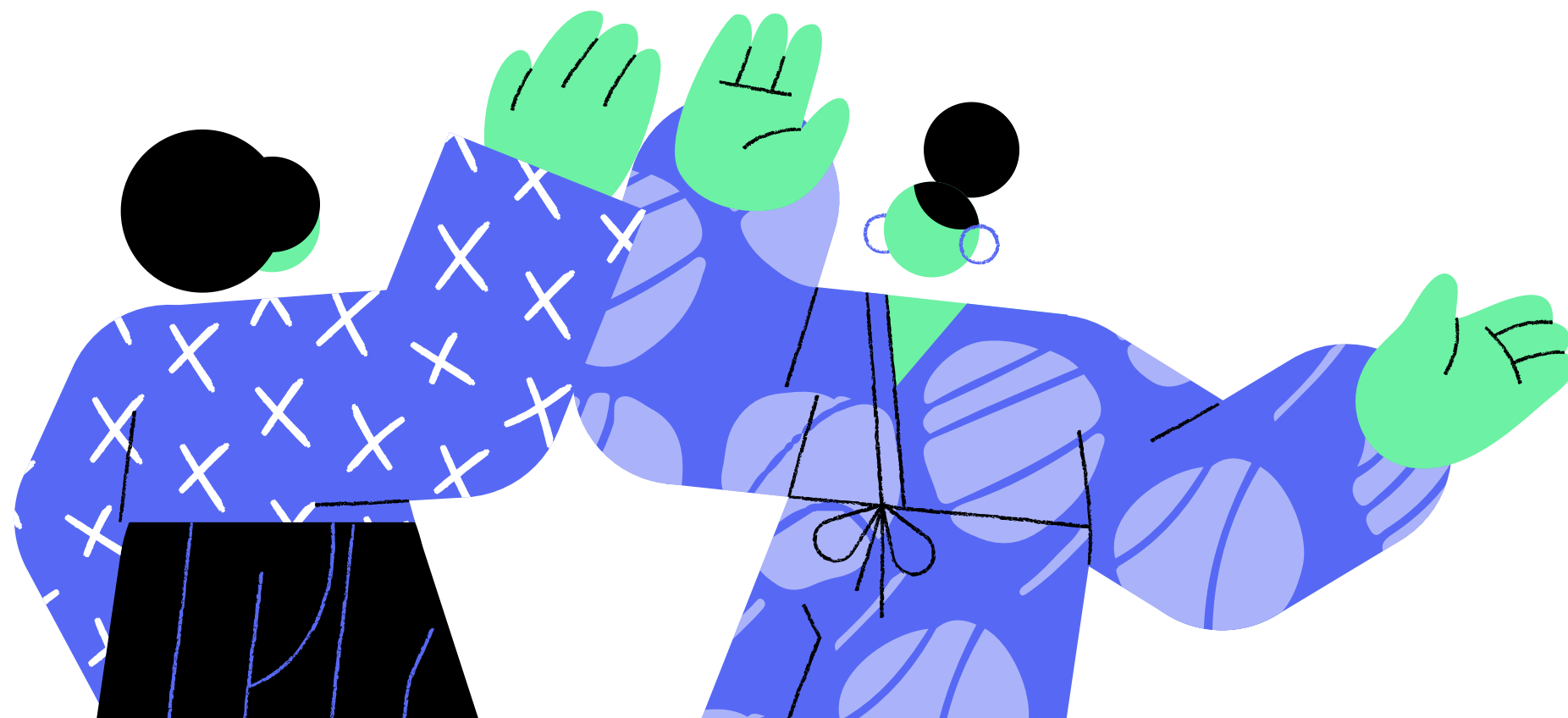
*(Interview Participant, 2021)*





*"Snap is probably what I use most with my friends when we talk about fashion. I can show what I like, for example, when I am shopping and in a dressing room, I send them a Snap. And they can tell me 'hey, this looks good' or 'hey, this looks shit'. I wouldn't post this on other social media. (...) I keep these [conversations] private."*

*(Interview Participant, 2021)*



# Implications.



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