Social Media Influencers and Customer Purchase Decisions in the Business Industry

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Abstract - This study examines the relationship between social media influencers and customer purchasing decisions in the business industry. The study focuses on skincare products, targeting respondents who use skincare products. The social media influencers were examined in terms of popularity, credibility, and content. In contrast, the customer's purchase decision was examined about their demographic profile, which included age, sex, employment status, monthly income, and social media preferences. The study examines the extent of social media influence, the profile of respondents, and the Level of Customer Purchase Decisions in the business industry. It employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, utilizing questionnaires and surveys to gather data from a total of 150 skincare users, who served as respondents, and conducted interviews with five skincare influencers. The study employed a weighted mean to determine the extent of social media influencers and the level of influence on customer purchase decisions in the business industry. Questions regarding the respondents' profiles in terms of age, sex, employment status, monthly income, social media platform preference, frequency, percentage, and rank were used. The Chi-Square method was used to analyze the extent of social media influencers in terms of popularity, credibility, content, level of customer purchase decision, and their relationship to the respondents' profiles. The study revealed a highly significant correlation between social media influencers and customer purchasing decisions. Specifically, the findings revealed that the extent of social media influencers' popularity, credibility, and content has a highly significant relationship with customer purchase decisions. Businesses should prioritize these factors when selecting influencers to maximize their impact on customer behavior. The results of this study help social media influencers and entrepreneurs understand that an influencer's popularity, credibility, and content are key to attracting loyal customers. By focusing on these factors, influencers can build stronger connections with their followers, increase trust, and make a more significant impact and outstanding contribution to the business.

Indexed Terms- Social Media Influencers, Customer Purchase Decision, Business Industry

I. INTRODUCTION

Customer feedback and its influence on their perspective are critical factors in product acquisition. Each customer has specific interests and viewpoints on the things they seek. Several factors influence customer purchasing decisions. The primary goal of this research is to investigate how social media influencers influence customer purchasing decisions for the products they desire to buy. They are revolutionizing marketing by giving businesses new ways to connect with customers and promote their products. Influencers shape people's attitudes toward products and brands, influencing their purchasing decisions. This study focuses on specific areas in the province of Laguna, including Siniloan, Pangil, Pakil, Paete, Kalayaan, Lumban, and Pagsanjan, to gain insights into local consumer behavior. Doing so would also help the business gain valuable insights, build a strong brand image, and foster lasting customer relationships. It examined what made influencers persuasive and how they influenced customers' purchase decisions.

II. METHODS

This research employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches, gathering data through survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews. This was utilized to gather numerical and textual data, which

were then generalized from groups of respondents to inform the determination of variables related to social media influencers and customer purchasing decisions in the business industry. Supporting Taherdoost's (2020) definition, this study employed mixed methods, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, based on the study's purpose and the nature of the research question, to gain a deeper understanding of the subject.

The researchers allocated seven local areas, distributing 150 respondents proportionally across various strata, depending on the population in each municipality in Siniloan, Pangil, Pakil, Paete, Kalayaan, Lumban, and Pagsanjan, as provided by their statistician. They specifically targeted skincare users as respondents to obtain data that would aid the study. Moreover, the researchers conducted interviews with five social media influencers to gather their opinions, hoping to acquire precise insights for the research.

For data collection, a questionnaire was used, which included checklists. The analysis results of Likert scale questionnaires were translated using the Four-Point Likert Scale, which employs the following categories: always, sometimes, rarely, and never. Still, its explanation would be (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree), assisted in measuring the levels of respondents' agreement with statements. The questionnaire had three segments: Profile of the Respondents, Extent of Social Media Influencers, and Level of Customer Purchase Decision.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

According to the demographic profile of the respondents, the results indicated that a majority of respondents between 18 and 23 years old were female. Additional data also indicated that most respondents had a monthly income of below Php 9,101.00 and preferred Facebook as their social media platform of choice.

Skincare was an essential aspect of self-care for many individuals aged 18 to 23, as this age group often experiences various skin challenges, including acne, oiliness, and sensitivity. The 18-23-year-old respondents identified themselves as Generation Z. They were considered the most conscious of their skin and health, particularly on their face. Most skincare product consumers fall into this category.

The majority of respondents, 124 out of 150, were female users of skincare products. In this generation, women were generally more conscious about their physical appearance than men, as it often contributed to their confidence. They were more self-conscious, particularly about the appearance of their faces, where possessing marvelous, glowing skin was a key factor in enhancing their self-esteem. This preoccupation with beauty and skincare not only made them look better but also gave them more confidence to walk around with it.

The findings regarding employment status revealed a strong pattern in the practice of using skincare products among employed individuals, with the engaged workforce being more likely to incorporate skincare into their lifestyle. The framework of working might support self-care practices, such as skincare, as part of overall health and wellness.

Regarding the monthly income of the respondents, most of them had a salary of less than Php 9,101.00. Meanwhile, the least of the respondents had a range of Php 63,701.00 to Php 109,200.00, which ranked the lowest. Even individuals with low incomes could exercise purchasing power when it came to skincare products, as long as they were willing to invest in the products they trusted. Trust was a crucial factor in consumer choice, and low-income consumers were now confronted with an abundance of information on how to care for their skin and affordable product options, which empowered them to make more informed choices.

Social media sites have greatly influenced individuals' skincare options in the online era. Influencers and skincare professionals shared their skincare regimens, product evaluations, and personal experiences, making consumers more aware. Online channels allowed consumers to view real-time skincare outcomes through before-and-after images and videos, thereby establishing credibility and familiarity. Such openness encouraged consumers to purchase products recommended by their favorite influencers, leading to more informed and discerning skincare decisions—products, as long as they were willing to invest in the products they trusted. Trust plays a significant role in consumer decision-making. Low-income individuals were now exposed to a plethora of information regarding proper skin care techniques and affordable product recommendations, which empowered them to make informed choices.

Social media platforms have significantly influenced people's skincare choices in the digital age. Influencers and beauty experts shared their skincare routines, product reviews, and personal experiences, providing consumers with more information. Digital platforms enable users to see real-time skincare results through before-and-after photos and videos, fostering trust and relatability. This transparency encouraged consumers to try products endorsed by their favorite influencers, leading to more informed and discerning skincare choices.

Table 1. Extent of Social Media Influencer

Extent of Social Media Influencer	Mean	SD
Popularity	3.03	0.81
Credibility	3.22	0.83
Content	3.21	0.79

According to the survey results, Credibility has the highest mean of 3.22, with a standard deviation of 0.83. Meanwhile, Content has the second highest mean, with the lowest standard deviation of 0.79. Furthermore, Popularity had the lowest mean of 3.03 and the second-highest standard deviation of 0.81. However, the analysis of the extent of social media influencers in terms of popularity, credibility, and content, stated above, shows that the majority of the respondents, a significant number also selected "Agree." As a result, it can be concluded that the extent of social media influencers in terms of Popularity, credibility, and content is "to a moderate extent."

The results of the Extent of Social Media Influencers in terms of popularity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Popularity

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Consider the popularity of social media influencers when buying skincare products.	3.13	Agree
2. Trust skincare product recommendations from a famous social media influencer.	2.90	Agree
3. Often seek reviews or opinions from social media influencers before making a purchase.	3.19	Agree
4. Find the popularity of social media influencers effectively affecting my skincare product choices.	3.00	Agree
5. Consider a social media influencer's number of followers or subscribers when deciding whether to purchase a product or service they promote.	2.91	Agree

Table 2 shows the extent of social media influencers in terms of popularity, with rank one having a weighted mean of 3.19. The respondents stated that they would seek reviews or comments from social media influencers before making a purchase. Consumers were increasingly seeking recommendations from social media influencers to determine whether the products they intended to purchase were worth using.

Table 3 presents the extent to which social media influencers are perceived as credible. The data accurately reveals that most respondents, with a weighted mean of 3.37 and a rank of 1, consider influencers more trustworthy when they provide fair reviews, highlighting both the positive and negative

aspects of skincare products. They believe that the influencers had a strategy to capture the viewers' attention and encourage them to buy their product.

Opinions from social media influencers were getting more credible for buyers interested in a certain product. Relying on social media influencers' reviews and opinions had a significant impact on customer purchasing decisions.

The results of the Extent of Social Media Influencers in terms of Credibility can be seen in Table 3

Table 3. Credibility

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I tend to rely on skincare recommendations from influencers who suggest products that match my needs and preferences.	3.05	Agree
2. Prefer influencers who share their skincare routines.	3.12	Agree
3. Trust influencers who are honest about their experiences with skincare products.	3.31	Strongly Agree
4. Value influencers more when they explain product ingredients and benefits.	3.23	Strongly Agree
5. Consider influencers more trustworthy when they give fair reviews, showing both the good and bad sides of skincare products.	3.37	Strongly Agree
TOTAL	3.21	To a Moderate Extent

Once the viewer had tried the product, they would provide additional feedback on whether it was good or not. Personal experiences can serve as powerful testimonials that illustrate how well a product works in real-life situations.

The results of the Extent of Social Media Influencers in terms of Content can be seen in Table 4

Table 4. Content

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Favor influencers who share creative skincare tips and product recommendations.	3.29	Strongly Agree
2. Prefer when social media influencers share personal experiences with skincare products.	3.36	Strongly Agree
3. Am enticed by influencers who make educational skincare content with creative visuals.	3.13	Agree
4. Find influencers more persuasive when they creatively utilize user-generated content, such as testimonials and before-and-after photos.	3.21	Agree

5. Incline to social media influencers whose creative content promotes products.	3.10	Agree
TOTAL	3.21	To a Moderate Extent

In Table 4, the content highlights that in the skincare industry, social media influencers have a significant impact on customer decisions. Consumers preferred influencers who shared personal skincare product experiences because it lent relatability and authenticity. Followers would better grasp how the products could benefit them by reading these intimate accounts, which included personal experiences with skincare products, adding authenticity and relatability that resonated with their audience.

According to the responses of the social media influencers that the researchers interviewed, the following statements were gathered regarding the extent of Social Media Influencers (SMI).

SMI1: Focuses on the authenticity of products, frequent interaction with viewers through social media, and personal skincare experiences with tutorials and reviews, driving the purchasing behavior of potential customers.

SMI2: Addressing audience needs through popular video hooks and content, utilizing music, product selection, and video duration to drive purchases.

SMI3 connects with viewers through tutorials and product testing, providing clear and honest reviews.

SMI4: Remains current and Trends, maintains product safety by testing and FDA approval, and presents content with a distinctive personal flair.

SMI5: Generates high-quality, informative content through extensive product testing, promoting research among audiences, and emphasizing in-depth reviews to support informed decision-making.

Social media influencers 1, 3, and 5 highlighted their own experiences with skincare products, testing them thoroughly before offering clear, candid reviews to engage with their followers. Social media influencers 2 and 4 highlighted making entertaining, trend-driven content based on audience liking and product safety protocols.

The results of the level of customer purchase decision in the business industry are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Level of the Customer Purchase Decision in the Business Industry.

Variable	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
I…			
1. Consider social media influencers' popularity by their likes, comments, and shares.	3.04	Agree	7
2. Find recommendations from popular social media influencers whom I trust and consider influential in my decision-making.	2.98	Agree	10
3. Heavily depends on influencer reviews to assess product authenticity and decide what to buy.	3.01	Agree	9

4. Likely to buy skincare products endorsed by influencers with a proven track record of delivering noticeable results.	3.12	Agree	6
5. Value social media influencers' openness in sharing their skincare routines, influencing my purchasing decisions, and signaling honesty and transparency	3.23	Agree	5
6. Trust their recommendation if influencer feedback on a product covers both positive and negative outcomes.	3.32	Strongly Agree	3
7. Acknowledge the detailed product information to understand which skincare products suit my skin type.	3.41	Strongly Agree	2
8. Consider skincare tips practical when social media influencers recommend them.	3.03	Agree	8
9. I purchase a product if it aligns with my preferences and effectively improves my skin.	3.49	Strongly Agree	1
10. Prefer skincare products promoted by influencers who create informative and educational content using creative visuals.	3.27	Strongly Agree	4
General Weighted Mean	3.19	To a Moderate Extent	

The majority of respondents strongly agreed to purchasing a product if it aligned with their preferences and effectively improved their skin. Detailed product information also helped them understand which skincare products would suit their skin type. Honest influencer feedback, covering both positive and negative outcomes, impacted their trust in their recommendations. Additionally, influencers who create informative and educational content using creative visuals were considered. Moreover, they heavily depend on influencer reviews to assess product authenticity and decide what to buy. The recommendations from popular social media influencers were trustworthy and influential in their decision-making.

Many consumers would likely purchase a product if it aligned with their needs and resolved their skin issues. In this case, it helped them achieve their goals of having glowing skin, reducing acne, achieving clear skin, and resolving other skin-related issues. The more a product aligned with customer preferences and

effectively improved their skin, the more likely they were to make a purchase. Selecting preferences and options that enhanced an individual's skin type was challenging.

The following statements were acquired during the interview addressing the concern regarding the level of Customer Purchase Decision,

SMI1: Influences purchases viewer through personal experiences and social media updates of the product, using videos and interactive content to engage her audience.

SMI2: Utilizing trending products and relatable content to drive sales of a particular product, staying informed through other experts, and incorporating engaging video hooks and interactive elements to capture viewers' attention.

SMI3: Promotes benefits products tailored to the current needs of viewers, stays updated by researching products, and utilizes tutorials, reviews, and interactive responses.

SMI4: Highlights product benefits with before-and-after results, addresses common skincare concerns, stays informed through ongoing research, and engages with audience questions interactively.

SMI5: Encourages purchases through positive reviews of basic skincare, stays updated with trends, and uses organic reviews, sponsored content, and user-generated content to build trust.

Social media influencers employ different tactics. If social media influencers' persuasive strategies were effective, they might attract more customers. Furthermore, influencers can establish a more genuine relationship and further influence purchasing decisions by customizing their strategies to appeal to their target demographic.

To increase sales, social media influencers 1, 4, and 5 utilized in-depth product demonstrations and shared firsthand experiences in videos that highlighted the advantages of the products and interactively addressed audience concerns and questions. To engage their audience and promote sales, Social Media Influencers 2 and 3 utilized interactive features and captivating video content, stayed up-to-date through research, and tailored their content to the latest skincare trends and demands.

The Relationship between the Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Social Media Influencers. This is evident in Table 6.

Table 6. Relationship between the Profile of the Respondents and the Extent Social Media Influencers

Variable	p-value	Relationship
Age	0.015	Significant
Sex	0.136	Not Significant
Employment Status	0.395	Not Significant
Monthly Income	0.356	Not Significant
Social Media Preference	0.038	Significant

The study found a significant association between social media influencers and the respondents' profiles in terms of age and social media preferences. However, the profile of the respondents, in terms of sex, employment status, and monthly income, showed a non-significant relationship with the social media influencers. This means that only age and social media preferences had a particular relationship to the extent of social media influencers. According to the study's findings, age and social media

Preferences had a significant impact on how respondents interacted with social media influencers. Overall, the findings emphasized the need to adapt influencer marketing methods to specific age groups and interests. To increase outreach and efficacy, marketers may benefit from focusing on developing content that resonates with younger audiences, particularly when tailored to specific platforms.

The results of the Relationship between the profile of the respondents and the Level of customer purchase decisions are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Relationship between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Customer Purchase Decisions.

Variable	p-value	Relationship
Age	0.337	Not Significant
Sex	0.131	Not Significant

Employment Status	0.603	Not Significant
Monthly Income	0.513	Not Significant
Social Media Preference	0.011	Significant

The profile of the respondents, in terms of social media preference, had a significant relationship with the customer's purchase decision in the business industry. However, their age, sex, employment status, and monthly income had no significant relationship. This means that businesses should focus on understanding and targeting the social media preferences of their customers to influence their purchasing behavior effectively.

The respondents' views on social media had a significant influence on their purchasing decisions. This suggests that companies should refine their marketing plans for the platforms where their target market is most engaged.

In contrast, the results suggested that there was no relationship between purchasing decisions and demographic factors, including age, sex, employment status, and monthly income. This means that these factors may not be so critical when dealing with specific customers in the industry.

The results of the relationship between the Extent of Social Media Influencer and the Level of Customer Purchase Decision are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Relationship between the Extent of Social Media Influencer and the Level of Customer Purchase Decision

Variable	p-value	Relationship
Popularity	< 0.001	Highly Significant
Credibility	< 0.001	Highly Significant
Content	< 0.001	Highly Significant

Social media influencers, in terms of popularity, credibility, and content, had a highly significant relationship with customer purchase decisions. The results suggested that significant variables affecting consumer buying behavior were the popularity, credibility, and content of the social media influencer. To optimize influencers' ability to affect customer behavior, companies should prioritize these factors when selecting influencers.

The findings of this research will inform social media influencers and entrepreneurs that a social media influencer's credibility, popularity, and content are key determinants in garnering loyal customers. Influencers could create stronger relationships with their audience by prioritizing these elements, building trust, and influencing purchase decisions more significantly. Their influence was crucial in devising effective marketing tactics that drove brand awareness and sales.

Social media influencers have been used as a solution to influence the purchase decisions of consumers and thereby drive purchases. Despite the importance of content characteristics, most studies emphasized the personal characteristics of Social Media Influencers, such as credibility, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and popularity (e.g., number of followers and likes) in driving consumers' positive perceptions (Koay et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

After careful evaluation and analysis of the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. A significant relationship existed between age and social media preferences, as well as the extent of influence that social media influencers had on customer purchase decisions. Most of the respondents were female, employed, and aged between 18 and 23 years, with an estimated monthly income of less than Php 9,101.00. Additionally, they expressed a clear preference for Facebook as their preferred social media platform. The age and social media preferences of the respondents significantly influenced their perceptions of social media influencers, underscoring the importance of understanding these factors for businesses and marketers seeking to engage effectively with this demographic in their purchasing decisions.
2. The profiles of the respondents had a significant relationship in terms of social media preferences

with the level of customer purchase decisions. This meant that the platforms used had a significant influence on their purchasing decisions. Therefore, businesses and marketers need to understand these preferences and the role of influencers to create effective strategies that engage this demographic and boost sales.

3. The extent of social media influencers had a highly significant relationship with the level of customer purchase decisions, focusing on the skincare industry. This implied that influencers had a significant impact on how customers chose products.

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