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The effect of online customer reviews and celebrity endorsement on young female consumers' purchase intentions

Theresa Macheka, Emmanuel Silva Quaye and Neo Ligaraba

Theresa Macheka and Emmanuel Silva Quaye are both based at Wits Business School, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. Neo Ligaraba is based at the School of Business Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Abstract

Purpose – *Young consumers are increasingly using online reviews and celebrity influence to make purchase decisions. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the influence of online customer reviews, celebrity influencer's attractiveness, celebrity influencer's credibility on female millennials' purchase intention of beauty products.*

Design/methodology/approach – *To validate the research questions and hypotheses, data were obtained from young female consumers using an electronic self-administered survey questionnaire that was close ended. A total of 203 valid responses were obtained from which data were analysed by making use of structural equation modelling Mplus and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 28.*

Findings – *The obtained results showed that the seven hypotheses of the study were positive. However, two hypotheses were negative, namely, celebrity influencer attractiveness did not have a significant influence on the attitude of consumers; and brand loyalty was not significantly correlating with young female consumers' purchase intention of beauty products.*

Practical implications – *Given that millennials are known to be active users of social media and often consult online peer product reviews, marketers and practitioners of beauty industry should improve the effectiveness and usability of beauty influencers and online reviews to attract female millennial consumers.*

Originality/value – *This research contributes to understanding young female consumers' attitudes towards purchasing beauty products, especially the combined influence of group influence (online reviews) and media influence (celebrity beauty influencers) on such attitudes.*

Keywords *Influencer marketing, Female consumers, Millennials, Purchase intention, Beauty marketing*

Paper type *Research paper*

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1. Introduction

In the past ten years, it has become crucial for local beauty cosmetic companies to spend time and money on research and development to better understand local women, particularly indigenous women, and their purchasing intentions and their needs, taking into consideration the evolution of the digital world.

Mud *et al.* (2020) stated that cosmetics and personal care goods have existed for a while, and as internet businesses expand, numerous marketing, advertising methods and initiatives must be created to assist companies in selling their products to both current and new customers (Ofori and Appiah-Nimo, 2019). One tactic is the use of celebrity influencers, who are well-known and well-recognised people who help brands market their goods (Ahmed *et al.*, 2015). The urge to link a company's goods to customers inspires purchases, shapes consumer preferences and generates demand, thus purchase intention is a crucial factor in the beauty industry that strengthens the brand's position in the market and inspires favourable emotions in consumers (Lee, 2018).

A homogeneous generation of universal beauty ideals began with the advent of contemporary globalisation in the 20th century, and it has persisted in some form to the present. Business firms are at the centre of this process, which has had huge socio-economic and cultural repercussions (Li *et al.*, 2020). The innovation, cutting-edge technology and market-oriented products with user and expert development inputs are the cornerstones of the worldwide beauty industry, as they give brands the assurance that the products they offer are both needed and liked by their target markets. In the 2017 fiscal year, the market for beauty products was estimated to be worth $532bn. By 2024, it is anticipated that the global market for cosmetic products will reach north of $863bn (Zion Market Research report, 2018). The breakdown of product categories in the beauty industry shows skin care taking the lead while makeup is equally expanding at an increasing rate. The makeup market is expected to grow through 2025, providing a chance for the beauty brand to expand in the following years.

Social media influencers have evolved into dynamic third-party spokespeople in the pervasive internet age (Freberg *et al.*, 2011). According to Erdogan (1999), celebrity endorsements are some of the most sought-after types of advertising, as they are much less expensive than the advantages they provide for an organisation's reputation and long-term survival. As a result, a significant amount of marketing and advertising budgets are going towards compensating these celebrities. Brands, such as Nike, Adidas, Pepsi, are examples of this phenomenon, as evidenced by the endorsement deals that famous people such as LeBron James, Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel have with these companies. Customers are prone to be influenced by celebrity-specific traits; hence, it is important to investigate how these traits affect consumers' purchasing attitudes (Abdaziz *et al.*, 2019; Osei-Frimpong *et al.*, 2019). According to Ahmed *et al.* (2015), credibility, attractiveness, strength, familiarity, trustworthiness, competence, likeability and fit are celebrity attributes that marketers primarily examine and are widely documented in the literature.

Born between 1986 and 2005, the Y generation comprises young individuals who are between 18 and 36 years of age (Thangavel *et al.*, 2021). This generation uses social media platforms and online consumer review sites frequently and has access to a huge database of past and present online reviews of goods, services and activities (Duffett, 2015). The Y generation's female demographic views cosmetics as significant and uses them frequently because they connect them to entertainment. Female customers are a crucial consumer group to target because, as being employed, they frequently have to make purchases for other family members (Mud *et al.*, 2020). As a result, they speak for all the people on whose behalf they make goods' purchases in addition to themselves. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991) states that an individual's perceived behavioural control and purpose to engage in a given conduct increases in proportion to their attitude and subjective standards towards the behaviour (Booth and Matic, 2011). This means that a celebrity plays a significant role in predicting whether a buyer will really purchase a product. The Brand Equity theory by Aaker (1991) postulates the idea that well-known businesses can make more money and products introduced with the support of a well-known brand have a lower competition risk (Pappu and Quester, 2016). Brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and brand awareness are the four primary components of brand equity (Aaker, 1991). The social influencer theory asserts that researchers contend that consumer decisions should be understood in social contexts (Bandura, 2001). Due to consumer reasons, such as informational and social normative motives, social influence governs consumer decision-making (Kelman, 1958). Consumers base their buying decision on the early adopters' experiences in their social network and informational concerns (Booth and Matic, 2011).

Purchase intention determines the degree of buyers' propensity to purchase a good, and the stronger the purchase intention, the larger the degree of intensity (Chinomona *et al.*, 2013). The employment of celebrity influencers as a traditional effective marketing

approach to influence customer attitudes towards cosmetics products is due to the fact that the more favourable the attitude, the higher the purchase intention (Dalziel and De Klerk, 2021). The attitudes, concepts and interests of millennial customers differ when it comes to interacting with social media influencers. A study by Rosara and Luthfia (2020) concentrated on the elements influencing Indonesian YouTube users' intentions to buy beauty items. The study's focus was on all women between 17 and 35 years of age, examining various groups with various needs, and it concentrated only on YouTube. A lot of research has focused on the interest and behaviour towards cosmetics among female millennials that was sparked by social media advertising and electronic word of mouth (eWOM; Duh, 2021). However, it was unable to determine how well each social media site worked to increase consumer interest in the products, purchase intention and sharing of product information. This study therefore focusses on the impact of online reviews, along with celebrity influencers and how they affect consumers' purchasing intentions and attitudes, with a particular emphasis on female millennials and their purchase of beauty products, to complement previous research (makeup). Despite the growing usage of celebrity influencers, the literature on this topic is still underdeveloped in South Africa and is only found in a small number of studies, particularly those that have a specific focus on the purchasing habits of female millennials.

Our research makes important and novel contributions at the intersection of influencer marketing, online reviews, brand equity and consumption behaviour. First, we contribute to the growing literature of how influencer characteristics, i.e. influencer attractiveness shapes customer attitudes (Casaló *et al.*, 2020; Kalu, 2019). Celebrity influencers frequently deliver messages that are more trustworthy and compelling to consumers, increasing the likelihood that they will heed their advice. Second, by drawing on brand equity theory, our research contributes to the literature on strong linkages between consumers' attitude and how they shape brand loyalty and acceptance of online reviews (Dalziel and De Klerk, 2021). Importantly, we show the significant role that brand awareness and eWOM play in the purchase behaviour of young female consumers in the beauty industry. We establish that consumers appreciate online reviews and strong brand recognition when choosing among beauty product brands. Finally, our research contributes to the literature by demonstrating the novel mediating mechanism (i.e. brand awareness and eWoM) in the customer attitude – purchase intentions linkage. The results of this study should help marketing executives in the beauty sector understand how to target young female consumers, especially, in the South African market. More broadly, our research enriches our understanding of the role of influencer marketing and the importance of online reviews for young female consumers who purchase beauty and other wellness products (Rosara and Luthfia, 2020).

2. Literature review

2.1 Beauty industry

The pursuit of beauty had already begun in all societies even before Thales made his ground-breaking contributions to Western philosophy. According to Grube (1927), the term "beautiful" in Greek culture mostly refers to anthropocentric physical appearance. Plato, according to Sartwell (2020), equates beauty with a reaction to love and desire while situating it in the domain of forms (an abstract quality or property transcendent to space and time), and he recognises the beauty of objects in their participation in form. Aristotle concurs with Plato that aesthetics should be objective rather than personal (Shabangu, 2016). Women's complexion, hair and bodies collectively define or determine whether a woman is seen to have the ultimate quality of beauty because the concept of beauty itself is quite complicated (Shabangu, 2016). Culture, ethnicity, class, gender and social institutions are intertwined and symbolically significant social aspects that have an impact on how people perceive beauty, particularly in relation to their skin, hair and bodies (Matiza, 2013). The beauty sector includes a variety of cosmetics and personal care products (Archna *et al.*, 2018). Sanidewi and Paramita (2018)

stated that beauty products are made to be applied to the face, hair and body and are regarded as a personal necessity. Creams, makeup, deodorants, skin care items, hair dye, manicures, perfumes, toothpaste and mouthwash are examples of products. Female consumers have significant purchasing power, accounting for 85% of all consumer expenditure and dominating the market for cosmetic brands (Cvetkovska, 2019).

2.1.1 The global beauty industry. In the 1600s, the term "cosmetics" was originally used to refer to the art of decorations, anointments or ornaments of the human body (Sartwell, 2020). Despite the fact that the term was, as we all know, rather short-lived, cosmetics have been used to enhance natural beauty since the dawn of time, making the beauty industry one of the oldest ever. In the past, beauty was typically only accessible to the wealthy, but as time went on, it became more widely available. In Paris, beauty products also increased in price in an effort to make women appear youthful and healthy (Yan and Bissell, 2014). By the turn of the century, even emulsions and cold creams that were formerly incredibly expensive and luxurious had to compete with cosmetics, which have since given way to what we now refer to as "normal" cosmetics (Tungate, 2008). The USA proposed a platform for the international cosmetics industry, whereas European industries either closed or moved to producing armaments and other military goods; the US market was able to grow due to the lack of conflict (Li *et al.*, 2020). In fact, the American cosmetics and toiletry market reached US$60m in 1919, which is nothing short of amazing given that, up to that point, the majority of innovative and exclusive procedures had originated in Europe (Cvetkovska, 2019). Before the market blossomed, the earliest colour cosmetics brands, Helena Rubinstein, Elizabeth Arden, Max Factor and Revlon, promoted cosmetics that were virtually exclusively used by Hollywood stars (Tungate, 2008).

2.1.2 South Africa beauty industry. South Africa is a country characterised by much diversity with many ideals of beauty that reflect the standards of different cultural groups and associations (Shimul *et al.*, 2022). However, Western views still strongly influence how South African women perceive their natural beauty and body image. It is the foresight of Thulare Monareng, Simphiwe Dana, Lerato Moloi, Terry Pheto and others who are working to regain the uniqueness of African beauty and to embrace the natural physical morphology of traditionally decorated women (Glapka and Majali, 2017). Globally, the retail portion of the gross domestic product of South Africa's cosmetics sector is estimated to be about R25.3bn (Cvetkovska, 2019). Despite the country's uncertain economic situation in 2015, the business saw significant development as a result of the growing disposable income of South Africa's black middle class (Department of Trade and Industry, 2016). The use of the internet in South Africa has brought about and assisted other forms of communication, such as customer reviews, where customers can give personal feedback about the experience of each product. To that end, Osei-Frimpong *et al.* (2019) agreed, further stating that people of social status, such as celebrities, are being asked to take advantage of this phenomenon to endorse products from a variety of brands.

2.1.3 Young female consumers and the beauty industry. When items that help young people build their own brands are on sale, shopping websites in South Africa typically sell out quickly. As a result, marketing strategies must take demand, its causes and the manner of supply into account (Shimul *et al.*, 2022). Social media is typically dominated by marketing campaigns for beauty, recreation and vitality products, and celebrities instantly "differentiate" products and elevate their status (Apejoye, 2013). Young consumers are starting to leave the age bracket of youth and may even be celebrities such as Nandi Madida, Casper Nyovest and Bonang Mathebe who are no strangers to leading healthy lifestyles, leading glamorous lives and inspiring others to do the same (Saumendra and Padhy, 2012). The cosmetic and fashion industries are intrigued by young consumers who are acknowledged to have a high predisposition to prominence and have a fixation with style (Pillay, 2021). Today's media conveys the message of an affluent lifestyle that is infused with what millennials calls the "American Dream." Driven by today's looser credit

deal restrictions and the rise of more designer brands, Generation Y seeks to buy these expensive product lines (Li *et al.*, 2020).

3. Theory development

3.1 Theory of planned behaviour

According to the TPB, behaviour is not impulsive but intentional. According to the theory, a person's behavioural beliefs are determined by some key particular situations, which may finally yield the intention that serves as the person's final behavioural reaction (Al-Maroof and Al-Emran, 2018). The term "subjective norm" describes the perceived societal pressure someone feels to act in a certain way. The self-efficacy hypothesis of Bandura is the foundation for the factor determining perceived behavioural control (Bandura, 2001). It claims that a person's feeling of self-efficacy can have a significant impact on how they approach their objectives, tasks and obstacles. Individual self-confidence, according to Bandura (2001), is crucial to one's capacity for behaviour. As a result, people with identical traits and abilities may act differently when choosing products that have been recommended by famous people for self-efficacy (Jin *et al.*, 2020). Previous studies have successfully used TPB and extended TPB models in a variety of situations (Hsu *et al.*, 2014; Huang *et al.*, 2021). In TPB, attitude, the subjective norm and perceived behavioural control have been linked to the inclination to buy cosmetics. Kim, Han and Lee (2001) used the TPB to explain the factors that influence online purchase behaviour. They argue that the TPB is particularly useful for understanding the unique challenges and opportunities of online shopping, and that it can be used to develop effective marketing strategies that target online consumers. The study has used the TPB to explain purchase intention because it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the antecedents and mechanisms that influence consumer behaviour.

3.2 Brand equity theory

The value that a brand gives to a product is referred to as "brand equity" (Yoo *et al.*, 2000). According to Keller, brand equity is the difference in how brand understanding affects how consumers react to brand marketing (Kingsnorth, 2022). The idea that well-known trademarks can make more money by producing items under their own brand is what is meant by the term "trademark ownership," which refers to the recognition earned by a trademark of its value or market value (Rungsrisawat and Chankoson, 2020). As the same brand offers quality and stability, consumers always prioritise well-known brands. Brand equity, which safeguards the product under the name of a trustworthy brand, influences the viability of launching a new product into the market. As a result, when a product is produced by a popular brand, the danger of competitors is reduced (Pappu and Quester, 2016). There are four main dimensions of brand equity, namely, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association and brand awareness (Aaker, 1996). Yoo and Donthu (2001) said authors used the brand equity theory to explain the factors that influence consumer behaviour in the context of global brands. They argue that brand equity can be a key determinant of success in international markets, and that it can be built through a combination of consistent brand messaging, quality products and strong customer relationships. The brand equity theory allows researchers to consider the complex interplay between various factors that can influence purchase intention, such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand associations.

3.2.1 Online customer reviews. An essential component of e-commerce is online customer reviews which influence consumers' buying decisions and the amount of money they spend in incalculable ways (Bevan-Dye, 2020). Online shoppers and online product/service evaluations are an essential component of eWOM in our internet-driven world where information and ideas are shared over the wireless link that created it (Mahmud *et al.*, 2019).

The digital revolution has made it common for consumers to check online product reviews during the buying process. This is in line with the increasing trend of internet influence, which means that review sites can give consumers insight into price, quality, ambience and experience (Kingsnorth, 2022; Maslowska *et al.*, 2017). Understanding the ties between celebrity and online reviews provides a research opportunity this study exploits. Online reviews are for all matters that relate to internet-based communicated information, these reviews are an important element of keeping brand ambassadors and other brand representatives in check for accountability purposes (Lee *et al.*, 2014).

3.2.2 Celebrity influencer. Influencers, as opposed to mainstream celebrities, are people who operate on multiple types of social media, frequently on a few platforms at once, such as Instagram (known as Instagrammers), YouTube (known as YouTubers), Twitter (known as Tweeters) and various professional and/or business bloggers (Brooks *et al.*, 2021). Influencers encourage consumer attitudes or emotional responses to promote goods through advertising (Ahmed *et al.*, 2015). However, how effectively the endorser conveys the marketing message will greatly influence how consumers react. According to a study on micro-celebrities, it was noted that there was an impression of close communication between influencers and consumers (Mohamad, 2021). They accomplish this in a variety of ways, including sharing unedited or lightly altered images, soliciting feedback on their posts to make them better, or displaying their relatability as regular people with problems.

3.2.3 Purchase intention. The primary objective of marketing and advertising efforts is to persuade customers to purchase the companies' goods. This likelihood is that a buyer will purchase the advertised beauty product increases with increasing purchase willingness. From the standpoint of marketers or advertisers, the likelihood that customers would make a purchase is a crucial factor in determining how effective celebrity endorsements are (Osei-Frimpong *et al.*, 2019). When a celebrity appears in a commercial, the consumer's perception of the brand, the advertisement and the celebrity will influence whether or not the consumer plans to make a purchase (Thangavel *et al.*, 2021). This study examined how these traits affect the purchasing of certain beauty items in advertising by female millennials, as young people are frequently the most interested in celebrities' life (Centeno and Wang, 2017). However, youth culture may take unexpected twists for celebrities such as buying cheaper goods with a proven track record due to brand loyalty or the sparking of viral trends that mock either the quality or prices of their goods (Dalziel and De Klerk, 2021). Additionally, mutual vulnerabilities and association of a good with an identifiable source creates room for genuine interaction during online review processes on social media, unlike the similar presentations on television or other marketing models (Abdaziz *et al.*, 2019).

3.3 Hypotheses development

3.3.1 Celebrity influencer credibility and customer's attitude. Celebrities are said to aid in brand recognition and to foster both a favourable attitude and a particular attribute for the brand (Brooks *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, a celebrity with greater credibility may have a positive effect on consumers' perceptions of the marketed brand. Previous studies have demonstrated that the use of celebrities in advertisements increases consumer interest (Apejoye, 2013; Davis, 2017; Johansson and Bozan, 2017). One of the main reasons for using celebrity endorsements is that celebrities add credibility to advertising and enhance consumer awareness (Belanche *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, it stands to reason that the endorsement of a celebrity with greater credibility will have a favourable effect on consumer attitudes towards advertising. Singh and Banerjee (2018) undertook a study in India exploring factors influencing celebrity endorsement credibility on consumer's brand attitude and advertising attitude on consumer's purchase intentions on 380 study participants. It was proven that celebrity credibility has a huge impact on consumer's attitude towards the brand and advertisement. Based on these, we begin with the following hypothesis:

H1. Perceived celebrity credibility positively influences consumer attitude.

3.3.2 Celebrity influencer attractiveness and customer's attitude. Beauty is the best recommendation of any letter of introduction (Sartwell, 2020). In fact, appearance is a powerful "weapon" for celebrities to stand out from others, draw the attention of the audience and influence their perception, and Kahle and Homer (1985) found that the physical appeal of celebrities is intellectual. All brands related to personal physical attractiveness, such as makeup products, skin care products and hair products are influenced by celebrity physical attractiveness (Shabangu, 2016). In a study titled "The impact of social media influencer marketing on buying intention from an Irish male millennial's perception: a case study of Irish fashion sector," it was found that consumers' purchasing intentions are influenced by social media influencers' physical beauty (Kalu, 2019). Previous research indicated that there is no correlation between celebrity attractiveness and customer's attitude towards the brand (Ha and Lam, 2017). Buying audiences show affection for physically attractive celebrities and therefore prefer them to unattractive ones (Casaló *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, charm can be divided into three components that are physical attraction, respect and similarity. Therefore, the following hypothesis statement can be derived from the above literature:

H2. Perceived celebrity influencer's attractiveness positively influences the attitude of consumers.

3.3.3 Online customer review and attitude of customers. The effect of eWOM on customer purchase decisions has been empirically established in prior studies (Boateng, 2021). More precisely, consumer attitudes and behaviour towards a purchasing decision are greatly influenced by online reviews of goods and services (Moloi *et al.*, 2022; Siddiqi *et al.*, 2020). According to published research, consumers seek evaluations for a variety of reasons (Maslowska *et al.*, 2017). A study seeking to determine the effects of online consumer reviews on purchasing decision of electronics, undertaken by Yaylı and Bayram (2012) in Turkey, showed very strong effects of how consumers read online reviews before making a purchase decision and the subsequent consumers' purchase frequency. The study further noted that the more the reviews, the more a certain product or brand is perceived popular, due to number of online hits. Rathod *et al.* (2022), in their study of the impact of online reviews on brand perception and purchase intention, found that reviews posted online play a major role in determining customer attitude hence buying intentions and behaviour. The study also noted that positive online reviews make a brand more attractive and seen as reliable by customers. Consumer reviews are seen as more reliable and less dangerous than company marketing information by consumers. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated, according to the presented literature:

H3. Online customers' reviews positively influence the attitude of consumers.

3.3.4 Consumer's attitude and brand loyalty. The loyalty to the brand is transmitted emotionally and behaviourally to the brand (Tellis, 1988). Brand loyalty illustrates the customer's degree of loyalty to the brand and refers to repeated purchases with a positive attitude over time (Aaker, 1991). However, other academics point out that consumer loyalty is often associated with a positive attitude towards the brand or levels of differentiation towards competitive brands (Dick and Basu, 1994). A theoretical and conceptual study alluded that happy consumers are more likely to repurchase the same product or service and tell their friends about it (Kristianti, 2021). Additionally, some researchers have asserted that protective and supporting attitudes foster client loyalty, even while the behavioural dimension represents a good attitude with some added value (Lee and Kim, 2020; Pappu and Quester, 2016). As a result, the following statement is true of the study:

H4. Perceived consumers' attitude positively influences loyalty to the brand.

3.3.5 Consumer's attitude and brand awareness. An earlier study discovered that users' perceptions of their virtual communities indirectly influenced their behaviour intentions to share knowledge with the community (Rossiter, 2014). Value has an impact on customer behaviour, therefore when a buyer consistently receives value, it encourages brand loyalty.

A valuable service provider will foster customer loyalty and raise brand awareness (Sasmita and Suki, 2015). The more consumers hear, see and think about a brand, the easier it will be for them to form associations in their memories, which will increase their perception of the brand (Foroudi, 2019). Therefore, it may be said that brand awareness influences brand image. Consumer attitude directly influences consumers' behavioural intention to purchase, which in turn, directly influences behaviour, according to various studies (Hsu *et al.*, 2014; Makanyeza, 2015). Razak *et al.* (2019) empirically investigated the effects of brand awareness, consumer attitude and re-purchase intentions. It was found that brand attitude moderates the relationship between brand awareness and re-purchase intention, and it was further noted that when brand attitude is high, brand awareness and purchase intention is positive, but on the other hand, the reverse is also true. Therefore, according to the above, the following hypothesis has been derived:

H5. Perceived consumers' attitude positively influences brand awareness.

3.3.6 Consumers attitude and electronic word of mouth. The definition of eWOM, which is accessible to many people and organisations via the internet, is the dynamic and ongoing process of exchanging information about a good, service, brand or company amongst potential, present or past consumers (Lee *et al.*, 2014). An online messaging study identified informativeness, entertainment value, reliability, experience, attractiveness and similarity as factors critically associated with brand awareness and purchase intention (Chih *et al.*, 2020). From a theoretical perspective of the study, reliability and experience were characteristics of influencers, whereas attractiveness and similarity were personal qualities. The basis on which followers characterise influencers is their personal attributes (Chih *et al.*, 2020). Personal attributes are what influencers possess and exhibit, whereas influencer characteristics are perceived by followers. Although prior research on the spread of eWOM has yielded valuable insights, a consensus regarding the elements that affect customers' readiness to purchase has yet to materialise, indicating that this work needs to be methodically integrated. Considering this, the research is pertinent to the following hypothesis:

H6. Perceived consumers' attitude positively influences eWOM.

3.3.7 Brand loyalty and purchase intention. Brand loyalty encourages customers to consistently purchase the same brand and prevents them from switching to other brands (Yoo *et al.*, 2000). Brand loyalty achieved through customer satisfaction induces buyers to make positive purchase decisions to buy the same product or brand of the same company. Furthermore, most of it displays attitudes and behavioural responses that foster emotional attachment and a desire to purchase the same brand again. Additionally, the behavioural aspect refers to repeated purchasing behaviour with respect to a particular product or service (Gupta *et al.*, 2017). Brand attention, purchase intention and brand choice are three behaviours that are considered to be of concern to businesses by brand equity (Oh *et al.*, 2020). According to extensive empirical research, brand attitude influences consumers' opinions of the brand (Foroudi, 2019). As a result, the assertion that follows has been developed and is pertinent to the current investigation:

H7. Perceived brand loyalty positively influences consumers' purchase intention.

3.3.8 Brand awareness and purchase intention. Brand awareness refers to a customer's prospective capacity to discern or recall that a brand belongs to a specific product category (Foroudi, 2019). The results of earlier studies (Lu *et al.*, 2014; Sasmita and Suki, 2015; Saumendra and Padhy, 2012) showed that brand awareness influences customer decisions regarding a product. Malik *et al.* (2013) found a strong correlation between brand awareness and purchase intention in their study. Their results indicated that for a proportional unit increase in brand awareness, there is a direct marginal increase of approximately 0.12 in purchase intention. The more well-known a makeup brand is, the more probable it is that customers will choose it when making a purchase. Additionally,

satisfied customers are more likely to stay with a brand for a longer period and to be more loyal. As a result, the following premise applies to the research:

H8. Perceived brand awareness positively influences consumer purchase intention.

3.3.9 Impact of electronic word of mouth on consumer purchase intention. It is stated that the intention to purchase is distinct from the actual purchase of the items and is merely a subjective option for the consumer (Al-Haddad *et al*., 2020). Price, brand perception and product reputation are just a few examples of the factors that either directly or indirectly affect a consumer's intention to buy, as they attempt to choose products that reduce perceived risk (Lee, 2018). Positive online reviews can increase consumer satisfaction and purchase intention, according to a prior study by Chih *et al.* (2020). The study also discovered that positive feedback significantly affected the influence of trust on purchasing intention. Users have confidence in the eWOM information provided by satisfied customers who have made online purchases. Previous studies show that eWOM has a subtle effect on consumer purchasing habits and how consumers choose certain products (Yaylı and Bayram, 2012). Consequently, the following assertions are relevant to this study:

H9. eWOM positively influences consumer purchase intention.

H10. Customer attitudes positively influence purchase intentions.

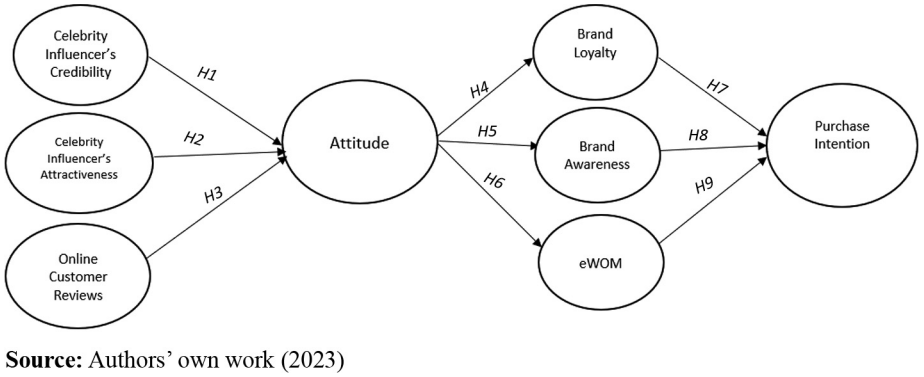
Based on the hypotheses' development presented above, Figure 1 is this study's conceptual model.

4. Methodology

4.1 Data collection and sample characteristics

Our study uses young consumers to address the research objectives. Therefore, young female student community was used as the target population. Pew Research Center (2021) reports that while no chronological endpoint has been defined for generational cohorts, they highlight that Gen Z are those between 18 and 24 years of age and millennials are those aged between 25 and 40 years of age as of 2021. Thus, we adopt the 2021 generational cohort classification by Pew Research to classify the young female consumers used in this study (Pew Research Center, 2021). The data collected between 5 July and 30 July 2022. The data was collected from female students at a large public university in South Africa. Data was gathered using convenience sampling, a non-probability sampling technique. To be included in the study, respondents must

Figure 1 Conceptual framework



Source: Authors' own work (2023)

have bought at least one of the beauty products used in the study and should indicate familiar with one of the social media influencers used in the study. The questionnaire was distributed through email. The questionnaire was hosted on Google Forms and the survey link emailed to the students to complete. More than 70% of the respondents were between 18 and 35 years of age. Also, majority of the respondents mentioned that their favourite social media influencers were Nomzamo Mbatha (29.06%), Mihlali Ndamase (17.24%) and Huda Kattan (9.36%). The favourite makeup brands mentioned in the study were Estée Lauder (17%), Maybelline (13%) and Revlon (12%). Table 1 provides full description of respondents' characteristics.

Research scales were operationalised to suit the subject matter of the study. Proper modifications were made to fit the current research context and purpose. For celebrity influencer credibility, a four-item scale was adapted from past studies (Martins *et al.*, 2019; Ohanian, 1990) and celebrity influencer attractiveness used six-item scales adapted respectively from past studies (Calvo-Porral *et al.*, 2021; Ohanian, 1990). Online customer reviews used a five-item scale measure adopted from Moloi *et al.* (2022), and attitude used four-item scales adjusted from Low *et al.* (2005). As for brand loyalty, a four-item measure scale was taken from Fullerton (2005); brand awareness used three item scales adopted from Netemeyer *et al.* (2004). eWOM measurements' four-items were adjusted from Lee (2014), and purchase intention used four-item scales adapted from Martin and Bush (2000). All the measurement items are measured on a five-point Likert-type scales that is anchored by 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree to express the degree of agreement.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

Variables	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Age		
18–20	5	2.46
21–25	53	26.11
26–30	50	24.64
31–35	36	17.73
36 and above	59	29.06
Total	*203*	*100.0*
Favourite beauty influencer		
Mihlali Ndamase	35	17.24
Nomzamo Mbatha	59	29.06
Huda Kattan	19	9.36
Nyane Lebajoa	3	1.48
Nikkie de Jager	12	5.91
Others	75	36.95
Total	*203*	*100.0*
Favourite makeup brand		
LÓreal	16	8
Estee Lauder	35	17
Revlon	24	12
Yardley	8	4
Maybelline	26	13
Sephora	2	1
Essence	22	11
Rimmel	2	1
Swiitch Beauty	4	2
Others	61	3
Total	*203*	*100*

Source: Authors' own calculation using SEM Mplus SPSS 284.2 *Measures*

5. Analysis

5.1 Evaluation of the measurement model

The study used structural equation modelling (SEM) with Mplus (8.2) to perform the analysis for the measurement and structural models (Muthén and Muthén, 1998). The estimation method used was the full information maximum likelihood procedure, which allows the estimation of coefficients without removing cases with partial missing data. The adequacy of the measurement model of the eight-factor solution was determined using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The solution of the measurement model reveals an acceptable model fit of the data: (χ^2 = 724.10 (495); χ^2/d.f. = 1.46; RMSEA = 0.05; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94; SRMR = 0.05) (Table 2). Following a good model fit of the measurement model through the CFA, the convergent and discriminant validity was then assessed. First, the standardised factor loadings of all the scale items for each construct were significant and positive. All the path loadings were also significant at $p < 0.001$. Moreover, all the constructs' reliability of all the latent factors exceeded the 0.70 threshold recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Importantly, with the exception of brand awareness, which shows an average variance extracted (AVE) score approaching 0.50, all the constructs' AVEs exceeded the 0.50 recommended threshold for AVE for all the constructs, as shown in Table 2. In sum, these results provide adequate basis convergent validity for all the constructs used in this study.

Discriminant validity was also assessed by showing that the inter-construct correlations were all below 0.70, and the square root of the AVE for each construct moved beyond the inter-item correlations score in the correlation matrix (Table 3) (Bagozzi and Yi, 2012; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). These results confirm that the constructs discriminate amongst themselves very well, hence discriminant validity is established. Finally, because the study used a self-reported questionnaire method to collect data with both independent and dependent variables collected from the same respondents, the likely influence of common method bias on the results was examined by estimating a one-factor CFA where all 34 items measuring the 8 factors were loaded on one unique factor (Malhotra *et al.*, 2006). The one-factor solution produced a very poor fit to the data. Consequently, common method bias is considered not to present any severe impact in this study.

5.2 Hypothesis testing with structural equation modelling path analysis

Following the successful assessment of the measurement model, a structural path analysis was performed to test the various theorised relationships. The SEM analysis results show that the model also fits the data reasonably well: (χ^2 = 947.32 (510); χ^2/d.f. = 1.86; RMSEA = 0.06; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91; SRMR = 0.08) (Table 4). The results show that online influencer credibility does not affect customer attitudes in the beauty industry ($\beta = -0.16$, $t = -0.97$, $p < 0.05$), hence *H1* is not supported. However, the prediction that influencer attractiveness will have a positive influence on customer attitude was supported ($\beta = 0.38$, $t = 2.10$, $p < 0.05$), thus confirming *H2*. The finding supports the view that online influencers who are attractive will engender positive customer attitudes. Furthermore, the relationship between online customer reviews and customer attitudes is not significant ($\beta = 0.16$, $t = 1.58$, $p > 0.05$), hence *H3* is not confirmed, as shown in Table 4.

5.2.1 Hypothesis testing. Moreover, the prediction that customer attitudes will have a favourable influence on brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.69$, $t = 13.05$, $p < 0.01$), brand awareness ($\beta = 0.77$, $t = 11.88$, $p < 0.01$) and eWoM ($\beta = 0.18$, $t = 1.86$ $p < 0.10$), were all supported, thus confirming H4, H5 and H6. Finally, the path coefficients provide evidence of strong support for the influence of brand awareness and purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.35$, $t = 2.08$, $p < 0.05$) and the influence of eWoM on purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.41$, $t = 4.85$, $p < 0.01$), but not for the influence of brand loyalty on purchase intentions ($\beta = -0.13$, $t = -1.07$, $p > 0.05$). Similarly, the prediction that customer attitudes will influence purchase intentions for beauty products was also not supported by the path coefficients ($\beta = 0.03$, $t = 19$, $p > 0.05$).

Table 2 Constructs measurement

	Constructs and scale items	*B*	*α*	*CR*	*AVE*
	Influencer credibility		0.87	0.83	0.56
CIC1	My favourite beauty influencer is knowledgeable about makeup products	0.68			
CIC2	My favourite beauty influencer is experienced in using a variety of makeup products	0.71			
CIC3	My favourite beauty influencer seems to be honest	0.73			
CIC4	My favourite beauty influencer is credible and convincing	0.85			
	Influencer attractiveness		0.94	0.94	0.72
CIA1	My favourite beauty influencer is well known	0.80			
CIA2	My favourite beauty influencer is beautiful	0.95			
CIA3	My favourite beauty influencer is attractive	0.97			
CIA4	My favourite beauty influencer is sexy	0.78			
CIA5	My favourite beauty influencer is elegant	0.84			
CIA6	My favourite beauty influencer has classy style	0.72			
	Online customer reviews		0.92	0.92	0.67
OCR1	Online customer reviews make it easier for me to make a purchase decision of makeup products	0.86			
OCR2	Online customer reviews have enhanced my effectiveness in making purchase decisions of makeup products	0.85			
OCR3	The last time I read online reviews I adopted consumers' recommendations of makeup products	0.77			
OCR4	Information from online reviews contributes to my knowledge of makeup products	0.77			
OCR5	Online reviews have motivated me to make a purchase decision of makeup products	0.91			
	Attitude towards makeup brand		0.87	0.89	0.61
ATT1	My favourite makeup brand meets my expectations	0.81			
ATT2	My favourite makeup brand makes me feel confident	0.74			
ATT3	My favourite makeup brand guarantees satisfaction	0.82			
ATT4	My favourite makeup brand does not disappoint	0.82			
	Brand awareness		0.72	0.72	0.46
BRA1	My favourite makeup brand comes up first in my mind when making a purchase decision	0.67			
BRA2	I can recognise my favourite makeup brand among competing brands	0.70			
BRA3	I can quickly recall symbols of my favourite makeup brand	0.67			
	Brand loyalty		0.86	0.87	0.63
BLO1	I consider myself to be loyal to my favourite makeup brand	0.81			
BLO2	I always recommend my favourite makeup brand to someone who seeks my advice	0.84			
BLO3	I always say positive things about my favourite makeup brand to other people	0.81			
BLO4	I would go out of my way to buy my favourite makeup brand	0.70			
	Electronic word of mouth		0.90	0.90	0.69
EWM1	I rely on electronic word-of-mouth recommendations to obtain information about makeup products	0.86			
EWM2	I am very confident that electronic word-of-mouth recommendations enable me to obtain the makeup products I want	0.93			
EWM3	I prefer to use electronic word-of-mouth recommendations for makeup products	0.83			
EWM4	I am willing to try new makeup products introduced by electronic word-of-mouth	0.68			
	Purchase intention		0.94	0.93	0.78
PIN1	I likely to purchase makeup products recommended by my favorite beauty influencer	0.83			
PIN2	Makeup products recommended by my favorite beauty influencer affect my buying intention	0.87			
PIN3	My willingness to purchase makeup products recommended by my favorite beauty influencer is high	0.93			
PIN4	I would purchase makeup products recommended by my favorite beauty influencer	0.90			

Notes: $\chi^2 = 724;10$, df $= 495$; $\chi^2/\text{df} = 1.46$; RMSEA $= 0.05$; CFI $= 0.95$; TLI $= 0.94$, SRMR $= 0.05$
Source: Authors' own calculation using SEM Mplus

Table 3 Inter-correlation matrix

#	Factors	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	CIC	4.12	1.03	*0.78*							
2	CIA	4.42	0.96	0.61**	*0.85*						
3	PIN	3.41	1.24	0.40**	0.37**	*0.88*					
4	ATT	4.18	0.87	0.23**	0.12	0.25**	*0.78*				
5	BRA	4.19	0.97	0.18**	0.18*	0.28**	0.58**	*0.68*			
6	BLO	3.73	1.15	0.17*	0.09	0.20**	0.55**	0.65**	*0.79*		
7	EWM	3.60	1.17	0.24**	0.29**	0.40**	0.13	0.11	0.10	*0.83*	
8	OCR	3.88	1.13	0.29**	0.24**	0.31**	0.21**	0.12	0.09	0.54**	*0.82*

Notes: $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; SD = standard deviation; values in bold on the diagonal are square root of AVE
Source: Authors' own calculation using SEM Mplus

Table 4 Structural path model (path coefficients)

Hypotheses		*β*	t-*value*	*Results*
H1	Influencer credibility → Customer attitude	−0.16	−0.97	Not supported
H2	Influencer attractiveness → Customer attitude	0.38	2.10*	Supported
H3	Online customer reviews → Customer attitude	0.16	1.58	Not supported
H4	Customer attitude → Brand loyalty	0.69	13.05**	Supported
H5	Customer attitude → Brand awareness	0.77	11.88**	Supported
H6	Customer attitude → eWoM	0.18	1.86^{+}	Supported
H7	Brand loyalty → Purchase intentions	−0.13	−1.07	Not supported
H8	Brand awareness → Purchase intentions	0.35	2.08*	Supported
H9	eWoM → Purchase intentions	0.41	4.85**	Supported
H10	Customer attitude → Purchase intentions	0.03	0.19	Not supported

Notes: $\chi^2 = 947.32$; df = 510; χ^2/df = 1.86; RMSEA = 0.06; CFI = 0.92; TLI = 0.91; SRMR = 0.08; $^{+}p < 0.10$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{**}p < 0.01$
Source: Authors' own calculation using SEM Mplus

5.3 Mediation analysis

Mediation analysis was performed with the help of the bootstrapping bias-corrected method with a 95% confidence interval and 2,000 samples (Xie *et al.*, 2015; Zhao *et al.*, 2005) to examine the underlying mechanism accounting for the relationship between customer attitudes and purchase likelihood in this study. The advanced bootstrapping procedure has greater relative power in establishing and comparing individual effects. The results, presented in Table 5, show that both brand awareness (indirect effect: $\beta = 0.27$, $t = 1.92$, $p < 0.10$, CI_{95} [0.04, 0.58]) and eWoM (indirect effect: $\beta = 0.07$, $t = 1.70$, $p < 0.10$, CI_{95} [0.00, 0.16]) fully mediate the relationship between customer attitude and purchase intentions. However, brand loyalty does not significantly mediate the relationship between customer attitude and purchase intentions ($\beta = -0.09$, $t = -1.04$, $p > 0.05$, CI_{95} [0.08, 0.30]), as shown in Table 5.

6. Discussion and conclusion

The focus of this research was to investigate how influencers' attributes, that is, credibility and attractiveness, as well as online customer reviews, impact young female inclination to purchase beauty products.

6.1 Key findings

Findings of the study clearly indicated that on the comprehension of how the physical attractiveness of a celebrity affects customer intention, the research established that there is a poor correlation between customer attitudes and influencer attractiveness. The study

Table 5 Mediation results

Mediation relationships	*β*	*SE*	t-*value*	*Bootstrap bias-corrected method 95% Lower*	*Upper*	p-*value*
Total effect	0.29	0.08	3.46*	0.11	0.44	0.00
Total indirect effect	0.26	0.15	1.74^{+}	−0.01	0.57	0.08
Specific indirect effect						
ATT → BA → PI	0.27	0.14	1.92^{+}	0.04	0.58	0.06
ATT → BL → PI	−0.09	0.08	−1.04	−0.26	0.08	0.30
ATT → eWoM → PI	0.07	0.04	1.70^{+}	0.00	0.16	0.09

Notes: $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{+}p < 0.10$, ATT = customer attitude, BA = brand awareness, BL = brand loyalty, eWoM = electronic word of mouth, PI = purchase intentions
Source: Authors' own calculation using SEM Mplus

indicated that the appeal of influencers influences consumer trust and boosts brand exposure. To help managers and marketers better understand which source credibility aspects were important for influencer endorsements, the last research question, *RQ3*, was created. Several writers (Apejoye, 2013: Davis, 2017) indicated that using a celebrity with a better reputation has a considerable beneficial impact on consumers' purchasing intentions. The study underlined correlation matrices determining that there was a strong correlation between seven of the nine hypotheses and the purchase intentions of female consumers. This demonstrates that stronger performance in those hypotheses results in stronger purchasing intentions.

The study also reveals that a correlation exists between the credibility of celebrity influencers and consumers' attitude towards the brand, according to the extensive research on credibility, and an influencer who possesses the essential credibility source factors can significantly improve the buying intentions of Generation Y female consumers. Furthermore, the research established that a celebrity's perceived expertise in the eyes of the public is more significant in determining purchase intentions and has greater persuasive power than their attractiveness, supporting the idea that using credible influencers may be a way to influence higher levels of credibility in an advertising message.

Also, the study revealed that the participants' purchase intention and the perceived knowledge of celebrity influencers showed the most striking and beneficial link. All three credibility characteristics were also found to have a significant and favourable impact on followers' perceptions towards the brand. However, intriguingly, the study findings showed that celebrity influencers' perceived trustworthiness had the most significant and positive impact on attracting the survey participants' positive attitude towards the makeup brand, in contrast to their perceived expertise, which influenced followers' purchasing intentions the most. This may be because young female consumers are more likely to purchase products when they believe the influencer who endorsed these products has experience in the beauty industry. However, when followers believe an influencer to be trustworthy, whether or not they need to buy the endorsed product, they develop a positive attitude towards the endorsed brand because they believe the influencers to be trustworthy. Therefore, perceived trustworthiness is more important to forming a favourable attitude towards the brand than perceived knowledge for purchase intention for young female consumers in the present study.

Contrary to previous research, the corresponding research hypothesis between influencers' attractiveness and attitude towards the brand was rejected, indicating that there was little correlation between the two variables. This result contradicted other studies' findings that consumer perceptions regarding items are highly influenced by physical attractiveness. The findings showed that followers' propensity to make a purchase was significantly and favourably correlated with online customer reviews. More research findings revealed a beneficial relationship between influencers who had built a relationship with their consumers through a positive review; this relationship between the endorser and the consumer led to

positively influencing consumers' purchasing behaviour. Therefore, perceived celebrity influencer's attractiveness positively influences the attitude of consumers.

Also, this study, by seeking to reveal the relationship between customer attitude and brand equity (brand loyalty and brand awareness), revealed that brand loyalty and the credibility of the influencer influences young female purchase intentions of beauty products. These results supported the idea that followers are more inclined to continue to follow influencers who they believe to be trustworthy. The study's results also show that consumers' attitudes and purchasing intentions towards the recommended brands are significantly influenced by their followers' allegiance to the celebrity influencers. This suggests that devoted fans of celebrity influencers are more likely to buy the things they promote and have a favourable opinion towards the suggested brand. The study's intriguing conclusion in this regard is that brand loyalty has a nearly equal impact on followers' intention to make purchases and attitudes towards beauty brands. That suggests that when followers consider influencers to be trustworthy, they grow to feel loyal to them, which in turn, has a good effect on the followers' intention to buy the suggested makeup product and their attitude towards the endorsed brand. Therefore, perceived brand awareness positively influences consumer purchase intention.

Furthermore, the study indicated that purchasing online is a new phenomenon that has attracted research interest, mainly in the area of consumer behaviour. By understanding the effect of eWOM and consumer online reviews, as well as the effect these have on young female purchase intention, the research therefore contributed to a better understanding of the ways in which eWOM, and online consumer reviews influence consumers buying intention. These results are in line with similar findings in literature, as Lu and Bai (2021) suggested that the reliability dimension of a brand trust has a mediating effect on how consumers review online, thus the probability of a willingness to purchase is because word-of-mouth is a well-recognised and credible source when it comes to information dissemination. Also, this study proved that eWOM has a positive effect on the consumer purchasing decision because the more products are advertised on the media or network sites, the more consumers become aware of the product or brand and this will enable the consumers to assess and evaluate such products which will equally influence them to draw conclusions on the brand, company or a product, as well as referring their friends and family to try the product. Therefore, users have confidence in the eWOM information provided by satisfied customers who have made online purchases, and it has perceived that consumers' attitude positively influences eWOM.

6.2 Theoretical implications

Obviously, every study has its contributions in its industry, and this study makes important theoretical and practical contributions. With the importance of social media influencer marketing, this study looked into and analysed the effects of brand loyalty, brand awareness, online customer reviews, influencer attractiveness, influencer credibility and eWOM on young female consumer intentions to buy beauty products and their attitudes towards the brand.

Theoretically, this study advances our understanding of the effects of online consumer reviews and celebrity endorsement on consumers' intentions to make online purchases in the context of South Africa, as well as the theories of planned behaviour, brand equity and social influencers. By the use of the theories of planned behaviour, brand equity and social influence in building customer intention, the validated model distinguished between the crucial roles of celebrity influencer and customer feedback. This study confirmed that customer intention is positively influenced by online consumer reviews, influencer credibility and influencer attractiveness.

Overall, empirical findings of the study indicated that online consumer reviews have a very strong and important influence on online consumers' purchasing intention and behaviour. Brands that deliver their product to their clients as promised, influence good reviews and thereby, influence purchase behaviour indirectly through positive online consumer reviews.

6.3 Managerial implications

From a managerial standpoint, this study unearthed that the credibility of influencers played a pivotal role in influencing purchase intentions. With this new approach to influencer marketing, communication must be entirely strategic, and influencers must be carefully chosen to represent the business, particularly within the beauty industry. To increase marketing impact, marketing personnel should use the most likeable, credible and attractive influencers who are most associated with high value as opinion leaders. When young consumers trust the source/the influencer, purchases become easy because they would trust the influencer. Moreover, more favourable and stronger brand images are created through the sale of good brands automatically causing their clients to have brand loyalty, hence, increase the customer purchase. Attractive influencers are also shown to significantly shape customer attitudes to predict purchase intentions. Therefore, marketing executives should carefully choose influencers who are attractive so that young consumers will aspire to such beauty and attractiveness. This is very crucial, especially for the beauty and wellness industry.

According to our research findings, customers, particularly young consumers, are very likely to use social media networking platforms for a variety of objectives. Social media marketing changes advertisements from one-way, impersonal product promotion to one that strengthens brand–consumer relationships and customer engagement. As a result, marketers in the beauty business must be creative and find the best platforms where their potential customers are connecting. For instance, in 2006, YouTube first offered businesses a number of advertising concepts to use the network as a powerful marketing tool (Rosara and Luthfia, 2020).

The most important thing for marketing managers in the beauty sector is to remember to respond to both positive and negative comments/reviews on the website or social media platforms, as customers tend to value reviews with both sides of the story more than those with solely positive ones. Through online reviews/comments provided by consumers, young consumers derive their purchase intention. To improve quality and information usefulness on platforms, marketing or digital marketing managers need to provide good customer experience and make sure that their website is user friendly to get good/positive reviews from customers. This will help with influencing the purchase intention of millennials because their decision is largely influenced by online reviews. Additionally, beauty brands would enjoy the benefits of eWOM because young consumers tend to spread the word to their peers.

6.4 Limitations and future research directions

Some limitations are highlighted for future research to consider. One of the limitations of this study was that the research made use of only young female consumers instead of including male participants. The purchase and use of beauty products in this present generation does not exclude young male, therefore, their involvement would have brought broader and relevant findings. However, for further research on this problem they should include at first, a range of age groups to be included in the sample, bearing in mind that this study has focussed its research mainly on young consumers. It would also be more interesting and more informative to study not only the perceptions of female students but also consumers from different stages of life, as in the case of housewives, working class, amongst other social classes, as all of them have a number of targeted advertisements nowadays.

Including them in the future research would be a good help in getting an overall perception of consumers.

Another limitation of this study, which examined consumers' intentions to buy cosmetics, may not apply to other sectors of the economy. However, recommendations for future studies might look at whether the same conclusions apply in other industries. Another aspect is that the influence of paid and organic content on a consumer's purchasing intention may vary. This study assumed generic content without mentioning whether it was paid for or not. To learn how consumers feel about paid versus organic content, as well as whether those aspects have distinct effects on consumers' purchase intentions, more research may be done .

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Corresponding author

Theresa Macheka can be contacted at: tpmacheka@gmail.com

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