

Influencers and the Purchase Decision: A Correlation in the Personal care Products Sector

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Abstract: Nowadays, influencers have become a fundamental part of innovative marketing strategies in global brands and companies. Since the emergence of social networks, they have become more relevant in these virtual spaces where Millennials have become the main protagonists, causing personal care brands to direct their efforts towards these new strategies. Within this context, the objective of this research is to determine whether there is a relationship between influencers and the decision to purchase products in the personal care market through the social network Instagram, in Lima, the capital of Peru. The research is applied with a quantitative approach, correlational in scope and non-experimental in nature. The survey was used as a research technique and the questionnaire as a data collection instrument with Likert scale questions, to assess reliability a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.810 was obtained, the sample consisted of young people aged 18 to 25 years and the fieldwork was conducted through social networks. The results show a significant correlation between influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products, with a Spearman's Rho of 0.309. In addition, it was also revealed that 38% of the respondents considered that a large number of followers was not enough to determine the credibility of an influencer. Finally, it was possible to verify that the alternative hypotheses were accepted and that there is indeed a relationship between influencers and the purchase decision. It can be concluded that influencers are considered an important source of information, they determine the purchase decision in well-positioned companies and enterprises, but this depends a lot on the impact of their speech; it is also concluded that many speeches reduce their relevance because they do not feel sincere and show only the purpose of selling.

Keywords: Marketing, influencers, influencer marketing, personal care

1. Introduction

Nowadays the world continues to change constantly with respect to new technologies, especially the Internet. Perez et al. (2014) state that the Internet has opened a new way by which people can communicate and interact, such as social networks. This evolution of social networks has allowed a new way of interaction of society as stated by Jimenez (2018) when explaining that social networks have generated a dynamism in society being an effective means of information, debate and boosting large social, cultural and political processes and movements in the world.

Within this context, it can be said that the Millennials have become the protagonists (Cordova-Buiza and Paredes-Vasquez, 2022). Aguilar (2016) describes them as a generation that moves like a fish in water with technology and that their attitudes or actions are mediated by a screen, which is why, to be connected to the network, they need tools such as smartphones to perform their work, socialization or leisure activities.

From the change, the opportunities offered by the market brought out a new type of trend "The Prosumer" (Rocha-Vallejos et al., 2022). Pérez and Luque (2017) define it as a person who not only consumes or receives content, but also produces units of content, achieving that their experiences or opinions can be disseminated or shared.

During this evolution the networks began to generate a trend that was increasing, it is there where according to Suazo (2018) television ceases to be the traditional format to which we were accustomed and the networks began to concentrate our attention and time and where these characters "The Influencers" begin to emerge. These characters who are considered opinion leaders or spokespersons denoting a lifestyle, showing transparency and trust with their followers; Santa María and Meana (2017) and Olavarria-Benavides et al. (2021)

add that they have the ability to influence people by modifying their opinions and being admired for the lifestyle they lead.

In addition, Carbajal & Gonzalez (2018) comment that influencers are changing the way in which companies communicate and try to reach their potential customers with an unforced advertising, but as a result of the recommendation through experience with a product, giving rise to reach new markets and obtain greater proximity to consumers. One of the most attractive markets is beauty or personal care since Patiño (2018) states that the industries that have felt the strongest impact of social networks have been health and personal care, where youtubers will play a crucial part in this industry since the vlogger phenomenon can define what products we will see on the shelf of our favorite store.

Regarding the personal care market, According to Alva (2021) in Latin America with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic; it meant a great concern in terms of health we are talking about, where the Personal Care category had its highest growth of +13% and beauty fell by -25% being the most critical. In addition, pharmacies became the channel with the largest purchases of personal care items.

With the arrival of Pandemic COVID 19 to Peru, the market was hit hard, Trigos (2020) in his note to the president of the Peruvian Cosmetics and Hygiene Guild [COPECOH] stated that the restrictive measures affected trade and also the pocket of Peruvians where there was a fall in the categories of cosmetics and personal hygiene such as: makeup (48%), fragrances (39%) and facial treatment (23%); while the only one that increased was personal hygiene by 10%.

Also Flores (2019) comments through the Commercial Intelligence Study, that Peru is the fourth in the region with the highest per capita consumption of US\$ 247, meaning that women spend approximately S/. 839 in these products per year. On the other hand, they also added that the distribution channels with respect to retail and direct sales have changed having between 51% and 48% respectively, with the remaining 1% corresponding to e-commerce.

In addition, the president of COPECOH Angel Acevedo, commented that what is expected for 2022 in the cosmetics and personal hygiene market is to achieve a turnover of 7,792 million representing a growth of 3.3% compared to 2021, considering of course that the framework of political and economic stability environment is optimistic. Indicators such as the development of mass consumption and inflation index present positive projections of +4% and +3.5% respectively (Trigos, 2020).

Finally, all this information will allow us to know a little more about the area to be analyzed in this research. The facts described above lead us to formulate the following problem: What is the relationship between Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products through the social network Instagram in Lima, the capital of Peru?

1.1 Objective

The general objective of this research is to determine the relationship between Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products through the social network Instagram.

2. Literature review

The foundation of this research is involved in the contribution and opinions of different authors. Ramos (2019) defines influencers as ordinary people who have managed to gain a large number of followers from their experience and transparency differentiating themselves from celebrities by the valuable information they share with their audience. One of the clearest theories is that of Two Step Flow Communication, where Lazarsfeld and Katz (1944 and 1955) comment that there are people who are more influential than others, stating that media influence occurs in two stages: First, the message delivered by the media to an opinion leader and second, the opinion leader shares his choice with others. Among their findings, they were able to see that opinion leaders were not necessarily people who held high positions (Weimann, 2015). Regarding the dimensions of this variable Serhat et al. (2022) comments on trustworthiness, explaining that when there is information that the consumer denotes as highly reliable, their comment will be positive and beneficial, so if they see the influencer in this way, the messages that they will transmit about a product or service can generate a change in the attitude of consumers. Regarding the expertise, he defines it as that which contains knowledge or different skills that allow you to make comments and / or statements on various topics. Finally, he explains that the attractiveness of the

influencer has required a harmony to have a positive impact on advertising; where the attractiveness is not limited only to the physical, but includes aspects such as familiarity, similarity and sympathy.

Astudillo & Bolaños (2021) comment that the purchase decision has its origin in the needs that people present, stating that there are internal and external factors that are based on the characteristics of the consumer and those that are alien to him. Among the theories, Maslow's pyramid is presented, where five different levels of needs were identified; where the basic needs were below and the higher ones at the top, where they will be activated as the lower levels are satisfied (Sergueyevna & Mosher, 2013).

Regarding the dimensions of the purchase decision we have Cultural, Social, Personal and Psychological factors. The first is defined as a set of values, perceptions, desires and behaviors that are learned from society, family and some institutions. Social factors focus on reference groups, which are divided into two; firstly, those that influence people, who are those of direct influence such as family, friends, acquaintances and co-workers and, on the other hand, the second is made up of professionals, religious and more formal actors, but with less interaction. Personal factors include self-image, health, beauty and physical condition, since when the consumer perceives a product or service in order to improve self-image, it is very likely that this will be a determining and lasting factor. Finally, psychological factors refer to discovering the relationship that exists between market strategies and this dynamic world that is constantly changing, giving rise to new needs that arise in the interaction with the environment (Ponce et al., 2012).

Among the previous research, we found that of Cueva et al. (2020) whose objective was to demonstrate that there is a correlation between influencer marketing and the purchase behavior of the millennial consumer. A cross-sectional correlational design and a questionnaire were used as a research tool with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.93 demonstrating its validity. The results indicated that with a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.582, a positive average correlation of influence marketing on the millennial consumer's purchasing behavior was affirmed. And with the results obtained, it could be affirmed that even millennials of adult age are influenced by these characters of the digital world.

In addition, in the research by Clemente and Atienza (2019) they investigated on determining that the dimensions perceived in influencers coincide with those of a traditional opinion leader. The information was collected with a survey of the population of Valencia, Spain, with ages between 16 and 34 years due to the fact that in that range there is a higher percentage of interaction in social networks. The sample was 205 respondents with a confidence level of 95.5% and stratified sampling by age and district was used. The conclusion was that the 3 dimensions of the influencer (Disinterest, Empathy and Experience) coincide with those of an opinion leader, in addition to the fact that advertising using an influencer is usually more successful, offering greater utility to the consumer in their purchase decision.

3. Methodology

The research approach is quantitative, using statistical methods to measure the results, and correlational in scope, seeking to determine the degree of relationship between the variables studied. The study has a non-experimental design, which means that the nature of the variables will not be modified in any way. The sample size was determined in 384 participants aged 18 to 25 years who use personal care products and are active users of the social network Instagram from Metropolitan Lima, Peru. This was determined by random probability sampling from a population of more than 10,000 people for which the statistical formula for an infinite population was used.

For data collection, the survey technique was used, which was developed in-house and was given through a questionnaire with filter questions in the first stage, followed by closed questions using the Likert scale. The questionnaire was validated by three marketing experts, resulting in a validity score of 94%. To ensure reliability, a pilot survey was conducted with 20 participants with similar characteristics to those of the study group, and a positive result was obtained with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.811. In addition, it was applied in a period of one month with all the questionnaires duly completed in their entirety.

4. Data Collection

To collect data on the relationship between Instagram influencers and people's decision to purchase personal care products, a virtual survey was conducted using social media. Google Forms was used to create the questionnaire as it is a convenient and efficient tool for gathering information. The Likert scale was used as a measurement instrument, which presents the options of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Disagree

nor Agree (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5). To begin the statistical analysis, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was performed to determine if the data followed a normal distribution. If the Sig P-value is ≥ 0.05 , it confirms the normality of the distribution, while Sig P-value < 0.05 indicates a non-normal distribution. As all the variables and dimensions had a Sig P-value < 0.05 , non-parametric statistics, specifically Spearman's correlation, were used to develop the results.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Results:

In this stage of the research, we proceed to detail the results obtained on the Influencers and the Decision to purchase personal care products, where all the information was statistically processed through the SPSS 26 Software in order to obtain the results of the variables mentioned above.

Table 1: Spearman correlation coefficient grade

Rango	Relación
-0.91 to -1.00	Perfect negative correlation
-0.76 to -0.90	Very strong negative correlation
-0.51 to -0.75	Strong negative correlation.
-0.11 to -0.50	Medium negative correlation
-0.01 to -0.10	Weak negative correlation
0	No correlation
+0.01 to +0.10	Weak positive correlation.
+0.11 to +0.50	Medium positive correlation
+0.51 to +0.75	Significant positive correlation
+0.75 to +0.90	Very strong positive correlation
+0.91 to +1.00	Perfect positive correlation

Note: Information obtained from Montes et al., 2021.

General Objective: To determine the relationship between influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Table 2: Relationship between influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

			Influencer	Purchase Decision
Spearman's Rho	Influencer	Correlation coefficient	1.000	,309**
		Sig. (bilateral)		0.000
		N	384	384
	Purchase Decision	Correlation coefficient	,309**	1.000
		Sig. (bilateral)	0.000	
		N	384	384
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).				

As can be seen in the table, the Spearman's Rho correlation between the studied variables of influencer and purchase decision in Metropolitan Lima, the capital of Peru is 0.309; thus determining that there is a medium degree of correlation according to Table 2.

To test the hypothesis we proceeded to use Chi-square, detailing the following:

Table 3: Chi square - General Hypothesis

Chi-square tests	
	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's chi-square	0.000

Note: Relationship between influencers and purchase decisions

By presenting a significance level of less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, thus concluding that there is indeed a significant relationship between influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Specific Objective 1: To determine the relationship between the trustworthiness of Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Table 4: Relationship between influencer trustworthiness and the decision to purchase personal care products in Metropolitan Lima in 2022.

			Reliability	Purchase Decision
Spearman's Rho	reliability	Correlation coefficient	1,000	,208**
		Sig. (bilateral)	.	,000
		N	384	384
	Purchase Decision	Correlation coefficient	,208**	1,000
		Sig. (bilateral)	,000	.
		N	384	384
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).				

This table shows the Spearman's Rho correlation between the reliability dimension and the purchase decision variable in Lima, the capital of Peru, with a coefficient of 0.208, thus determining that there is a medium degree of correlation according to table 4.

To test the hypothesis we proceeded to use Chi-square, detailing the following:

Table 5: Chi square - Specific hypothesis 1

Chi-square tests	
	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's chi-square	0.000

Note: Relationship between reliability and purchasing decision

With a significance level of less than 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, thus corroborating that there is a significant relationship between the reliability dimension and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Specific Objective 2: Determine the relationship between Influencers' expertise and the decision to purchase personal care products in Metropolitan Lima in 2022.

Table 6: Relationship between influencer expertise and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

			Expertise	Purchase Decision
Spearman's Rho	Expertise	Correlation coefficient	1.000	,323**
		Sig. (bilateral)		0.000
		N	384	384
	Purchase Decision	Correlation coefficient	,323**	1.000

		Expertise	Purchase Decision
	Sig. (bilateral)	0.000	
	N	384	384
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).			

The table shows the Spearman's Rho correlation between the expertise dimension and the purchase decision variable in Metropolitan Lima in 2022, with a correlation coefficient of 0.323, confirming that there is a medium degree of correlation according to Table 6.

To contrast the hypothesis we proceeded to use the Chi-square test, detailing the following:

Table 7: Chi cuadrado – Hipótesis específica 2

Chi-square tests	
	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's chi-square	0.000

Note: Relationship between expertise and purchasing decision

Presenting a significance level of less than 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, confirming that there is a significant relationship between the expertise dimension and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Specific Objective 3: To determine the relationship between the attractiveness of Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Table 8: Relationship between influencer attractiveness and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

			Attractiveness	Purchase Decision
Rho de Spearman	Attractiveness	Correlation coefficient	1,000	,297**
		Sig. (bilateral)	.	,000
		N	384	384
	Purchase Decision	Correlation coefficient	,297**	1,000
		Sig. (bilateral)	,000	.
		N	384	384
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).				

The table above shows the Spearman's Rho correlation between the attractiveness dimension and the purchase decision variable in Lima, the capital of Peru, with a correlation coefficient of 0.297, confirming that there is a medium degree of correlation according to Table 8.

To contrast the hypothesis, we proceeded to use the Chi-square test, detailing the following:

Table 9: Chi square - Specific Hypothesis 3

Chi-square tests	
	Asymptotic significance (bilateral)
Pearson's chi-square	0.000

Note: Relationship between attractiveness and decision to purchase.

With a significance level of less than 0.05 ($0.00 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, thus corroborating that there is a significant relationship between the attractiveness dimension and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

5.2 Discussion

According to the results of the present research it can be stated that the Spearman's Rho correlation was used where we obtained a value of 0.309; thus accepting that the variables studied have an average positive correlation; in addition, the chi-square test was used for the hypothesis test, having a resultant of 0.000 where being less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, concluding that there is indeed a significant relationship between Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

These results coincide with the research of Chauca (2020) in demonstrating that there is a moderate positive relationship between both variables "Digital influencers and the purchase decision of fashion products" by presenting a Spearman's Rho of 0.707 and a significance of 0.000. In addition, Cueva et al. (2020) reinforces and agrees by commenting on the findings of their research applied to three different age strata, that even adult millennials are really influenced by these prescribers of the digital world.

Similarly, Davila & Victorino's (2022) research concurs in seeking to determine the relationship between digital influencers and makeup purchase decision. Here they commented that the customer usually takes as a recommendation what a digital influencer says but that this is not enough to be considered as a final factor but opt for reviews or same experiences of friends and / or family.

In the case of specific objective 1, the Spearman correlation test was used, which gave us 0.208, where it is stated that the variables that conform it present an average positive correlation and the significance level obtained through the Chi Square resulted 0.000 contrasting and determining that there is a significant relationship between trustworthiness and the decision to purchase personal care products through the social network Instagram in Metropolitan Lima in 2022.

Horny & Zubiaurre (2019) coincide with these results, but with a difference regarding the fact that part of their research takes as a strong point the trustworthiness dimension, which is presented as one of the strongest and most determinant, this due to the target audience to which it is directed; likewise, both researches obtained positive results. In addition, Cruz (2020) also agrees with these results since he sought through his research to analyze the perceived veracity of influencers and how this takes the quality of the message regarding products and brand awareness as important indicators for a non-forced purchase decision.

For the specific objective 2, the Spearman correlation test was used, where 0.323 was obtained, affirming that the variables that conform it present an average positive correlation and the level of significance obtained through the Chi Square was 0.000, contrasting and determining that there is a significant relationship between the expertise of the influencer and the decision to purchase personal care products through the social network Instagram in Lima, the capital of Peru.

In the same way, the research of Cruz (2020) coincides, given that he comments that Millennials consumers have knowledge of the brand they consume, being their decision reinforced by the advertising of the Social Media Influencer. In turn, Horny & Zubiaurre (2019) took in part of their results the influencer's expertise as one of the dimensions with the highest correlation in their research; this is due to the fact that the studied public prioritizes the knowledge and trust that the Influencer possesses, coinciding with our results.

Regarding specific objective 3, the Spearman correlation test was used where 0.297 was obtained, thus accepting that the studied variables (attractiveness and purchase decision) have an average positive correlation; in addition, the chi-square test was used for the hypothesis test, having a resultant of 0.000 where being less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted, concluding that there is indeed a significant relationship between Influencers and the purchase decision of personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru.

Similarly, the research of Hoempler & Chipana (2019) coincides with our results by discovering within their research that respondents take into account the attractiveness of the source, since the status of the influencer makes the promoted product more attractive. In turn Cortegana et al. (2018) also agreed with the results by finding within their research a new component called "Attractive Trend" as a result of the readjustments in the

rotation of variables; where the influencer is presented as a factor of content creation and fashion trends, thus evidencing the relationship between the two.

As already known, the main focus of this research was to determine the relationship between Influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products in Lima, the capital of Peru, for which we proceeded to compare the similarities and discrepancies with the background previously reviewed in this study. For this, it was necessary to resort to sources of information such as Dialnet, Redalyc, Alicia, Scielo, among others; but there were limitations in terms of the personal care market, since there is still not much information linked to influencers. I recommend that in order to complement this lack of information, it is necessary to take as references certain researches that present similar categories such as makeup and fashion, which can provide the guidance needed to develop the research.

6. Conclusions:

This research analyzes the relationship between influencers and the purchase decision of personal care products. The study shows that there is a positive mean relationship between influencers and the purchase decision, since the Spearman correlation coefficient presents a value of 0.309 and the P-value obtained through Chi-square was 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$), which shows a significant relationship between both study variables. Therefore, companies are recommended to include influencers in their marketing plans, as they are important in influencing consumers' purchase decision.

The study also shows a positive relationship between the trustworthiness of influencers and the purchase decision of personal care products, with a Spearman correlation coefficient value of 0.208 and a P-value of 0.000. In conclusion, it is recommended that companies thoroughly evaluate their influencers, in order to ensure that they have the same values; preferably that they have had experience in the same field and thus can make a more reliable judgment and image when promoting the company's products.

In addition, the study indicates a positive relationship between influencer experience and the decision to purchase personal care products, with a Spearman correlation coefficient value of 0.323 and a P-value of 0.000. Companies are advised to invest in influencers who have prior knowledge or experience with the product or service, as this can add value to their brand.

Finally, the study also highlights the importance of attractiveness in influencers, with a positive relationship between the attractiveness of influencers and the decision to purchase personal care products, as the Spearman correlation coefficient presents a value of 0.297 and the P-value obtained through Chi-Square was 0.000 ($0.000 < 0.05$). It is recommended that companies choose influencers with personality and ease of communication that can attract attention and have an impact on consumers.

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