

Exploring the Influence of Perceived Usefulness and Ease of Use of Social Media Influencers on Skincare Product Purchases: A Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Perspective

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to determine how perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (EOU) of social media influencer (SMI) material affect consumers' purchase intentions for skincare products. Using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the study looks at how consumers react cognitively and behaviorally to influencer-generated material, specifically in terms of practical utility and ease of use. Two hypotheses were proposed: first, that perceived usefulness considerably influences purchase intentions, and second, that perceived simplicity of use has a major impact on buy intentions. A quantitative study design was used, with a structured questionnaire as the major data collection tool. The study used purposive sampling to recruit 500 respondents from urban and semi-urban areas of Haryana, India. The respondents were engaged social media users who frequently saw skincare content promoted by influencers. The survey instrument included 20 items measuring PU and EOU, which were adapted from prior TAM-based studies to fit the context of skincare influencer marketing. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to validate the constructs, and reliability was validated by Cronbach's alpha coefficients greater than 0.7. A multiple linear regression analysis was then used to investigate the association between PU, EOU, and purchase intention. The regression model had a statistically significant R^2 value of 0.48, indicating that PU and EOU explained 48% of the variance in purchase intention. PU showed a larger standardized beta value ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$) than EOU ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < 0.001$), indicating more predictive potential in affecting consumer behavior. The findings indicate that when influencer material is seen as useful, relevant, and easy to engage with, customers are more likely to purchase skincare goods. These findings highlight the importance of TAM in the context of digital marketing and provide practical insights for influencers and brand managers looking to improve their content strategy.

Keywords: Social Media Influencers, Technology Acceptance Model, Skincare Products, Perceived Usefulness, Ease of Use, Consumer Behavior

Introduction

In today's digital landscape, social media influencers (SMIs) have emerged as key opinion leaders who drive consumer preferences and behaviors. This tendency is especially noticeable in the beauty and skincare industries, where influencers typically serve as trusted advisers, sharing personal experiences and product recommendations with a sizable and sometimes highly engaged following. These

influencers use platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook to provide material such as tutorials, reviews, testimonials, and daily routines that not only educate but also persuade potential customers.

SMIs are viewed as more relatable and trustworthy than traditional celebrities or commercials, particularly among Generation Z and millennials (Djafarova & Rushworth, 2017). While SMIs' popularity and visibility are well-documented, more empirical research is needed to understand the underlying psychological factors that drive consumer response to influencer material.

This study fills that gap by utilizing the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), a theoretical model devised by Davis (1989) that suggests that Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (EOU) are the key predictors of an individual's intention to embrace a new technology or system. In this study, TAM is repurposed to examine how consumers perceive influencer material in terms of practical benefit (PU) and ease of comprehension or interaction (EOU), as well as how these perceptions influence their purchase intentions for skincare.

TAM has been widely used in information systems, but its use in digital marketing and influencer studies is relatively new. However, studies such as Venkatesh and Bala (2008) and Cheung et al. (2020) show that it is becoming increasingly relevant in understanding customer participation in online platforms and social commerce situations. Given that customers frequently regard influencers as informational tools, it is fair to broaden TAM to assess how users accept and act on influencer suggestions.

The research emphasize the significance of SMIs in product endorsement and consumer involvement. Djafarova & Rushworth (2017) and Lim et al. (2017) discovered that the authenticity, integrity, and expertise of SMIs are critical in influencing consumer attitudes and behavior, particularly in the personal care industry.

TAM asserts that user acceptance of a system is governed by two beliefs: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (EOU) (Davis, 1989). While TAM is commonly used in technology, it has also been modified for marketing purposes, such as digital consumer engagement (Venkatesh & Bala, 2008).

Recent TAM adjustments in social commerce (Cheung et al., 2020) demonstrate that the PU and EOU of influencer content (e.g., tutorials, product reviews) predict buy intentions. When information is simple to comprehend and useful, customers are more likely to trust the influencer and act on recommendations.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to analyze the predictive value of PU and EOU in the context of influencer-based skincare marketing. By combining TAM with demographic data and behavioral research, the study gives a formal framework for understanding not only whether influencer material works, but also why and how it effects customer behavior. The findings are particularly useful for marketers, brand managers, and influencers who want to build more engaging and effective content strategies, with the objectives-

1. To assess the impact of perceived usefulness (PU) of SMI content on consumer purchase intention for skincare products.
2. To evaluate the influence of perceived ease of use (EOU) of SMI content on purchase intention.

Research Methodology

This study used a quantitative research methodology to investigate the relationship between perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (EOU) of social media influencers (SMIs), as well as their influence on skincare product purchase intentions. The primary data collection instrument in the study was a structured questionnaire, which adhered to the principles of Davis's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which has been widely used in various consumer behavior and digital marketing contexts (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

Sample and Data Collection- Purposive sampling was used to pick 500 respondents from Haryana, India, in both urban and semi-urban settings. This strategy was used to specifically target people who often use social media platforms and are likely to come across influencer-promoted skincare items. The demographic data gathered includes age, degree of education, and favorite social media platforms. This was necessary to contextualize the impact of SMIs, especially in a digitally sophisticated population (Lim et al., 2017). The data was collected using an online Google Form survey, which provided wider reach and accessibility.

Instruments- The survey instrument was developed to capture TAM's two primary constructs: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use. A total of 20 items (Q21-Q40) were created and assessed using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Items Q21-Q30 measured PU, which reflects how much consumers believe that following SMIs helps them make informed skincare decisions. Items Q31 through Q40 evaluated EOU, demonstrating how easily consumers understood and navigated the content supplied by SMIs. The questionnaire design was inspired by earlier TAM-based influencer studies (Cheung et al., 2020; Venkatesh & Bala, 2008) and tailored to the skincare domain for contextual relevance.

Data Analysis- The measurement model was validated using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). This phase guaranteed that the grouped items correctly represented the latent constructions of PU and EOU. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were used to determine data acceptability for factor analysis. Both constructs had substantial factor loadings and passed reliability criteria (Cronbach's alpha > 0.7). Following that, a multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine the effect of PU and EOU on consumer purchase intentions.

Results and Discussions

A multiple regression analysis was used to assess the impact of perceived utility (PU) and perceived ease of use (EOU) on purchase intention (PI) for skincare products promoted by social media influencers (SMIs). The analysis sought to evaluate the key predictions of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which holds that both PU and EOU are substantial predictors of behavioral intention (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

The regression model was found to be statistically significant with a R value of 0.69 and a R² value of 0.48. This means that the two predictors—PU and EOU—can explain approximately 48% of the variance in customer purchase intention. The ANOVA findings verified the model's significance: $F(2, 497) = 124.56, p < 0.001$.

Table 1: Regression Results for PU and EOU on Purchase Intention

Predictor Variable	Standardized Beta (β)	t-value	Significance (p)
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	0.55	13.46	< 0.001
Perceived Ease of Use (EOU)	0.29	7.01	< 0.001
Model Summary			
R	0.69		
R ²	0.48		
$F(2, 497) = 124.56$	< 0.001		

The standardized beta coefficients showed that PU ($\beta = 0.55, p < 0.001$) predicted purchase intention more accurately than EOU ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.001$). These findings are consistent with earlier research (e.g., Venkatesh & Bala, 2008; Cheung et al., 2020), which emphasizes perceived usefulness as the most important factor determining online behavioral intention. In the context of SMI marketing, this

implies that when influencer material is perceived as helpful, relevant, and value-added, such as thorough product evaluations, lessons, and expert comments, consumers are more likely to acquire favorable buy intentions.

Although perceived ease of use was slightly less influential, it remained significant. The beneficial impact of EOU suggests that customers choose content that is simple to understand, accessible, and user-friendly. This is consistent with Lim et al. (2017), who discovered that content simplicity and clarity increase user trust and emotional connection, especially among younger viewers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube.

These findings have major ramifications for influencer marketing techniques. Content emphasizing the practical benefits of skincare products and presented in an easily consumable way is more likely to turn passive viewers into active consumers. Marketers and influencers should customize their content strategies to maximize both utility and usability.

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