

Analyzing the Effect of Source Credibility on Cosmetic Product Choice: A Study on YouTube Makeup Videos

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ABSTRACT: In the current era of modernization where everything is coming on the fingertip as the online shopping is considered more convenient by a majority of peoples as compare to physical shopping and it is also encouraged by the sources especially in the situation where we are living with a pandemic like COVID-19 now a days. In this case also the peoples are attracted through the YouTube videos about many things. The consumers of online products are normally identified to purchase the products from trusted online outlets, recommended by the experts and having attractive attributes or packaging. The current research is same for the beauty content available on YouTube and its effect on the purchase intention of the consumers. The research is conducted to examine the effect of source credibility factors like trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness on the information adoption and its reflection on the purchase intension of the beauty products. The result shows that there is a significant effect of above said factors on the information adoption of vlogs of beauty contents and its effect on purchase intension of beauty products. Trustworthiness, Expertise and Attraction explain 33.4% of the variance in the information adoption of vlogs of beauty contents available on YouTube while this attribute explain 39.4% of the variance explained in the purchase intension and both of these are significant.

KEY WORD: Source credibility, Trustworthiness, Expertise, Attractiveness, Information Adoption, Beauty Contents, Vlog, Purchase Intention

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I. INTRODUCTION

The internet regardless of whether we are consumers or not, has changed nearly every part of our lives. It has changed the whole perspective of communication with friends and family or obtaining the latest information from any part of the world. Our shopping patterns have also shifted drastically over the years. This change can be seen particularly in cosmetic industry since most of the people went to a shop to buy a cosmetic product with the guidance of store staff but this whole process has changed with the internet mainly with social media.

YouTube is one of the largest social networking sites after Facebook (Lee, 2018) with the penetration of 61%, YouTube has the second most active global consumption. YouTube has its own exclusive features of engagement concerning communicative rights: introduction, expertise and user interaction widely known as “Vlog”. Vlog or video blogs are created by YouTube users to share it with their followers. Through these vlogs, the creator shares a thought, message or opinion to the audience. Just like blogs were a forum for people to exchange knowledge and experiences in the past years, now we have a medium to communicate visual knowledge known as vlogs. Presently the vlog content on YouTube is consider being reliable source for online viewers and perceived as trustworthy throughout the reviews of product experience (Ramadanty, S., Muqarrabin, A. M., Nita, W. A., & Syafganti, I, 2020). The emergence of the online beauty culture and the rise of YouTube and Instagram stars have altered the relationship between consumers and cosmetic brands. These beauty YouTubers or vloggers are classified as “influencers” who have significant knowledge and expertise on consumer behavior especially in beauty community. In the 21st century, as anything is available on the Internet, customers prefer to do more research on a single product or service before making a final buying decision. YouTube videos have been an important method in collecting knowledge on goods or services from a customer viewpoint. Vlogs has increasingly become more popular to consumers and has changed their view of the product or service.

Most studies from previous years focused on online reviews through blogs and eWOM (Chu & Kim, 2011; Erkan, Ismail & Evans, Chris, 2016). Therefore, this study aims to focus on the effect source credibility of videos available on the YouTube platform regarding cosmetic products and how it changes and help to make buying decision. By the term source credibility indicates the three factors which are trustworthiness, attractiveness and expertise taken by Ohanian source credibility model (1991). Furthermore, the study aims to focus on IAM (Sussman and Siegal, 2003) to understand how consumers accept product information provided

by YouTubers depending on source credibility of the YouTube videos/vlogs and how consumers are influenced by the information received affect the intent of viewer to buying intent of cosmetic products.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Source Credibility

Ohanian (1990) developed credibility model which is one of the mostly used model. With the advertising point of view, Ohanian (1990) developed a scale to study the effectiveness of endorsers' trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness. Source credibility indicates the positive attributes that affect a receiver or a consumer's acceptance of a particular message (Ohanian, 1991). When the message source is reliable, the message is judged as favorable and would be more convincing. (D Hussain, 2019). The creator has knowledge of the product, trust as a social media influence and physical attraction for beauty content created on YouTube (Minh Vo, 2018). Hence it is observed that if the creator follows the standards and rules as mentioned, the more probable they are to positively influence the buying decision of a viewer. A study on impact of YouTube beauty vloggers reviews and the buying intention by Ananda, A. F & Wandebori, H. (2016) found out that Ohanian's source credibility model has a significant role in purchase intention through the videos posed by beauty vloggers on YouTube. Perceived credibility is the trust level that influences the adoption of a message in positive or negative manner and shifts consumers behavior (Minh, 2018). Furthermore it can be stated that the beauty vloggers's trustworthiness and expertise builds consumers attitude towards purchasing intention. The credibility of the source shows the positive characteristics influencing or adopting a specific message from the recipient. (Ohanian, 1990). This hypothesis starts two models, the source validity and the source attractiveness model. Nonetheless, Ohanian (1990) joins those two models and utilizing trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness as measurements for the source credibility hypothesis (Fred, 2015). For this situation, YouTube beauty vloggers: their ability with respect to the item, reliability as an individual and physical engaging quality. The more these conditions are fulfilled by an informant, the more liable they are to influence the buying intention positively and conversely.

Trustworthiness

"Trustworthiness is defined as consumer's confidence in the source for providing information in an honest manner" (Ohanian, 1991). However Ohanian (1990) suggested that a trustworthy communicator whether an expert or not was seen as convincing. During the past years, we can see the emergence of beauty videos on social platforms including YouTube with 349 billion beauty content in 2018 (Statista). Viewers and audience on YouTube generally search for effective communication with vloggers, the YouTube vloggers have a bond with their audience and this type of communication can be seen on their fan pages unlike traditional celebrities who are not relatable to the audience (Lepisto and Vahajylkka, 2017). The trust aspect can be seen in the video comment sections where customers often say they have bought a product on the basis of the recommendation of Vlogger (Sokol, 2017). They are no longer looking for celebrity endorsement represented by brands as they hardly find trustworthiness and relatability. Videos on digital platform like YouTube altered media by allowing anybody to make and encouraging a two-path connection among makers and watchers (YouTube culture and trends, 2020).

Expertise

Video blogs are methods to broadcast information with the assistance of images and videos and YouTube is a forum to share this information with the viewers (Baker, 2017). This dimension of source credibility represents the extent to which a communicator has relevant and useful knowledge to convey (Pornpitakpan, 2004). In the case of YouTube beauty videos, the beauty vloggers on their channel generally show or share their literal depiction personal knowledge regarding the products. The category of beauty on YouTube has thousands of beauty vlogger as mentioned above in chapter two, these beauty vloggers have proficiency regarding the information they are providing and that is why they are known as "beauty gurus" as mentioned by Forbes (2016). With the help of past researches and synopsis on expertise and attitude towards information provided (Ohanian, 1990; Pornpitakpan, 2004, Kim et al., 2017).

Attractiveness

Ohanian (1990) established three characteristics of information sources: trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness which are previously mentioned in the context of YouTube videos. The YouTube videos and video creator are also source of information for the viewers. According to Joseph (1982) physically appealing communicators are seen as more positive and confident when contrasted with unattractive communicators. The attractive features shown by a vlogger on the YouTube channel are therefore of great interest to the public and the influence of their appeal increases the number of subscribers (Miller, 2009).

Information Adoption Model

EWOM discussions and interactions consist of the simply transmitting information to and from individuals (Erkan and Evans, 2016). The impact of the information may fluctuate from individual to individual; various view of a similar information will develop between receivers (Erkan and Evans, 2016; Lee, 2018). Throughout previous studies, the information adoption model was used to explain how the information obtained is internalized by people (Erkan and Evans, 2016). Information adoption theories explain how individuals are faced when Ideas, information, or technology are provided to them. This model may clarify how individuals use information to alter their behavior and actions within computer-mediated platforms of communication (Wang, 2016). Prior work also indicates that this model approaches the power of eWOM as it can explain eWOM (Cheung et al., 2008; Lee, 2018). In order to determine how consumers respond to information quality, Sussman and Siegal (2003) represented IAM, whereas in terms for better understanding, Erkan and Evans (2016) modified this model by combining consumer behavior. In other words, Erkan and Evans (2016) proposed that eWOM does not only have trust in eWOM's data attributes across web-based network media phases, but also relies on consumer actions to eWOM's data. This new model is known as "Information Acceptance Model" (IACM) as defined by Erkan and Evans (2016). This study identifies the factors affecting consumer buying intent in the context of YouTube makeup videos and source credibility. As mentioned earlier, Erkan and Evans (2016) studied information adoption model and eWOM. According to Erkan and Evans (2016), the attributed related to eWOM are not enough to analyze the impact of eWOM in purchase intention of consumers. Therefore Erkan and Evans (2016) further extended their research model by including purchase intention of consumers, they determined that in eWOM information, behavior of consumer should be included into the account in the evaluation. Evan and Erkan (2016) further introduced "Information Acceptance Model" in order to investigate in the consumer purchasing intentions. Also, Lee (2018) stated that if the information provided to people is considered useful to them, they use that knowledge as the basis for their purchasing decision. In this research, beauty videos on YouTube are source of information for the consumers who are searching for cosmetic products so it is believed that beauty content provider on YouTube are viewed as credible source of information.

Research Objectives

The main objectives of this study are to

- i. Determine the relationship between perceived trustworthiness of information in the beauty based content towards product
- ii. Determine the relationship between perceived expertise of information and consumers' attitude towards product.
- iii. Determine the relationship between perceived attractiveness of information and consumers' attitude towards product.
- iv. Determine the relationship between information adoption of beauty based content and purchase intention of consumers.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The approach used in this study is quantitative research method. In order to conduct statistical analysis the main data is gathered through questionnaire technique.

Sampling Technique

Simple random method was utilized in this research. However, this study was conducted around the globe on Google Docs from the females only.

Sample Size

The number of respondents was 390, females across Asia, Europe, America, Africa and Australia.

Design of Questionnaire

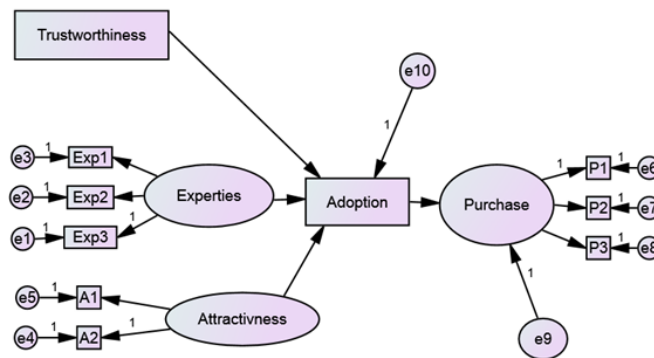
Five point Likert scale was utilized in questionnaire; variables are measured all objects by using 1 to 5 point scale whereas '1=strongly disagree', '2=disagree', '3=neither agree nor disagree', '4=agree', '5=strongly agree'.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Majority of the respondents who given the responses about the questions regarding you tube cosmetics or makeup videos claimed their ages between 24 to 32 years (42.3%) followed by the lower age group (37.2%) while the higher age groups are found less interested in makeup or cosmetic videos.

Majority of the respondents who given the responses about the questions regarding you tube cosmetics or makeup videos claimed their education as graduate (36.2%) followed by the undergraduates and masters (25.1% for each) while the remaining education groups are found less interested in makeup or cosmetic videos.

Majority of the respondents who given the responses about the questions regarding you tube cosmetics or makeup videos are found from Asia (45.64%) followed by Europeans (33.33%) while the remaining region's females are found less interested in makeup or cosmetic videos.



The arrows appeared in the structural equation model shows the effect or regression of the variables attached. The variables appeared at the tails are considered as an independent variables while the variables attached at head side is the dependent variables. The variables appeared in rectangles are observed or existing variables/items while the variables appeared in circle/oval are unobserved variables. The small circles labeled from e1 to e10 are the residuals used in model estimation and shown as per the model requirement.

TABLE 1: MEASUREMENTS AND MODEL ESTIMATIONS

| | | | Estimates | S.E. | C.R. | AVE |
|------|------|----------------|-----------|------|------|-------|
| Exp3 | <--- | Expertise | .801 | .059 | 0.79 | 0.574 |
| Exp2 | <--- | Expertise | .753 | .074 | | |
| Exp1 | <--- | Expertise | .718 | .070 | | |
| A2 | <--- | Attractiveness | .271 | .062 | 0.59 | 0.45 |
| A1 | <--- | Attractiveness | .910 | .090 | | |
| P1 | <--- | Purchase | .751 | .063 | 0.76 | 0.54 |
| P2 | <--- | Purchase | .699 | .087 | | |
| P3 | <--- | Purchase | .749 | .082 | | |

TABLE 2: DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY USING FORNELL AND LARCKER (1981) CRITERION

| Constructs | Trustworthiness | Attractiveness | Expertise |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Trustworthiness | 0.865 | | |
| Attractiveness | 0.240 | 0.106 | |
| Expertise | 0.532 | 0.254 | 0.602 |

TABLE 3: DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY USING HETERO TRAIT-MONOTRAIT (HTMT) RATIO

| Constructs | Trustworthiness | Attractiveness | Expertise |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Trustworthiness | | | |
| Attractiveness | 0.789 | | |
| Experties | 0.921 | 0.537 | |

TABLE 4: MODEL FIT SUMMARY

| Model | NPAR | CMIN | DF | P | CMIN/DF |
|--------------------|------|---------|----|------|---------|
| Default model | 22 | 62.371 | 33 | .998 | 1.890 |
| Saturated model | 55 | .000 | 0 | | |
| Independence model | 10 | 184.899 | 45 | .000 | 4.109 |

| Model | RMR | GFI | AGFI | PGFI |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|
| Default model | .035 | .745 | .875 | .647 |

| Model | RMR | GFI | AGFI | PGFI |
|--------------------|------|-------|------|------|
| Saturated model | .000 | 1.000 | | |
| Independence model | .450 | .334 | .186 | .273 |

| Model | NFI Delta1 | RFI rho1 | IFI Delta2 | TLI rho2 | CFI |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------|
| Default model | .854 | .829 | .867 | .842 | .864 |
| Saturated model | 1.000 | | 1.000 | | 1.000 |
| Independence model | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

TABLE 5: PATH ANALYSIS

| | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
|----------|------|-----------------|----------|------|--------|------|
| Adoption | <--- | Trustworthiness | .343 | .040 | 8.670 | *** |
| Adoption | <--- | Expertise | .292 | .051 | 5.781 | *** |
| Adoption | <--- | Attractiveness | .340 | .152 | 2.235 | .025 |
| Purchase | <--- | Adoption | .545 | .048 | 11.315 | *** |

V. CONCLUSION

This research was conducted around the globe; the number of respondents was 390 which was collected through questionnaire on Google Docs from the females and is directed towards the social media marketing through the YouTube videos for the beauty content. The impact of Source credibility of the beauty content available at YouTube on consumer purchase intention was examined with the mediating role of Information Adoption from beauty vlogs. In order to investigate this, Trustworthiness, Expertise and Attractiveness were taken as independent variables and Purchase Intention towards beauty products was our dependent variable, Information Adoption from beauty vlogs was added as a mediator. The beneficial purpose was to make aware the social media and digital marketing industry for the beauty products about its consumer purchase intention and to address the problem of consumers purchase decision making. The key findings or decisions obtained by the study are: Trustworthiness, Expertise and the Attractiveness have significantly positive impact on Information Adoption from beauty vlogs. Contrary, Information Adoption from beauty vlogs has significantly positive impact on Consumer’s purchase intention towards beauty products. Also, the Trustworthiness, Expertise and the Attractiveness have significantly positive indirect through impact Information Adoption from beauty vlogs towards Consumer’s purchase intention towards beauty products. Finally, Information Adoption from beauty vlogs have a positive mediation role to carry the effects of Trustworthiness, Expertise and the Attractiveness to Consumer’s purchase intention towards beauty products.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study are very much beneficial from business and managerial perspective. Social media and digital marketer or the producers of beauty products can gain benefit from the data in order to understand the mind set of consumers regarding their purchase intention towards beauty products. They can analyze which path way they should adopt to attract the customers towards them. The study indicated which factors impact consumer purchase choice most with the help of these results a beauty product manufacturer now know how they can satisfy their consumers demand and attract its target customers through YouTube videos. Fast beauty producers should work more towards their online marketing and should be more responsive on their YouTube videos in order to cater consumer demand and attract consumers. As seen in the study source credibility plays vital role in building consumer choice so beauty product producers can understand consumer mind through the data of this research and can utilize it for their marketing strategies. The beauty product producers can have a competitive edge over others through keeping the results as guidelines to build their strategies and planning to retain their consumers by coming up with new beauty content on YouTube by focusing the trustworthiness, Expertise and Attractiveness in new beauty content videos in order to stay engaged with the consumers. As consumers demand is shifting with time that is why beauty content videos should also shift by their preferences and contents towards maintaining and improving their social media marketing section.

Beauty product produces and managers should focus more on their online video promotions on YouTube in order to have more consumer attention which will lead to more profits. They can introduce special promotional offers, discounts offers and deals.

Consumers can also attain benefits through this by knowing what factors influence them the most and what sections they focus more. These results will make their decision making easy as they will have answers to their demands. The complexity of decision making will also get decrease

Beauty product producers now know consumer take into account trustworthiness which indicates that YouTubers who provide information about makeup/cosmetic product on YouTube are reliable. They should work on Expertise in videos which make the mind of customers that the information about the product in the videos is true; the users are the experts and having good knowledge of that product. Also the Attractiveness of vloggers is very important for the customers to adopt a product referred in a beauty video.

Demographics of the research can assist beauty product produces and managers to target the right customers as through these data. They can utilize their resources to the right target customers and make their policies accordingly to cater the sections mentioned in the demographic results.

This study is developed from unpublished MBA Thesis of Ayesha Ahmed

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