From Hashtags to Checkout: Exploring How Twitter Beauty Influencers Impact Gen Z's Buying Behavior in Nigeria

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Abstract: *This research examines the impact of beauty influencers on Twitter on the patronage of beauty products among Gen Z in Nigeria. The study focuses on the strategies these influencers use to engage Gen Z consumers, their influence on awareness and perception of beauty products, and the relationship between Gen Z's engagement with influencers and their purchasing behavior. The research is grounded in the theories of social influence, planned behavior, and trust. A quantitative survey methodology was adopted, using questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. Major findings indicate that beauty influencers often use engaging hashtags and challenges to interact with Gen Z consumers. Exposure to influencers' content enhances Gen Z's awareness of new beauty products. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the frequency of influencers' Twitter posts and Gen Z's product awareness. A positive perception of influencers' credibility is linked to increased purchase intentions among Gen Z. Higher engagement levels, such as likes, shares, and comments, lead to increased patronage of beauty products among Gen Z consumers in Nigeria. The study concludes that beauty influencers play a pivotal role in influencing Gen Z's product choices on Twitter.*

Keywords: Social media marketing, Consumer behaviour, Beauty Products, Twitter Influencers, Gen Z consumers.

Background to the Study

In recent years, the beauty industry has experienced profound transformations, largely driven by the proliferation of social media platforms such as Twitter (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2022). This change is particularly evident in Nigeria, where Generation Z (Gen Z) individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2000s constitute a vital demographic with distinct characteristics and preferences (Salimi, 2019). Growing up in a digital era, Gen Z has been immersed in a world where social media is deeply embedded in their everyday experiences (Lokithasan *et al.,* 2019). Twitter, known for its extensive reach and influence, has emerged as a prominent platform for beauty influencers to engage with audiences and endorse beauty products (Lou & Yuan, 2018). Thus, exploring the impact of beauty influencers on Twitter on the patronage of beauty products among Gen Z in Nigeria is a critical area of study.

Social media platforms like Twitter have revolutionized the marketing and consumption of beauty products (Liang & Chaipoopirutana, 2022). Beauty influencers on Twitter have become influential voices, particularly among Gen Z, shaping consumer behavior through their content and recommendations (Nandagiri & Philip, 2018). By crafting engaging content that resonates with their followers, these influencers provide reviews and promote beauty products, significantly impacting purchasing decisions (Lim *et al.,* 2017). The authenticity and relatability of influencers are key factors in their influence on Gen Z's patronage of beauty products in Nigeria (Pang *et al.,* 2020).

A crucial aspect of Gen Z's engagement with beauty influencers on Twitter is the trust they place in these influencers' recommendations (Lou & Yuan, 2018). Research indicates that Gen Z consumers are more likely to trust peer recommendations and influencer endorsements than traditional advertising (Mahmoud, 2018). This trust is built through consistent and genuine interactions, creating a sense of community and belonging between influencers and their followers (Marwick & Boyd, 2021). Consequently, beauty brands are increasingly partnering with Twitter influencers to harness this trust and effectively reach Gen Z consumers (Shamsi & Siddiqui, 2017).

Additionally, the interactive nature of Twitter allows for real-time engagement and feedback between beauty influencers and their audience (More, 2019). This direct interaction not only enhances the consumer experience but also provides brands with valuable insights into product preferences and trends among Gen Z consumers (Makhdoomi & Nazir, 2022). Through polls, Q&A sessions, and live tutorials, beauty influencers create a dynamic and immersive environment on Twitter that encourages active participation and exploration of beauty products (Scott, 2018).

Another significant element of Twitter's influence on Gen Z's patronage of beauty products is user-generated content (UGC) (Sharma & Foropon, 2019). Gen Z enjoys creating and sharing their beauty routines, product reviews, and makeup looks on platforms like Twitter (Sharma & Trivedi, 2022). This UGC acts as authentic testimonials, reinforcing the influence of beauty influencers and fostering a culture of product discovery and experimentation among Gen Z in Nigeria (Lokithasan et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Twitter's algorithmic features, such as trending topics and hashtags, increase the visibility of beauty-related content and discussions (Lim et al., 2017). Beauty influencers leverage these features by strategically using trending hashtags and participating in online challenges to broaden their reach and engagement with Gen Z audiences (Nandagiri & Philip, 2018). This digital virality not only promotes specific beauty products but also helps shape broader beauty trends and norms within Gen Z communities on Twitter (Pang et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the presence of beauty influencers on Twitter significantly impacts Gen Z's patronage of beauty products in Nigeria, encompassing aspects of trust, engagement, and UGC. This multifaceted phenomenon highlights the need for brands and marketers to comprehend and capitalize on these dynamics to effectively connect with this influential demographic within the evolving beauty industry landscape shaped by social media.

Statement of the Problem

The rapid growth of social media platforms has transformed the beauty industry, particularly through the rise of beauty influencers on Twitter. However, there is a lack of empirical evidence on how these influencers affect the purchasing behaviors of Generation Z (Gen Z) consumers in Nigeria. As a digitally native demographic, Gen Z is more susceptible to social media trends and recommendations, yet it remains unclear how their engagement with beauty influencers translates into actual patronage of beauty products. Despite the increasing collaborations between beauty brands and influencers, the effectiveness of these partnerships in influencing Gen Z's consumer decisions is not well understood. Moreover, the role of influencer credibility, trust, and authenticity in shaping Gen Z's perception of beauty products requires further exploration. This research seeks to fill the gap by investigating the strategies used by beauty influencers on Twitter to engage with Gen Z, the impact of these strategies on Gen Z's awareness and perception of beauty products, and the correlation between influencer engagement and Gen Z's purchasing behavior. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for beauty brands aiming to effectively market to this influential demographic.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study include:

1. To examine the Twitter presence strategies employed by beauty influencers targeting Gen Z in Nigeria.
2. To assess the impact of beauty influencers' Twitter content on Gen Z's awareness and perception of beauty products.
3. To investigate the correlation between Twitter engagement with beauty influencers and Gen Z's actual purchase behaviour of beauty products.

Review of Concepts

Exploring Generation Z's consumer behavior within the beauty product market reveals unique characteristics and preferences that distinguish this demographic (Lou & Yuan, 2018). Unlike previous generations, Gen Z consumers prioritize authenticity, transparency, and ethical considerations in their interactions with beauty brands and products (Forbes Research, 2017). They seek brands that align with their values, promote inclusivity, and show a genuine commitment to social and environmental causes (Keller & Berry, 2003). Businesses need to understand these preferences to effectively connect with Gen Z consumers and establish lasting brand relationships.

Gen Z's consumption patterns are heavily influenced by digital media and online content, making platforms like Twitter crucial for shaping their beauty product choices (Asemah et al., 2022). As a tech-savvy generation, Gen Z constantly seeks information, reviews, and trends online before making purchase decisions (Asemah & Ekhareafo, 2022). Beauty influencers on Twitter play a vital role in curating content that aligns with Gen Z's interests, aesthetics, and values, thereby influencing their purchasing behaviors and brand loyalties (Hsu et al., 2017). Understanding these digital consumption habits is essential for brands aiming to target and engage with Gen Z effectively.

Gen Z also values personalized experiences and product offerings (Kotler & Keller, 2011). This generation seeks customization, individuality, and self-expression, looking for beauty products that cater to diverse skin tones, gender identities, and cultural backgrounds (Asemah & Omosotomhe, 2022). Twitter offers a platform for brands and influencers to highlight product diversity, inclusivity, and personalization, aligning with Gen Z's values of acceptance and representation (Nwaoboli et al., 2022). Adapting marketing strategies to these preferences can increase brand relevance and appeal among Gen Z consumers.

Furthermore, Gen Z prefers authentic and relatable content over traditional advertising (Asemah, 2011). They are more likely to trust recommendations and reviews from peers, influencers, and user-generated content on platforms like Twitter (Kristen Forbes, 2016). Beauty brands and influencers that focus on transparency, genuine engagement, and user-generated content can foster stronger connections with Gen Z, promoting brand advocacy and loyalty (Marwick & Boyd, 2021). Acknowledging the importance of authenticity and relatability in consumer engagement strategies is vital for brands navigating Gen Z's unique consumption landscape.

The beauty industry is rapidly evolving due to various factors, including technological advancements, cultural shifts, and changing consumer preferences (Sharma & Foropon, 2019). The growing emphasis on sustainability, ethical practices, and clean beauty products is a prominent dynamic within the industry (Hassan & Valenzuela, 2022). Consumers, including Gen Z, are increasingly conscious of environmental impacts, animal cruelty, and ingredient transparency, leading to a higher demand for eco-friendly and socially responsible beauty brands (Khoiriyah & Toro, 2018). Understanding these shifts is critical for businesses to align their offerings with evolving consumer values and market trends.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on social influence theory, theory of planned behaviour, and the theory of trust. Gelati and Verplancke (2022) proposed that social influence significantly affects individuals' thoughts, feelings, and actions. On Twitter, this theory manifests through mechanisms like social proof, conformity, and compliance (Lou & Yuan, 2018). It's essential for understanding how interactions shape consumer perceptions and behaviors within the beauty industry (Keller & Berry, 2003). Ajzen's (1991) proposed the theory of planned behaviour outlines how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control affect consumer intentions and behaviours. In the beauty product market, these factors explain how Gen Z consumers' beliefs, social pressures, and perceived abilities influence their purchasing decisions (Kumar & Mirchandani, 2022; Hsu et al., 2017). Trust Theory, as detailed by Gerrath and Usrey (2020), emphasizes the role of trust in influencer marketing and brand-consumer relationships. Trust-building, trustworthiness, and trust transfer are key aspects that influence consumer behavior, loyalty, and advocacy in the beauty industry among Gen Z consumers in Nigeria (Evans et al., 2017; Hsu et al., 2017).

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative survey research design to investigate the Twitter strategies of beauty influencers targeting Gen Z in Nigeria, assess how these strategies affect Gen Z's perception and awareness of beauty products, and examine the relationship between Twitter engagement and Gen Z's actual purchasing behavior

(Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). With approximately 5.4 million active Gen Z Twitter users in Nigeria, this demographic is vital due to their unique digital preferences (Statista, 2024). Purposive sampling, a non-probability method, was chosen to focus on Gen Z individuals actively following beauty influencers, enhancing the study's relevance (Bernard & Ryan, 2019). A sample size of 400 respondents was selected based on recommendations for survey research, ensuring adequate representation and statistical power (Charan & Biswas, 2019; Sreedharan et al., 2019). This approach allows for robust data analysis and insight into the impact of Twitter on beauty product patronage among Gen Z. The sample size for this study is statically determined using the Taro Yamane (1976) formula.

Where   n   =   sample size

N   =   Total Population

e   =   Margin of error the researcher is ready to allow

Therefore N = the total number of active users are 31,600,000 (www.statista.com).

e = confidence level of 95% (0.05)

n =   5,400,000

$(1+ 5{,}400{,}000 \ (e)^2)$

n =   5,400,000
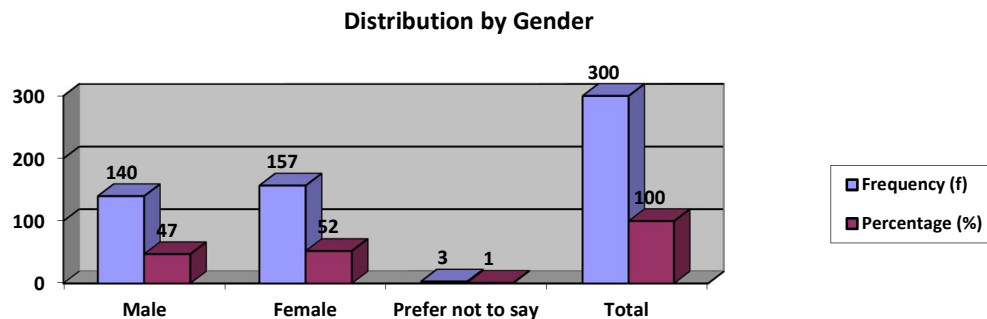
(1+ 5,400,000 (0.0025)

n =   5,400,000

13,501

Therefore n = 385 Approximately 400

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Respondents	%
Male	140	47
Female	157	52
Prefer not to say	3	1
Total	**300**	**100**

Distribution by Gender

The data on gender distribution reveals that out of the total respondents, 157 (52%) are female, 140 (47%) are male, and 3 (1%) prefer not to say, indicating that the majority are female.

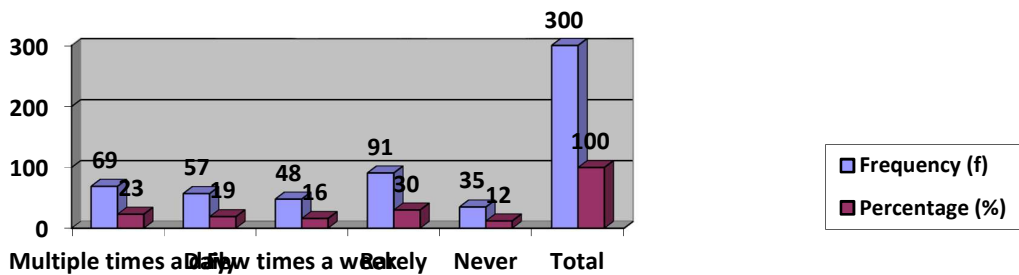**Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level**

Education	Frequency	%
SSCE/GCE	50	17
NCE/OND	31	10
DEGREE/HND	191	64
M.SC & Above	28	9
Total	**300**	**100**
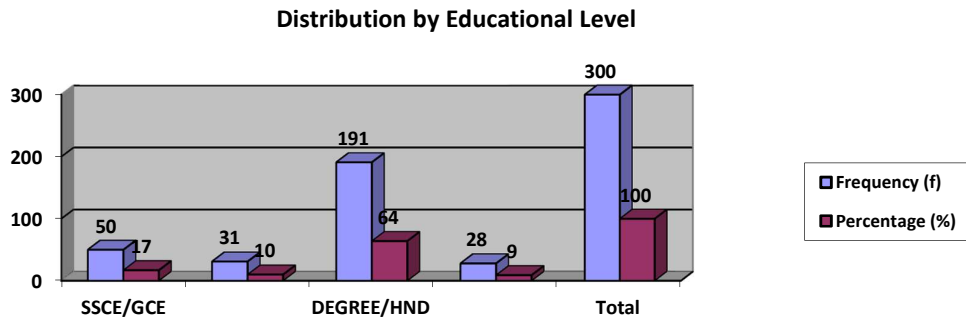
Source; Field Survey, 2024

Table 2 shows the educational levels of respondents, with 50 (17%) holding an SSCE/GCE, 31 (10%) having an NCE/OND, 191 (64%) possessing a Degree/HND, and 28 (9%) with an MSc or higher, indicating that the majority, 191 (64%), hold a Degree/HND.
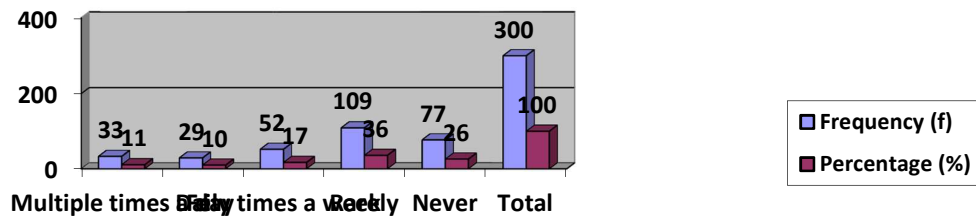

Source; Field Survey, 2024

The bar chart above summarizes the respondents' use of Twitter, with 69 (23%) using it multiple times a day, 57 (19%) using it daily, 48 (16%) a few times a week, 91 (30%) rarely, and 35 (12%) never using it, indicating that the majority, 91 (30%), use Twitter rarely.

Distribution of Respondents by how often they engage with beauty influencers' content on Twitter

Source; Field Survey, 2024

The bar chart above represents respondents' engagement with beauty influencers' content on Twitter. It shows 33 respondents representing (11%) engage multiple times a day, 29 respondents representing (10%) engage daily, 52 respondents representing (17%) engage a few times a week, 109 respondents representing (36%) engage rarely, while 77 respondents representing (26%) never engage. Data collected from the above table imply that the majority of the respondents 109 (36%) rarely engage with beauty influencers' content on Twitter.

Analysis of Research Questions
Table 3: RQ. 1. What are the common strategies used by beauty influencers on Twitter to engage with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria?

Statement	Frequency (%)					
	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
1. Beauty influencers on Twitter often utilize engaging hashtags and challenges to interact with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria	47 (16%)	124 (41%)	93 (31%)	10 (3%)	26 (9%)	300 (100%)
2. Beauty influencers frequently employ interactive polls and Q & A sessions on twitter to connect with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria	36 (12%)	110 (37%)	108 (36%)	21 (7%)	25 (8%)	300 (100%)
3. Collaborating with other influencers and brands is a common strategy used by beauty influencers on Twitter to engage with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria	71 (24%)	136 (45%)	55 (18%)	13 (4%)	25 (8%)	300 (100%)
4. Offering exclusive discounts and promotions through Twitter is an effective strategy employed by beauty influencers to attract Gen Z consumers in Nigeria	24 (8%)	128 (43%)	90 (30%)	24 (8%)	34 (11%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above shows 124 respondents (41%) agree that beauty influencers use engaging hashtags and challenges to interact with Gen Z on Twitter. Information from the table indicates 110 (37%) agree influencers use polls and Q&A sessions. The table also reveals 136 (45%) agree influencers collaborate with others. Furthermore, data from the table show that 128 (43%) agree influencers offer discounts and promotions effectively.

Table 4: RQ 2. How does exposure to beauty influencers' content on Twitter influence Gen Z's awareness and perception of beauty products?

Statement	Frequency (%)					
	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
1. Exposure to beauty influencers' content on Twitter often enhances Gen Z's awareness of new beauty products available in Nigeria.	30 (10%)	121 (40%)	80 (27%)	43 (14%)	26 (9%)	300 (100%)
2. Beauty influencers' content on Twitter positively influences Gen Z's perception of the quality and effectiveness of beauty products in Nigeria.	21 (7%)	100 (33%)	136 (46%)	24 (8%)	19 (6%)	300 (100%)
3. Gen Z consumers in Nigeria are more likely to trust and consider purchasing beauty products endorsed by influencers they follow on Twitter	31 (10%)	136 (46%)	90 (30%)	19 (6%)	24 (8%)	300 (100%)
4. Beauty influencers' recommendations and reviews on Twitter significantly impact Gen Z's decision-making process when purchasing beauty products in Nigeria.	37 (12%)	143 (48%)	87 (29%)	14 (5%)	19 (6%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Forty (40%) of respondents agree that beauty influencers on Twitter enhance Gen Z's awareness of new products. Furthermore, most respondents, 136 (46%), are neutral about influencers influencing product perceptions. Further information from the table shows that 136 (46%) agree that endorsements by followed influencers increase trust in products. Also, 143 (48%) agree that recommendations significantly influence purchasing decisions.

Table 5: RQ 3. Is there a significant relationship between Gen Z's engagement with beauty influencers on Twitter and their purchase behavior of beauty products?

Statement	Frequency (%)					
	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
1. Gen Z consumers' engagement with beauty influencers' content on Twitter often influences their purchasing decisions regarding beauty products in Nigeria.	24 (8%)	157 (52%)	87 (29%)	17 (6%)	15 (5%)	300 (100%)
2. Following beauty influencers on Twitter increases Gen Z consumers' likelihood of purchasing beauty products recommended or endorsed by them	30 (10%)	150 (50%)	80(27%)	28 (9%)	12 (4%)	300 (100%)
3. Gen Z consumers' interactions with beauty influencers on Twitter play a significant role in shaping their preferences and brand loyalty towards beauty products in Nigeria	23 (8%)	132 (44%)	93 (31%)	34 (11%)	18 (6%)	300 (100%)
4. The frequency of engagement with beauty influencers' content on Twitter correlates positively with Gen Z consumers' actual purchases of beauty products in Nigeria.	47 (16%)	100 (33%)	118 (39%)	15 (5%)	20 (7%)	300 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

157 respondents (52%) agree that engaging with beauty influencers on Twitter influences Gen Z's beauty product purchases. Also, 150 respondents (50%) agree that following influencers increases their likelihood of purchasing recommended products. Data from the table show that respondents (44%) agree that interactions shape preferences and brand loyalty. It is evident from the table that 118 respondents (39%) are neutral about the correlation between engagement frequency and actual purchases.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One

In respect to the first research objective of this study which sought to find out the common strategies used by beauty influencers on Twitter to engage with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria. Responses to the research questionnaire, detailed in Table 3, align with Arijeniwa et al. (2022)'s findings on social media's role in shaping consumer behavior. Specifically, 41% of respondents agree that beauty influencers frequently use engaging hashtags and challenges, 37% agree that they use interactive polls and Q&A sessions, 45% support influencer collaborations, and 43% believe exclusive promotions are effective. These results corroborate Arijeniwa et al.'s insights on the

influence of social media platforms in promoting synthetic values and underscore the complex interplay between digital marketing strategies and consumer behavior among Gen Z in Nigeria.

Research Question Two:

Responses to the second research question provide insight into how exposure to beauty influencers' content on Twitter influences Gen Z's awareness and perception of beauty products. Notably, 40% of respondents agree that such exposure enhances their awareness of new beauty products, and 46% remain neutral about influencers' impact on their perception of product quality and effectiveness. Additionally, 46% agree that they are more likely to trust and consider purchasing products endorsed by influencers they follow, while 48% agree that influencer recommendations and reviews significantly impact their decision-making process. These findings align with Lokithasan et al. (2019), who explored gender-specific influences in social media marketing, showing that influencers significantly affect emerging adults' attitudes and behaviors. However, unlike the nuanced gender-specific trends noted by Lokithasan et al., this study highlights a more general trend among Gen Z consumers in Nigeria, indicating a positive correlation between influencer engagement and consumer awareness and trust.

Research Question Three:

The findings suggest a significant relationship between Gen Z's engagement with beauty influencers on Twitter and their purchase behavior. Specifically, 52% of respondents agree that their engagement with influencers influences their purchasing decisions, while 50% agree that following influencers increases their likelihood of purchasing recommended products. Moreover, 44% agree that interactions with influencers shape their brand preferences and loyalty. However, when considering the frequency of engagement and its correlation with actual purchases, 39% of respondents remain neutral. These findings align with Lou and Yuan (2018), who emphasize the importance of message value and credibility in influencer marketing. The study suggests that credible and valuable content delivered through influencers can build consumer trust, leading to higher engagement and purchase behavior. This highlights the necessity for brands to focus on delivering authentic and trustworthy content to foster consumer trust and enhance the effectiveness of their influencer marketing strategies.

Summary

This study examines the influence of beauty influencers on Twitter on the patronage of beauty products among Gen Z in Nigeria. Grounded in social influence, planned behavior, and trust theories, the research explores how these influencers utilize Twitter to shape consumer awareness, perception, and purchasing behavior. Through a quantitative survey methodology, data was collected from 400 respondents. Findings highlight the use of engaging hashtags, challenges, interactive polls, and exclusive promotions as strategies employed by influencers. The study reveals a positive correlation between the frequency of influencers' posts and Gen Z's product awareness. Furthermore, influencers' credibility perceptions are linked to increased purchase intentions. High engagement levels such as likes, shares, and comments significantly influence product patronage among Gen Z consumers. This research underscores the need for beauty brands to comprehend and leverage the dynamics of

influencer marketing on Twitter to effectively engage with Gen Z consumers in Nigeria's evolving beauty industry.

Conclusion

The presence of beauty influencers on Twitter plays a pivotal role in shaping the patronage of

beauty products among Gen Z in Nigeria. The study's findings underscore the significant impact of influencers on consumer behavior, particularly in awareness and purchasing decisions. The trust, authenticity, and relatability of influencers are crucial factors driving engagement and product patronage among this demographic. As social media continues to transform the marketing landscape, beauty brands must strategically harness the influence of Twitter to connect with Gen Z consumers. By aligning marketing strategies with the values and preferences of this tech-savvy generation, brands can foster stronger consumer relationships, enhance brand loyalty, and gain a competitive edge in the beauty market. Future research should explore the long-term effects of influencer marketing on consumer behavior and brand equity within the beauty industry.

Recommendations

The study highlights the significant correlation between Twitter engagement with beauty influencers and Gen Z's actual purchase behavior of beauty products. Based on these insights, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Diversified Research Approaches: A deeper exploration of Gen Z's consumer behavior through a mixed research method could offer richer, multifaceted insights, combining quantitative and qualitative data to fully capture the nuances of their engagement patterns and decision-making processes.

2. Expanding Platform Analysis: Future research should extend beyond Twitter to include other social media platforms, examining how different channels influence Gen Z's interactions with beauty influencers and impact their purchasing decisions.

3. Decoding the Algorithmic Influence: Industry practitioners are encouraged to delve into the algorithms that shape Gen Z's consumer behavior on social media. Understanding these mechanisms can help beauty brands optimize their marketing strategies to align with the digital habits of this demographic.

4. Emphasizing Consumer Feedback: The beauty industry should prioritize feedback from Gen Z consumers, as their preferences and opinions significantly influence online business success. Active listening and responsive adjustments to consumer needs can enhance brand loyalty and engagement.

5.Analyzing Social Media Algorithms: Researchers should conduct content analysis on social media algorithms to better understand the dynamics of influencer visibility and reach in the beauty sector. This analysis can inform more effective influencer marketing strategies and content creation practices.

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