The Power of Beauty Influencers in Building a Positive Brand Image in the Cosmetics Industry

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, multiple companies rely on influencers as a strategy to market their products. These companies even resorted to collaborations where these specific people have their product line as part of the agreement. However, when a particular issue arises with the influencer, the company's image is also affected, and this information is very limited in this field of research. To address the gap, this research aims to broaden the knowledge of the effects of influencer marketing on cosmetic brand image. The study utilized a quantitative approach particularly a descriptive correlational method that involved 380 Generation Z (18-26 years old) respondents and explored the relationship between cosmetic influencers' characteristics and their effect on creating a positive brand image. Moreover, the study identified the specific characteristics that consumers investigate on influencers when purchasing a cosmetic product. The results of this study found that the most sought-after characteristics are appearance, behavior, and personality, which create a positive effect on brand image. The results of the study aim to help potential brands in the future understand the impact of social media influencers on brand image.

Keywords: local cosmetic brand, influencer marketing, social media marketing, brand image.

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1. INTRODUCTION

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The majority of our population certainly have their own social media accounts. At the height of the pandemic, where everyone was forced to be locked up in the comfort of their homes, a source of entertainment would merely come from one's usage of their cellphone. Companies took this to their advantage by banking on social media influencers to promote or endorse their products. In other words, companies have leveraged social media to promote their products (Samat, et al. 2024). They even ventured into collaborations where these influencers get to have their product line within the company.

As mentioned, social media influencers are third-party actors who have established a significant number of relevant relationships with a specific quality to influence organizational stakeholders through content production, content distribution, interaction, and personal appearance on the social web (Enke & Borchers, 2019). Companies invest in these people as a strategy to market their products.

Depending on how people perceive them, these people can positively and negatively impact one's business industry; most of the time, the basis for a company to select an influencer would be their popularity, credibility, physical appearance, personality, and behavior –all of which are qualities consumers look for. On the negative side, the company's image is also affected when a particular issue arises with the influencer.

Hence, the role of social media influencers can be a two-edged sword. Collaborating with an effective influencer can significantly enhance a brand's visibility and recognition among its target audience. It also helps build an engaged following since people often follow their influencers and the brands they endorse. Recognizing this potential and selecting an influencer who aligns with the brand's image and target audience increases brand awareness and fosters trust between the brand and its customers.

However, finding the influencer can be challenging due to factors at play. This includes assessing the influencer's ability to create quality content and considering its potential impact on shaping or damaging a brand's image. There is always a risk that an influencer's actions or background might negatively affect the company since brands have limited control over their messaging. Sometimes, there might be a mismatch between an influencer's attributes and the brand's personality.

In the context of the Philippines, many local cosmetic companies emerged alongside the rise of social media influencers during the pandemic. This was created to adapt to a technologically growing culture in which social media platforms are primarily utilized to endorse products and reach their target audience. As a result of the rising popularity of influencer marketing, both the cosmetics and skincare industries have become more prominent (Castillo et al., 2022).

Local cosmetic brands such as Issy and Co. (Issy) Colourette Cosmetics, Strokes Beauty, Lucky Beauty, GRWM Cosmetics, Sunnies Face, BLK Cosmetics, and Happy Skin have managed to establish themselves in the market during these times. A significant factor contributing to their success is social media influencers' endorsement of these brands on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. This form of marketing boosts brand visibility and offers customers convenient access to product reviews that can guide them in making informed decisions.

This research aims to offer valuable insights to the local cosmetic industry regarding the influence of social media influencers on consumer perceptions of their brands. It also serves as an opportunity for social media influencers to gain awareness of their impact on the brands they endorse and realize the responsibility they carry as brand ambassadors. While the findings offer valuable perspectives on consumer

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behavior and marketing strategies, their generalizability to other nations, industries, or markets requires careful consideration. Factors such as cultural differences, varying levels of social media engagement, and diverse market dynamics may shape the effectiveness of influencer marketing across different environments. Thus, while the study provides a robust foundation for understanding the role of beauty influencers, further research will be essential to validate and adapt these insights in varied global contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing

Due to the pandemic, most companies have decided to switch to virtual places through the help of social media influencers with its effects of being more cost-efficient while being able to get an even wider reach. Influencers, also called 'micro-celebrities', have gained fame through strategic self-presentation on social media (Janssen, 2022). In a 2019 study by Jin et al. on social media influencer marketing, consumers exposed to Instagram celebrity's brand posts showed a more positive attitude toward the endorsed brand. This proves the effectiveness of influencer marketing in promoting the company's products (Ellyawati & Kusumatriawan, 2024) and being able to connect with their audience more in hopes of having an increase in their sales as well. YouTubers demonstrate the impact of parasocial relationships, which are necessary for explaining marketing effectiveness but must be adequately considered in research (Masuda et al., 2022).

Influencer Characteristics

With the rise of social media influencers, companies nowadays have started utilizing them as brand endorsers and promoters to increase revenues and sales in addition to this. Aggad and Ahmad (2021) found that influencer characteristics and content can positively affect purchase intentions, while Masuda et al. (2022) discovered that parasocial relationships positively impact purchase intentions and are influenced by perceived influencer types. Ooi et al. (2023) found that interactivity may only change consumers' attitudes toward the influencer. Furthermore, Kim and Kim (2021) showed that trust mediates the effects of expertise, authenticity, and homophily on loyalty and marketing outcomes. Moreover, Jun and Yi (2020) found that influencer interactivity positively affects emotional attachment and authenticity, which in turn impacts brand trust and loyalty. Apart from this, Kim and Park (2023) explored how virtual influencers' attractiveness influences purchase intention and found that mimetic desire and brand attachment mediate this relationship.

Popularity

In the dynamic realm of influencer marketing, individuals with sizable followings and active audience engagement wield substantial influence over brand image and consumer behavior. This influence is exemplified by prominent figures like Kylie Jenner and Huda Kattan (Geyser, 2024). Consequently, Forbes (2016) highlights the multifaceted considerations in influencer selection, with the influencer's personality popularity emerging as a pivotal factor for brand alignment. Moreover, Alassani and Göretz (2019) argue convincingly that influencers boasting a larger fanbase demonstrate heightened efficacy on social media, a trend integral to the evolving landscape of digital influence. All in all, the studies suggest that social media personalities who have amassed a great number of followers and subscribers can

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seemingly hold a strong positive influence on both their audience and the brand they're associated with.

Credibility

Recent research has pinpointed various credibility traits crucial for influencers to effectively influence consumers and cultivate trust. Credibility, encompassing attributes such as honesty and integrity, shapes consumers' perceptions of influencers (Liu, 2022). Building on this and the previous trait, popularity, Janssen et al. (2022) revealed that influencers with a larger fanbase are perceived as more credible by consumers, fostering positive attitudes and acting as credibility indicators in brand promotions. Additionally, Pramono and Pradana (2022) emphasized that credibility and positive attitudes toward beauty influencers directly impact followers' responses to purchase advertised products, subsequently influencing brand image positively. In essence, studies are saying that selecting a credible influencer all points to aiding consumers develop trust and alleviating their doubts about perceiving a certain brand.

Appearance

With the unrealistic beauty standards of today's society, physical appearance is one of the important aspects that influencers need to maintain to remain appealing to the public and the brands they work with. This was demonstrated in the research conducted by Adhi, et al. (2023) entitled 'Does Appearance Matter? Building Digital Brand Image Through Brand Ambassadors on Instagram.' The respondents were consumers of a beauty brand, and the study showed that the appearance of a brand ambassador has a positive correlation with brand image.

Similarly, in a study examining credibility attributes (attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) of social media influencers on Gen Zs, it was thoroughly explained that the attractiveness of an influencer can be manifested through their identification or perceived similarity with their followers, hence making them feel more relatable and likable (Nugroho, et al., 2022). Moreover, the results of this study showcased that Gen Z consumers prefer classy influencers with good personality traits over those who solely rely on a sexy appearance. This preference aligns with other research indicating that the attractiveness of influencers enhances the power of brand image (Ahn & Bailenson, 2011).

Personality

When looking for an influencer online that people can subscribe to, their personality must resonate with their viewers. Being able to agree with someone is a personality trait that would help these individuals create long-lasting relationships with others (Miao et al., 2020). This was also proven through the study of Shetty and Fitzsimmons (2022). where they were able to conclude that brand personality congruence is a positively great factor when it comes to a customer being able to develop brand love and brand loyalty. Since these social media platforms where cosmetic influencers provide their content is a one-sided communication, viewers ensure that their personalities match as a means of connecting with them. Singh et al. (2021), stated that for brands to connect well with their customers, they must be able to gather insights from the consumers' personalities to create a positive brand experience.

Behavior

Brands use influencers, defined as "regular people" with a considerable number of followers on social media, to engage with their target audiences (Chopra et al., 2020).

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When followers discover an influencer with whom they might connect with their values and behavior that influencer supports a product that looks compatible with their preferred style, the followers' perceptions of the product tend to match the influencer's perceptions according to Weinlich and Semerádová (2022). According to Chopra et al. (2020), a recent study found that profitable endorsement outcomes result from a significant congruence between the social media influencer's image and behavior. Finally, the findings in these studies show that the positive behavior of an influencer has an impact on interactions on social media and attracts promoted brands.

Brand Image

Brand image refers to the way specific groups perceive a brand. It involves the consumer's perception and preferences towards a brand, which are measured by the different brand associations stored in their memory (Bluhme et al., 2018). Furthermore, it also refers to the decoding of perceived associations to the brands such as the brand's products, services, and communications, which all lead to the creation of trust, stability, and differentiation (Bluhme et al., 2018). In relation to this, the use of social media influencers is rapidly growing, and followers are becoming more attached to their represented brand through their interactions with the influencer personality (Aljafari, 2019). These interactions suggest that SMIs can impact the perception of customers regarding their brand image. SMI's interactions among their followers bring about their unique characteristics which can also impact the reputation of a brand (Chatterjee, 2018).

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

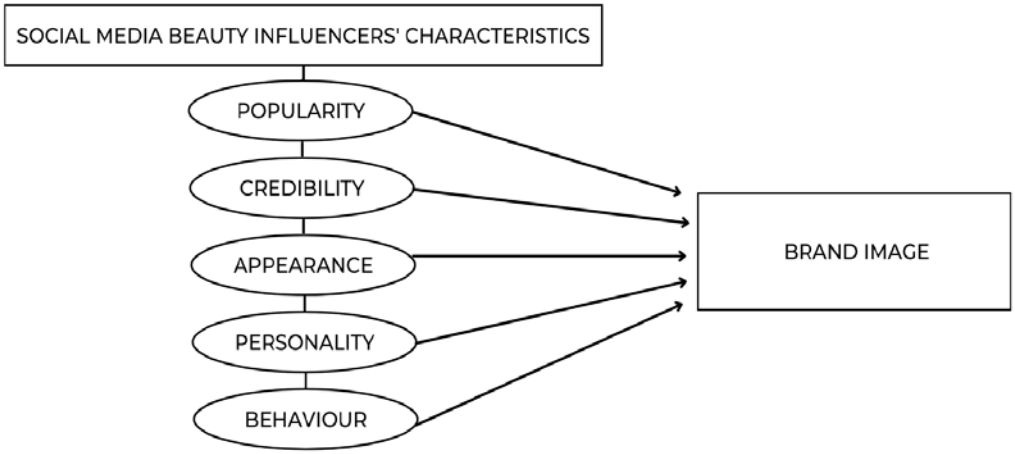

Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework

4. HYPOTHESES

H1: The influencer's popularity creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

H2: The influencer's credibility creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

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H3: The influencer's appearance creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

H4: The influencer's personality creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

H5: The influencer's behavior creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used a quantitative-correlational research design to investigate the characteristics of social media influencers and their effect on brand image. The independent variables: (1) Popularity, (2) Physical Appearance, (3) Credibility, (4) Personality, and (5) Behavior, were examined to determine if they have an impact on the dependent variable; brand image. The study utilized purposive sampling to collect data from a targeted group of 380 respondents, specifically adult Gen Z individuals aged 18 to 26. Participants were selected based on criteria that included having an active social media account, following a cosmetics influencer, and have purchased of cosmetics endorsed by an influencer. To gather this data, an online survey was administered, ensuring strict adherence to data privacy protocols throughout the process. This approach not only facilitated the collection of relevant insights but also protected the confidentiality and integrity of respondents' information. Structural Equation Modelling was utilized to test the hypotheses.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study investigated the relationship between various factors, namely "APPEARANCE," "BEHAVIOR," "CREDIBILITY," "PERSONALITY," and "POPULARITY," and their impact on "BRAND IMAGE."

Table 1: Demographic and Behavioristic Profiles of the Respondents

Demographic	Category	F	%
Sex	Female	277	72.9
	Male	57	15.0
	Prefer not to say	46	12.1
Civil Status	Single	371	97.6
	Married	9	2.4
	Separated	0	0
	Widowed	0	0
Occupation	Employed	77	20.3
	Student	298	78.4
	Unemployed	2	0.5
	Self Employed	3	0.8
Do you follow beauty and cosmetic	Yes	380	100
Which social media platform do you use more frequently to follow	Facebook	175	46.1
	Instagram	284	74.7
	Tiktok	298	78.4
	Twitter	81	21.3

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cosmetic brands?	Youtube	247	65.0

The demographic profile of the 380 participants in this study reflects a diverse sample. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents identified as female (72.9%), followed by males (15.0%), and a notable proportion who preferred not to disclose their gender (12.1%). In terms of civil status, a significant majority reported being single (97.6%), while a small percentage identified as married (2.4%). Employment status varied, with a substantial portion of participants being students (78.4%), followed by employed individuals (20.3%), self-employed (0.8%), and unemployed (0.5%).

All participants indicated following beauty and cosmetic influencers on social media, with preferences for platforms such as TikTok (78.4%), Instagram (74.7%), and Facebook (46.1%) for following cosmetic brands. These findings provide valuable insights into the preferences and behaviors of this diverse group of consumers in the context of beauty and cosmetic products.

Table 2. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Popularity

Popularity	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The influencer I follow has a substantial number of followers on their social media page, suggesting that their content and reviews are authentic.	5.22	0.75	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I follow has been promoting several products, which is why he/she is always seen everywhere.	4.88	0.95	Strongly Agree
The influencer I follow would always appear on my social media feed.	5.07	0.77	Strongly Agree
I am following an influencer that is admired by many people.	5.08	0.72	Strongly Agree
The influencer I follow consistently creates viral content on social media.	4.67	1.04	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	4.98	0.85	Strongly Agree

In summary, the overall mean score across all statements was 4.98, with a standard deviation of 0.85, indicating a strong agreement among participants regarding the perceived popularity of the beauty and cosmetic influencers they follow.

Table 3. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Credibility

Credibility	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The influencer I am following shares honest reviews, even if it is a sponsored collaboration.	5.32	0.70	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following fulfills their promises to their followers.	5.13	0.63	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following knows and understands a product or brand very well.	5.21	0.62	Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has a very good reputation online.	5.22	0.56	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following provides genuine opinions that truthfully align with those of other influencers.	5.22	0.59	Very Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	5.22	0.62	Very Strongly Agree

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In summary, the overall mean score for credibility across all statements was exceptionally high at 5.22, with a low standard deviation of 0.62. This underscores a very strong consensus among participants regarding the perceived credibility of the beauty and cosmetic influencers they follow, indicating a high level of trust in their honesty, fulfillment of promises, product knowledge, online reputation, and alignment of opinions with other influencers.

Table 4. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Appearance

Appearance	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The influencer I am following has physical characteristics that are visually pleasing.	5.46	0.64	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following fits the beauty standards of our society today.	5.39	0.69	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following always has an aesthetic background in his/her videos.	4.96	0.83	Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has an image that is associated with the promotion of the beauty brand.	5.22	0.65	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has a confident appearance when he/she is talking about beauty products.	5.48	0.66	Very Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	5.30	0.69	Very Strongly Agree

The overall mean score for appearance across all statements was 5.30, with a low standard deviation of 0.69. This indicates a very strong agreement among participants regarding the perceived visual appeal, alignment with societal beauty standards, and brand association of the beauty and cosmetic influencers they follow, while showing agreement on the influencers' use of aesthetic backgrounds and confident appearances in videos.

Table 5. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Personality

Personality	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The influencer I am following shows sincerity in presenting his/her beauty products.	5.31	0.59	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has their own unique gimmick, different from other influencers.	4.76	0.99	Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has their own distinct personality and character when interacting with his/her viewers.	4.87	0.89	Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following has a pleasing personality, which makes his/her content easily enjoyable.	5.40	0.67	Very Strongly Agree
I find the influencer I am following to also have a similar personality with me, which makes him/her easy to relate with.	5.07	0.77	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	5.08	0.78	Strongly Agree

As depicted in Table 5, the overall mean score for personality across all statements was 5.08, with a standard deviation of 0.78. This suggests a strong agreement among participants regarding the perceived sincerity, likeability, distinctiveness, and

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relatability of the beauty and cosmetic influencers they follow, with some variability in perceptions of the uniqueness of influencers' gimmicks.

Table 6. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Behavior

Behavior	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The influencer I follow exhibits positive behavior on social media.	5.41	0.63	Very Strongly Agree
The influence I follow gives reviews that would ensure his/her tone not to seem condescending.	5.18	0.60	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I follow have a large online network because of their positive interactions with each other.	5.18	0.62	Very Strongly Agree
The influencer I am following mimics the behavior of the brand they are promoting.	5.02	0.89	Strongly Agree
The influencer I follow responds positively even when faced with negative criticism from viewers.	5.26	0.67	Very Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	5.21	0.68	Very Strongly Agree

The study focused on participant perceptions of the behavior exhibited by beauty and cosmetic influencers, and the mean scores, along with standard deviations, offer insights into how these behaviors are perceived. In summary, the overall mean score for behavior across all statements was 5.21, with a low standard deviation of 0.68. This reflects a very strong agreement among participants regarding the positive behavior exhibited by the beauty and cosmetic influencers they follow, encompassing interactions on social media, tone in reviews, online network building, responses to criticism, and alignment with the behavior of promoted brands.

Table 7. Strength of agreement between participants and measurement items for Brand Image

Brand Image	Mean	Std Dev	Interpretation
The higher that number of subscribers and viewers an influencer has, the positive effect it can have on the image of the brand.	5.47	0.67	Very Strongly Agree
The credibility of an influencer affects the image of the brand.	5.28	0.71	Very Strongly Agree
The attractiveness of the cosmetic influencer can undoubtedly affect the image if the brand he/she is endorsing.	5.36	0.91	Very Strongly Agree
A personable influencer can affect how people perceive the brand's total personality.	5.34	0.64	Very Strongly Agree
The behavior of an influencer affects the image of the brand.	5.30	0.73	Very Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	5.35	0.73	Very Strongly Agree

The study explored participant perceptions regarding the impact of beauty and cosmetic influencers on brand image. The mean scores, along with standard deviations, provide insights into how participants perceive the relationship between influencers and the image of the brands they endorse. Table 7 shows that the overall mean score for brand image across all statements was 5.35, with a low standard deviation of 0.73. This reflects a very strong agreement among participants regarding the significant influence of influencers, their credibility, attractiveness, personability, and behavior on shaping the image of the beauty and cosmetic brands they endorse.

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Table 8. Hypotheses Testing

Path	Path Coefficients	P-values	Description	Interpretation
H1: Popularity → Brand Image	0.328	<0.001	Not Significant	H1 is not supported
H2: Credibility → Brand Image	0.106	<0.001	Not Significant	H2 is not supported
H3: Appearance → Brand Image	0.451	<0.001	Significant	H3 is supported
H4: Personality → Brand Image	0.122	<0.001	Significant	H4 is supported
H5: Behavior → Brand Image	0.260	<0.001	Significant	H5 is supported

7. DISCUSSION

H1: The influencer's popularity creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

The results indicate that 'POPULARITY' did not display a positive significant relationship with 'BRAND IMAGE', indicating that the popularity of influencers may not be a significant predictor of perceived positive brand image in this context. While it still holds what Alassani and Göretz (2019) argued about large fan bases equating to social media efficacy, there are still many factors at play with regard to its effectiveness in creating a positive brand image. In this case, the results say that although there is a strong agreement with the perceived popularity of the influencers, if we factor in its relative effectiveness with brand image, the beta coefficient shows that it poses a non-significant one. Consequently, even though the likes of Kylie Jenner achieved great success with their associated brands in the U.S. partly due to their large social media following (Geyser, 2024). It can still be argued that it does not stay true and consistent all the time, especially with the consumers in the local cosmetic scene.

H2: The influencer's credibility creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

On the other hand, 'CREDIBILITY' did not show a statistically significant relationship with 'BRAND IMAGE'. This implies that credibility, in this context, may not be a significant predictor of brand image. This is contrary to the previous studies of Pramono and Pradana (2022), which argue that credibility directly impacts the responses of consumers in terms of their overall positive perception of the brand. Moreover, it does not also align with the study of Liu (2022) as the study did not find credibility as an encompassing trait that shapes consumers' perception of influencers. In summary, selecting an influencer for a cosmetic brand solely based on credibility as a major trait for growing a positive brand image is not deemed to be effective.

H3: The influencer's appearance creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

Examining the predictors of 'BRAND IMAGE,' it was found that 'APPEARANCE' demonstrated a significant positive relationship with 'BRAND IMAGE'. This implies that as the perceived appearance of beauty and cosmetic influencers improves, it contributes positively to enhancing the overall brand image. The results obtained align with the assertions made by Adhi et al. (2023);

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Nugroho et al. (2022); Ahn and Bailenson (2011). These studies collectively emphasize that an influencer's physician appearance or attractiveness significantly enhances the consumers' perceptions of a brand's image.

H4: The influencer's personality creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

Moreover, 'PERSONALITY' exhibited a significant positive relationship with 'BRAND IMAGE'. This suggests that the personality traits of influencers play a noteworthy role in shaping the overall brand image. Consequently, this also suggests that having a great personality is highly important in creating a positive brand image for a cosmetic brand. Additionally, these findings validate the research conducted by Shetty and Fitzsimmons (2022), affirming that brand personality congruence significantly contributes to the cultivation of customer brand affection and brand loyalty. Moreover, the results are consistent with the assertions made by Singh et al. (2021) in their study, highlighting that viewers consistently seek alignment between their personality and the content of influencers they engage with, thereby fostering a stronger connection with the associated brand.

H5: The influencer's behavior creates the most significant impact on the cosmetics brand image.

Similarly, 'BEHAVIOR' exhibited a substantial positive relationship with 'BRAND IMAGE'. This suggests that the behavior exhibited by influencers significantly influences and enhances the perceived brand image. The results of this study provide substantial evidence that behavior is pivotal in creating a positive image for a cosmetic brand. Furthermore, the study by Weinlich and Semerádová (2022) provided support for the hypotheses, as it highlighted that when followers identify an influencer who aligns with their values and behaviors, and that influencer endorses a product compatible with their preferred style, the followers' perceptions of the product are inclined to mirror the influencer's viewpoints. Furthermore, it is consistent with the study by Chopra et al. (2020), where it was discussed that favorable endorsement outcomes stem from a notable alignment between the social media influencer's image and the consumer's behavior.

In summary, the results highlight the differential impact of various factors on the brand image, with "APPEARANCE," "BEHAVIOR," and "PERSONALITY" emerging as significant predictors, while "CREDIBILITY" and "POPULARITY" did not demonstrate a statistically significant relationship with the brand image in this particular study.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research delves into the dynamics of beauty influencers and their influence on brand image reveals nuanced insights. The findings underscore the distinctive role played by specific attributes, namely Appearance, Behavior, and Personality, as pivotal predictors in shaping a positive brand image. Contrastingly, Credibility and Popularity did not exhibit statistically significant correlations with brand image, suggesting that the perceived authenticity and relatability of beauty influencers may hold greater sway over consumer perceptions than mere popularity or credibility metrics. This implies that local makeup brands need to carefully match their values with the beauty influencers they partner with. By understanding the synergy

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between these attributes, brands are likely to establish strong connections with their target audience.

These findings pave the way for marketers to strategically choose influencers whose attributes align with their brand identity, ensuring a more coherent and authentic representation. Brands on the other hand may now focus on these characteristics to further evaluate whether the influencer they partner with is the perfect one to build on their image. In terms of the local cosmetics trend in the digital landscape, these characteristics will continue to be crucial in gaining traction for brands and attracting more and more potential consumers to subscribe to and follow these beauty influencers. Moreover, as beauty companies continue to navigate the competitive digital landscape, understanding and strategically leveraging these characteristics will be integral in sustaining as well as expanding their presence in the beauty industry.

All in all, this nuanced understanding guides marketers and brands in strategically capitalizing on the multifaceted characteristics of beauty influencers to cultivate a more enduring positive brand image.

Lastly, while this study highlights the significant role of beauty influencers in shaping a positive brand image within the cosmetics industry, the extent to which these findings can be generalized to other nations, industries, or markets remains limited. Cultural nuances, economic factors, and varying consumer behaviors across different contexts may influence the dynamics of influencer marketing. Therefore, while the insights gained in this study provide a valuable framework for understanding these relationships, further research is needed to explore how they might apply to diverse markets and sectors, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the global landscape of influencer impact.

9. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study suggest that appearance, behavior, and personality are the traits that significantly impact in creating a positive brand image. On the other hand, Credibility and Popularity does not. Based on the Theory of the Planned Model adapted from Ajzen and Fishbein (2005), social media influencers in general are driven by their characteristics, which in return, activate the followers or the viewers' peripheral routes. It also suggests that trustworthiness and expertise play a big role in brand image and purchase intentions, However, with the results of the study, it was implied that the latter traits are not the best predictors for a more positive branding. This can be because the majority at the cosmetic landscape does not need any so-called “experts”. After all, the viewers of these digital cosmetic content are average at using their cosmetic products as well. They like influencers that they can relate to, someone they can see themselves into. All in all, the planned model is effective, but it depends upon the various deciding factors. With this study, it might be because viewers like content that is close to their behavior and personality. This implication may contribute to the ongoing discourse on Social Media Marketing, Affiliate Marketing, Influencer Marketing, and other online media strategies that involve influencers.

10. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The primary objective of this study is to delve deeper into the influence of social media influencers on brand image and to pinpoint the characteristics of influencers that consumers deem relevant during their purchasing decisions. Through meticulous research and data collection, the findings suggest that appearance, behavior, and

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personality are the most sought-after traits in a social media influencer. Consequently, brand marketers can leverage these insights to identify influencers who can have the most significant impact on their brand image. Furthermore, brands must always bear in mind the alignment of content with their brand identity to ensure an authentic and cohesive marketing strategy, particularly within the realm of local makeup industries. Brands must recognize the importance of synchronizing influencer content with their own identity to uphold a consistent and effective brand image.

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