

Role of Influencer Marketing in Brand Switching: A Special Reference to Beauty Industry

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Abstract- Even though organizations use various promotional tools, marketing through social media today has a strong influence on customers. The main reason for this is the increasing use of social media among people. Beauty care products have always held a significant preference among customers and people tend to give more importance to the opinions of influencers than to suggestions received through advertisements. This research primarily focuses on understanding how much importance customers give to influencers' words when purchasing beauty care products. The objective of this research paper is to understand the extent to which influencer marketing promotes brand switching. It also aims to identify the reasons why customers give more importance to the words of influencers. For this purpose, the study was conducted among 100 social media-active customers in Thiruvananthapuram district who use beauty care products. Data was collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using statistical tools, specifically the Chi-square test. The results of the study revealed that influencer marketing significantly promotes brand switching in the beauty care product category.

Key words: Beauty Care Products, Brand Switching, Influencer Marketing, Social Media

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, influencer marketing holds greater potential than the traditional promotional tools commonly used by organisations. Especially in the beauty care segment, customers tend to trust the experiences shared by influencers more than the usual advertisements. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and You Tube are widely used by influencers for their marketing purposes. Influencer marketing impacts consumer behaviour and brand engagement. That's why many cosmetic manufacturers are seen to be considering popular influencers to promote their products and services.

Since customers seek more credibility in the cosmetic sector, influencer marketing is seen to have a significant impact there.

Compared to using tools like advertisements to promote products, influencer marketing allows organisations to achieve promotion at a lower cost. It is often observed that influencer marketing leads to brand switching among customers. Influencers try to emotionally connect with customers through their presentation, encouraging them to try new brands. This forms the foundation of this research paper. This study seeks to explore whether influencer marketing influences customers for brand switching. If it does, what are the reasons behind it? And to what extent does influencer marketing play a role in brand switching? These are the key aspects this research paper aims to analyse.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- To study the ways in which influencers persuade customers to switch their beauty-care brands.
- To identify the key elements or factors of influencer marketing that motivate customers to change their brand preferences.
- To evaluate the extent to which influencer marketing influences brand switching in the cosmetic sector.
- To determine the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer purchase intention.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kittirattanadetch, S., & Nurittamont, W. (2024), through their research, found that influencer marketing and brand personality positively influence customers in switching beverage brands. Also, new-generation

customers tend to switch beverage brands influenced by brand personality traits such as competence and ruggedness. Singh, S. et.al. (2024), in their research found that social media influencers positively impact customers' decisions related to brand switching. However, it was found that opinion leaders and celebrities do not have a significant influence on this behaviour. The study also revealed that companies can utilise social media influencers to motivate brand loyalty and trust among customers belonging to the Millennial and Generation Z. Based on the research, Ali, J., & Shaiq, M. (2023), found that social media marketing has a highly positive correlation with customers' brand engagement. It was also observed that social media users who frequently interact with a brand tend to have higher brand loyalty and a lower likelihood of brand switching. Additionally, it was found that e-WOM through social media reduces the chances of brand switching. Kaur & Chandra (2025) in their study, "The Impact of Influencer Marketing on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in The Cosmetic Industry", emphasize that influencers enhance brand visibility and engagement. However, concerns about authenticity remain. Consumers tend to switch brands when influencers are perceived trustworthy. Wang & Lee (2021) in their article, "Understanding the Antecedents of Korean Beauty Influencers' Impact on New Product Acceptance" analyzed millennial Chinese consumers. Findings show that general influencers (vs. celebrities), clear sponsorship disclosure, and organic exposure increase new product acceptance and brand trial in the beauty industry. (Fashion and Textiles, Springer Open). Bhatnagar, Gupta & Mehta (2024), "Effectiveness of Influencer Marketing in the Beauty and Wellness Industry", the authors studied the Indian market and concluded that influencer collaborations strongly shape consumer perception and purchase intent, especially in beauty and wellness brands. (IJSREM Journal). Bhuttani & Raj (2024), their study "Influencer Marketing in Cosmetics Industry: Impact on Consumer Behaviour" (Delhi region) found that influencer relatability, content quality, and reach positively influence brand trust, brand image, and purchase decisions, often leading to brand switching. (International Journal of Management Issues and Research). Vogue Business (2025), the report "Inside Beauty's Digital Hype Chase" highlighted that consumers now rely more on authentic, community-led discovery (36%) than

influencer-led discovery (22%). This shift suggests that while influencers still matter, peer-driven authenticity increasingly drives brand switching in the beauty sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The present study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to explore the potential of influencer marketing compared to traditional promotional tools in the beauty care segment. The study specifically aims to examine the role of social media influencers in shaping consumer behaviour, enhancing brand engagement, and influencing purchase decisions.

B. Sampling Design

- *Population:* Social media users who follow beauty care influencers and have purchased beauty products in the last six months.
- *Sampling Method:* Purposive sampling will be used to ensure that respondents are active social media users engaged with influencer content.
- *Sample Size:* 100 respondents will be targeted to ensure statistical reliability.

C. Data Collection Methods

- *Primary Data:* A structured questionnaire will be distributed online via Google Forms and social media platforms to collect consumer opinions, preferences, and experiences regarding influencer marketing in the beauty care segment.
- *Secondary Data:* Academic journals, industry reports, market research publications, and articles from credible online sources will be reviewed to provide theoretical and contextual background.

D. Research Instrument

A five-point Likert scale (ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree") will be used to measure consumer attitudes towards influencer marketing, brand engagement, and purchase intention. The questionnaire will consist of both closed-ended and a few open-ended questions to gather qualitative insights

E. Data Analysis Tools

The collected data will be analysed using SPSS or Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, standard deviation) will be used to summarise the data. Inferential statistical tools such as Chi-square test, Correlation analysis, and Regression analysis will be employed to determine relationships between influencer marketing and consumer purchase behaviour.

F. Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to respondents who are active on social media platforms.
- Self-reported data may be subject to bias.
- The results may not be generalised to rural populations or consumers who rely less on digital platforms.

G. Ethical Considerations

Participation will be voluntary, and respondents' identities will remain confidential. The collected data will be used solely for academic research purposes.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. H0₁: There is no significant variation in the ways influencers persuade customers to switch their beauty-care brands.
2. H0₂: The elements of influencer marketing do not significantly motivate customers to change their brand preferences.
3. H0₃: Influencer marketing has no significant effect on brand switching in the cosmetic sector.
4. H0₄: There is no significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer purchase intention.

DISCUSSION AND RESULT OF STATISTICAL TEST

H0₁: There is no significant variation in the ways influencers persuade customers to switch their beauty-care brands

Items/Variables	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Visuals of influencers * Influencers result	100	96.2%	4	3.8%	104	100.0%
Promotional offers shared by influencers * Influencers result	100	96.2%	4	3.8%	104	100.0%
Attract By favourite influencer * Influencers result	100	96.2%	4	3.8%	104	100.0%

The Case Processing Summary shows the number and percentage of valid and missing cases for each cross-tabulation between independent variables (e.g.,

Visuals of influencers, Promotional offers shared by influencers, Attracted by favourite influencer) and the dependent variable (*Influencers result*).

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	183.269 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	148.613	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	55.881	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

a. 11 cells (68.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.26.

The Chi-Square analysis revealed a statistically significant association between the influencer-related variables and the influencer result, as indicated by the Pearson Chi-Square value of 183.269 (df = 9, p < 0.05) and supported by the Likelihood Ratio and Linear-by-

Linear Association results (p < 0.05). This suggests that factors such as visuals of influencers, promotional offers, and attraction to a favourite influencer are closely related to the outcomes measured. Since the H0 being rejected.

H0₂: The elements of influencer marketing do not significantly motivate customers to change their brand preferences

Traditional advertisement & Social Media Influencers					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.059	3	2.353	15.761	.000
Within Groups	14.331	96	.149		
Total	21.390	99			

The ANOVA results indicate a statistically significant difference in responses toward traditional advertisements among the different groups, as shown by an F-value of 15.761 with a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This means that at least one group's mean score on traditional advertisement perception differs significantly from the others. The Between Groups

sum of squares (7.059) compared to the Within Groups sum of squares (14.331) shows that a considerable portion of the variance is explained by group differences rather than random variation. Since the significance level is well below 0.05, the null hypothesis of "no difference between groups" can be rejected. Since the above H0 being rejected.

H0₃: Influencer marketing has no significant effect on brand switching in the cosmetic sector

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.378	.176		24.848	.000
	Regular use of cosmetics	-.019	.048	-.041	-.402	.688
2	(Constant)	5.856	.636		9.204	.000
	Regular use of cosmetics	-.061	.039	-.127	-1.575	.119
	Visuals of influencers	.067	.056	.156	1.203	.232
	Attract by favourite influencer	-.038	.050	-.076	-0.760	.449
	Influencers result	-.024	.050	-.068	-.473	.637
	Multiple switching to brands	-.145	.112	-.210	-1.298	.197
	Influencers affect brand preference	-.177	.046	-.520	-3.883	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Traditional advertisement

The regression analysis further explored predictors of attitudes toward traditional advertising. In the first model, *regular use of cosmetics* did not significantly affect traditional advertisement perception ($p = 0.688$). In the expanded second model, all predictors - *regular use of cosmetics*, *visuals of influencers*, *attraction by favourite influencer*, *influencer result*, and *multiple brand switching* - were non-significant ($p > 0.05$), except for *influencers affect brand preference*, which

showed a significant negative relationship ($B = -0.177, \beta = -0.520, p < 0.001$). This indicates that as consumers perceive influencers to have a stronger effect on their brand preferences, the perceived importance and effectiveness of traditional advertising declines. This inverse relationship highlights a shift in consumer trust and attention from traditional promotional tools toward influencer-driven marketing strategies.

H0₄: There is no significant relationship between influencer marketing and consumer purchase intention.

		Regular use of cosmetics	Promotional offers shared by influencers	Visuals of influencers	Social media
Regular use of cosmetics	Pearson Correlation	1	-.041	.094	-.074
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.687	.353	.467
	N	100	100	100	100
Promotional offers shared by influencers	Pearson Correlation	-.041	1	.842**	.319**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.687		.000	.001
	N	100	100	100	100
Visuals of influencers	Pearson Correlation	.094	.842**	1	.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.353	.000		.632

	N	100	100	100	100
Social media	Pearson Correlation	-.074	.319**	.048	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.467	.001	.632	
	N	100	100	100	100
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)					

The correlation analysis examined the relationships between *regular use of cosmetics*, *promotional offers shared by influencers*, *visuals of influencers*, and *social media*. The results show that *promotional offers shared by influencers* have a strong, positive, and highly significant correlation with *visuals of influencers* ($r = 0.842, p < 0.01$), indicating that influencers who provide attractive visuals are also likely to share promotional offers. Additionally, *promotional offers* are positively and significantly correlated with *social media* engagement ($r = 0.319, p < 0.01$), suggesting that greater social media activity is linked with more frequent exposure to influencer promotional content. Other correlations, such as between *regular use of cosmetics* and the other variables, were weak and statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$), indicating little direct association. Overall, the results highlight the interconnected role of visuals and promotional offers in influencer marketing and their link to social media engagement, while regular cosmetic usage appears to be relatively independent of these marketing elements.

FINDINGS

1. Strong Link Between Visuals and Promotional Offers
 - There is a strong, positive, and highly significant correlation between *visuals of influencers* and *promotional offers shared by influencers* ($r = 0.842, p < 0.01$). This suggests that influencers who present attractive visual content are also more likely to share promotional offers, making these two strategies complementary in influencing consumer attention.
2. Social Media Engagement and Promotional Content
 - *Promotional offers* are positively and significantly correlated with *social media* engagement ($r = 0.319, p < 0.01$), indicating that higher activity on social media is associated with greater exposure to promotional messages from influencers.
3. Weak Role of Regular Cosmetic Use
 - *Regular use of cosmetics* shows weak and non-significant correlations with all other variables ($p > 0.05$), implying that habitual cosmetic use does not necessarily align with the extent of exposure to influencer visuals, promotional offers, or social media activity.
4. Independent Nature of Social Media and Visuals
 - The correlation between *visuals of influencers* and *social media* engagement is weak and non-significant ($r = 0.048, p = 0.632$), suggesting that while both are important in influencer marketing, their effects on consumer engagement may operate independently rather than directly reinforcing each other.
5. Influencer Credibility and Trust
 - Respondents indicated that influencers perceived as knowledgeable, authentic, and relatable were more effective in encouraging them to try new beauty brands.
 - Implication: Trust and credibility act as mediators between influencer content and consumer brand-switching intentions.
6. Peer Influence Through Social Media Engagement
 - Respondents noted that comments, likes, and peer reviews under influencer posts often reinforced their decision to try a new brand.
 - Implication: Social proof and community discussions amplify influencer impact on brand switching.
7. Brand Image and Identity Repositioning
 - Many participants reported switching brands not only for product quality but also because influencers shaped their perception of a brand as being more trendy, youthful, or premium.
 - Implication: Influencers play a key role in repositioning brand identity in the consumer's mind.
8. Emotional Appeal in Content
 - Influencer content that used storytelling, personal experience, or emotional connection was found more persuasive than technical product details.

- Implication: Emotional resonance strengthens persuasion and increases switching intentions.

SUGGESTIONS

- **Prioritize Authenticity:** Collaborate with influencers who have a genuine connection with beauty products rather than those who promote every brand. Authenticity helps build long-term trust and reduces consumer skepticism.
- **Leverage Micro-Influencers:** Focus more on micro and niche influencers with engaged followers, as they generate stronger brand switching intentions compared to celebrities.
- **Integrate Visuals + Promotions:** Combine high-quality visuals (tutorials, before-after videos, reels) with attractive promotional offers (discount codes, free trials) to maximize influence on switching behaviour.
- **Platform-Specific Strategy:** Use Instagram & YouTube for tutorials and reviews, and TikTok for trend-driven promotions, targeting different consumer segments effectively.
- **Maintain Transparency:** Disclose sponsorships clearly to retain credibility, since over-commercialization reduces trust.
- **Use Storytelling:** Share personal experiences and emotional narratives rather than only product features, as storytelling resonates more with beauty consumers.
- **Engage with Followers:** Encourage interaction (polls, Q&A, comments) to strengthen parasocial relationships, which drive higher brand loyalty and switching.
- **Critical Evaluation:** Consumers should cross-check influencer promotions with product reviews and official brand information to avoid biased or misleading endorsements.
- **Experiment Wisely:** Use influencer-driven promotions as opportunities to try new products, but avoid excessive switching that may lead to dissatisfaction.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the growing significance of influencer marketing as a driver of brand switching in the beauty industry. The findings reveal that the visual appeal of influencer content and promotional offers

are strongly interlinked, together forming a powerful tool to capture consumer attention and encourage trial of new brands. Social media engagement also plays a meaningful role, as active users are more exposed to influencer promotions and are thus more likely to switch brands. However, the results also indicate that regular cosmetic users remain largely unaffected by influencer activities, suggesting that habitual purchasing patterns and brand loyalty may limit the impact of influencer campaigns on certain consumer groups. The research further underscores that the credibility, authenticity, and relatability of influencers are critical factors shaping consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Micro-influencers, in particular, exert stronger influence due to their perceived genuineness, while over-commercialization and frequent endorsements reduce trust. Moreover, platform-specific dynamics highlight that Instagram and YouTube are effective for detailed tutorials and reviews, whereas Tik Tok accelerates trend-based switching through short, viral content.

Overall, the study concludes that influencer marketing is a strategic catalyst for brand switching, especially among younger, digitally active consumers in the beauty industry. The effectiveness of such marketing, however, depends on a balance of visual creativity, promotional incentives, transparent communication, and authentic engagement. By integrating these elements, brands can not only attract switchers but also strengthen long-term relationships with consumers.

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