
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Effectiveness of Social Media Influencers in the Cosmetic and Skincare Industry to the Purchase Intention of the Generation Z Filipinos

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| ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing, the process of examining, identifying, and supporting beauty influencers who communicate on behalf of the brand's customers, is a trend in today's digital world across various social media platforms, creating an opportunity for brands to market through social media influencers. To investigate the effectiveness of social media influencers in the cosmetics and skincare industry, the researchers conducted a quantitative analysis using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to examine and identify the effectiveness of social media influencers in the said industry on the purchase intention of Filipino consumers. This research is distinctive as it concentrates on the relatively emerging and fast-evolving cosmetic and skincare industry in the Philippine market. The absence of studies in the Philippines, where social media influencers play a vital role in a brand's marketing and advertising efforts, is one element that distinguishes this study. The study has highlighted four main hypotheses. These factors include Trust, Perceived Credibility, Perceived Image, and Brand Attitude as the influencing factors for Generation Z Filipino consumers. Findings from the data gathered have shown that all the hypotheses generated a significant relationship and positive correlation toward purchase intention.

| KEYWORDS

Influencer Marketing; Perceived Credibility; Trust; Purchase Intention; Cosmetics; Social Media; Brand Attitude; Perceived Image

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1. Introduction

The growth of social media influencers enables companies to be involved in today's digital world, which affects the growth of advertising a brand on social media, in which companies now acquire a variety of influencer marketing for their products. It is inexpensive to implement techniques that allow the target audience to be directly reached. Beauty knows no gender. With the rising trends in media and technology, men and women have adapted to the beauty and skincare industry. (Wischhover, 2018) Also, these alternatives have led to the growth of social media influencer marketing, which is an excellent shift for companies to build their brand. Moreover, the growing trend of influencers marketing has boosted the growth of the cosmetics and skincare industry. Wischhover (2018) also states that the attitudes and behaviors of consumers who buy beauty products and skincare products depend on a group of variables, mainly three factors: physical and personal Factors, marketing Factors, and socio-cultural factors. Influencers exist as brand ambassadors to promote brands through social media platforms. Thus, interact more deeply with their customers.

Social media influencers have evolved as popular endorsers for promotion strategies. These are the influencers who are famous and endorse various beauty products through their social media platforms, like Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, and YouTube and have attained fame by branding themselves as specialists on social media platforms. The cosmetics and personal care industry continuously evolve to provide consumers with access to safe, sustainable, and innovative products. Evidence suggests that social media influencers positively impact the online audiences' beauty and lifestyle, in which they are frequently seen as role models whose tastes, ideas, and attitudes are worth idolizing. (Krywalski, 2020)

This study will mainly focus on the cosmetic and skincare industry influencer's effectiveness towards the purchase intention of generation Z Filipinos. Several supplementary research studies are discussed in the literature review, which will further highlight components that are influencing the purchasing intention of the consumers. Furthermore, the research methodology will consist of data gathering procedures, the presentation of the research hypothesis. Lastly, the interpretation of the data and the discussion will be presented to be followed by the conclusion and recommendation.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing with collaboration tools is a relatively recent trend in the industry (Granata, 2021). The identification of social media influencers, their effectiveness and impact on beauty brands, and the promotional strategies they used when communicating with customers were all discussed in the literature study. Increased connectivity among generation Z Filipinos enabled by online platforms allows them to act and interact in ways that make them more similar to one another, resulting in fewer perceived limits on cross-generational barriers in daily life. Cosmetics and skincare influencers may interact with their peers and consumers through their content, which helps them gain popularity. (Smith, 2018). Influencers primarily benefit from a variety of commercial channels for advertising. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, LinkedIn, and Youtube are just a few examples. Nonetheless, this is dependent on their personality and abilities.

2.2 On the Consumer's Perception Towards Social Media Influencers in the Cosmetic and Skincare Industry

The perceived credibility of customers is important in this study. Trust is one of the ideas in the study that plays a role in this investigation. Bojang (2017) addresses the significance of trust as a beauty influencer. It is critical to comprehend the level of trust in the e-marketing platform, which can result in either threat or success. In a social media setting, followers and beauty influencers do not know each other personally. Influencers would convince customers more readily if they were trustworthy, reliable, honest, and sincere. Bruns (2018) also mentioned that consumers' feelings of perplexity and uncertainty are often reduced by trust, which facilitates action or influences their buying behavior. For instance, consumers regard social media influencers as trustworthy when they are genuine, personal, transparent, and upfront with their content. Lacking these key attributes, the influencers have little to no power to persuade and create an impact on their audience.

2.3 On the Social Media Influencer's Impact on Consumer's Purchasing Decision

According to Lee (2020), influencers have a personal predisposition to influence the purchasing decisions of other customers. Influencers have grown in popularity as reputable and insightful sources of information due to their ability to interact with their peers. They also have an above-average ability to influence the opinions and behaviors of others. Numerous research has been conducted to investigate the role of influencer marketing. Chapple (2017), for example, cosmetic and skincare industry influencers generate a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention, specifically for luxury brands. It indicates that consumers consciously absorb their product recommendation by trying out the product themselves and/or suggesting it to others. Example shows how these influencers have a favorable influence on consumers' purchasing intentions, particularly for premium items. It implies that buyers voluntarily internalize the influencer's product recommendations by trying the product for themselves and/or purchasing it.

Influencers have acquired prominence in a variety of industries as a result of the advent of internet platforms such as social media. According to Mwaisaka (2017), these changes lead professionals and firms to keep up with consumer dialogues online, resulting in beauty industry social media influencers. Brands may reach their target consumers by enlisting the help of social media influencers to promote their products. Skincare products are in high demand these days, with a shift in demand as these products target not just older but also younger people. The growth of the global market is at a robust rate of 6.5 percent in the next seven years. The cosmetics industry has derived substantial benefits from the rise of social media, which is why beauty brands increasingly turn to digital media to raise their visibility and credibility and boost their sales (Ridder, 2020).

3. Methodology

The researchers used a descriptive correlational design to further describe the variables and the relationships that occur naturally among them. Through a quantitative gathering of information,

A research survey was developed and validated to collect data from Male and Female respondents ages 18 to 23 residing in Metro Manila, NCR.

3.1 Computed Value of Cronbach Alpha of the Questionnaire Items

Table 1. Computed Value of Cronbach Alpha of the Questionnaire Items

Items	Cronbach alpha	Remarks
Perceived Credibility	0.803	Good
Perceived Image	0.881	Good
Trust	0.813	Good
Brand Attitude	0.800	Good
Purchase Intention	0.856	Good
Overall	0.908	Excellent

"Note: Acceptable if Cronbach alpha is greater than the 0.70 minimum value".

The table shows the computed value of Cronbach's alpha. The value of alpha for items Perceived Credibility (0.803), Perceived Image (0.881), Trust (0.813), Brand Attitude (0.800), and Purchase Intention (0.856) are all good. The overall value of alpha of all the items combined is 0.908, which is excellent indicates that the questionnaire tool used in this study has passed the reliability test.

The sampling unit will consist of Filipino consumers who are into cosmetic and skincare brands and follow social media influencers across various social media platforms. Moreover, a probability simple random sampling technique was utilized to collect data and was distributed along with different online platforms.

In the context of the conducted primary research, the representativeness of the examined sample was assessed using the following formula below, totaling 385 respondents.

3.2 Mechanics

The questionnaires are distributed via google forms link to gather the primary data. The survey questionnaire distributed was divided into several sections. In the first portion, to properly profile the respondents, The respondents were asked if they were following social media influencers in the cosmetic or skin care industry. Choosing the "No" option will terminate the whole survey process, which resulted in 11 respondents who were disqualified from taking the survey.

In the second section, the respondents were asked what social media platforms they follow in the beauty industry. They are also given the option to input the platform if not mentioned. The third section of the survey addressed the independent variables: perceived credibility, perceived image, trust, and brand attitude, along with the dependent variable, purchase intention. These variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale widely used in research as it allows to operationalize perceptions and personality traits quickly.

The survey consists of a set of close-ended questions for a quantitative data gathering procedure which will be analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation further to assess the relationship and correlation of the mentioned variables.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of What Social Media Platforms Do They Followed Beauty Influencers

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of What Social Media Platforms Do They Followed Beauty Influencers

Social Media Platforms	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Instagram	306	81.38
Youtube	261	69.41
Tiktok	204	54.26
Facebook	161	42.82
Twitter	48	12.77

Table 2 above shows the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents in terms of what social media platforms they follow as beauty influencers. It is shown that the majority of them followed them through Instagram, which is 81.38% (306). Social media platforms such as youtube were also used by 69.41% (261) respondents, 54.26% (204) used TikTok, 42.82% (161) used Facebook, and 12.77% (48) respondents followed the beauty influencers through Twitter.

4.1.2 Respondents' Perceived Credibility on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Table 3. Respondents' Perceived Credibility on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I believe that the more followers an influencer has, the more authentic are his/her recommendations	3.91	Agree
I believe the Influencer's recommendations are more trustworthy when they are not being sponsored by the brand they are recommending	4.17	Agree
I perceive influencers as credible when their message in their post (on social media) is clear and persuasive	4.13	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.07	Agree

Legend: "(1.00-1.51) Strongly Disagree", "(1.51-2.50) Disagree", "(2.51-3.50) Neutral", "(3.51-4.50) Agree", "(4.51-5.00) Strongly Agree"

In response to the first hypothesis, Table 3 shows the respondents' perceived credibility on the cosmetics and skincare influencers. It is shown that overall, respondents agreed with the above statements with a weighted mean of 4.07. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "I believe the Influencer's recommendations are more trustworthy when they are not being sponsored by the brand they are recommending" (4.17), while the statement with the least weighted mean is "I believe that the more followers an influencer has, the more authentic are his/her recommendations" (3.91). All of the statements are interpreted as "Agree", which implies respondents' preference on the perceived credibility of the cosmetics and skincare influencers.

4.1.3 Respondents' Brand Attitude on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Table 4. Respondents' Brand Attitude on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I perceive the brand as a quality brand based on the influencer who promotes them	4.03	Agree
If my favorite online personality recommends a brand, I am more likely to try it	4.14	Agree
I feel good about buying from a brand represented by a reputable influencer	4.16	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.11	Agree

Legend: "(1.00-1.51) Strongly Disagree", "(1.51-2.50) Disagree", "(2.51-3.50) Neutral", "(3.51-4.50) Agree", "(4.51-5.00) Strongly Agree"

In relation to the second hypothesis, Table 4 shows the respondents' brand attitudes toward cosmetics and skincare influencers. It is shown that overall, respondents agreed on the above statements with a weighted mean of 4.11. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "I feel good about buying from a brand represented by a reputable influencer" (4.16), while the statement with the least weighted mean is "I perceive the brand as a quality brand based on the influencer who promotes them." (4.03). All of the statements are interpreted as "Agree". The result implies respondents' preference on brand attitudes toward cosmetics and skincare influencers.

4.1.4 Respondents' Trust in the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Table 5. Respondents' Trust in the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I perceive the influencer as trustworthy based on the quality of their content	4.16	Agree
I trust influencers based on their product reviews	4.15	Agree
I trust beauty influencers as much as I trust beauty experts and professionals.	3.84	Agree
I trust organic reviews more than company-controlled reviews	4.27	Agree
I trust more the recommendations of Influencers that communicate with their followers (answering questions, answering DM, launching pools, interacting with followers).	4.22	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.13	Agree

Legend: "(1.00-1.51) Strongly Disagree", "(1.51-2.50) Disagree", "(2.51-3.50) Neutral", "(3.51-4.50) Agree", "(4.51-5.00) Strongly Agree"

In response to the third hypothesis, Table 5 shows the respondents' trust in the cosmetics and skincare influencers. It is shown that overall, respondents agreed with the above statements with a weighted mean of 4.13. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "I trust organic reviews more than company-controlled reviews" (4.27), while the statement with the least weighted mean is "I trust beauty influencers as much as I trust beauty experts and professionals." (3.84). All of the statements are interpreted as "Agree". The result shows respondents' perception regarding trust in the cosmetics and skin care influencers

4.1.5 Respondents' Perceived Image on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Table 6. Respondents' Perceived Image on the Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The beauty influencer impacts my perception of the brand	4.02	Agree
I associate the influencer's image with the beauty brand he/she promotes	4.02	Agree
The appearance & content (i.e. the overall aesthetic, post content) on influencers' posts regarding the product/brand affects my decision in purchasing a product.	4.18	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.07	Agree

Legend: "(1.00-1.51) Strongly Disagree", "(1.51-2.50) Disagree", "(2.51-3.50) Neutral", "(3.51-4.50) Agree", "(4.51-5.00) Strongly Agree"

Table 6 shows the respondents' perceived image of the cosmetics and skincare influencers in relation to the fourth hypothesis. It is shown that overall, respondents agreed with the above statements with a weighted mean of 4.07. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "The appearance & content (i.e. the overall aesthetic, post content) on influencers post regarding the product/brand affects my decision in purchasing a product." (4.18), while statements with the least weighted mean are "I associate the influencer's image to the beauty brand he/she promotes" and "The beauty influencer impacts my perception towards the brand" with the same weighted mean of 4.02. All of the statements are interpreted as "Agree". This implies respondents' perception regarding the perceived image on the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers

4.1.6 Respondents' Purchase Intention with the Impacts of Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Table 7. Respondents' Purchase Intention with the Impacts of Cosmetics and Skin Care Influencers

Statements	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
I have felt more confident about buying a product after seeing the Influencer that I follow recommending/using it	4.17	Agree
I actively seek out reviews from influencers before making purchase decisions	4.20	Agree
I am more likely to buy a beauty product that is recommended by an influencer.	4.15	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.18	Agree

Legend: "(1.00-1.51) Strongly Disagree", "(1.51-2.50) Disagree", "(2.51-3.50) Neutral", "(3.51-4.50) Agree", "(4.51-5.00) Strongly Agree"

Table 7 shows the respondents' purchase intention with the impacts of cosmetics and skincare influencers. It is shown that overall, respondents agreed with the above statements with a weighted mean of 4.18. The statement with the highest weighted mean is "I actively seek out reviews from influencers before making purchase decisions" (4.20), while the statement with the least weighted mean is "I am more likely to buy a beauty product that is recommended by an influencer." (4.15). All of the statements are interpreted as "Agree".

4.1.7 Pearson r Correlation Test: Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Credibility, Image, Trust and Brand Attitude Towards Cosmetics and Skincare Industry Influencers to the Respondents' Purchase Intention

Table 8. Pearson r Correlation Test: Significant Relationship Between the Perceived Credibility, Image, Trust and Brand Attitude Towards Cosmetics and Skincare Industry Influencers to the Respondents' Purchase Intention

Indicators	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Perceived Credibility	0.667	Strong Positive Correlation	0.000	Reject H ₀₁	Significant
Brand Attitude	0.839	Very Strong Positive Correlation	0.000	Reject H ₀₂	Significant
Trust	0.806	Very Strong Positive Correlation	0.000	Reject H ₀₃	Significant
Perceived Image	0.697	Strong Positive Correlation	0.000	Reject H ₀₄	Significant

Legend: If the p-value is less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance, reject H₀; otherwise, failed to reject

Table 8 above shows a significant relationship between the perceived credibility, image, trust, and brand attitude towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention using a Pearson r Correlation test. It is shown that the results were found to be significant for all indicators with p-values of the same 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance, thus, rejecting the null hypothesis. This implies that there is a significant relationship between the perceived credibility, image, trust, and brand attitude toward cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.

4.1.8 Summary of Hypotheses

Table 9. Summary of Hypotheses

Research Questions	Hypothesis	Findings	Interpretation & Decision
Does the perceived credibility of the consumer to the cosmetics industry affect their purchase intention towards a brand?	The perceived credibility of the consumer to the cosmetics and skincare industry influencer significantly affects their purchase intention towards a brand.	c=0.667 p-value: 0.000 There is a significant relationship between perceived credibility toward cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.	Strong Positive Correlation Hypotheses #1 Is Negated
Does consumers' brand attitude directly influence the consumers' purchase intention?	Consumers' brand attitude directly influences the consumers' purchase intention.	c= 0.839 p-value: 0.000 There is a significant relationship between brand attitude toward cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.	Very Strong Positive Correlation Hypotheses #2 Is Negated

<p>Does consumers' trust in the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers directly impact their purchase intention for the brand?</p>	<p>Consumers' trust in the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers directly impacts their purchase intention for the brand.</p>	<p>c= 0.806 p-value: 0.000</p> <p>There is a significant relationship between trust toward cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.</p>	<p>Very Strong Positive Correlation</p> <p>Hypotheses #3 Is Negated</p>
<p>Does the perceived image of the consumer to the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers significantly affect their purchase intention towards a brand?</p>	<p>The perceived image of the consumer to the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers significantly affects their purchase intention towards a brand</p>	<p>c= 0.697 p-value: 0.000</p> <p>There is a significant relationship between perceived image towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention</p>	<p>Strong Positive Correlation</p> <p>Hypotheses #4 Is Negated</p>

Legend: If the p-value is less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance, reject H_0 ; otherwise, failed to reject

Based on Table 9, we can conclude that the 2nd and 3rd hypotheses yielded a very strong positive correlation while the rest had a strong positive correlation, which means that both hypotheses 2 and 3 which are both referring to the consumer's trust and brand attitude towards SMI significantly affect their purchase intention and have a higher level of correlation among the rest. This insight is the reason why some brands or companies are very selective in choosing who they should partner up with because the "digital native" or generation Z are very critical of influencers, especially in terms of their views.

As for the 1st and 4th hypotheses, referring to the perceived image and perceived credibility, it yielded a strong positive correlation meaning there's a relationship between the variables. However not as high as the first two hypotheses mentioned in the first paragraph.

Findings imply that there is a significant relationship between the perceived credibility, image, trust, and brand attitude towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.

4.2 Discussions

4.2.1 Perceived Credibility

In response to the survey question, respondents agreed on the statements regarding perceived credibility towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers. The majority of the respondents believe that Influencer's recommendations are more trustworthy when they are not being sponsored by the brand they are recommending. Also, respondents believe that the more followers an influencer has, the more authentic are his/her recommendations. In addition, respondents also perceive influencers as credible when their message in their social media posts is clear and persuasive. In relation to the first hypothesis, the result implies that there is a significant relationship between perceived credibility towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.

4.2.2 Brand Attitude

The result shows that the majority of respondents feel good about buying from a brand represented by a reputable influencer. The respondents also perceive the brand as a quality brand based on the influencer who promotes them. As per result, respondents also agree that they are more likely to try if their favorite online personality recommends a brand. This shows respondents' brand attitudes toward cosmetics and skincare influencers. Concerning the second hypothesis, the result implies that there is a significant relationship between brand attitude towards cosmetics and skincare industry influencers to the respondents' purchase intention.

4.2.3 Trust

As per results, most Generation Z Filipinos trust organic reviews more than company-controlled reviews. Respondents also perceive the influencer as trustworthy based on the quality of their content. Furthermore, they trust influencers based on their product reviews, and as much as they trust beauty experts and professionals. Also, respondents trust the recommendations of Influencers that communicate with their followers (answering questions, answering DM, launching polls, interacting with followers). In response to the third hypothesis, the result implies consumers' trust in the cosmetics and skincare industry influencers directly impacts their purchase intention for the brand. This shows that trust has a beneficial influence on respondents' purchasing intentions. This is particularly clear in their responses to the survey question, explicitly expressing their faith in influencers in purchase decisions.

4.2.4 Perceived Image

As per the results, the majority of the respondents agreed that appearance & content (i.e., the overall aesthetic, post content) on influencers' posts regarding the product/brand affects their decision in purchasing a cosmetic product. Furthermore, respondents associate the beauty influencer's image to the beauty brand they promote and impact their perception towards the brand. In response to the fourth hypothesis, the perceived image of cosmetics and skincare influencers in connection to purchase intention was shown to be significant. This implies that perceived image and purchase intention has a favorable relationship.

4.2.5 Impacts of cosmetics and Skincare Influencers

The result shows that most Generation Z Filipinos actively seek out reviews from influencers before making purchase decisions. This implies that respondents base their shopping decisions on influencers and consider other factors. Respondents also agreed that they felt more confident about buying a product after seeing the influencer they follow recommending/using it. In addition, as per result, respondents are more likely to buy a beauty product recommended by an influencer.

5. Conclusion

As this study is dedicated to the consumers, marketers, and influencers that are part of the e-commerce industry, the following parties could better understand possible solutions to increase brand awareness, engagement, and profitability towards their company. Such as knowing what social platforms Generation Z actively use and interacting with cosmetic and skincare influencers, establishing influencer-to-consumer trust and credibility.

The study findings should be utilized as a developmental trigger for inquiry in terms of

1. **Promotions and IMC** - First hypothesis of the study discussed in Table 3 shows respondents' perceived credibility on the cosmetics and skincare influencers. As shown in Table 8, there is a correlation between this factor and purchase intention. Hence, new entrants or companies venturing into the cosmetic industry late in the game should adjust their promotional collateral efforts towards perceived credibility-building endeavors and initiatives.
2. **Product development** - Businesses venturing into the cosmetic industry should consider consumers' brand attitudes in their product development. As per the second hypothesis, Table 4 shows the respondents' brand attitudes toward cosmetics and skincare influencers. Factors strongly correlate with purchase intention, as shown in Table 8. Hence, Companies in the beauty industry must consider these factors in their product's definition, precisely its marketing strategy.
3. **Pricing Adjustments** - The fourth hypothesis discussed in Table 6 shows respondents' perceived image of the cosmetics and skincare influencers. Table 8 shows that this factor significantly affects their purchase intention towards a brand; hence companies should optimize their prices relative to the respondents' perceived image on the cosmetics and skincare influencers to suggest the quality or exclusiveness of a cosmetic brand.

Future authors of this current study may want to consider adding the variable of pricing to elicit willingness to pay and price sensitivity as a consideration factor when it comes to the determination of purchase intention of generation Z Filipino consumers.

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