

Investigating The Effect of Influencer Marketing on Purchase Intention of Green Cosmetic Products Using Structural Equation Modelling Analysis

Dr. AFSA PARVEEN

Assistant Professor

Quantum School of Business, Roorkee, India

Email address: afsaparveen2017@gmail.com

Abstract

Modern advertising has undergone a revolution because to social media and influencer marketing, which have moved the emphasis from conventional promotional tactics to more engaging and customized methods. As platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok gain popularity, marketers use influencers—people who have a significant online following—to establish genuine connections with their target consumers. Influencer marketing leverages relatability and trust to make ads seem more genuine and powerful. This tactic increases consumer interaction, raises brand exposure, and influences purchasing decisions. But obstacles like issues with influencer trustworthiness, authenticity, and changing platform algorithms need for meticulous preparation. Social media and influencer marketing will continue to play a crucial role in influencing consumer behavior and brand success as digital environments change. To find out the influence of influencer marketing on green cosmetic products purchase intention, primary data is collected through questionnaire. This study investigates the effect of influencer marketing on the purchase intention of green cosmetic products, employing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to analyze the relationships among key variables including influencer credibility, perceived environmental value, consumer trust, and purchase intention. Based on a survey of 450 respondents aged 18-35, results indicate that influencer credibility significantly impacts consumer trust and perceived environmental value, both of which mediate the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase intention. Results revealed that there is significant positive influence of influencers marketing on the purchase intention of green cosmetic products.

Keywords: Influencer marketing, Green cosmetics, Purchase intention, Structural Equation Modelling, Consumer trust, Environmental value

I. Introduction

As customers place a greater emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility while making purchases, the beauty business is changing. Green cosmetics, which are promoted as ethically and environmentally manufactured, have emerged as a result of this trend. At the same time, influencer marketing has taken over as the most popular digital marketing strategy, especially on sites like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok (Veirman et al., 2017). Influencers are vital in influencing the attitudes and actions of consumers, particularly those who promote sustainable lifestyles (Lou & Yuan, 2019).

Green cosmetic products represent a rapidly growing niche in the beauty industry, offering consumers an alternative that aligns with their values (Ghazali et al., 2017). However, despite the growing interest, converting this intention into actual purchase behavior remains a challenge. One of the critical touchpoints in this conversion journey is the role of digital influencers who act as modern-day opinion leaders. Influencers can bridge the knowledge gap between green cosmetic brands and potential consumers, thereby affecting their attitudes and behavioral intentions.

This study's goal is to find out how influencer marketing influences consumers' intentions to buy eco-friendly cosmetics (Suki, 2016). This study attempts to offer a detailed understanding of the mediating components, including consumer trust, perceived environmental value, and influencer credibility, by employing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). By identifying important methods via which influencer marketing might improve consumer engagement with sustainable beauty goods, the study hopes to make a contribution to both academic literature and real-world marketing techniques (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015).

Table 1: Overview of Influencer Marketing in Modern Advertising

Aspect	Description
Advertising Shift	From traditional strategies to personalized and engaging approaches
Platforms	Instagram, YouTube, TikTok
Influencer Role	Leverage trust, relatability, and authenticity to connect with audiences
Key Benefits	Enhances brand awareness, boosts engagement, drives purchase decisions
Challenges	Authenticity concerns, credibility issues, evolving platform algorithms

Source: Author's Compilation

Table 2: Research Focus and Methodology

Element	Description
Research Focus	Effect of influencer marketing on purchase intention of green cosmetic products
Methodology	Quantitative research using a structured questionnaire
Analytical Technique	Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)
Target Population	Respondents aged 18–35 who follow social media influencers
Sample Size	450 respondents

Source: Author's Compilation

II. Literature Review

2.1 Influencer Marketing

Influencer marketing involves endorsements and product placements from individuals who possess expert knowledge or social influence in their respective domains. Influencers often build strong personal connections with their followers, allowing them to shape opinions and purchasing behaviors (De Veirman et al., 2017). Several studies suggest that perceived authenticity, trustworthiness, and relatability of influencers play a significant role in affecting consumer behavior (Chatterjee, 2020).

Influencers are often categorized into macro, micro, and nano influencers based on their follower count. Micro and nano influencers tend to have higher engagement rates and are perceived as more relatable, which may enhance their effectiveness in promoting niche products such as green cosmetics (Han & Hyun, 2018).

2.2 Green Cosmetics and Sustainability

Green cosmetics are characterized by natural ingredients, eco-friendly packaging, and cruelty-free testing. These products appeal to environmentally conscious consumers and are often positioned as ethical alternatives to conventional beauty products (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). The rise of environmental awareness has led to increased consumer scrutiny regarding ingredient sourcing, production processes, and corporate social responsibility (Chetioui et al., 2020).

Several dimensions contribute to a consumer's perception of green cosmetics, including transparency, ingredient sourcing, certification labels, and brand reputation. These perceptions play a vital role in shaping purchase intentions, especially among millennial and Gen Z consumers.

2.3 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention refers to a consumer's plan to buy a specific product or service. It is influenced by various psychological and contextual factors, including trust, perceived value, and social influence (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of green cosmetics, purchase intention is often mediated by ethical concerns, perceived effectiveness, and peer recommendations (Henseler et al., 2015; Yadav & Pathak, 2016).

2.4 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

This study draws on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Source Credibility Theory to construct its framework (Lim et al., 2017). TPB posits that intention is the most immediate determinant of behavior and is influenced by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Source Credibility Theory emphasizes the importance of the communicator's expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness in shaping audience responses. Based on these theories, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Influencer credibility positively affects consumer trust.
- H2: Influencer credibility positively affects perceived environmental value.
- H3: Consumer trust positively affects purchase intention.
- H4: Perceived environmental value positively affects purchase intention.

III. Research Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

A quantitative survey method was used. A structured questionnaire was distributed online, targeting social media users aged 18-35 who follow sustainability influencers and have shown interest in green cosmetic products. A total of 450 valid responses were obtained. The sample included diverse educational backgrounds, with a majority holding undergraduate or postgraduate degrees.

3.2 Measurement Items

The constructs were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Influencer credibility was measured using Ohanian's (1990) scale, which assesses expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Consumer trust, perceived environmental value, and purchase intention were adapted from existing validated scales. Pretesting of the questionnaire ensured clarity and relevance of items (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

3.3 Analytical Technique

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesized model. Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha, and construct validity was examined through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Model fit indices such as the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Chi-square/df ratio were used to assess the overall goodness of fit (Hair et al., 2019).

IV. Results

4.1 Demographic Profile

Most respondents were female (67%), aged between 21-30 (62%), and active on Instagram and YouTube. Nearly 70% reported purchasing cosmetic products monthly, and 55% claimed to have bought green cosmetics at least once.

4.2 Measurement Model

The confirmatory factor analysis showed acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.7) and convergent validity (AVE > 0.5). Discriminant validity was confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The model also exhibited good fit indices: CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.04, and Chi-square/df = 1.96.

4.3 Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

All hypothesized relationships were supported:

Hypotheses	Beta value	Significance
H1	0.62	p < 0.001
H2	0.48	p < 0.001
H3	0.48	p < 0.001
H4	0.41	p < 0.001

V. Discussion

The findings confirm that influencer credibility plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions, especially in the context of environmentally friendly products. Trust and perceived environmental value serve as significant mediators, highlighting the importance of authentic communication and sustainability alignment between influencers and brands.

The influence of social media is particularly strong among younger consumers who seek relatable and credible voices. Influencers who actively promote eco-conscious living are seen not only as product endorsers but as lifestyle advocates, which enhances the effectiveness of their message.

This study also reveals that perceived environmental value is not solely a function of product attributes but is influenced by how well influencers communicate these values. When influencers are perceived as authentic and aligned with environmental ethics, consumers are more likely to internalize the product's green claims.

VI. Managerial Implications

Brands should collaborate with credible influencers who align with their environmental values. Transparency in marketing messages and consistent sustainability practices can enhance consumer trust and intention to purchase.

Marketing strategies should prioritize influencer partnerships that emphasize long-term relationships rather than one-off promotions. Educational content, behind-the-scenes glimpses of sustainable production, and interactive Q&A sessions with influencers can significantly enhance perceived credibility.

Additionally, brands should ensure that influencer content is not only informative but also visually engaging and emotionally appealing, as these factors enhance message retention and conversion.

VII. Conclusion

This study underscores the effectiveness of influencer marketing in promoting green cosmetic products. By leveraging SEM, the research provides empirical evidence for the significant roles of trust and perceived environmental value in influencing purchase intentions.

The insights from this study are valuable for marketers aiming to enhance the appeal of green cosmetics among young consumers. The results highlight the necessity of authenticity, trust-building, and value communication in influencer-driven marketing campaigns.

VIII. Limitations and Future Research

Limitations include sample demographics and self-reported data, which may introduce biases such as social desirability. Future research could explore longitudinal designs, cross-cultural comparisons, and the role of video content in influencing eco-conscious purchase behavior.

Additional studies could also examine the comparative effectiveness of different types of influencers (e.g., celebrities vs. micro-influencers), the role of user-generated content, and the impact of algorithmic content visibility on consumer engagement with green product promotions.

References

- [1]. Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.
- [2]. Dangelico, R. M., & Vocalelli, D. (2017). "Green Marketing": An analysis of definitions, dimensions, and relationships with stakeholders. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 26(4), 457-475.
- [3]. De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: Impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798-828.
- [4]. Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(3), 39-52.
- [5]. Chetoui, Y., Benlafqih, H., & Lebdaoui, H. (2020). How fashion influencers contribute to consumers' purchase intention. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 24(3), 361-380. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JFMM-08-2019-0157>
- [6]. Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust and purchase intention. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 19(1), 58-73. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501>
- [7]. Suki, N. M. (2016). Green product purchase intention: Impact of green brands, attitude, and knowledge. *British Food Journal*, 118(12), 2893-2910. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-06-2016-0295>
- [8]. Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- [9]. Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 43(1), 115-135. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8>
- [10]. Lim, X. J., Radzol, A. M., Cheah, J. H., & Wong, M. W. (2017). The impact of social media influencers on purchase intention and the mediation effect of customer attitude. *Asian Journal of Business Research*, 7(2), 19-36. <https://doi.org/10.14707/ajbr.170035>
- [11]. Han, H., & Hyun, S. S. (2018). Green indoor and outdoor environment as nature-based solutions and customer retention in the airline industry: The role of perceived health risk and psychological well-being. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 27(6), 864-877. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2030>
- [12]. Ghazali, E. M., Soon, P. C., Mutum, D. S., & Nguyen, B. (2017). Health and cosmetics: Investigating consumers' values for buying organic personal care products. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 39, 154-163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2017.08.002>
- [13]. Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- [14]. De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: The impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798-828. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035>
- [15]. Kumar, A., & Ghodeswar, B. M. (2015). Factors affecting consumers' green product purchase decisions. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*, 33(3), 330-347. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MIP-03-2014-0068>
- [16]. Chatterjee, S. (2020). Influence of social media marketing on brand experience and brand equity in the fashion apparel context. *Journal of Global Fashion Marketing*, 11(3), 203-215. <https://doi.org/10.1080/20932685.2020.1752762>
- [17]. Yadav, R., & Pathak, G. S. (2016). Young consumers' intention towards buying green products in a developing nation: Extending the theory of planned behavior. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 135, 732-739. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.06.120>

Appendix:

Section A: Demographic Information

Age			
18-22	23-27	28-32	33-35
Gender			
Male	Female	Prefer not to say	
Educational Level			
Undergraduate	Graduate	Post Graduate	Others
Have you ever purchased green/eco-friendly cosmetic products?			
Yes		No	
How often do you use social media platforms (Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, etc.)?			
Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Daily

Do you follow beauty or lifestyle influencers?	
Yes	No

Section B: Influencer Credibility

(Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

The influencers I follow are knowledgeable about the products they promote.

I find influencers to be honest when reviewing products.

Influencers appear to have expertise in the beauty industry.

The influencers I follow are trustworthy sources of information.

I believe that influencers genuinely use the products they recommend.

Section C: Perceived Environmental Value

(Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

I believe green cosmetic products help reduce environmental harm.

Buying eco-friendly cosmetics aligns with my personal values.

I am more likely to consider a product if it's marketed as sustainable or green.

Green cosmetics promoted by influencers seem more authentic to me.

I feel responsible for choosing environmentally friendly cosmetic products.

Section D: Consumer Trust in Influencers

(Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

I trust the influencers I follow when they recommend green cosmetic products.

I rely on influencers' opinions when considering a new cosmetic purchase.

Influencer reviews help me feel confident about product quality.

I believe influencers disclose genuine opinions about the products they promote.

I feel a personal connection with the influencers I follow.

Section E: Purchase Intention of Green Cosmetic Products

(Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

I intend to purchase green cosmetic products in the near future.

I am likely to buy a green cosmetic product if it is recommended by an influencer.

Influencer marketing increases my interest in eco-friendly cosmetic products.

I would recommend green cosmetic products promoted by influencers to others.

I prefer buying green cosmetics over conventional ones when influencers highlight their benefits.

Section F: Platform & Content Preferences (Optional)

Which platforms do you primarily follow beauty influencers on? (Select all that apply)

- Instagram
- YouTube
- TikTok
- Facebook
- Other: _____

What type of influencer content influences your purchase decisions the most?

- Product reviews
- Tutorials and demonstrations
- Hauls and unboxings
- Sponsored brand collaborations
- Behind-the-scenes and lifestyle content