The Impact of Social Media Influencers as an Advertising Aid in the Beauty Industry

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ABSTRACT

The Indian beauty market is expected to grow at 9% to USD 22- 23 million in the coming year. This rise is owed to the rising disposable income of the consumers and their desire to look good. These are some of the factors among other which are fueling the growth of the Indian beauty market. Fueling this trend more is the expenditure of brands in training experts that provide proper guidance and also have knowledge of several items which improves the customer experience greatly.There's a vivid distinction in phrases of age for customers purchasing on the internet and customers buying offline wherein for a buyer aged between 18 to 25 years, the awareness is actually attained through internet resources (Facebook, Instagram etc) as well as advertisements.

INTRODUCTION

Since the inception of social media and especially from the year of 2020, the way a brand markets its products and services has been revolutionized. This holds true especially in case of the beauty industry.

Marketers are battling advertisement clutter to find more creative ways to engage with their target audience, thanks to the timely increase in advertising through social media, blogs, and games. In this ever-changing online landscape, new modes and adaptations of traditionally used advertising vehicles have emerged, such as celebrity endorsements. In fact, according to the report by Schimmelpfennig and Hollensen (2016) celebrity endorsement is not as successful as it used to be and a new form of sponsorship is needed. As a result, marketers are turning to influencer marketing, a relatively new concept in advertising, as mainstream advertising has lost its appeal with millennial consumers (Newman 2015).

Due to the strength and scope of a consumer's online opinion or comments, they will automatically affect thousands of other consumers, which explains the rise of influencer marketing (Yusuf et al. 2018). Social media influencers have become a powerful "someone" force with "immense growth and strength" (Booth and Matic 2011).

It's almost impossible to go through an Instagram feed these days without encountering influencer marketers. These social media influencers are the latest generation of celebrities, born out of the blogging craze that has swept India over the past five years.

We've been listening to a great deal of buzz around bloggers, influencers, YouTubers and there's no doubting that the definition of advertising has changed in the development of millennia's or perhaps quite the Gen "Z".

Late 90 's as well as 2000's had been all about digital media and print but in case we have a better look from 2016 and forward, its no greater the era of celebrity recommendations quiet, it's all about the brand-new phrase Influencers. In an extremely simplistic fashion in case, we attempt to realize who actually an influencer is actually, "it is some person/individual that persuades you on your choices and preferences in the daily life of yours could definitely be known as an influencer." That is exactly how we explain this hyped term in marketing. In order to understand the potential of its in India, when Googled about influencers or maybe influencer promoting in Indian context, there's not much written about this.

Followers in such huge numbers can only show the power social media and its influencers hold. Such kind of a following of consumers and being able to influence the consumers and their purchase decisions describes the potential of social media.

Yet, the strength and effectiveness of social media influencers as a source of advertising has not been studied in depth academically due to their recent emergence in the Indian advertising industry. Accordingly, the aim of this research is to learn how brands in the beauty industry can better utilize this form of brand ambassador in advertising campaigns by gaining a better understanding of how customers perceive the source.

This research used the appropriate method of collection the data through the help of questionnaire from respondents with common beauty preferences and social media influencers to effectively meet these goals. The researcher was able to better understand consumer opinions and perspectives on various facets of social media influencers through these secondary and primary research. Both during the review of literature and through the questionnaire, common themes emerged. Topics such as trust and credibility, reliability, sponsorships and collaborations emerged from the study results.

As illustrated below, the results provided useful, meaningful and informative information for beauty brands.

a) In this report, consumers place great importance on the relationship and trustworthiness of influencers on social media.

b) When the product is related to beauty, the attractiveness of a social media influencer is essential, but the degree of attractiveness must be seen as achievable by consumers.

Different countries, especially European countries like UK, Italy and France, could study the future of this topic. Social media influencers from these European countries are common, but their cultures are different from India, so they may have different perspectives and opinions on brands at European level. The research could also be repeated to better understand the perspectives of millennial male customers on social media influencers in a particular field, such as fitness or fashion. A larger study that includes both male and female perspectives on influencers could also provide valuable business insight.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The goal of this particular literature review is actually gaining a clear understanding of what's presently known about the primary areas of the analysis subject, the effect of social media influencers as an aid for advertising and marketing in the beauty business from the perspective of India.

The record will be established initially by building an understanding of the beauty business and the connection of its to the quickly changing area of marketing communications. After that in relation to the beauty business, a quick introduction of other the same places follows, like social media, word of mouth, stealth advertising, and product placement.

Since social media influencers are actually a fairly brand new addition to the marketing field, the literature on the topic is actually very much limited. On the flip side, latest articles on influencer item matching on social networking, influencer advertising effect and attractiveness is going to be examined. This investigation is going to review the literature on celebrity endorsement as well as appeal to obtain a clear understanding of various other featured media which are actually very similar in nature to social media influencers. It is going to include an overview of current info, highlight popular fashion, and determine important gaps. This can be useful in answering the research issue on the impact of social media influencers on the beauty business.

BEAUTY INDUSTRY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Unlike other generations, the beauty industry has been found to have greater engagement and engagement with social media influencers (Moore 2012). According to Maoz, millennial women generated 83.9 percent of social media posts in 2017 (Maoz 2018). As a result, the main emphasis of the study will be on millennials as customers.

Technology is ingrained in the everyday life of the beauty industry (Moore 2012), from work to dating, and as a result, they are commonly referred to as digital natives. Millennials are the generation that grew up with the Internet and expanded the boundaries of what is possible online through their desire to find meaningful interactions, experiences, and relationships with brands (Hurst 2016). When it comes to digital ads, clients in the beauty industry are inspired consumers seeking collaboration (Serazio 2015). They are pragmatic and no longer want brands to communicate with them in a one-way fashion; instead, they seek mutually beneficial dialogues in which they can co-create with brands. Due to the hyperconnectivity of this generation, they have dramatically higher levels of satisfaction with the Internet.

The assumption that all members of the beauty industry are hyper-connected digital natives (Serazio 2015) has been disproved by a study by Kilian et al. (2012), who found that there are different levels of digital use among members of the beauty industry. The first is the moderate beauty industry, which continues to rely on conventional forms of advertising and is underrepresented on the Internet. The second group is the entertainment-seeking beauty industry, which uses social media for entertainment and content development, but also uses conventional methods for daily tasks. The last part is the hyper-connected consumers, for whom social media is an inseparable part of their lives (Kilian et al. 2012). Their daily life is completely enveloped by the technologies they employ. This should be taken into account in all research related to the beauty industry.

The beauty industry actively seeks participation and shares knowledge with much broader peer groups than other generations. Co-creation is a relatively new term, first introduced to the literature in 2004 by Vargo and Lusch. The concept is that two parties, the company and the client, collaborate to generate value (Barrutia et al. 2016). According to the findings, companies have become too insular in their approach to capital, missing the opportunity to build brand awareness through training, improved customer experience, and co-creation (Barrutia et al. 2016). This generation expects upbeat,

collaborative, and open online contact. Co-creation provides the openness and commitment demanded by the Millennial generation.

Consumer participation is essential for the sustainability of co-creation. The willingness of consumers to participate in co-creation is essential to its success. The fact that 225 million people use ad blockers to stop ads (Roth et al. 2017) supports the theory that the beauty industry doesn't like one-sided conversations in online marketing. According to Barnes (2015), the filtering of digital ads by the beauty industry may be due to their perception of themselves as proactive agents. They have well-developed approaches to rating advertisements, basing their judgments not only on a brand's regular advertising, but also on the brand's broader peer review. This explains why consumers are so obsessed with social media influencers.
Today it's nearly become necessary for companies or brands to include things like the usage of social networking in the marketing strategy of theirs, mainly as a result of the expansion of social media users globally - in 2017 there was 2.46 billion social media users online, a selection which had been steadily improving overs the many years (Jokinen, 2016). Brands could gain a good deal from advertising and marketing on social networking, not simply due to the substantial market they're in a position to attain since a big portion of the population is actually live but also as a result of the incredibly low price of this particular kind of ad in comparison to other styles of classic media (Bakhshi,Gilbert, Shamma, 2014). Another key difference from regular media is the fact that while conventional media provides a one way information to customers, social networking provides opportunities for consumers and brands to have a 2 means marketing communications (Prindle, 2011), all of the while offering the chance for owners to share the opinions of theirs and talk with other people (Kelly, 2010), therefore being in a position to build up a much closer connection with the consumers of theirs. Because of the solid internet presence of customers, social media also can supply a mean for businesses to collect info about what their clients are interest in as well as about the behavior of theirs. These insights may be of great worth for businesses when planning future methods. Nevertheless, several studies have revealed that because of to the large quantity of ad from makes on social media they begin to be dismissed by owners, while user generated content from people that have had a good experience make customers much more apt to purchase a merchandise (Chiu, Tang and Lin, 2005; Forsythe and; Shi, 2003). One social media which is proving to be extremely beneficial with companies is Instagram. over 200 million users visit specialist profile at least the moment one day and 60 % say they've discovered products that are new on the network; and since Instagram primary objective is actually for people to share photographs, it becomes equally ideal platform for user generated content, and thus a great house for Digital Influencers.

ONLINE REVIEWS AND ELECTRONIC WORD OF MOUTH

The web has supplied an easy way for anybody with access to a personal computer to communicate and exchange opinions and ideas with some other people, even in case they've never met in person; and with it internet communities start appearing. These communities are actually defining as internet spaces composed by people that socially interact and also have talks with a shared interest or maybe purpose. These communities may usually be discovered on social networking websites, in which customers can immediately speak and share opinions with one another, which makes them a fantastic instrument for eWOM - Electronic Word of mouth.

Electronic word of mouth refers to any kind of negative or positive statement made by prospective, actual, or maybe former clients about a product or maybe organization, which is actually made available to a wide range of institutions and people via the Internet. It can be said that electronic word of mouth is similar to regular word of mouth, it's just that electronic word of mouth takes places over the internet. Online reviews published by the social media influencers are a part of the whole word of mouth spree regarding a product or a service. According to the literature reviewed, consumers tend to rely on such online reviews and electronic word of mouth of social media influencers because they feel that these social media influencers are normal people just like them. This aspect of online reviews, electronic word of mouth and social media influencers makes social media influencers come off as a reliable source of information for consumers.

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS, THEIR RELIABILITY AND CREDIBILITY

The beauty as well as cosmetic business has been one such segments where the usage of Influencers has proved to be helpful and it is extremely common, since it is practice that is common for customers to carry out research before buying on social networking and search for influencers' review.

Brands do business with social media influencers through PR partnerships as well. There are two aspects of it. Firstly, brands often send their products to the social media influencers as PR in the hopes of their products being reviewed and being exposed to a large number of social media following. These are the prospective customers whom the brands want to convert into customers. Secondly, brands pay social media influencers to actually talk about their products. Now this can be in a positive manner as well as in a negative manner. According to a survey, there are some brands which do pay the influencers to talk about their products but they also provide full freedom to the influencers over what they want to say about the products and their experience. There are also some brands which pay the influencers but do not give freedom over

the review of the products. This then leads to influencers following a particular script as to what is to be said about the product, and hence the consumers do not get to know about the actual review. All they get to know about is "all- things-good" about the product. On the other hand, YouTube Influencers have an influence on customer behavior. A study shows based out of Portugal reflects that are particular that the way customers perspective and perceive the vlogger has an effect in the purchase intent of theirs and that when they see the YouTuber as reliable, they are going to view the product review of theirs in a good light. With Influencers currently being observed has dependable sources of info they are able to serve as nice advertisements elements in the Portuguese decorative store. Furthermore, in a research of societal influence online, found that customers could be affected by feedback of other customers, negative or positive. Hence, if an influencer articles on Instagram encouraging the purchase of a make- up product gets good comments from some other customers, this's discovered to raise the consumers' readiness to comply with the demand or maybe message communicated based on the need of theirs for social acceptance. Source Credibility principle puts forward that customers value content that's editorial, for example organic influencer articles, over that of a clear persuasion effort by an influencer. With regards to Source Credibility, trustworthiness is actually the capability of the customer to see the idea communicated by the social media influencer as legitimate. It's the analysis of just how worthy an influencer is of a follower's loyalty. The loyalty and commitment between a customer and influencer have been discovered to positively influence long-term relationships and sales between the influencers' followers as well as the promoted brand. the secret to reliable internet feedback is encounters which customers are able to connect with straight and a credible source inside an evaluation means customers view the brand favorably. Complementary to this particular emphasis on experiences, it was discovered that not just do individual experiences enhance credibility but this particularly, female influencers on-line gave more importance to credibility & influence, because younger females can connect to them. In a study on influence marketing in the beauty industry, results reflect that advertising involving influencers does impact on buying intentions as respect the programs given as well as on behaviours and attitudes to beauty and fashion. Customers keep favourable views to blogs, regardless of the age group, with most publicly acknowledging they determine as well as relate with the bloggers and the blogs of theirs

STEALTH MARKETING

Of the countless kinds of marketing, stealth advertising is considered probably the most deceitful, in that the primary goal of its is avoiding disclosure of a connection between a brand and an influencer. The brands' aim is exploiting and make use of the relationship influencers have with the followers of theirs, to motivate objectives like increasing their revenue and sales.

Before 2021, there was no law regarding sponsored content or Ads being put up in social media posts. On the 22nd of February, 2021, some guidelines regarding influencer advertising of social media were laid down by the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI). These guidelines reflect that the social media influencers are bound to include disclosure labels such as #AD, #SP, #collab, #sponsored or #promo. This step taken by the ASCI will ensure that the consumers who get exposed to such content on social media do not get deceived by the social media influencers or advertisers. By putting the content out as sponsored will ensure that the consumers are well informed about everything and can, hence, take informed purchase decisions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze impact of social media influencers as an advertising aid in the beauty industry
2. Toassesstheimpactofreliabilityandcredibilityofasocialmediainfluencer.
3. Toassesstheimpactofproductmatch-upandtheattractivenessofasocialmediainfluencer   fromthebeauty industry.
4. To understand the views of the respondents on sponsored posts and ads.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Science methodology is a method for solving a research problem in a systematic manner. The different methods and techniques for conducting research are included in the Research Methodology. Scientific inquiry is the art of science. In other words, research is the systematic and scientific quest for relevant knowledge on a particular subject. The rationale for considering research methodology is that it allows one to gain knowledge of the process and technique used to achieve the project's goal.

Research Design:

The conceptual framework in which research is carried out is known as research design. A descriptive research served as the model for data collection, calculation, and interpretation. Descriptive research entails gathering numerical data through self-reports, questionnaires, or interviews (in person or over the phone), as well as observation. The analysis for this study was descriptive and result-oriented.

Sampling Design:

All that physically exists, including the entirety of space and time, all kinds of matter, energy, and momentum, and the physical laws and constants that regulate them, is referred to as the Universe.

The target population that must be sampled must be specified as the sampling unit. Students and professionals from Dehradun served as the research's sampling unit.

The number of respondents chosen from the world to make up a survey is referred to as sample size. A total of 51 people were surveyed.

The sample was chosen using the convenience sampling technique. Convenient sampling is a non-probabilistic sampling method that aims to produce a sample of useful elements. In convenience sampling, the sample is chosen at the interviewer's discretion. The data for this project was collected using the Questionnaire Method. A sample survey was carried out using this method of data collection.

Data Collection:

- Data was gathered from both primary and secondary sources.
- • Primary data—Primary data are those that are new and collected for the first time, and thus have an original character. Questionnaire was used to gather the primary data.
- • Secondary data—Secondary data is information that has already been compiled by someone else and has gone through the statistical process. Online pages, books, and magazines were used to gather secondary data.

Tools for Presentation and Analysis:

- The following tools were used to evaluate the data collected via the questionnaire which was in the form of a Google form:
  - Percentage, Bar Graphs, and Pie Charts: These data analysis methods were used to collect, analyze and asses the data.

Limitations of the Study

"What is worth doing is worth doing best," as the saying goes. To put it another way, an individual should strive for excellence. In fact, however, this is not always possible. Humans must function under the constraints imposed by nature and culture. That is to say, while every attempt was made to make this project report accurate and detailed, there were numerous constraints at play. The following are the study's main limitations:

- ❖ The concept of social media influencers, sponsored posts and ads are relatively new in the Indian subcontinent. Hence, some of the respondents were not able to answer properly.
- ❖ A nationwide survey was not feasible due to a lack of time and money. As a result, the research has been limited to Dehradun.
- ❖ Since a smaller sample was selected, it's possible that it's not an accurate representation of the population being studied.
- ❖ Due to the sudden outbreak and widespread of the novel corona virus, the majority of the research was limited to the Internet and written sources.
- ❖ Since certain respondents may not be interested in providing accurate information, the information provided by the respondents may be biassed.
- ❖ Owing to a lack of expertise, some of the respondents were unable to respond to the questions.

CONCLUSION

- Maximum of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21- 35, which make the majority of them belong to the millennial generation. This means that millennials in general are the most exposed to social media and influencers. The research establishes that the millennials have established a bond and a relationship with the social media influencers which becomes the base for their following.

- Consumers have established a relationship with social media influencers. This makes the influencers approachable to the consumers. It's a two-way process. When it comes to content, the social media influencers also approach their audience as to what their demands are. Hence, the brands need to keep such kind of a relationship of the social media influencers and their audience in mind. This can prove to be beneficial for the brands as they can reap benefits out of such kind of engagement between the influencers and their audience.

- In this research, the credibility and the reliability of the social media influencers played an important part. Studies show that the consumers view social media influencers as a reliable and a credible source of information because they feel that these influencers are common people just like them, and hence relate with the on more of an empirical level. Because of such aspect of reliability and credibility, primary research has shown that maximum of the respondents has purchased a product based on social media influencer's recommendation. Brands can reap benefits out of such kind of a trust by choosing their social media influencers for collaboration wisely.

- This study reveals that consumers follow influencers based out of beauty industry on social media. Also, they feel that they are able to get more credible information regarding beauty products from social media influencers over celebrities. The study reveals that the reason behind this could be that the influencers come off as more approachable than the celebrities.

- This research reflects that consumers place a high value on trustworthiness. So, it is recommended that the influencers do not endorse any such random products. Also, the influencer should not juggle or switch between brands with substitute products. This can lead to loss of trust in the influencer.

- With regards to a global context, micro influencers are given more attention because they come off as approachable and relatable. With regards to Indian context, macro influencers are given more credit and attention owing to the newness of the concept in the country.

- Literature reveals that influencers talking about only the positive aspect of a products comes off as very dicey. Consumers tend to loose trust in such influencers because only the positive aspect of any product seems to be paid for. Consumers are more likely to be influenced by an influencer who genuinely showcases both, the negative and the positive aspect of any product.

- The results show that knowledge being insignificant when it comes to beauty. Brands, especially in the beauty industry, considers influencers who do not have experience or professional knowledge because ethe consumers want to see the products being used by someone who is like them i.e., not experienced.

- When it comes to brand collaborations, it is also a way of communicating the needs and wants of the consumers to the brand, through the social media influencer. This way, the brands can improve their products to satisfy the demand of the consumers. Through brand collaborations, the visibility of the brand and its products can be improved immensely. Brands should not solely focus on paid partnerships with the social media influences as this tends to lead towards mistrust. Instead, they should focus more of organic collaborations and PR.

- The concept of ads and sponsored content on social media in relatively new in India. Consumers are still not much aware about the concept. Before 2021, there was no such law binding influencers to disclose paid partnerships. In February, 2021, the guidelines established by the ASCI binds the influencers to disclose their paid partnerships. This ensures that the consumers are not being deceived by such partnerships and their interest remains protected.

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