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The Influence of User-Generated Content Information Credibility and Information Adoption on Consumer Purchase Intention

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Abstract

Influencer marketing is considered one of the most significant developments in the marketing industry. Influencers use short-form content production methods such as blogging and video blogging as a way for their followers to gain insights into their personal and everyday lives, as well as their experiences and ideas. The purpose of this study is to identify the influence of information credibility and information adoption on consumer purchase intention toward cosmetic products in Malaysia. The study's unit of analysis is a woman who has prior experience watching YouTube videos on cosmetic product reviews. Structural Equation Modelling in IBM-SPSS-AMOS 24.0 was used to test the proposed hypotheses of the research. The results indicate that both information credibility and information adoption influence consumers' purchase intention toward cosmetic products in Malaysia.

Keywords: Information Adoption, Information Credibility, Purchase Intention, Social Media Influencer, User-Generated Content

Introduction

Technology and the Internet allow customers to access vast product or service information on social media. Social media has made it easier for consumers to digest product information. It offers them more comfortable and instant channels of communication with other consumers from around the world. The Internet encourages customer conversations by facilitating the transmission of information to a broader audience within a short timeframe. It is well acknowledged that user-generated content may substantially influence customer purchase decisions (Wang & Lin, 2012). In consumer feedback, user-generated content refers to the information created by consumers and made available online for others to read and learn from. It may be used for product reviews to customer service feedback (Bahtar & Muda, 2016). Consumers have begun to utilize social media sites to exchange information (Dimitriu & Guesalaga, 2017). Marketers must understand how user-generated content may assist firms in forecasting the demand for their products since it is seen to be a key determinant of customers' purchase decisions.

Consumers now can engage in debates due to the extensive availability of the Internet, which allows information to be rapidly and efficiently disseminated to many people. According to the most recent statistics available, customers have been actively involved in discussing their purchasing experiences online, thus providing marketing managers with an unparalleled opportunity to gather industry knowledge (Erevelles et al., 2016). When customers engage with virtual environments, they frequently leave digital footprints that represent their opinions on products or services, personal experiences, and overall performance evaluations of a firm (Peltier et al., 2020). Consumers may readily share their opinions and learn from the experiences of others on a variety of platforms, such as store websites, online review sites, Internet discussion forums, social networking sites, microblogs, and blogs (Zhang et al., 2014). Because of the growing popularity of social networking platforms, consumer interaction and communication has increased substantially (Dinh & Lee, 2021). The capacity of Internet users to communicate and exchange data has improved tremendously due to the presence of social networking sites. People who express their comments online about a company or a product they have purchased are generally driven by a desire to assist other customers and to feel like they are part of a more extensive community of consumers (Cheung & Lee, 2012).

With the emergence of social media, users are becoming much more interested in exchanging information about products and services with each other (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Social media platforms have turned into an effective channel of communication and information resources that allow users to create and share information in an all-embracing and easily accessible way. Therefore, the process of the user generating information and sharing it with individuals with different lifestyles has improved dramatically with the emergence of social media (Kwahk & Park, 2016). As a result, information flow has evolved from a passive one-way communication process to an interactive one in which users may exchange and obtain information from a variety of online venues (Dahl et al., 2019). Consumer experiences that are not paid for or overseen by firms are referred to as user-created content. It can take place online or offline, and it does not have to be sponsored by a firm or institution (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). User-generated content related to firms is common on social media, with consumers creating and sharing their content to express their thoughts and feelings, enjoy themselves, learn something new, or interact socially with other customers (Davicik et al., 2022).

From an interactive marketing standpoint, the environment is rapidly evolving away from corporate-centric marketing communications to consumer-centric collaborative sharing and interactions (Muda & Hamzah, 2021). A small number of individuals create the great majority of online material, but most Internet users consume it. Many customer evaluations are now available online due to customers' increasing dependence on the Internet to discover and exchange product information (Reichelt et al., 2014). Social networking platforms have received greater attention from marketers looking to leverage the opportunities to influence consumer purchase intentions (Weismueller et al., 2020). When compared to other sources of information, such as marketers, customers find user-generated content, such as reviews offered by social media influencers, to be more convincing and the source of information that has the least bias (Mohamed et al., 2023). Online review information is predicted to have a considerable influence on customers' purchase decisions in the future (Elwalda et al., 2016). When individuals adopt what they have learned from the material and implement it into their day-to-day daily lives, the credibility of the information improves significantly. The credibility of the information also improves information adoption, as it enables people to

learn from such knowledge, which in turn influences their purchase decisions (Tien et al., 2018). Therefore, consumer attitudes toward information must also be considered when examining their purchase intentions (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

Literature Review

User-Generated Content and Social Media Influencer

Influencer marketing is becoming increasingly popular, and it is considered one of the most significant developments in the marketing industry. Influencers use short-form content production methods, including blogging, video blogging, and other short-form content creation methods such as Instagram to allow their followers to gain insights into their personal and everyday lives, as well as their experiences and ideas (De Veirman et al., 2017). Material made by social media influencers has been shown to be substantially more effective than content developed in a studio (Ki & Kim, 2019). Consumers that have a favorable attitude toward user-generated content are more inclined to acquire the products that have been evaluated by others (Muda & Hamzah, 2021). Social media influencers share their opinions on products, services, and firms with their followers through social media platforms. These social media influencers may be called thought leaders in their respective fields since they communicate with many followers on social media (De Veirman et al., 2017).

Social media influencers generally adopt new products and services related to their fields of interest ahead of the vast majority of customers, giving them an advantage in understanding how these products and services will integrate into their lifestyles ahead of those customers (Casaló et al., 2020; Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). In turn, influencers use this information to assess things and provide recommendations, allowing them to establish a credible reputation while also earning monetary compensation for their efforts (Ki et al., 2020). Social media influencers are used as a tool for increasing the reach of brand content through electronic word-of-mouth marketing. Brands may amplify their marketing messages and increase target customers' acceptance of their products by enlisting the help of social media influencers to seed media with specific messages or share new product endorsements (De Veirman et al., 2017).

The Relationship Between Information Credibility and Purchase Intention

Consumers can use the comment sections in online forums to voice their opinions and share their prior experiences with a product or service that influencers have suggested. The source of communication determines its creditability (Keshavarz & Esmaeili Givi, 2020). The outcome is that potential buyers may access vast user-generated content information, and the reliability of the information available online increases due to this trend. User-generated content, in addition to benefitting potential consumers by encouraging them to adopt the available information, also provides information to businesses by urging them to improve the quality of their products and the reputation of their brands through consumer interaction on social media platforms. Social media users that are seeking assistance can find it more convenient to consult more reliable resources (Tien et al., 2018).

Consumers prefer user-generated evaluations because such reviews provide more detailed and trustworthy information that firms often do not share on public platforms (Yang & Mai, 2010). The recipients' acceptance and learning from the knowledge demonstrates the credibility of the information (Tien et al., 2018). User-generated material that receives positive feedback will boost potential customers' trust in implementing the knowledge, ultimately leading to them making a purchasing decision. The level of reliability of the source

impacts the acceptance of online reviews by the person who is receiving the information (Daowd et al., 2020). More importantly, consumers will have a more positive attitude toward a product or service if other users give more good evaluations and information about the product or service. When the product information content is relevant to the consumer, there is a favorable influence on the consumer's intention to purchase the product (Alalwan, 2018). Customers who have a favorable view toward those who wield influence on social media are more likely to buy the products recommended by those individuals (Lim et al., 2017).

H1: Information credibility has a significance influence on purchase intention

The Relationship Between Information Adoption and Purchase Intention

Adoption of user-generated material is one of the highly focused on response variables in online communication, and it is one of the most important. A deep foundation for customer-to-customer electronic word of mouth information is likely to be provided by social media. This information will substantially influence consumer buying decisions (Tien et al., 2018). In the same way that knowledge is transferred, information must be adopted in the recipient's mind. The process of information adoption can also be thought of as the internal transmission stage in which information is received and turned into consciousness and knowledge (Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The decision on whether or not to accept or reject the information is based on an evaluation of its credibility and an evaluation of its assessed relevance to the individual who is receiving it. Adoption of user-generated material and the intention and decision to purchase are among the highly-oriented response variables in online communication that may be measured (Cheung & Thadani, 2012). A consumer is considered to have a conscious plan to purchase a product when they have the intention to make a purchase after going through an individual process and making use of both evaluative and normative judgements (Visentin et al., 2019).

Users will seek assistance from the online community whenever they have more questions regarding a product that they are using. The term purchase intention refers to the likelihood that online users will buy products of a certain brand as a direct result of reading online reviews of those products (Hsu, 2021). However, the effect of the degree of adoption of user-generated information available on social media on customer purchasing intentions can be varied (Yang, 2012). This study predicts that the influence of user-generated reviews shared by YouTube users to communicate their views and experience regarding a product will have a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention. Previous research found that consumers' purchase intentions were influenced by their adoption of the information available on social media platforms (Daowd et al., 2020; Erkan & Evans, 2016; Leong et al., 2021; Tien et al., 2018).

H2: Information adoption has a significance influence on purchase intention

Context of The Study

Women are more likely to use cosmetics when they place a high value on personal appearance; this is particularly true for professional women who wish to appear attractive in public (Ridzuan et al., 2021). According to the data provided by Malaysia Department of Statistics, the total expenditures in the Malaysian cosmetics industry amount to around US\$407 million, and the majority of the demand is satisfied by imports rather than locally produced items (Mohammed et al., 2021). Consumers are willing to pay a premium price for high-quality cosmetic products (Ridzuan et al., 2021). The Malaysian cosmetics industry is

continuously expanding, turning it into a dynamic field of interest for Malaysian consumers and manufacturers alike (Ali et al., 2019).

Data Collection

Data were gathered using an online questionnaire accessible through a Google Form link posted on social media networks such as Facebook, Instagram, Telegram, and WhatsApp. This study's participants consisted of Malaysian women between the ages of 18 and 56 who had watched YouTube reviews on cosmetic products uploaded by beauty influencers. This study then used the calculation method recommended by Smith, (2013) to determine the right sample size with a 95% confidence level, .5 standard deviation, and a margin of error (confidence interval) of +/-5%.

Necessary Sample Size (NSS) = $(Z\text{-score})^2 * StdDev*(1-StdDev) / (\text{margin of error})^2$

The required sample size based on the calculation is 384.16. Hence, this study employed purposive and snowball sampling methods, which involved circulating the online questionnaire to gather responses. This research followed the procedure recommended by Leighton et al (2021) for the social media snowball strategy technique, utilizing Facebook as the social media platform. Apart from that, this research also used instant messaging platforms, namely WhatsApp and Telegram. In total, 384 responses were gathered via this method of sampling for further analysis using IBM-SPSS-AMOS 24.0.

Findings and Discussion

YouTube Usage by The Respondents

The respondents' YouTube usage included the types of cosmetic product reviews that customers preferred to watch on YouTube, the frequency with which they viewed YouTube videos featuring reviews of cosmetic products uploaded by beauty influencers, and the country of origin of the beauty influencers.

Table 1

Frequency watching cosmetic product review

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
More than once a month	196	51.0	51.0	51.0
Once a month	140	36.5	36.5	87.5
Very rare	48	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	

As Table 1 shows, 196 respondents (51%) watched cosmetic product reviews on YouTube more than once a month, 140 respondents (36.5%) watched the reviews once a month, and 48 respondents (12.5%) watched the reviews on rare occasions.

Table 2

Social Media Influencer Country of Origin

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Malaysia beauty influencer	212	55.2	55.2	55.2
International beauty influencer	172	44.8	44.8	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The countries of origin of the influencers in this research were grouped into two categories and presented in Table 2. In total, 212 respondents (55.2%) preferred watching cosmetic reviews provided by Malaysian beauty influencers, and the remaining 172 respondents (44.8%) chose to watch videos provided by international beauty influencers.

Table 3

Types of Cosmetic Product

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Makeup products	187	48.7	48.7	48.7
Skincare products	168	43.8	43.8	92.4
Hair care products	19	4.9	4.9	97.4
Fragrance products	10	2.6	2.6	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows the types of YouTube cosmetic product review videos preferred by the respondents. Exactly 187 respondents (48.7%) preferred makeup product reviews, 168 respondents (43.8%) preferred skincare product reviews, 19 respondents (4.9%) chose to watch hair care product reviews, and 10 respondents (2.6%) watched fragrance product reviews on YouTube.

Normality

When employing structural equation modelling (SEM), it is sufficient to measure the normality of the data distribution by looking at the skewness and kurtosis (Alsheikh et al., 2021). As suggested by Abdul-Rahim et al (2022); Awang (2015), when the sample size is bigger than 200, skewness values that fall between -1.5 and $+1.5$ are considered acceptable. However, SEM using Maximum Likelihood Estimator (MLE) is also robust to kurtosis violations of multivariate normality provided that the sample size is large and the value of the Critical Region (CR) for the kurtosis does not exceed 7.0 (Awang, 2015). The results of skewness and kurtosis are presented in Table 4. The values of skewness and kurtosis for all items are within the acceptable range. The value range for skewness is between -0.964 and -0.361 , and the CR value for the kurtosis range is between -1.837 and 3.620 indicating a satisfactory normal distribution.

Table 4

Skewness and Kurtosis

Variable	Min	Max	Skew	c.r.	Kurtosis	c.r.
IC1	3	7	-0.652	-5.215	0.014	0.054
IC2	2	7	-0.684	-5.468	-0.107	-0.428
IC3	3	7	-0.681	-5.451	0.001	0.006
IC4	2	7	-0.964	-7.71	0.905	3.620
IA1	4	7	-0.505	-4.042	-0.351	-1.404
IA2	4	7	-0.361	-2.889	-0.459	-1.837
IA3	4	7	-0.423	-3.387	-0.428	-1.711
IA4	4	7	-0.517	-4.136	-0.204	-0.815
PI1	3	7	-0.733	-5.861	0.338	1.352
PI2	3	7	-0.601	-4.805	0.105	0.419
PI3	3	7	-0.808	-6.468	0.395	1.581
Multivariate					45.242	26.212

Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Procedure

The measurement model was analyzed to determine the validity and reliability of the constructs. Each indicator that falls under a latent variable must have a factor loading greater than .06 in order to achieve good convergent validity (Awang, 2015; Dash & Paul, 2021; Hair et al., 2010).

Table 5

Summary of Convergent Validity

Variable	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Information Credibility	0.825 0.843 0.707 0.853	0.655	0.883
Information Adoption	0.739 0.822 0.790 0.704	0.585	0.849
Purchase Intention	0.809 0.858 0.745	0.649	0.847

How well scale items that are conceptually linked are correlated is determined by the convergent validity. By comparing the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) values, the convergent validity of the constructs can be assessed. The CR values are more than .6 and the value for AVE is set at .5 (Abdul-Rahim et al., 2022; Awang, 2015;

Hair et al., 2014). Table 5 presents the factor loading, AVE, and CR. Given that all values are more than the specified range, the convergent validity (AVE > .05) and (CR > 0.6) results for all constructs in this study are satisfactory

Table 6
 Summary of Discriminant Validity

Construct	Information Credibility	Information Adoption	Purchase Intention
Information Credibility	0.809		
Information Adoption	0.707	0.765	
Purchase Intention	0.722	0.740	0.806

For discriminant validity, for each construct, the square root of AVE has to be greater than the correlations between the construct and all other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 is generated by first carrying out the steps necessary to manually calculate the square root of AVE. As Table 6 shows, all of the pair-wise construct correlation values are lower than the square root of AVE, indicating that the discriminant validity criterion has been satisfied.

Result of SEM Path Analysis

The SEM approach was then applied to evaluate the parameters contained within the structural model in order to test the proposed hypotheses. Path analysis was employed in the structural model to test for the direct influence. For the estimated models to be valid, three criteria of model fit need to be met. The criteria are: root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) < 0.08 for the absolute fit index; comparative fit index (CFI) > 0.9 and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) > .09 for the incremental fit index; and chi-square (df) < 5.0 for the parsimonious fit index (Awang, 2015).

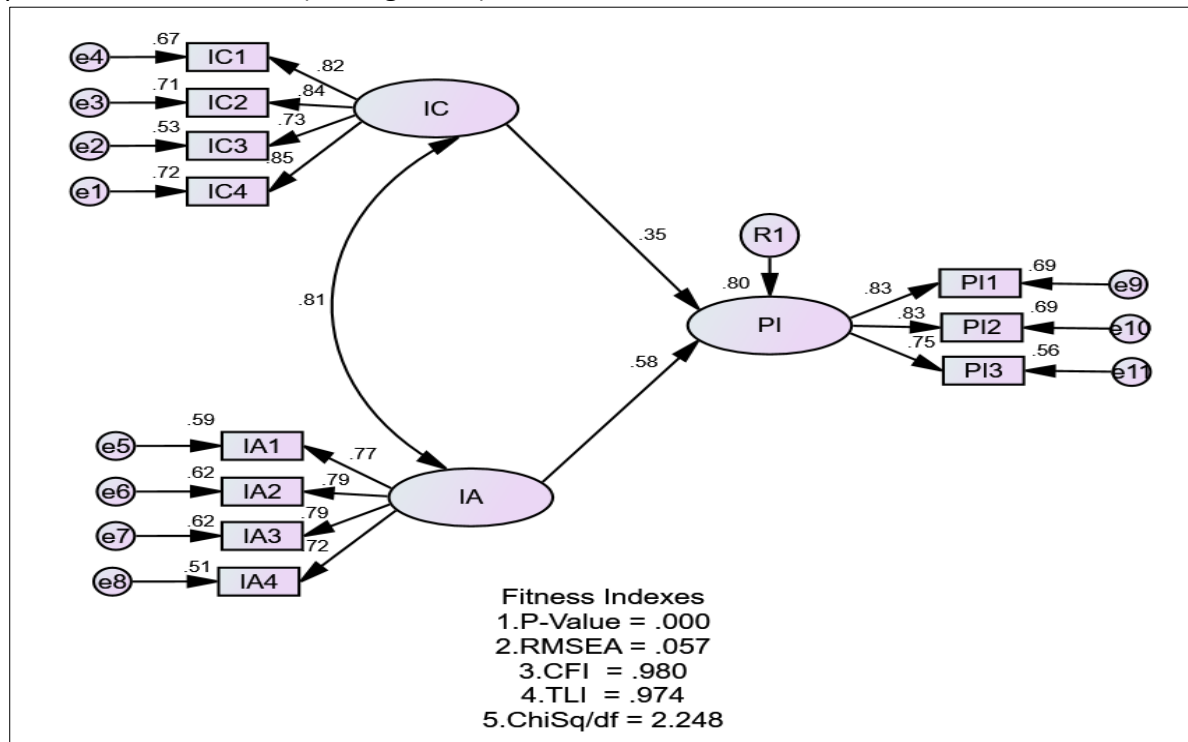


Figure 1. Standardized path coefficient

The findings of SEM path analysis, which are depicted in Figure 1, show that all the fitness indexes results are satisfactory for all three model fit categories with RMSEA=0.057, CFI=0.980, TLI=0.974 and ChiSq/df=2.248. Aside from that, the R^2 value is .80, indicating that information trustworthiness and information adoption contribute 80 percent to purchase intention. The value of R^2 for this model suggests, in general, that the regression model is acceptable.

Table 7

Path regression coefficient and its significance

Relationship			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Result
Purchase Intention	<-	Information Credibility	0.288	0.063	4.539	***	Significant
Purchase Intention	<-	Information Adoption	0.772	0.113	6.833	***	Significant

The result in Table 7 reveals that all the hypotheses are accepted. Information credibility significantly influenced purchase intention ($p = .000$) and information adoption significantly influenced purchase intention ($p = 0.000$).

As a result of the growth of social media, there has been a significant increase in the amount of information, viewpoints, and experiences that consumers are willing to share with one another. This increased sharing provides helpful information for individuals who are looking for information, and they adopt the information when they discover that it fulfils their needs. However, since the personal identity of the individuals publishing and expressing their opinions of a product or service on the internet is not revealed, people have almost unrestricted freedom to post their opinions of certain goods or services. Consequently, consumers' purchase intentions are influenced by the influencer's credibility (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020) and information adoption (Erkan & Evans, 2016).

Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between information credibility, information adoption, and purchase intention. Consumers' engagement level increases when items or services are promoted by social media influencers, making social media a powerful marketing tool. Thus, marketers and social media influencers need to understand the factors driving the adoption of information discovered in user-generated content, which ultimately influences customer purchase intentions. Social media influencers are increasingly being used in marketing initiatives across all industries in recent years (AlFarraj et al., 2021).

The outcomes of this study add to the body of knowledge pertaining to social media marketing by demonstrating that social media influencer information credibility and consumer information adoption have significant relationships with purchase intention among female consumers. Consumers' purchase intentions are thought to be directly influenced by user-generated content on YouTube. The results of this study contribute to the growing body of knowledge about social media marketing by highlighting the important relationships between social media influencer credibility, information adoption, and purchase intentions among female customers.

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