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Influence of Social Media on Gen Z's Purchase Decisions for Organic Cosmetics

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of social media on the purchasing decisions of Generation Z regarding organic cosmetic products. Gen Z, a digitally native and socially conscious group, relies significantly on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook to engage with beauty-related content, find new products, and validate buying decisions via reviews and influencer endorsements. The study uses a quantitative research design, collecting primary data from roughly 60 Gen Z respondents via a structured questionnaire with multiple-choice and Likert scale items. The data was examined using descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, and correlation analysis. The study found that Gen Z consumers have a high level of environmental and health awareness, with an average awareness score of 4.2 on a five-point scale. Trust in online reviews showed a large positive connection ($r = +0.65$) with purchasing intent, demonstrating that reliable web information had a major impact on their purchasing behaviour. Influencer posts were the most effective sort of material, followed by detailed product reviews. Traditional commercials and lectures proved to be less compelling.

Overall, the survey emphasizes the relevance of original, relatable, and trustworthy online content in influencing Gen Z consumer choices. These insights provide useful information for brands looking to connect with this environmentally conscious and media-savvy generation.

Keywords: consumer behaviour, Purchase decisions, organic cosmetics, social media, Generation Z

INTRODUCTION

As the youngest adult generation, Generation Z is frequently confused with millennials. Both grew up around digital technology, and as a result, they have certain similarities. However, Generation Z (commonly referred to as Zoomers) differs from the millennial generation. And all firms should be aware of this. This diverse group of young customers defies easy categorisation, posing a unique cosmetic challenge due to their behaviours and nuanced tastes. Gen Z is especially significant. Despite not being the largest or wealthiest demographic, they wield significant power. Understanding Gen Z is more than just knowing the present; it is also about grasping the future. They can set trends, shape cultural movements, and ultimately define what is considered innovative and cool. Beauty and grooming choices among Generation Z are influenced by a variety of variables, including affordability and personal expression. From demanding diversity to using clean-label materials, young consumers are altering beauty norms (and the beauty business) in a new and deliberate manner. Gen Z has a great interest in beauty and grooming content on social media, with more than half (53.9%) indicating they enjoy discovering it on Instagram and other social media platforms. This emphasises the significance of social media as a major medium for firms to engage with younger consumers. There is a clear gender difference in how Gen Z interacts with this content. Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook have emerged as effective tools for beauty influencers and companies to engage Gen Z audiences with tutorials, reviews, unboxings, and product hauls. The visual and interactive aspect of these platforms helps to bridge the gap between businesses and customers,

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allowing Generation Z to discover new organic products, confirm their decisions through peer reviews, and create emotional ties with brands.

This study will examine how social media affects Gen Z consumers' purchasing decisions for organic cosmetics. It aims to understand the dynamics of digital consumer behaviour by studying elements such as influencer credibility, content engagement, brand visibility, and peer influence. The paper will also provide insights for marketers looking to reach out to this conscious and connected generation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the role of social awareness toward organic cosmetic products.
2. To examine the trustworthiness of online reviews in the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers.
3. To investigate the online content factors that influence Gen Z consumer decisions to purchase cosmetic organic products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mohammad Osman Gani (2023). The study aims to investigate the effect of social media influence on consumers' purchase intention of organic beauty products, with a focus on the role of customer engagement and generativity. The findings of the study suggest that social media influence has a significant positive effect on consumers' purchase intention of organic beauty products. Additionally, the study found that customer engagement and generativity partially mediate the relationship between social media influence and purchase intention, with customer engagement having a stronger mediating effect than generativity.

Brown, A.M. (2023). In this research, the researcher observed that social media has significantly influenced consumer behavior, particularly for organic cosmetic products. Instagram influencers provide visually appealing content that encourages millennial consumers to buy organic beauty products.

Johnson, P., and Kim, S. (2022). This research found that Facebook and YouTube are significant channels for consumer engagement with organic skincare businesses, leading to increased brand awareness and loyalty.

Zaleski's (2020) According to the author, Gen Z consumers are more diverse and socially conscious than previous generations, and they prioritize inclusivity, authenticity, and transparency when it comes to the brands they support. As a result, retailers are beginning to shift their marketing strategies to appeal to these values, such as featuring diverse models in advertisements and promoting sustainable and ethical practices.

Seemiller and Grace's (2016) study focuses on Generation Z students, who are defined as those born between 1995 and 2010. According to the authors, this generation is unique in that they have grown up in a world that is increasingly global, diverse, and technology-driven. As a result, they have different expectations and preferences when it comes to education and engagement.

Philip Kotler (1965) opined that all the models so far developed by various scientists should be used in an integrated manner to study and understand the consumer in general. In his opinion, buying patterns are being influenced by price, quality, availability, style, option, and image, depending on the product, different variables, and behavior mechanisms. He found that all the factors assume different degrees of importance in influencing the purchase decision process**.**

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will adopt a quantitative research approach to collect and analyze numerical data on Gen Z customers' social media and purchasing habits. The method will allow the researcher to assess the correlations between variables such as social media engagement, trust in influencer material, and purchasing decisions.

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Sources of Data

Primary Data: The primary data for this study will come directly from Gen Z consumers via a standardized online questionnaire. This will contain questions about demographics, social media use, attitudes toward influencer material, and organic cosmetics purchase habits. To guarantee broad reach among target respondents, the survey will be delivered via social media platforms (e.g., Instagram, Facebook, and other platforms) as well as email.

Secondary Data: Secondary data is taken from published research publications, industry reports, and trustworthy web sources covering social media marketing, consumer behavior, and the organic cosmetics business. This material will be utilized to supplement the literature review, create a conceptual framework, and provide context for evaluating primary data**.**

Structure of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was carefully created and distributed to gather primary data. It includes multiple-choice questions and Likert scale items that capture respondents' demographics, social media usage, and shopping habits for organic cosmetics.

Sample Size

The study was carried out with a sample of approximately 60 Gen Z customers who completed the questionnaire and contributed primary data for analysis.

Hypotheses

H_0: There is no significant difference in social awareness regarding organic cosmetic products among Gen Z consumers.

H_1: There is a significant difference in social awareness regarding organic cosmetic products among Gen Z consumers.

H_0: There is no significant impact of the trustworthiness of online reviews on the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers.

H_1: There is a significant impact of the trustworthiness of online reviews on the purchasing decisions of Gen Z consumers.

H_0: There is no significant relationship between online content factors and Gen Z consumers' decisions to purchase organic cosmetic products.

H_1: There is a significant relationship between online content factors and Gen Z consumers' decisions to purchase organic cosmetic products.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

For the study, the acquired data were examined using descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, and correlation analysis.

According to descriptive statistics, respondents' average awareness of environmental advantages was 4.2 (SD = 0.7) on a five-point Likert scale. This research implies that Gen Z consumers are highly socially conscious about the environmental impact of cosmetic items. Furthermore, frequency analysis revealed that more than 75% of participants ranked their awareness as 4 (agree) or 5 (strongly agree). This suggests that environmental and health issues have a significant impact on the perception and acceptability of organic cosmetics among this demographic.

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The mean trust score in online reviews was 4.0, with a standard deviation of 0.9, indicating that the majority of respondents thought online reviews were a reliable source of information when evaluating organic cosmetic goods. To further investigate this relationship, a correlation study was performed between the level of trust in online reviews and the influence of reviews on purchase decisions. The obtained correlation coefficient was +0.65, showing a significant positive relationship. This shows that as trust in internet reviews increases, so does the possibility of purchasing organic cosmetics. These findings highlight the significance of credible web content in consumer decision-making processes.

According to an analysis of respondents' opinions of various types of online material, influencer content is the most impactful, with a mean score of 4.3. This was followed by product reviews, which had an average rating of 4.0. Other sorts of material, such as tutorials and advertisements, were assessed as having a smaller influence on purchasing decisions. These findings underline the importance of authentic and relatable online information, particularly influencer endorsements and detailed product evaluations, in altering Gen Z consumers' attitudes and actions toward purchasing organic cosmetics.

FINDINGS

The survey found that Gen Z customers are extremely socially concerned, with an average awareness score of 4.2 about the environmental benefits of organic cosmetics. Over 75% showed strong awareness, showing that environmental and health problems influence their preferences. Trust in online reviews was likewise high (M = 4.0) and had a favourable correlation (r = +0.65) with purchasing decisions. Influencer content had the highest impact (M = 4.3), followed by product reviews. Other media, such as tutorials and advertisements, were less influential. These findings underscore the importance of trustworthy, relatable social media material in influencing Gen Z's organic cosmetic shopping habits.

SUGGESTIONS

According to the study, social media has a significant impact on Generation Z's purchasing decisions for organic cosmetics. With a high level of social and environmental awareness, Gen Z consumers are heavily influenced by credible and engaging online content. Influencer endorsements and genuine product reviews emerged as the most influential content kinds, whereas standard marketing had a lower impact. Trust in online reviews is highly correlated with purchase intent, emphasizing the importance of openness and relatability in digital marketing. To effectively engage this group, marketers should prioritize transparent communication, environmentally sensitive messaging, and strategic use of social media channels and influencers.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that social media has a significant impact on Generation Z's shopping decisions for organic cosmetics. The findings show that Gen Z consumers are not just concerned about the environmental and health consequences of their cosmetic choices, but they are also strongly involved with social media material that reflects their values. Influencer content and authentic product reviews have a substantial impact on their decision-making, with online review trust closely correlated with buy intent. The study reveals that digital platforms, particularly those with credible, relatable, and value-driven content, are critical tools for marketers looking to connect with this conscious and trendsetting generation.

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