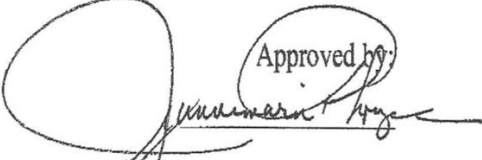
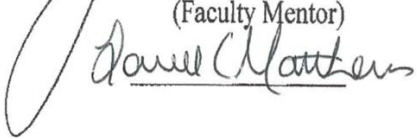


How social media uses the psychology of persuasion to influence the purchase of beauty
products to the young generations

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A thesis submitted to the University Honors Program at Southern New Hampshire University to
complete HON 401, and as part of the requirements for graduation from the University Honors
Program

Manchester, New Hampshire
May 2019

Approved by:

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May, 2019

*Your year and month of graduation

Abstract

As someone who currently works in the beauty industry and follows the industry intensely. I noticed how much impact persuasive methods have on the young generation of consumers through social media and digital marketing. This was illustrated through the various sources on social media such as influencers, bloggers, celebrities, social media outlets and much more. This thesis sought to determine if these persuasive techniques that brands use to market their products to younger generations are increasing the amount of purchases these consumers make or influence their decisions to purchase beauty products. A survey was conducted through Qualtrics and distributed to the target market, comprised of the Millennial Generation and Generation Z between the ages of 18-40 years old to determine how much of an impact these persuasive methods conducted by the beauty industry has on them overall; as well as to gather demographic information. Results showed that although these methods have a strong impact on the purchasing decisions of young consumers on beauty products many still rely on word of mouth recommendations from trusted friends and family members.

Keywords: Social Media, Persuasion, Beauty Industry, Influencers, Marketing

Introduction

For years, cosmetics have been purchased and used for individuals to enhance their physical appearance and alter or cover imperfections. In society, today, the image of perfection is something we strive for; with increasing amounts of digital marketing channels pushing products using influencers, celebrities, social platform ads and much more. The beauty industry has benefited from the increasing popularity of social media channels such as YouTube and Instagram by closing the gap between cosmetics brands and consumers and creating the demand for products. The beauty industry contains skin care, hair care, make-up, perfumes, toiletries and deodorants, and oral cosmetics which spans across numerous products. With the beauty industry market being valued at around \$532 billion and is expected to be valued at 806 billion by 2023, it shows how much influence over consumers the industry really has and how popular it has become (Global, 2018). Over the last few years, this large shift in the industry was due to the increased use of digital marketing, social media, and the psychology of persuasion. Persuasion can be defined as the action or fact of persuading someone or of being persuaded to do or believe something. Therefore, the psychology of persuasion looks into the factors that go into being persuaded or in this case purchase products. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest play large roles in using persuasion techniques, and many various outlets to reach consumers in so many more ways than before.

Psychology of Persuasion

The purpose of social media, since its creation, is to allow individuals to connect with family and friends as well as network with others. Social media is used to share information and to interact with others easily and efficiently. Through social media, we are able to share our product favorites with friends and family, which in turn has a significant persuasion toll on their

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purchasing decisions. Eighty percent of consumers are likely to purchase an item based on friend's suggestions (Barker, 2017). How a business presents itself on social media is a large indication of how its consumers will be persuaded to purchase their products as well. With social media being such a significant part of marketing today, companies need both the attention from online influencers and potential customers, while also having a strong social media presence. Without having both of these credible sources, it will be difficult to convince consumers of how reliable they are to purchase from. Being consistent and interactive on their social media platforms, and showcasing their products in use, will provide value to its customers, and in turn will convert interested customers into purchasers. With that strong perception shown on social media, businesses will be able to attract the attention of more followers, which is an important component in driving sales (Barker, 2017). When a potential customer is able to see that the brand has a large number of followers, it shows them that others are aware of the brand, the business cares about their customers, and other purchasers are satisfied with their products. Having a strong interactive relationship with their consumers, plus lots of followers equals higher chance of purchases for the brand (Barker, 2017).

Social Media

Social media gives its users a constant intake of information and allows users to gather the opinions from everyone in their social networks. This could be from friends, online influencers, or from reviews from people who have used specific products. It allows individuals to communicate directly with anyone around the world who they may have never had the ability to correspond with. Through social media networks, influencers have the ability to form solid bonds with their follower community, and to interact and respond directly to them. Forbes states: "For brands and retailers trust is more important than ever. Consumers demand authenticity and

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expect influencer content to be genuine and realistic” (Kinski, 2017). Instagram and YouTube are popular platforms for beauty content, but YouTube has become a very relevant resource for consumers to obtain beauty related information. “As of 2014, there were 14.9 billion beauty-related videos on YouTube and monthly 700 million beauty videos were being watched on the website” (Kinski, 2017). Only 3% of the content on YouTube that is beauty related is controlled by brands themselves, this means that 97% of the content is user generated made by beauty vloggers (Kinski, 2017). This is proof that the beauty industry and social platforms control a large part of influencing consumer purchases.

Beauty Industry and Social Media

The beauty industry continues to expand and become more diverse to include every gender, race, and age group; with this its marketing strategies must continue to evolve as well. The consumers in today's society do not want to be bombarded by more traditional advertisements that give unrealistic expectations. Consumers want to see real results of products being advertised, and what accurate results they can expect for themselves (Kinski, 2017). Business have merged with the consumer community, as they have become more responsive to altering their products to fit the needs of those consumers. With the growing influencer community on social networks it has given those specific individuals an immense social capital based the number of followers they have. Influencers are essentially spokespeople for brands, real people who consumers can get opinions from; consumers trust their judgment and view them as reliable sources. The social media landscape in the beauty industry consisting of partnerships and or collaborations as these influencers call them with brands reveals the unification of consumer and businesses. But is this unification valid, and how does it work? Both ends of the partnerships continue to merge, consumers will remain doubtful of companies if they do not have

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trusted influencers backing up their products; given that money is what ultimately what drives all marketing endeavors. Consumers negotiate this skepticism by engaging themselves in brand culture, particularly through social media and through people they have instilled their trust in, like influencers. Consumers are trusting the brands more because of the good information they hear from valid influencer sources. This makes consumers trust brands and how they are persuaded to purchase products, if someone they trust likes the product, they feel comfortable making a purchase (Zhang, 2018). Although consumers may be skeptical at times, they still choose to participate in brand culture, through following the accounts of their favorite brands, or interacting with brands' social media posts, etc. (Dehghani, 2016).

Persuasive Marketing Methods

A common marketing method that social networks use is social persuasion which can be defined as the “methods and procedures by which a social entity's attitude, belief, or behavior is affected by other entities in a social network. These methods are what gives companies the opportunity to predict essential social entities, namely top persuaders, whose adoption of a product, service, or opinion will result in the largest numbers of other entities in a social network to adopt the same product, service, or opinion” (Fang,2018). More traditional methods of advertising offline have become outdated and in need of changes based on how the business world and society are always changing. There are many ways that companies are using persuasive methods on social media to market their products to the young, technologically advanced generations. Companies are straying away from traditional advertising methods and turning to social media to market to a larger audience. Years ago, when only a small amount of exposure to the advertisement were enough for an interested consumer to want to make a purchase, today the number is substantially more. Research shows that “it takes at least sixteen

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exposures to an ad, and thorough research for a potential consumer to purchase a product.” Being able to spend a substantial amount less on a traditional advertisement and instead post on social media in various ways gives more opportunity for companies to persuade a consumer to purchase a product (Baramidze, 2018).

Influencers/Bloggers

So, what exactly is Influencer marketing? The term refers to targeting specific individuals who are prominent in the target group through popular influential people, instead of brands addressing the market directly. Marketing in this way gives companies an advantage to receive an expanded reach to the target audience that would be responsive to their products, through the people who are passionate about the brand and products. The customers, being reached in this way, are more receptive to the brand, because of their trust in the influencer. Influencers in a way are a smaller scaled form of celebrities and are individuals who their followers look to for opinions. Influencer marketing is also digital word-of-mouth marketing that focuses on the most present individuals on social media channels to instill a brand's message to a larger market. It is the process of identifying the target market, researching their needs, and engaging with the influential people who have the ability to have significant conversations with customers about a brand and its products. Influencer marketing involves posting marketed content, through the use of social media. The influencers spread word through various social media platforms and create content about themselves with the product with the help of the brand (Choubisa, 2019). Social media and content marketing are not directly interchangeable with influencer marketing, but they are very closely related. “According to Twitter and Annalect (The digital analytics and data-driven network of Omnicom Media Group) 40% of survey respondents had purchased a product, because they saw it from an influencer” (Baramidze, 2018).

Celebrity endorsement on online platforms is a popular advertising campaign strategy as its effectiveness has also been proven. Celebrities generate a transfer process in which they influence consumers' positive feelings regarding products or brands based on consumers' assumption that they have authentic positive attitudes toward a product or brand; then, consumers' positive feelings lead to their purchase. Compared with traditional celebrities (e.g., entertainers, movie stars, politicians, or sports figures), digital celebrities including bloggers, vloggers, and insta-celebrities, have emerged with the growing popularity of online social networks. Digital celebrities are closer and more accessible to social networking users in online communities. Influential digital celebrities, such as bloggers, represent virtual communities and play a role as powerful opinion leaders, helping firms monitor new consumer trends, which, in turn, enable the latter to support their customers' new needs (Hwang, 2018). Given that firms are aware of the effective use of celebrities in SNS advertisements, such as Twitter, many employ them for brand promotion by using celebrity-endorsed Twitter messages (Zhang, 2018).

Beauty/Celebrity Influencers

The term "social influencers" or in this case beauty influencers, as mentioned above has been adopted to define those individuals who have a significant following on social media. Influencers are essentially every day social media users who have established form of trust by posting their opinions of products on social platforms and have in turned gained a large following (Kinski, 2017). Many of these followers see the influencers' posts daily and are often targeted by businesses to promote products. Despite whether the influencers' posts are sponsored by brands or not, their content has a large effect on purchasing decisions; this is because the audience understands and trusts their opinion of the product because of their trustworthiness. If an influencer shares a post on social media about a product that works well for them, their

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audience will be more interested in learning about the products to achieve the same results.

Influencers are often on social media as a career and devote much of their time to making sure their content helps their audience. They properly include the brand of the products they use in their posts and make the posts “shoppable” by tagging the brand, which makes it easier for followers to purchase the products and become familiar with the brand (Barker, 2017).

Another form of collaboration that is common in the beauty world is the press package, or as influencers call it, a “PR package.” Beauty brands hire public relations agencies to create and send PR packages, to influencers so that they can use and review the products themselves before sharing to their online communities. This helps to drive awareness and sales. PR packages are essential to a large social media outreach. The packages are free and contain beauty products for the influencers to use and test so that consumers are not the guinea pigs for the products which could result in a bad image for the brand if they do not work correctly. In return for the free products, influencers are required to post a review of the product on their social media platforms to spread word to their viewers (Rich, 2018). Brand who are able to target the right influencer who will enjoy the product and share it with their followers will attract more consumers to the product, thus a successful PR package. The number of followers a beauty influencer has corresponds to how many PR packages they will review on a monthly basis. Having millions of followers will result in more free products because brands want to reach as many potential consumers as they can. Beauty brands are continuously dispensing new products, which are all sent to influencers, usually personalized. The package grabs the influencers attention, which makes them more likely to test the product. However, because of how abundant these free packages are these days, there isn't possibly enough time for the Influencer to review

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every product which means that when they do post about it their viewers know that it's something they love and something that they too should buy.

Another, more traditional, form of an endorser for products are celebrities. Since the millennial generation is bombarded constantly with celebrities' images, and influenced by them heavily, determining which celebrity millennials can identify closely with is essential to the success of a product. (Hwang, 2018). Celebrities are very socially prominent, meaning if a product is endorsed by them the product, in turn, will be more socially prominent itself. Millennials are very socially conscious, so purchasing these endorsed products helps them to feel more accepted through the use of that product. The millennial generation has been manipulated to believe they live in a materialistic society where using specific products increases their popularity more than previous generations have felt. Their material possessions are seen as an expression of how important a person is. When they use products that they feel are important because of a celebrity endorsement, it aids in their development of self-identity. Millennial consumers are so concerned about what others think of them that they are more involved with their purchases than previous generations because of the social consequences associated with making the wrong purchase. These consumers feel the need to be socially accepted, and it is an enormous reflection on their brand consumption and purchasing patterns (Hwang, 2018). Millennials actively search for products that reflect their perception of themselves, therefore, they are more likely to be persuaded to buy if the endorser that is shown advertising a product matches their self-image. "Research found that in order for celebrity endorsers to effectively reach the audience, they must connect with their audience. Brands that employ a celebrity endorser who has the ability to connect with the millennial audience can influence the consumption needs of this generation" (Hwang, 2018).

Social Media Ads/Sponsorships

Social media posts, ads, and influencer recommendations makeup 18.5% of the influence that persuades Generation Z consumers to purchase items while shopping or gets them into the store to look for the product. (Emarketer,2019). This could mean that they purchase directly online after or go to a store to see the product after seeing it on social media and end up purchasing it there; browsing a store makes up 45.8% of what influences Generation Z consumers to make a purchase while shopping. The two inter-connect to subliminally make the consumer feel persuaded to by the product. Sponsorships are another way a company can use social media to promote products or persuade their consumers to purchase. Usually, influencers are active on social media channels such as YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and more. The influencers leverage their followings in order to receive sponsorships from brands. "An influencer with three to seven million followers can earn on average \$75,000 per Instagram post"(Baramidze, 2017). Major influencers can receive a substantial amount of compensation from brands by sharing sponsored posts and videos. Influencers with a smaller following can also accumulate a large income as well by essentially putting all of their effort into turning their skills into a career (Baramidze, 2018).

YouTube and the Beauty Industry

Since its beginning, YouTube has established itself as prominent social media platform. YouTube today spans across multiple outlets of media such as television, film, music, and more. The area of YouTube that specifically correlates with this research and has generated extreme popularity is the "vlog," which is a blog in the form of a video. Vlogs have opened a new world of video content on YouTube and Beauty YouTubers specifically, vloggers who make videos about makeup and other beauty products, are immensely popular and one of YouTube's

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predominant niche categories. Forbes ranked the top beauty influencers of 2017, all of whom began on YouTube. "Combined, these 10 YouTubers have 50,000 subscribers and a total reach on all social media of 135,000,000 people" (Forbes, 2017). There was not always a prevalent beauty YouTube community. The famous YouTubers today started out on the platform part-time just sharing a hobby. Some were professional makeup artists, and others just merely enjoyed the beauty world, and wanted to turn it into an easily shareable medium. YouTube as a social media platform was very unique for its time when it first began. The platform encouraged users to create their own content, promoting creativity and a new form of social media. YouTube was initially focused on video creation and sharing, shaping a different media than had ever been done before. Video as a social medium correlate well to the beauty industry; beauty products are very visual in terms of color, pigments, and textures, making YouTube a perfect platform to display them on. Beyond showing viewers what these products look like, beauty YouTubers can also create how-to tutorials that instruct the viewer how to apply the products in order to achieve a desired look. Being able to show the products visually rather than just typing a product description as they would on any other social media platform persuades the consumer through a learning technique that the product would work for them. Unlike traditional media, YouTube allows every user to be equal, they do not have to be professionals to create their own content. This allows anyone to have the ability to use the platform to share their love for the beauty industry and their product opinions. Videos do not need to look professional, however, those who use YouTube as a career today have increased their video quality. Followers of these content creators and consumers looking for product recommendations enjoy these videos because they show content that is relatable and personal. This makes YouTube such an important part of the beauty industry and persuasion because of the relatability. If consumers feel as if they

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can relate to and trust whom they are watching and who is giving them advice to purchase a beauty product they will feel more inclined to purchase it rather than listening to a large corporations' ad to buy a product. YouTube as a platform allows for individuals to participate in brand culture, rather than just a way to distribute a product to consumers. (Baramidze, 2018).

Persuading through YouTube

With YouTube being such an influential platform through resources such as the influencers that create content on it, brands are capitalizing on this opportunity to reach an expansive number of consumers that YouTubers have following them. Brands are able to advertise their products through promotions, sponsorships, and collaborations as mentioned before. For example, popular online makeup brands, partner with an abundance of famous beauty YouTubers. The brands give the YouTuber's their own custom discount code which their subscribers and fans can use when making a purchase on the brand's website. A percentage of sales made with the code are given to the YouTuber, as payment for advertising the brand. YouTube and social media generally are the perfect platforms for this type of collaboration because they reach a wide yet tailored audience. Consumers or "Subscribers" of these YouTuber's are likely to engage with the brands that YouTubers partner with because subscribers are already invested in the YouTubers they follow; thus, trusting their opinions on the brand itself as well. The social media world is larger than ever before, users have the ability to specifically select the media that they consume, based on their interests and passions. Therefore, someone who subscribes to a beauty YouTuber has consciously chosen to participate in that YouTuber's market and consume their honest opinions and recommendations. The relationship between a YouTuber their followers is truly unique, and unlike anything the average corporate relationship has ever seen before. It is innovative and YouTubers often refer to their

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subscribers as people who they feel personally connected to in a way they would be with family or friends. Loyal subscribers will have followed the YouTuber on their YouTube journey since the beginning, learning intimate details about their life experiences. But contrary to feeling this deep connection, most subscribers have never met their favorite YouTuber, so the relationship feels close, without having ever had an in-person connection. This illuminates the power of YouTube as a social media platform, with the ability to form relationships digitally and use the power of persuasion between people who might live thousands of miles away from each other. (Dehghani, 2016).

Target Market

The main target market for this research is a combination of two age groups, Generation Y and Generation Z primarily in the United States. These two age groups were targeted because they make up the largest portion of consumers whose buying habits are heavily influenced by social media. Generation Y or millennials have had frequent exposure to technology. Social media has existed since the birth of Millennials in 1981, but it became more widely adopted at the turn of the twenty-first century in the year 2003. This has had a large influence on their social outcomes, for example their heavy reliance on social media for entertainment, interaction with others and even their emotional regulation. Generation Y has benefited greatly from the increased availability of customized products, and accessible information on social media of what to purchase (Naumovska, 2017). Generation Z is a very active generation in terms of high intensity usage of social media platforms. This generation has a technical know-how behavior and lays emphasis on the less restricted and easily available access to communicative technology. On the contrary to Generation Y, Generation Z was born into a society where social media was already very prevalent. This generation is very comfortable with technology and all it

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entails and interacting on social media is a significant portion of their socializing behaviors (Williams, 2011).

Generation Y(Millennials)

Generation Y individuals were born into a technological, electronic, and highly advanced society where social media was becoming very prevalent. They are accustomed to a socially diverse world with many substantial opportunities. The age category for the Generation Y or millennial generation include young adults of age 23 up to adults at age 40. This generation is self-absorbed and self-reliant with a strong sense of independence. They want results from the products that they purchase and are not as concerned with the why of it. They are image-driven and make personal statements with their self-image. This generation has a vast need for social acceptance, in terms of connecting with people around them, fitting in with social standards, and social networking. In terms of being successful, the millennial generation individuals are open-minded, optimistic, and very goal oriented. They are highly motivated toward achieving the very best version of themselves. In order to be successful in marketing to the millennial generation, brands need to give them a very considerable amount of marketing attention. The younger group of this generation is very selfish, they will spend considerable amounts of money on looking the best and buying products to help them achieve this no matter the cost. In order for marketing attempts to be successful to this generation, marketers need to attract this group early on and earn its loyalty by appealing to their likes and dislikes and need for social acceptance. In terms of communication, companies must continually be more creative with media and promotional themes to capture this audience. It is very unlikely that this generation will respond traditional marketing ads, they are more likely to respond to influencers and new online marketing techniques. A combination of both this online channeling through influencers, offline ads, and

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word-of-mouth recommendations are the best choice for brands to reach the millennial generation. Word-of-mouth advertising is very important to reach Gen Y, such as referrals from friends and family, and trusted people that influence them online (Barska, 2015).

Generation Z

Generation Z is accustomed to high-tech and several information sources, with messages bombarding them from all sides. They have never lived without the Internet. Generation Z value's authenticity and realness, which means that peer acceptance is important to Generation Z, they need to belong. Generation Z consumers are between the ages of 14-23. (Mintel,2017). They are a global and diverse generation who comes from a wider mix of backgrounds with different experiences and ideas. They quite possibly are the most imaginative generation, and they think more laterally (Williams, 2011). This generation is frequently labeled as technically innate, and very conscious of previous generations. They feel the need to be involved with and informed by other people and this is the main rationale behind their excessive use of social media. They tend to prefer online communication more than previous generations do and enjoy giving feedback to brands, on services or issues they have. Similar to sharing their feedback, they also, value opinions given by others as well, which is why influencers are very popular in this generation. Marketers are increasingly targeting this segment. Generation Z youth is exposed to media more than to any other activity besides sleeping, with a 67 minute per day increase in the amount of time spent by people consuming and interacting with media in previous years. When accounting for multitasking, this number is now approaching 8 hours of total electronic multimedia exposure daily (Williams, 2011).

Social Media Habits of Target Market

The top four most popular social media apps used by the target market are Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat. Millennials or Generation Y consumers use YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat most whereas Generation Z individuals use Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram the most. The target market spends up to six and a half hours per day viewing social media content on the internet which makes up a quarter of their day. For millennials, it can be estimated one of those hours is spent on Instagram, and one hour on snapchat (R, 2018). For Generation Z approximately two of those hours is spent on Facebook and approximately one hour on Instagram. This means that the remaining time these individuals are watching video content on YouTube. With these various outlets now available to use and browse social media on, the target market spreads out their time on these platforms through many devices. These include their smartphones, televisions, laptops, and tablets or other streaming devices. Between them, all millennials spend 2.9 hours a day on YouTube using their smartphones and Generation Z spends 2 hours. Millennials spend 1.8 hours a day versus Generation Z at 1.7 hours a day on their televisions watching YouTube, on their laptops 1,7 hours versus 1.3 and on their Tablets or other streaming devices .6 versus .5 hours watching YouTube. That means all their hours of social media usage a day spans across many outlets. (Intel, 2017)

Purchasing Decisions

The Millennial generation not only represents the consumer market of the future, but millennials are also changing the way in which companies market products online and in-store in order to be successful. The purchasing decisions of U.S. Millennials are influenced by more sources and different types of people than ever before in older generations. Millennials reported that they are most influenced by family, friends, and influential people online. A survey showed

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that millennials were also twice as likely than older generations to be influenced by celebrities or influencers online to purchase products. Online retailing is also a major force for this generation, but their shopping often combines digital and in-store (Millennials, 2015). The online buying habits of Generation Z are influenced by a few factors. Family influence plays a huge role in their purchasing decisions since this age group is younger, it is typical for this generation to still live with parents and also, in many ways, social media has an even greater influence on young people, along with the internet generally, and other opinionated figures online such as influencers and celebrities. This generation looks up to these influencers as role models, and whose every move they may follow. These key actors can significantly affect the buying behavior of young people who obtain information about where and what these influencers buy (Hidvégi,2016).

Methodology

Hypothesis

This thesis seeks to understand the possible use of persuasion through outlets such as social media to influence the purchase of beauty products of the younger generations; and the mechanism companies use which act most strongly on the young consumers' perception. My hypothesis is that social media does influence consumers to purchase beauty products through various outlets on social media platforms using persuasive methods.

Survey Research

A study containing 32 questions was created using the Qualtrics database and distributed out to individuals who make up the target market to identify if in fact, the various ways social media uses persuasive methods to influence the purchase of beauty products has had any effect on the audience surveyed. The data collected seeks to clarify whether or not the hypothesis stated

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is true. The individuals surveyed were between the ages of 18-40, those who make up both the Millennial generation as well as Generation Z.

Demographics

In terms of the demographics of the survey the results were as follows; 93.3% of the individuals identified as female and the other 6.7% of them identified as male. The most popular age of the respondents was between 18-23 years old at 84.3%, following 30-36-year old at 9%, 24-29-year old's at 3.4% and 37-42 year old's at 2.3%. There were a few outliers in the data that did not fit into the target age group that will not be included in the analysis of the data. The large majority of the respondents were of Caucasian ethnicity at 92.1%, following Hispanic/Latino ethnicity at 5.6%, and Asian or Asian American ethnicity at 2.3%. Most of the data showed that those who completed the survey were attending college whether it be already graduated or currently still enrolled, and this made up 77.5% of the data. There was a small number of individuals who completed high school and did not continue to college and this made up 12.4% of the data as well as some who are attending or have completed graduate school at 9%. Due to the younger target market, most of their employment statuses are employed part-time making up 56.2% of the surveyors, a smaller percent of them at 29.2% are working full-time, and the rest were either unemployed and currently seeking work or unemployed and not seeking work. The income statistics from the survey showed that most of the respondent's overall household income ranged between \$50-100,000 at a large 40.9%. The rest fell within the \$30-49,999 mark at 17.1%, under \$15,000 mark at 14.8%, over \$150,000 at 10.2%, between \$15-29,999 at 9.1% and lastly the smallest percentage was between \$75-99,000 at 8%. In terms of the areas those who were surveyed lived in, 40.5% lived in rural areas, 39.3% lived in suburban areas, and 20.2% live in urban cities.

Social Media Statistics

The results of the survey showed that most of the respondents have internet access at home, only a small group of 2.25% of the respondents do not. In terms of how often they use the internet a large 71.91% of them are almost always online. Most also responded saying that they are extremely likely to use social networking sites on a daily basis at 83.15%, and 93.26% of respondents are also on these sites' multiple times a day. In the last 6 months results showed that most of the respondents have used the following platforms; Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube. This shows that the majority of this target market is very active on social media.

Product Knowledge and Usage Data

Among the respondents, 83.14% of them are at least moderately familiar or extremely familiar with beauty products and a small amount of 16.86% of them responded to being either only slightly familiar or not familiar at all. This shows that the use of beauty products in this target market is predominant. The data also shows that they are either intermediate in terms of their proficiency in using beauty products or advanced at 87.5%. In terms of using these products every day, 88.77% of respondents use beauty products either every day or every other day as a part of their daily routine; and a large majority of 80.27% of them have been using their products for well over 4 or 5 years. In the past 6 months 87.84% of the respondents have purchased beauty products and only a small percentage has not. The respondents were asked if they keep up with popular beauty influencers online and 46.59% of them do, 18.18% of them only do every once in a while, and 35.23% of them do not follow influencers regularly. These statistics show that the majority of individuals surveyed are very well versed in beauty product knowledge and make purchases of them very often. In terms of them keeping up with beauty

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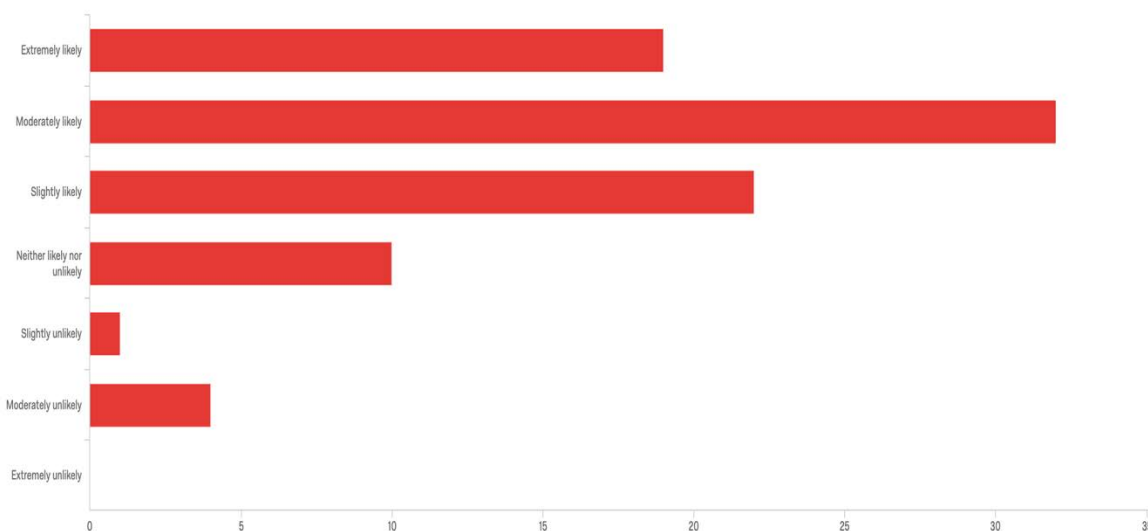
influencers a majority of the respondents do, but there is a large percentage that do not; this shows that in this particular area where data was collected not as many people are interested in beauty influencers online.

Persuasion and Buying Habit Data

When it comes to purchasing new products or looking for new product recommendations, 51.13% of the respondents turn to social media or online beauty influencers to find new suggestions. The other 48.86% either visit a store or ask a friend or family member for recommendations on new products to try. This shows that although social media and influencers are very prominent sources in today's society, some people still prefer to shop on their own for new products or ask for the opinion of a trusted friend or family member. To go off of that point a majority of respondents answered saying that word-of-mouth is what influences their purchasing decisions the most at 55.68%. Social media/online reviews influence 40.91% of their purchases and very few of them are influenced by commercials or ads at 3.41%. In terms of being persuaded to purchase beauty products based on social media, around 70.79% of respondents answered that they are influenced to purchase through social media. When the individuals who were surveyed were asked where they purchase their beauty products there was not a majority response for one specific store. Most answers pointed to ULTA Beauty, Sephora, Drugstores, or mass retailers such as Walmart and target as well as online on amazon or the previous stores mentioned websites. Not many of them purchase the products directly on the brands official website. This correlates with the fact that influencers that many of them follow usually have discount codes for their followers to use at these larger stores rather than on a brands direct website.



The above chart shows how persuaded the respondents are to purchase a beauty product based on an ad, most of them were neither likely or unlikely to purchase a product based on an ad showing that most of them rely more on an influencer’s recommendation or a recommendation from a friend or family. The below chart supports the fact that they trust the recommendation of an influencer more where it shows that the majority of respondents are likely to purchase a beauty product based on their recommendations.



Conclusion

Based on all of the results from the survey, it is prevalent that many people stay connected online through social media and are moderately persuaded by digital marketing persuasive methods such as influencers but also digital marketing persuasive methods such as influencers and bloggers; and use social media such as YouTube and Instagram to stay connected on new product recommendations to purchase. With the beauty industry continuously growing and digital marketing becoming such a large part of our society today these results show that the industry has a large impact on consumers and are a very persuasive industry.

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