

Research Article

Beyond Celebrity Endorsements: The Growing Influence of Non-celebrity Social Media Influencers on Consumer Purchase Decisions

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Abstract: The study investigates the role of non-celebrity social media influencers in shaping consumer purchase decisions towards personal care products. The emergence of social media platforms has enabled people with specialized knowledge or relatable personalities to have considerable impact. The study investigates the impact of non-celebrity influencers on consumer views and choices surrounding personal care goods. It utilizes qualitative analysis and survey data to examine how these influencers use their authenticity, knowledge, and interaction with audiences to exert influence. Findings suggest that non-celebrity influencers play a crucial role in building trust and credibility, providing authentic product recommendations, and creating relatable content that resonates with consumers. Moreover, they contribute to shaping consumer attitudes by fostering a sense of community and facilitating informative discussions around personal care products. Understanding the mechanisms through which non-celebrity influencers influence consumer behavior can offer valuable insights for marketers aiming to capitalize on the power of social media in promoting personal care products.

Keywords: Personalized Skincare Routines, Behind-the-Scenes Content, User-Generated Content, Social Advocacy and Values Alignment.

INTRODUCTION

The significance of non-celebrity social media influencers in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products cannot be overstated Booth [11]. The influencers often possess a high degree of authenticity and credibility, which resonates strongly with modern consumers who value transparency and genuine connections. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, non-celebrity influencers are perceived as more relatable and trustworthy, leading to increased receptivity to their product recommendations [13]. Non-celebrity influencers have the ability to reach niche audiences with specific interests and preferences within the personal care product category [21]. This targeted approach allows brands to tailor their marketing efforts more effectively, maximizing the impact of their messaging and increasing the likelihood of conversion. By partnering with influencers who have built loyal followings within relevant subcultures or communities, brands can tap into a ready-made audience of engaged and receptive consumers [19]. Furthermore, non-celebrity influencers play a crucial role in driving conversations and shaping trends within the personal care industry [1]. Through their authentic storytelling and engaging content, they have the power to influence consumer perceptions of beauty standards, skincare routines, and self-care practices [25]. As such, brands that collaborate with non-celebrity influencers can position themselves at the forefront of emerging trends and market shifts, gaining a competitive edge in an increasingly crowded landscape [5]. Overall, the significance of non-celebrity social media influencers in shaping consumer

attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products lies in their ability to foster trust, reach niche audiences, and drive conversations within the industry. By harnessing the influence of these individuals, brands can forge meaningful connections with consumers and drive tangible business results in today's digital age.

Social Media Marketing

Social media marketing refers to the strategic promotion of goods and services using popular social media. The primary objective of social media marketing is to establish relationships with the intended audience, foster brand affinity, and generate website traffic [7]. The process includes disseminating material on one's social media sites, actively interacting with and responding to followers, evaluating outcomes, and executing social media campaigns [2]. The primary benefit of social media is its ability to provide extensive brand visibility and a significant return on investment. The analytical capabilities offered by social media marketing are unattainable via conventional marketing strategies. Social media marketing is a more cost-effective alternative to conventional advertising methods, while also enhancing consumer satisfaction by targeting a particular audience [11]. Social media has a far greater scope of influence compared to conventional marketing, since it directly interacts with clients. This interaction facilitates the generation of excitement and enables marketers to get more comprehensive understanding of the efficacy of their marketing operations. Additionally, customers get advantages from social media marketing as they have the ability to access curated material, selectively picking and

consuming just the information they want, while also gaining access to pertinent advertisements and communication [13].

Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing has emerged as the most recent trend in the field of social media marketing. This is a potent word-of-mouth marketing method that entails creating and promoting content across several social media platforms [21]. Social media influencers are basically contemporary internet superstars that possess a substantial following. With their exceptional ability to convince others, they have the capacity to captivate and shape their audience via their vlogs, blogs, tweets, and other forms of communication on their preferred platform. They might aid marketing organizations in promoting organic word-of-mouth by offering financial remuneration or complimentary products/services [18]. Consumers are increasingly relying on influencers' opinions when making purchase decisions; hence marketers of this period should cooperate with influencers to influence prospective consumers' buying choices. In light of the limited efficiency of conventional advertising methods, which have been largely made obsolete by third-party services like ad blockers, influencer marketing has emerged as a valuable strategy for engaging with one's desired client base in the present period [1].

Theoretical Background

Khodabandeh and Lindh, C. [27] conducted research to study the effect of the external input of influencers and the internal input of commitment on purchase intention in online interactions. The researchers found that brand image functions as the mediating component in this relationship. The study highlighted the significance of brand effects of influencers and commitment in affecting purchase intent. The sample consisted of 730 consumers from a variety of nations, and the research revealed the role of these factors. The findings of this study recognize the complex nature of the internet sector and highlight the need of choosing influencers who are suitable for these industries. Xin Jean Lim et al., [39] to investigate the effectiveness of social media influencers. The researchers focused specifically on the attractiveness of the source, the trustworthiness of the source, the relationship between the source and the product, and the transfer of meaning. With the help of this study, fifteen marketers were given a variety of advice that could be put into practice regarding the process of selecting a social media influencer who has the capacity to engage and captivate a particular audience via the use of an advertising message that was engaging. According to the findings of the study, the consumer attitude was the mediating component. Additionally, mediation was used in order to evaluate the impact of the customer's attitude. In order to attain a competitive advantage in the market, the study presented a number of practical considerations for marketers. These considerations included the need of carefully selecting an appropriate social media influencer and tailoring advertising to the target audience. A customer's attitude seems to have the largest influence on their desire to make a purchase, according to the research. Through the use of social learning theory in marketing, the

goal is to improve the understanding of the connection that exists between the effectiveness of social media influencers and the consumer's willingness to make a purchase. De Veirman, Cauberghe, and Hudders [20] investigated the impact that Instagram influencers, the number of followers, and product difference had on the attitude towards a respective business. According to the findings of two separate experimental researches, Instagram influencers who have a significant number of followers are regarded to be more desirable owing to the fact that they are believed to be more popular. The results of the study suggest that the perception of the influencer's popularity, which is determined by the number of followers they have, contributes to the perception of the influencer's perceived leadership in the opinion leadership space. Additionally, the number of accounts that an influencer follows is a factor that contributes to their level of likeability. In the event that the numerical value was low, the degree of likeability was equally low as well. Additionally, the study discovered that influencers who have a high number of followers may not be the best option for marketing purposes when it comes to promoting a variety of products. This is due to the fact that this reduces the perceived uniqueness of the brand and, ultimately, the attitudes towards the business. Forbes [23] conducted an investigation of the beauty industry's use of social influencers. The study investigated the characteristics of certain beauty social influencers and the ways in which these influencers are used in brand promotional training on YouTube. An investigation of the content of Maybelline's sponsored videos was carried out, with the primary emphasis being on the promotion and inclusion of three influencers on their respective YouTube channels. It was via the application of the concepts of Social Learning Theory and Attribution Theory that the impact of the influencers on viewers was investigated. When it came to selecting influencers who had characteristics that were extremely suitable for this experiment, Maybelline demonstrated an excellent level of effectiveness. Certain influencers displayed the five chosen, desirable traits more successfully than others, while each had distinct abilities that allowed them to flourish in promoting Maybelline in the beauty market. Each of the characteristics—namely, reliability, knowledge, helpfulness, confidence, and articulation—is linked to the concept that influencers utilize their voice to include Maybelline into the discourse that is taking place online. While the influencers' knowledge revealed a thorough insight and awareness of the beauty business on a larger scale, the reliability of the influencers helped to develop a feeling of openness between the brand and the consumer. It was the friendly manner of the influencers that helped to cultivate a relationship between the consumers and the brand, which in turn made it easier for the customers to apply the products and increased their sense of self-assurance. This, in turn, led to a rise in favorable attitudes on purchasing behavior and overall satisfaction with the product. In the end, their eloquence successfully incorporated all of the characteristics that were described earlier, and their ability in communicating the material in a visual medium actively engaged their audience in the process of associating Maybelline products with positive

feelings.

Content and engagement strategies of non-celebrity influencers

Non-celebrity influencers in the personal care product industry employ a diverse range of content and engagement strategies to connect with their audiences, build trust, and influence purchasing decisions. These strategies are crucial for establishing authenticity, fostering engagement, and ultimately driving consumer interest and loyalty. In this comprehensive exploration, we will delve into various content and engagement strategies utilized by non-celebrity influencers within the personal care product niche, providing insights into their effectiveness and impact.

- i. **Authentic Product Reviews and Demonstrations:** Non-celebrity influencers often rely on authentic product reviews and demonstrations to showcase personal care products to their audience. Unlike traditional advertisements, these reviews provide genuine insights into the influencer's experience with the product, including its effectiveness, usability, and benefits. By sharing their honest opinions and demonstrating how they incorporate the product into their daily routines, influencers create a sense of trust and credibility among their followers. This authenticity resonates with consumers who value transparency and seek reliable recommendations when making purchasing decisions.
- ii. **Personalized Skincare Routines:** Many non-celebrity influencers leverage their expertise and knowledge in skincare to offer personalized routines and tips to their audience. Through educational content, skincare enthusiasts share insights into various skincare concerns, product ingredients, and routines tailored to different skin types and concerns. By providing valuable information and actionable advice, influencers position themselves as trusted authorities in the personal care space, attracting followers who are seeking guidance and solutions to their skincare needs. Additionally, personalized skincare routines create a sense of exclusivity and customization, driving engagement and fostering a deeper connection with the audience.
- iii. **Behind-the-Scenes Content:** These videos offer a glimpse into the influencer's daily life, including their skincare routines, self-care practices, and favorite personal care products. By inviting followers into their world, influencers create a sense of intimacy and authenticity, fostering a stronger emotional connection with their audience. Moreover, behind-the-scenes content provides an opportunity for influencers to showcase their personality, lifestyle, and values, further strengthening their brand identity and resonance with their audience.
- iv. **Interactive Q&A Sessions and Live Streams:** Interactive Q&A sessions and live streams are popular engagement strategies used by non-celebrity influencers to connect with their

audience in real-time. During these sessions, influencers answer questions, provide skincare advice, and engage in meaningful conversations with their followers. By fostering direct interaction and dialogue, influencers create a sense of community and belonging among their audience, encouraging active participation and engagement. Additionally, live streams allow influencers to showcase new products, share exclusive discounts, and host giveaways, driving excitement and incentivizing audience participation.

- v. **User-Generated Content and Community Challenges:** Non-celebrity influencers often leverage user-generated content and community challenges to foster engagement and create a sense of belonging among their audience. By encouraging followers to share their personal care routines, skincare transformations, and product experiences, influencers create a community-driven platform where users can connect, inspire, and support each other. Additionally, community challenges such as skincare challenges, product trials, and themed content prompts encourage active participation and foster a sense of camaraderie among followers. This collaborative approach not only strengthens the bond between influencers and their audience but also generates valuable user-generated content that can be leveraged for further engagement and brand promotion.
- vi. **Educational Content and Product Recommendations:** Non-celebrity influencers play a crucial role in educating their audience about personal care products, ingredients, and skincare techniques. Through informative content such as product reviews, ingredient breakdowns, and skincare tutorials, influencers empower their followers to make informed purchasing decisions and optimize their skincare routines. Additionally, influencers often share curated product recommendations based on their expertise and personal preferences, guiding followers towards high-quality and effective products that align with their skincare goals and concerns. By providing valuable information and recommendations, influencers establish themselves as trusted sources of knowledge and expertise in the personal care space, driving credibility and loyalty among their audience.
- vii. **Collaborations and Partnerships with Brands:** Collaborations and partnerships with brands are common strategies used by non-celebrity influencers to promote personal care products to their audience. These partnerships may involve sponsored content, brand ambassadorships, or product collaborations, where influencers endorse and showcase specific products to their followers. Additionally, collaborations often involve co-created content, exclusive discounts, and behind-

- viii. the-scenes access, providing added value and incentives for followers to engage with the brand. Authentic Storytelling and Vulnerability: Authentic storytelling and vulnerability are powerful engagement strategies used by non-celebrity influencers to connect with their audience on a deeper emotional level. By sharing personal experiences, struggles, and skincare journeys, influencers create a sense of empathy and reliability, fostering a strong emotional connection with their followers. Vulnerability allows influencers to demonstrate authenticity and authenticity, humanizing their brand and resonating with followers who may be experiencing similar challenges or insecurities. Additionally, storytelling creates a narrative arc that captivates and inspires the audience, driving engagement and fostering a sense of connection and belonging within the community.
- ix. Social Advocacy and Values Alignment: on-celebrity influencers often use their platform to advocate for social causes, promote sustainability, and champion inclusivity within the personal care industry. By aligning with values such as environmental responsibility, ethical sourcing, and diversity representation, influencers appeal to socially conscious consumers who prioritize sustainability and social impact in their purchasing decisions. Additionally, social advocacy allows influencers to differentiate themselves from competitors and establish a unique brand identity rooted in authenticity and purpose. By leveraging their platform for positive change, influencers not only drive engagement and loyalty among their audience but also contribute to larger conversations and movements within the personal care industry.

RESEARCH PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY AND METHODOLOGY

Non-celebrity social media influencers have become significant players in recent years, impacting customer views and buying decisions on personal care goods. Nevertheless, the precise methods by which these influencers exercise their impact are not well examined. This research seeks to fill this void by investigating the impact of non-celebrity social media influencers on customer behavior regarding personal care items. The objective of this study is to get a thorough comprehension of how non-celebrity social media influencers impact customer attitudes and intents to buy personal care goods. It is a empirical study made with 350 sample respondents in the study area. Simple random technique method has been used in selecting the sample respondents. A well structured interview schedule was framed to know the respondents' profile. The primary data have been analyzed with the help of SPSS

1. To study the dimensions of NCSMI consumer attitude and purchase intention
2. To examine the difference in consumer attitude and purchase intention on basis of demographic variables

ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND RESULTS

Relationship between the nature and opinion about the factors influencing the agriculture credit

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean rank of the factors influencing the non- celebrity social media influencers accord to the nature of the respondents.

AGE

Non-celebrity social media influencers play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products. Non-celebrity influencers are often perceived as more authentic and relatable compared to celebrities. Consumers feel a stronger connection to them, which can positively influence their attitudes towards the products they endorse. Non-celebrity influencers typically have a smaller but more engaged audience compared to celebrities. They often interact directly with their followers, responding to comments and messages, which fosters a sense of community and trust.

Table 1: Difference in the opinion based on the Age Group

Factors	Age	N	Mean Rank	Test	Result
Authenticity and Reliability	Less than 30	138	157.71	Chi-Square	1.816 Sig. 0.326
	30-45 years	109	186.35		
	More than 45 Years	103	187.84		
	Total	350			
Content Quality	Less than 30	138	174.77	Chi-Square	0.159 Sig. 0.924
	30-45 years	109	178.37		
	More than 45 Years	103	173.44		
	Total	350			
Engagement and Interaction	Less than 25	138	176.72	Chi-Square	0.462 Sig. 0.794
	25-45 years	109	175.60		
	More than 45 Years	103	173.76		
	Total	350			
Accessibility	and Less than 30	138	172.85	Chi-Square	

Affordability	30-45 years	109	182.89	1.491
	More than 45 Years	103	171.24	Sig.
	Total	350		0.475
Social Proof	Less than 30	138	165.17	Chi-Square
	30-45 years	109	168.46	1.502
	More than 45 Years	103	196.79	Sig.
	Total	350		0.472
User-generated Content	Less than 30	138	159.57	Chi-Square
	30-45 years	109	187.66	2.098
	More than 45 Years	103	183.98	Sig.
	Total	350		0.350
Alignment with Brand Values	Less than 30	138	158.03	Chi-Square
	30-45 years	109	186.04	0.966
	More than 45 Years	103	187.75	Sig.
	Total	350		0.617

The Kruskal-Wallis test indicates that there is no statistically significant variation in the opinion regarding the factors based on the age of the respondents. The calculated Chi-Square test values are not statistically significant for the given degree of freedom, which are 2. Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis is upheld, indicating that there is no substantial disparity in the respondents' opinions regarding the factors based on their age. The quality and consistency of content produced by non-celebrity influencers are crucial factors in shaping consumer attitudes. High-quality, visually appealing content that provides valuable information and advice can positively influence purchase intentions

Gender

The impact of non-celebrity influencers in the personal care product industry can vary significantly based on gender dynamics, both in terms of the influencers themselves and their target audience. Non-celebrity influencers have the potential to challenge traditional gender norms and stereotypes by representing diverse gender identities and experiences within the personal care space. While the industry has historically been dominated by female influencers promoting skincare and beauty products, there is a growing trend towards inclusivity and representation of male influencers advocating for grooming and self-care products. This shift towards gender diversity not only reflects changing societal attitudes towards personal care but also opens up new opportunities for brands to reach and engage with diverse audiences. Gender plays a significant role in shaping the demographics of non-celebrity influencer audiences within the personal care product niche. While female influencers may predominantly attract female followers interested in skincare, makeup, and beauty products, male influencers may cater to male audiences seeking grooming products, haircare solutions, and masculine-oriented personal care routines.

Table 2: Difference in the Opinion Based on the Gender

Factors	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Test	Result
Authenticity and Reliability	Male	187	160.94	Mann-Whitney U	24518.000
	Female	163	171.46	Z	-2.807
	Total	350		Sig.	0.003
Content Quality	Male	187	166.32	Mann-Whitney U	23512.000
	Female	163	164.42	Z	-0.632
	Total	350		Sig.	0.558
Engagement and Interaction	Male	187	169.05	Mann-Whitney U	23002.000
	Female	163	160.86	Z	-3.078
	Total	350		Sig.	0.002
Accessibility and Affordability	Male	187	161.90	Mann-Whitney U	21201.000
	Female	163	170.21	Z	-0.278
	Total	350		Sig.	0.691
Social Proof	Male	187	165.82	Mann-Whitney U	27806.000
	Female	163	165.08	Z	-3.741
	Total	350		Sig.	0.001
User-generated Content	Male	187	160.11	Mann-Whitney U	23257.000
	Female	163	172.54	Z	-0.956
	Total	350		Sig.	0.282
Alignment with Brand Values	Male	187	161.80	Mann-Whitney U	28561.000
	Female	163	170.34	Z	-3.315
	Total	350		Sig.	0.001

The result from the Mann-Whitney U test shows that the Z score for Authenticity and Reliability (-2.807), Engagement and Interaction (-3.078), social fact Social Proof (-3.741) and Alignment with Brand Values (-3.315) are less than the critical value of -1.96. Hence the framed null hypothesis for these factors is rejected. Non-celebrity influencers who are transparent about sponsored content and disclose any potential conflicts of interest are perceived as more trustworthy. Consumers appreciate honesty and authenticity, and influencers who maintain transparency in their endorsements are more likely to retain their followers' trust. Content Quality and Consistency: Transparency and Honesty: Social Proof and User-generated Content: Non-celebrity influencers often showcase user-generated content, such as testimonials and before-and-after photos, which serve as social proof of the product's effectiveness. This type of content can significantly impact consumer attitudes and purchase intentions by demonstrating real-life results. Alignment with Brand Values: Non-celebrity influencers who align with the values and image of the personal care brands they endorse are more effective in shaping consumer attitudes. Accessibility and Affordability: Non-celebrity influencers who promote personal care products that are accessible and affordable to their audience are more influential in driving purchase intentions. Non-celebrity influencers often collaborate with brands and other influencers, which can increase their visibility and credibility. Strategic partnerships can enhance the influencer's reputation and influence, thereby positively impacting consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products.

Implications of the study

The implications of non-celebrity social media influencers in shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products are multifaceted and significant. Firstly, their role highlights the increasing importance of authenticity and reliability in marketing strategies. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, non-celebrity influencers often have more genuine connections with their followers, fostering trust and credibility that can positively impact consumer attitudes towards personal care products. This suggests that brands should prioritize collaborations with influencers who align with their values and target demographics to maximize effectiveness. On-celebrity influencers offer a cost-effective alternative for brands looking to engage with niche audiences. By leveraging the reach and influence of these individuals, brands can access specific consumer segments that may be more receptive to personalized content and recommendations. This targeted approach can lead to higher levels of engagement and conversion rates compared to mass-marketing efforts.

Managerial implication

The research provided marketers with valuable insights on how to strategically choose a social media influencer to effectively promote advertisements and obtain a competitive edge in the market. The marketer has the authority and freedom to choose a social media influencer who can appeal to a certain audience and engage them with a compelling advertising message. According to the data study, customer attitude has the greatest impact on purchase intention. Hence, marketers must carefully choose a suitable social media influencer to enhance customer attitude and impact buy intention.

CONCLUSION

The rise of non-celebrity influencers underscores the democratization of influence in the digital age. Anyone with a passion for personal care products and a knack for content creation can potentially become an influence, regardless of traditional fame or status. This democratization opens up opportunities for diverse voices and perspectives to be heard, empowering consumers to make more informed choices based on a wide range of viewpoints and experiences. Overall, the implications of non-celebrity social media influencers in shaping consumer

attitudes and purchase intentions towards personal care products highlight the shifting landscape of marketing and the increasing power of individuals to drive consumer behavior. By recognizing and harnessing the influence of these influencers, brands can build stronger connections with their target audience and stay ahead in an ever-evolving market. Non-celebrity influencers employ a wide range of content and engagement strategies to connect with their audience, build trust, and influence purchasing decisions within the personal care product niche. From authentic product reviews and personalized skincare routines to interactive Q&A sessions and social advocacy, these strategies are essential for fostering engagement, driving brand loyalty, and ultimately shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. By understanding and leveraging the effectiveness of these strategies, influencers can maximize their impact and create meaningful connections with their audience, while brands can capitalize on the influence of these individuals to reach and engage with their target consumers in today's competitive digital landscape.

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