

Harpreet Kaur Kalsi

**UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON
COSMETIC PURCHASES**

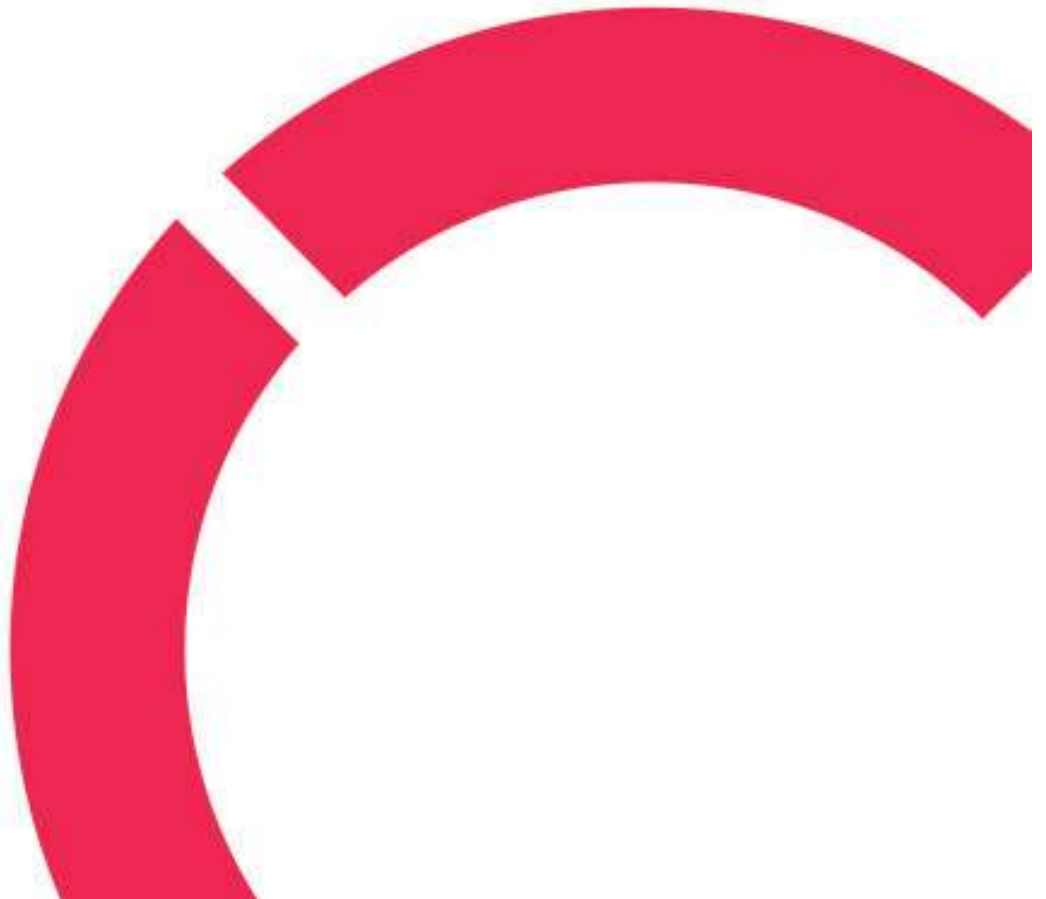
Case Study - Social Media's Role in Buying Cosmetic Products in Kokkola Region

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ABSTRACT

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Name of thesis UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON COSMETIC PURCHASES Case Study - Social Media's Role in Buying Cosmetic Products in Kokkola Region		
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<p>This study looks into the effect of social media on cosmetic purchases in Kokkola, with a selected highlighting on systems like as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. It is noticed that social media influences the customer a lot while making the purchase. I ran a web survey with Webropol to determine how numerous internet channels affect consumer behaviour inside the impressive and good location. Our research is mainly in the Kokkola region to find out if customers in this region depend heavily on social media for assistance and guidelines. Opinions from many of the users shared and accepted that their purchase is influenced by the trends and patterns they have followed from social media. Furthermore, the visual appeal of objects shown on social media, as well as person-generated information inclusive of tutorials and opinions, emerged as critical determinants in shaping customer alternatives. These findings spotlight the large and have impact of social media, and how social media performs in the changing customer performance in Kokkola's cosmetic industry. Businesses may take advantage of this effect by way of tailoring their marketing processes to effectively interact with their target market, capitalize on growing traits, and improve their brand visibility within the aggressive cosmetics industry. Social media plays an important role so that is why the companies in the cosmetic industry spend on marketing to influence the target market. Understanding the complexities of social media-driven purchaser conduct is essential for groups trying to thrive within the digital generation.</p>		

<p>Key words Brand Value, Brands, Cosmetics items, Customer Behavior, Customer, Facebook, Feedback, Influencers, Instagram, Marketing, Product Image Appeal, Products, Purchases, References, Social Media Strategies, TikTok, YouTube.</p>
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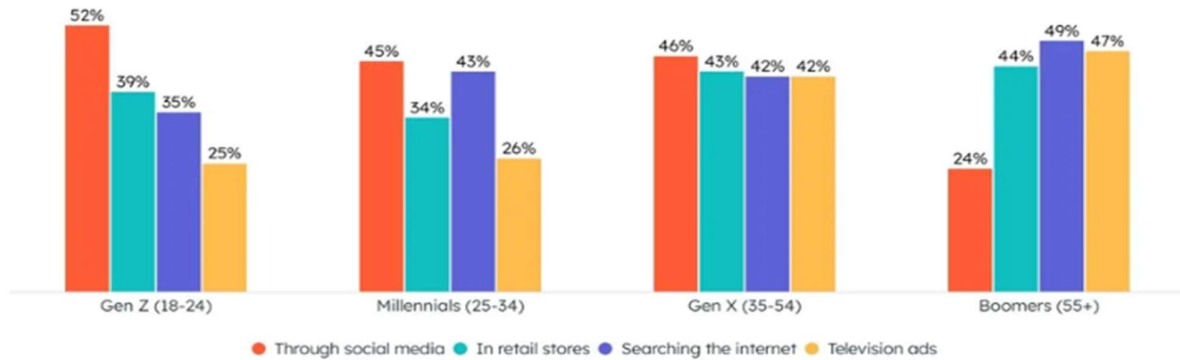
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1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, it has been noticed that globally, various elements of modern life are impacted by the use of social media. There are 4.88 billion social media users worldwide, these numbers are almost tripled in a ten year time period (2013 – 2023) (Rivera 2024) and these numbers are still increasing. People or customers are impacted and addicted to using social media, especially in the cosmetic market, and buying these products. There is a significant impact on the purchase of cosmetic products because of social media and the digital revolution, it plays a vital role in the customer, their behavior, and purchasing sentiments. People now have more options and a diverse range of cosmetic items, suggestions, tips, and reviews from digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube which are dominating the internet (White 2024). If we observe and investigate people's behaviors towards the use of the internet, then we will find that they are spending most of their time on social media pages. A customer gets a new way in means of social media to search, study and get a review of a product they are interested in buying or planning to buy in the future (Kowalewicz 2022). Suggestions, reviews, and tips posted by users or influencers raise important concerns in the cosmetics sector regarding how social media influences customer perceptions, preferences, and purchase decisions (Arora 2024).

There are implications for businesses, consumers, and society because of the impact of social media on cosmetic purchases and it is important to understand digital influence. Companies and consumers have a direct or indirect impact on the information or reviews available on social media (Arora 2024). Companies need to stay competitive and reach their target consumers more efficiently. Companies have to properly use the power of social media and it has become critical for them in the cosmetic business (White 2024). We can divide the consumers in different age groups to know their purchasing trends, which age is group influenced through social media or would like to visit the retail store or through internet or Television ads, below graph explains the consumer trends:



Picture 1: Consumer Trends Report (Iskiev 2023)

In the above table, age group 18-24 is named as Gen Z, 25-34 age group is named as Millennials, 35-54 is named as Gen X and 55+ is named as Boomers. As you can see that Gen Z are the one who mostly purchases through social media as they are the one who are influenced the most by it (Iskiev 2023). Influencers and user-generated content have emerged as strong drivers of consumer engagement and brand exposure, challenging traditional marketing tactics. Companies hire or pay to influencers for their product marketing to target the big consumer market. Companies are tapping such influencers who have already established their names in the market and people easily follow them e.g. celebrities or athletes (Heimann 2022). On the other side, consumers or customers are getting too many options and information which creates the possibility and problems such as confusion in navigating this digital world. Customers get so many product options that they get confused in the selection and some of them make wrong purchases.

I will study the past reports and try to find out the gaps and will fill those gaps with the information I get through the recent survey and a thorough evaluation of the various impacts on social media specifically for the cosmetic purchases. This study tries to understand the processes by which consumer behavior in the cosmetic business is impacted by social media, influencers (Heimann 2022) and practical suggestions obtained through surveys. It helps to understand what factors influence consumers in cosmetic product purchasing. In addition, for companies who want to enhance their digital marketing strategies, this study will provide practical insights and advice. With it, companies can effectively connect with consumers in the dynamic and ever-changing social media network (White 2024).

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The cosmetic business has long been an integral part of consumer culture, with people all over the world investing in items designed to improve their looks and self-expression. Historically, conventional advertising channels such as print, television, and billboards influenced customer perceptions and purchase decisions in the cosmetic industry. These traditional channels have left a great mark on the consumers thinking, these channels work like an instrument which creates brand loyalty, highlighting the product quality, influencing price sensitivity (Shaw 2020). It is important for the marketing team in the companies to understand the consumer behaviour to make the marketing strategies. These strategies through understanding of consumer behaviour models are helpful for the team (Enago Academy 2023). It is noticed and mentioned in the studies that consumer behaviour is divided into three categories, traditional marketing funnel, customer decision-making process and consumer adoption process (Shaw 2020). However, the introduction of social media changes the customer or consumer behavior and connects with the company, products, and their knowns, it changes their way of thinking and the scene of cosmetic marketing and its consumption. Social media marketing was first adopted by the beauty and cosmetic industry and this industry is the one who adopted social influencers too (Schwarz 2022).

Because of the start of social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, the customer or consumers will get access to a wide range of products (cosmetics, etc.), and they will get suggestions from old users, influencers, or friends (Chandarith 2020) (Picture 2). Influencers will also get their content from the internet or social media platforms. Influencers, beauty bloggers, and vloggers have become the most powerful characters in the social media world, with the power of their content writing with which they can shape consumer tastes and trends. Nowadays customer or consumers follows influencers' references, tutorial guides, or recommendations and do not follow them, just leaving behind the old ways of advertisement methods, these influencers have thousands or millions of followers.



Picture 2. Social Media platforms use by companies for marketing (Chandarith 2020)

On social media platforms, users are allowed to share their opinions and thoughts and can raise their voices in case they are not satisfied with the product or services. People are buying cosmetic products online by just looking at the material created by the user, cosmetic tutorials, product reviews, and images. It has become an important part of the consumer decision-making process, establishing a feeling of community and authenticity among online beauty communities. Buyers read the reviews and suggestions of the users, which will help the company to make the right decision while purchasing. Below you can find the list of social media marketing related concepts from their authors:

Table 1. List of Social Media Marketing related concepts

Social Media Marketing Related Concepts	Author (S)
<p>“Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, the most popular platforms in the world, as well as Sina Weibo, Wechat and Zhihu (which are the most influential platforms in China) have become indispensable social platforms in people’s everyday lives. Social platforms have changed people’s lifestyles and the ways in which information is disseminated.”</p>	<p>(Ma, N., Liu, Y. & Chi, Y. 2018)</p>

Social media marketing is an interdisciplinary and cross functional concept that uses social media (often in combination with other communications channels) to achieve organizational goals by creating value for stakeholders.”	(Felix, R., Rauschnabel, P. & Hinsch, C. 2017)
ASM, defined as the strength of a bond between a person and social media is a driver of meaningful social media (Felix, R., Rauschnabel, P. & Hinsch, C. 2017) behaviours.”	(Van Meter 2018)

Companies who are in the cosmetic business must understand the impact of social media, they must understand how essential it is if they want to succeed in the business. Companies' representatives spend time on social media platforms to understand consumer behavior before the product launch (Enago Academy 2023). Companies can tailor their marketing strategies to successfully interact with their target audience, capitalize on emerging qualities, and control logo loyalty in an increasingly aggressive marketplace through very well-inspecting the dynamics at play and identifying key elements using consumer behavior.

2.1 Statement of the Problem

The extensive effect of social media on consumer behavior in the beauty sector creates both possibilities and difficulties for firms and customers. While social media platforms provide unparalleled access to a wide range of cosmetic items, reviews, and suggestions, the sheer amount of information accessible can cause information overload and choice fatigue among customers (Enago Academy 2023). Sometimes, paid promotion is not trustworthy, and consumers might be cheated with online shopping (Picture 3). It has also been seen that product promotion by influencers or paid users builds a difference between paid promotions and genuine references, it will also raise concerns regarding the trust and transparency in the online shopping of cosmetics products.



Picture 3. Regret of purchasing cheap cosmetic products online (Shruti Makeover 2021).

Moreover, businesses have created a field that cannot be changed and dynamic with the help of fast growth of social media processes and features for looking to interact with their target audience. Businesses keep track of their audience's tastes through social media platforms. They will navigate each platform to find thorough information on customer preferences, trends, and purchasing habits, this information will help the marketing team of businesses to improve or make new marketing strategies in the launch of new products.

In the cosmetics business, the important elements that influence customers while purchasing cosmetic products and the impact of social media on cosmetic sales are covered in this study (Enago Academy 2023). This study aims to provide actionable insights and recommendations for businesses seeking to effectively navigate the digital landscape and cultivate meaningful relationships with their target audience by unraveling the mechanisms through which social media shapes consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchasing decisions (Enago Academy 2023).

2.2 Objectives of the Study

- The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which social media influences customer behavior while purchasing cosmetics.
- The purpose of this study is to discover the major characteristics that influence consumer interaction with cosmetic material on social media sites.

- The purpose of this study is to look at how customer perceptions and preferences in the cosmetics business are influenced by influencers and user-generated content.
- The purpose of this study is to investigate how consumer decision-making processes for cosmetic items are influenced by the social media process and features.
- The purpose of this study is to evaluate the productivity of cosmetic businesses' existing digital marketing strategies for interacting with their target audience on social media platforms.
- The purpose of this study is to improve businesses' digital marketing planning and effectively use social media for cosmetic purchases.
- The purpose of this study is to add knowledge by providing visions into the dynamic link between social media and consumer behavior in the beauty sector.

2.3 Research Questions

Through research questions, I will be trying to find out the answers which help both buyers or companies while buying or manufacturing the products. It is beneficial for both to maintain the sustainability and to avoid the unnecessary wastage of money, resources and material used. Below are the questions coming to my mind which will help in studying and understanding the consumer behaviour, social media influencers, social media marketing, companies marketing strategies etc:

- What is the scope to which social media influences consumer behavior in the situation of cosmetic purchases?
- What are the key drivers of consumer interaction with cosmetic material on social media platforms?
- How can influencers and user-generated content help to shape customer perceptions and preferences in the cosmetics industry?
- How do social media algorithms and features influence consumer cosmetic product purchasing decisions?
- How effective are contemporary cosmetic businesses' digital marketing techniques for interacting with their target demographic on social media platforms?
- What is the practical advice for firms looking to improve their digital marketing tactics and effectively use social media for cosmetic purchases?
- How does this study help to our knowledge of the dynamic interaction between social media and consumer behavior in the cosmetic industry?

2.4 Significance of the Study



Picture 4. Kylie Jenner a famous celebrity and social media star (Schwarz 2022)

Consumers stand to gain from a better grasp of the forces at work in the digital beauty space. Consumers who are aware of the impact of social media on their purchasing decisions are better able to make informed decisions, navigate the abundance of cosmetic content available online, and critically evaluate the authenticity of recommendations and reviews from influencers (Picture 4) and peers (Enago Academy 2023).

This study adds to the current body of knowledge about consumer behavior in the context of social media and cosmetics. By filling gaps in current research and giving empirical insights into the mechanisms by which social media promotes cosmetic purchasing, this study lays the groundwork for future research and academic inquiry in this field (Enago Academy 2023).

Businesses can also use the findings of this examine to broaden more a success digital marketing strategies for cosmetic brands and impressive firms. Understanding the factors that pressure consumer engagement and decision-making on social media structures allows businesses to improve their on-line presence, tailor their content material to better resonate with their target audience, and, ultimately, enhance income and emblem loyalty.

The conclusions of this study have far-reaching social consequences, particularly in comprehending the changing nature of consumerism and digital involvement in the twenty-first century (Enago Academy 2023). This study, by throwing light on how social media influences consumer behavior in the beauty sector, might enlighten conversations about digital literacy, advertising ethics, and the impact of technology on society as a whole.

2.5 Scope and Limitations

This study examines how social media affects customer behavior while making cosmetic purchases. We have observed that our close friends or relatives check the social media for the new product launch and its review before buying it. In the cosmetics sector, customer perceptions, preferences, and purchase decisions seem how it influenced by platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. Social media algorithms, user-generated content, cosmetic manufacturers' digital marketing efforts, and the impact of influencers are a few issues that are covered in this study (Enago Academy 2023).

The aim is to find out and provide depth knowledge of consumer behavior while scrolling and making decisions on social media platforms in the Kokkola region. This study aims to get to know how social media influences people by conducting a survey of the customers in this region.

It is possible that all the cosmetic products might not be covered in the survey or maybe customers want to share limited information with me. This information is for one region only and might not apply to other geographic places or cultural circumstances.

The continuous evolution of social media makes it difficult to capture the most recent consumer trends and behaviors. As a result, the data obtained may be restricted in its temporal relevance and may not accurately reflect the dynamic nature of the social media effect over time.

Table 2. Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Behaviour

Cultural Factors	Personal Factors	Social Factors	Psychological Factors
Consumer Social Beliefs	Influence of Consumer income	Word of mouth of people	Consumer thinking pattern
Consumer Friends or social class	Influence of consumer inner beliefs	Closed friend's opinion	Influence of consumer's learning behaviour
Consumer Perceived value		Influence of social media	Attraction to a distinct attribute (Fragrance, Colour)
		Price of the product	Influence of Positive emotion of consumer

Furthermore, this study is based mostly on self-reported data from surveys, which may be prone to memory or social desirability bias. It is possible that customers' replies to the survey depend on their understanding of social standards or they want to display themselves positively and above-mentioned factors that affects consumer behaviour are most commonly observed (Table 2).

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Social networking has transformed the manner in which people link up, communicate and take up information. The consumer behavior has been greatly influenced by the enlargement of social media platforms like Friendster, MySpace, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tiktok, and YouTube (CN. Fortune 2023). These sites enable customers to reach a wide variety of content such as product suggestions, reviews and advertisements (Bognar 2019). It is for this reason that consumers increasingly turn to social media for ideas, reassurance or assistance when making purchases (Crescitaly 2024). This dynamic and immersive nature of social media enhances peer-to-peer connection enabling individuals to seek advice; share experiences; build virtual communities around shared interests like beauty products.

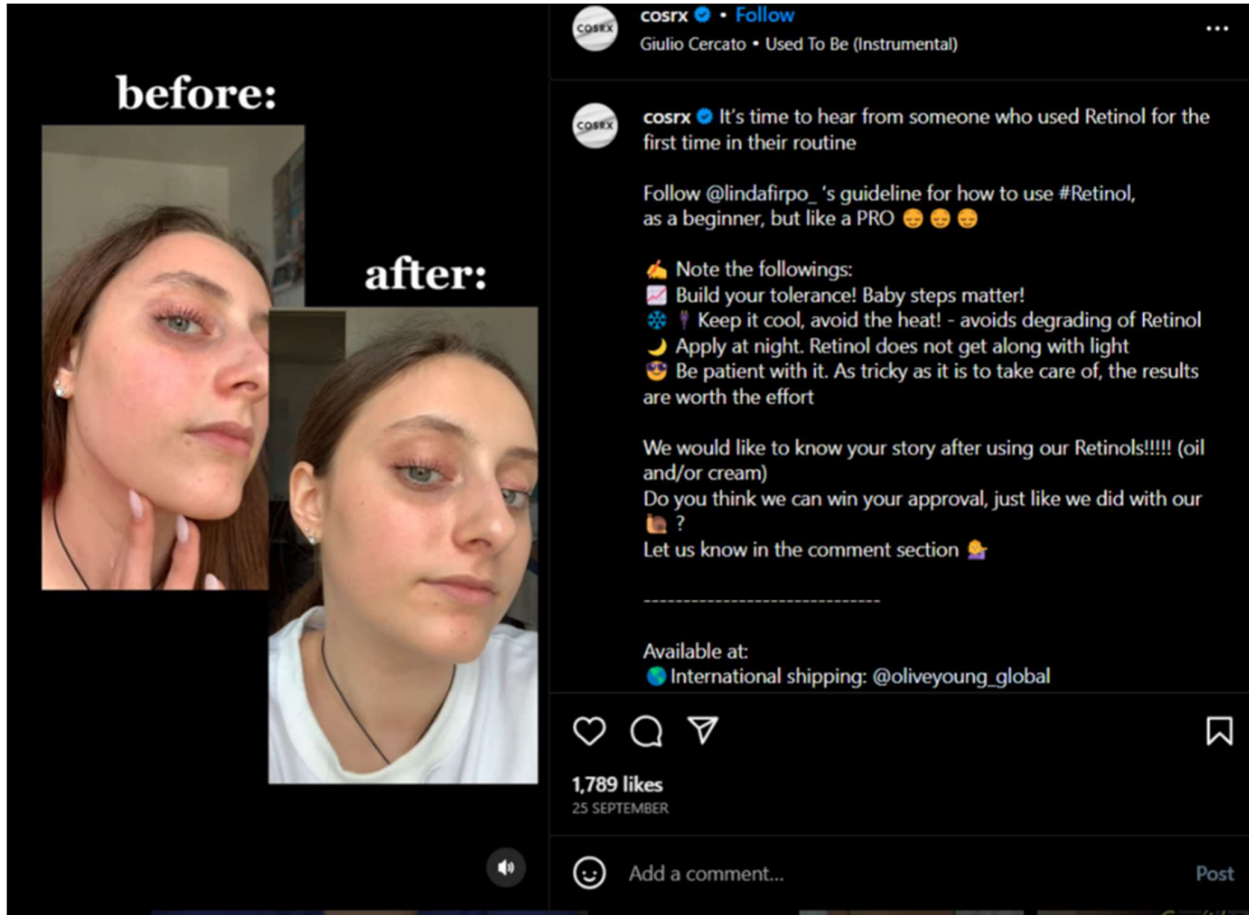
3.1 Theoretical Frameworks for Understanding Social Media Influence

There have been different theoretical frameworks that have been advanced in order to explain how social media influence consumer behavior (CN. Fortune 2023). Theoretically, these models use ideas from psychology, advertising and sociology to describe how people access information and form attitudes as well as make choices through social media. For instance, the social identity hypothesis suggests that interactions within a group help individuals feel a sense of belonging, which affects their attitudes and behaviors including purchasing decisions (Crescitaly 2024). Similarly, the theory of social cognitive emphasizes the importance of observation learning and imitation in shaping behavior thereby suggesting that people are affected by what others do especially those who they interacts with through various social networks.

3.2 Influence of Social Media on Cosmetic Purchases

Social media has a huge impact on customer behavior in the beauty sector (CN. Fortune 2023). Instagram and TikTok act as virtual markets, allowing users to find, explore, and purchase cosmetic goods. Influencers and content creators play a critical role in determining consumer preferences and trends, with their endorsements and suggestions frequently having a major impact among their following. The word “influencer” is added to the English dictionary in year 2019 first time after being used so much in

the market (Suciu 2020). Furthermore, the visual aspect of social media platforms makes them excellent for displaying cosmetic items, allowing firms to connect with customers through visually appealing content like cosmetics lessons, product demonstrations, and user-generated reviews.



Picture 5. Brand COSRX influence the customer with this post (Pandey 2024)

3.3 Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior in Cosmetic Purchases

Several factors impact customer behavior while purchasing cosmetics. These include personal preferences, attitudes, and ideas regarding attractiveness and self-image (CN. Fortune 2023). Social media influence the buyers and give information or knowledge about the new product, and it effects the buying behaviour of consumers positively (Powers et al. 2012). Peer influence, societal standards, and cultural values all play an important part in determining consumer behavior. In addition, situational considerations such as price, convenience, and product availability might influence purchase decisions. In

the context of social media, elements such as influencer reputation and trustworthiness, perceived authenticity of user-generated content, and product visual appeal all help to shape customer perceptions and preferences (Brown 2017).

3.4 Role of Influencers and User-Generated Content

Influencers and user-generated content have emerged as key drivers of customer engagement and purchase decisions in the beauty sector. From celebrities to bloggers/vloggers, each of them are influencer, they influence the people (Digital Marketing Institute 2023). Influencers, who frequently have big social media followings and knowledge in beauty-related areas, have the power to influence customer attitudes and preferences through their endorsements and product suggestions. User-generated material, such as reviews, tutorials, and before-and-after photographs given by everyday users, lends authenticity and credibility to brand message, establishing trust and connection with potential buyers. Brands frequently partner with influencers and ask them to create user generated content as part of their marketing strategies so as to leverage its reach.

3.5 Summary of Key Findings

The literature review has shown several key findings about the impact of social media on cosmetic buying. First off, it is an effective tool for product discovery since many people go to platforms like Instagram or TikTok where they can receive more information about new trends, items and styles available in market (Crescitaly 2024). Consumer preferences and purchasing decisions are heavily shaped by influencers and user-generated content with their recommendations and endorsements greatly influencing their massive following. Moreover, how good an item looks, the authenticity of social media influencers, and user generated content genuineness all likewise impact customer perceptions and actions in the beauty industry (CN. Fortune 2023). For enterprises looking to improve their digital marketing strategies and effectively engage customers in the evolving world of social media, grasping these attributes becomes vital (Crescitaly 2024).

4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The term research design refers to the overall plan or strategy for carrying out the investigation. In this case, a mixed-methods approach is utilized to gain comprehensive understanding about influence of social media on cosmetic purchases. This methodology employs both quantitative as well as qualitative approaches to gather and analyze data (Kothari 2004). Numerical data regarding consumer attitudes, behaviors along with preferences towards buying cosmetics via social media platforms are collected through quantitative surveys among other tools like questionnaires. More detailed scrutinization on underlying motives, perceptions and experiences of consumers is done using qualitative methods such as surveys that involve content analysis within Kokkola region.

4.1 Data Collection Methods

Many techniques are used to gather data that is relevant to the study topics. The survey captures quantitative data on Kokkola customers and their use of social media, engagement with cosmetic content, as well as buying habits. Quantitative research study focuses on gathering data through exact measurements, using numerical and statistical analysis (Campbell 2014). Moreover, semi-structured interviews are conducted among a few of the surveyed respondents so as to unearth the viewpoints, motivations and experiences of such individuals. It is also through content analysis that we will evaluate what constitutes cosmetic content found in social media platforms including influencers' popularity, user-generated materials and other marketing messages.

4.2 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques are used to look at gathered information for satisfactory findings. Quantitative data from surveys undergoes statistical approaches such as descriptive statistics and inferential analysis to bring out patterns, trends, and correlations. Thematic analysis is a method that can be employed to unveil recurrent themes, patterns, or ideas related to study questions in qualitative data collected via interviews (Manderbacka & Jylhä 2000). Content analysis tools help examine the content and attributes of cosmetic material on social media platforms (e.g., the frequency of different types of content, use of influencers and brand message presence). On the whole, these data analyzing methods help reveal insights through reports that enhance understanding about how social media affects cosmetic sales.

5 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The findings of the survey are from the data I collected through survey questionnaire. I have made 16 survey questions, which are made to know the opinion and trends of the customers or buyers. I used email, weblink, whatsApp and social media channels for the survey. I emailed the link to my classmates and generic email id of our university, I asked for a help from our university social and marketing team to send the email. I shared the link on social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram etc. I sent the link to my contacts and groups in Kokkola region. In my first attempt, it was challenging to encourage the people to give their opinion or fill the survey form. But in the second attempt, I personally visited the market place, interviewed and convinced people to provide their feedback by submitting the survey. It helps in collecting and analysing the data and to know their thoughts about what is their opinion on how social media influence them in purchasing cosmetic products. Through this survey, the data we received, will get to know the customer behaviour, their interest and the trend of their purchase, which will later help customers and companies both.

5.1 Findings from the Survey

Here is a detailed summary of the findings and analysis of each question along with an explanation for each graph:

Q1. How old are you?

Number of respondents: 121

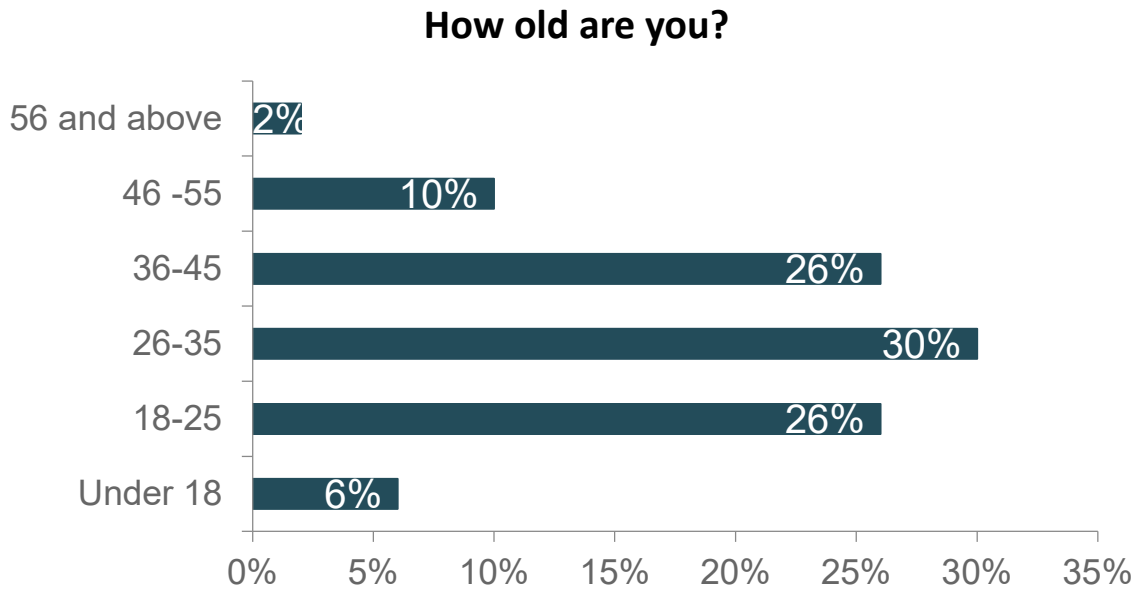


Figure 1. Age groups.

The chart illustrates the distribution of respondents across different age groups, showing a diverse range of participants from under 18 to 56 and above.

Q2. Gender

Number of respondents: 121

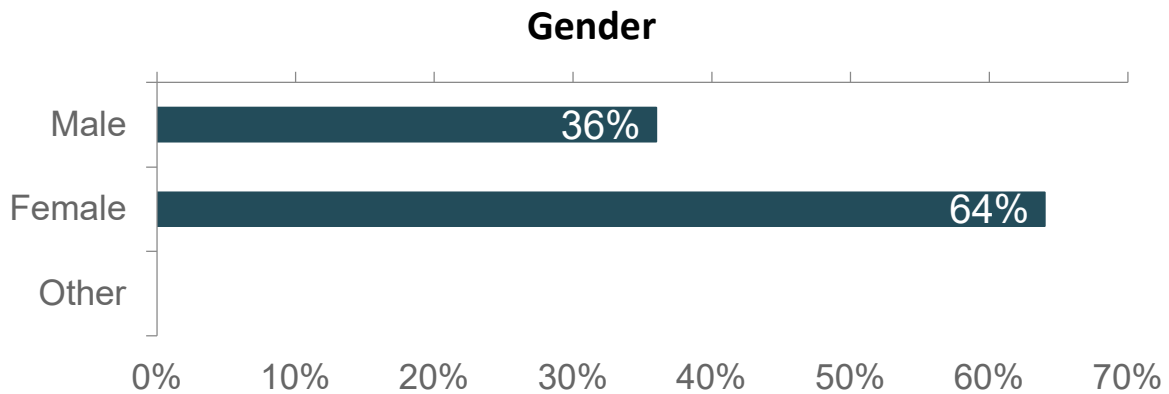


Figure 2. Genders.

The chart displays the gender distribution of respondents, indicating that 64.5% were female, 35.5% were male, and 0% identified as other.

Q3. Occupation

Number of respondents: 121

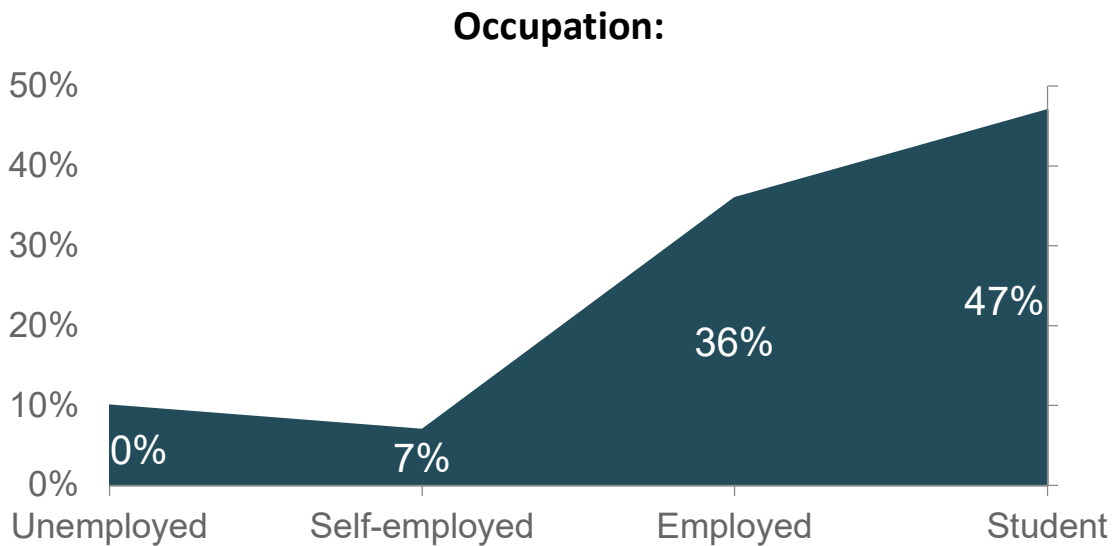


Figure 3. Occupations.

The chart showcases the occupational distribution of respondents, with a majority being students (47.1%), followed by employed individuals (35.5%), self-employed (7.5%), and unemployed (9.9%).

Q4. Place or City:

Number of respondents: 114

About 90% respondents are from Kokkola region and 10% are mix respondents (e.g. Vaasa, Tampere, and Helsinki).

Q5. How often do you purchase cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 118

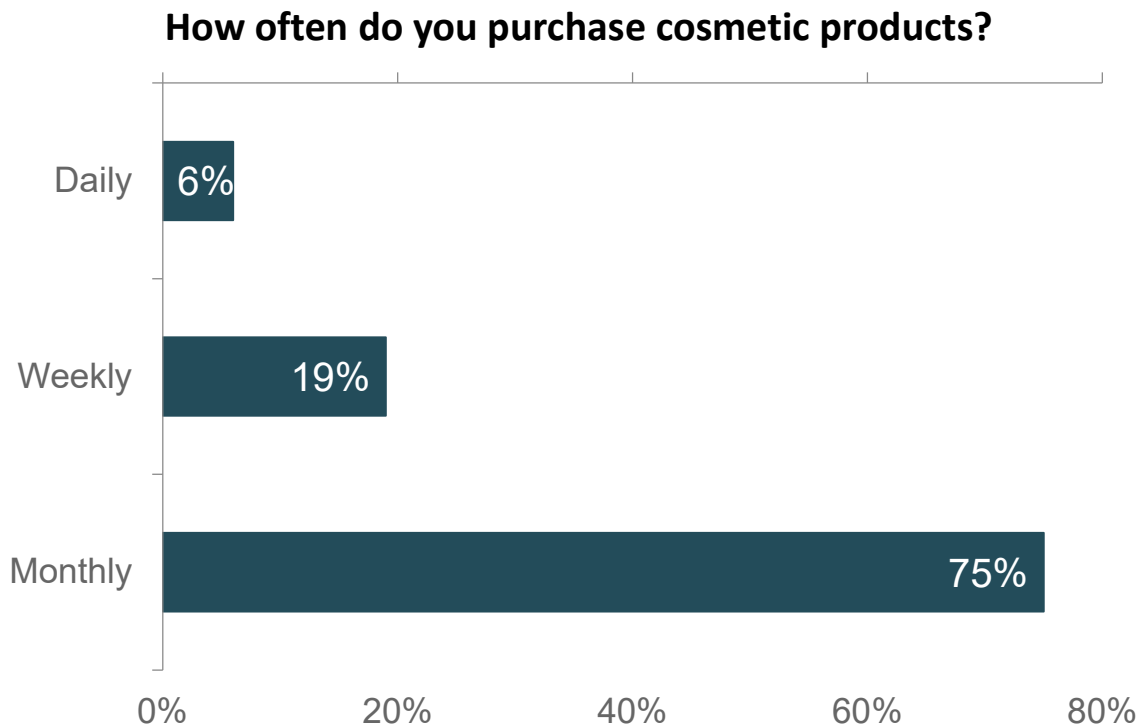


Figure 4. Purchasing frequencies.

The chart demonstrates the frequency of cosmetic product purchases among respondents, with 74.6% buying monthly, 19.5% weekly, and 5.9% daily.

Q6. Which Social media platform do you use?

Number of respondents: 121

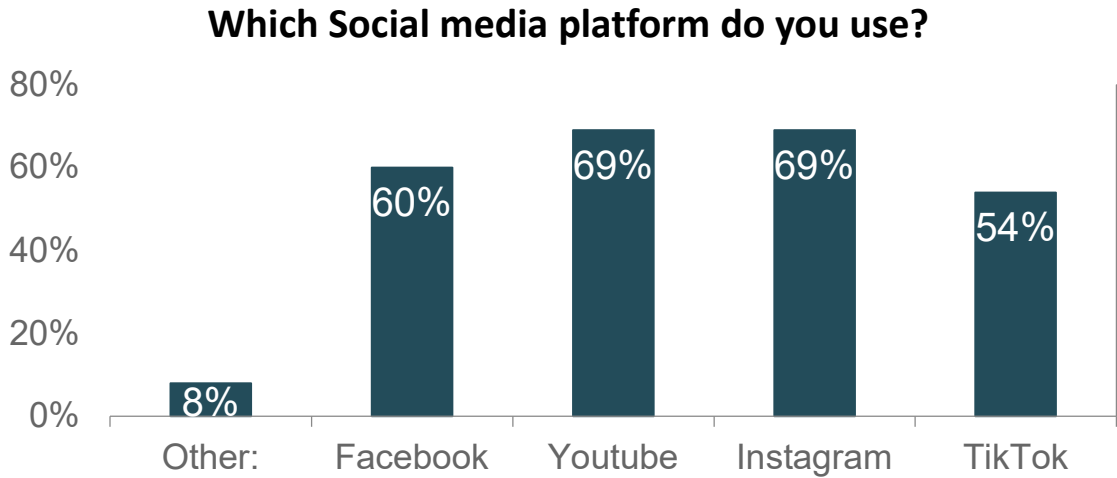


Figure 5. Social media platforms.

The chart reveals the preference for social media platforms among respondents, with TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube being the top choices.

Q7. How much time you have spent time in a week on Social media platforms:

Number of respondents: 119

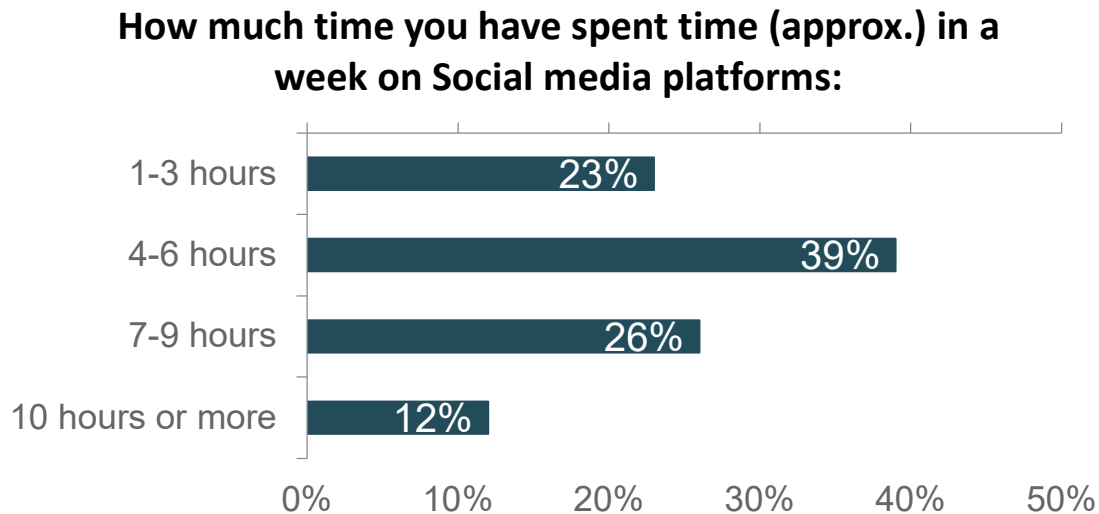


Figure 6. Time spent on social media platforms.

The chart shows the time spent by respondents on social media platforms per week, with the majority spending 4-6 hours (38.7%) and 7-9 hours (26.0%).

Q8. What influences your decision to buy cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 119

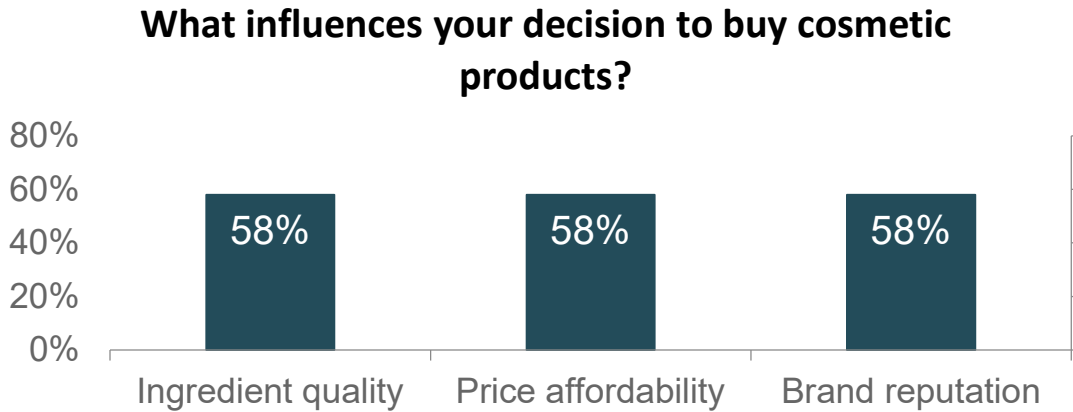


Figure 7. Factors influencing their decision to buy cosmetic products.

The chart indicates that brand reputation, price affordability, and ingredient quality equally influence respondents' decisions to buy cosmetic products.

Q9. Which type of cosmetic products do you prefer?

Number of respondents: 119

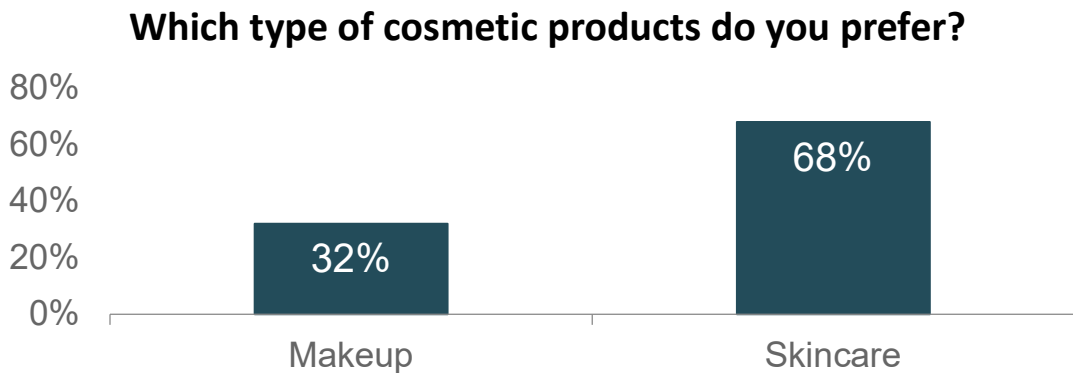


Figure 8. Types of cosmetic products.

The chart highlights that a majority of respondents prefer skincare products (68.1%) over makeup (31.9%).

Q10. Does influencer influence your decision to buy cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 119

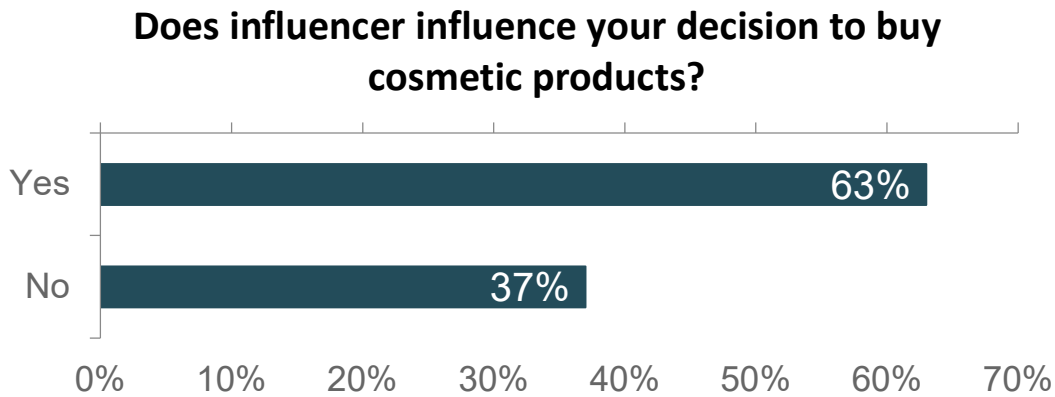


Figure 9. Answers to the question about influencer's influence on their decision to buy cosmetic products.

The chart shows that 63.0% of respondents are influenced by influencers when making cosmetic purchases.

Q11. Where do you prefer to purchase cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 119

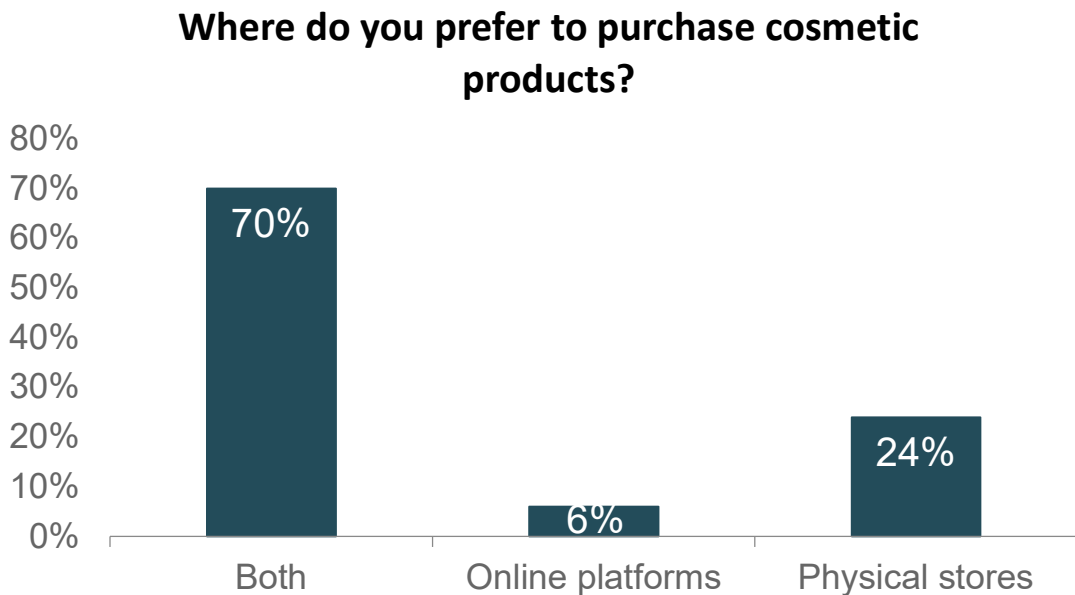


Figure 10. Places where they prefer to purchase cosmetic products.

The chart reveals that most respondents prefer purchasing cosmetic products both from physical stores (24.4%) and online platforms (5.9%).

Q12. Are you loyal to specific cosmetic brands?

Number of respondents: 117

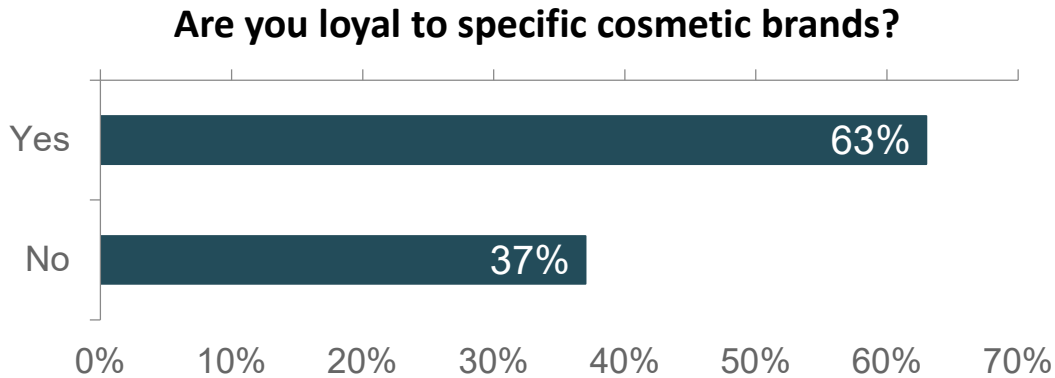


Figure 11. Answers to the question about their loyalty to specific cosmetic brands.

The chart indicates that 63.2% of respondents are loyal to specific cosmetic brands.

Q13. How do you prioritize quality versus price when buying cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 120

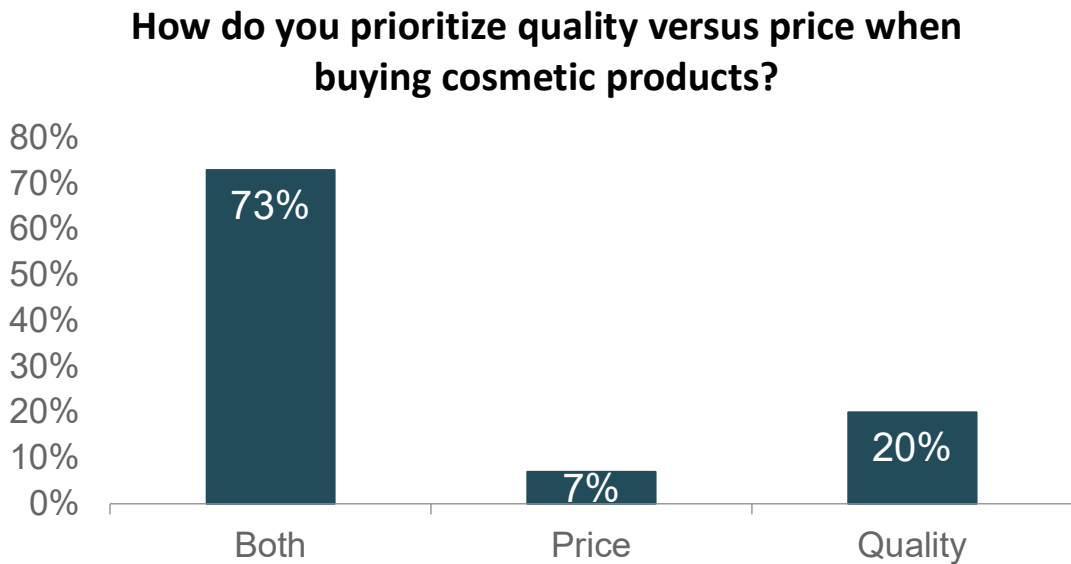


Figure 12. Answers to the question about how they prioritize quality versus price when buying cosmetic products.

The chart shows that 72.5% of respondents prioritize both quality and price when buying cosmetic products.

Q14. Do customer reviews play a role in your decision to buy cosmetic products?

Number of respondents: 118

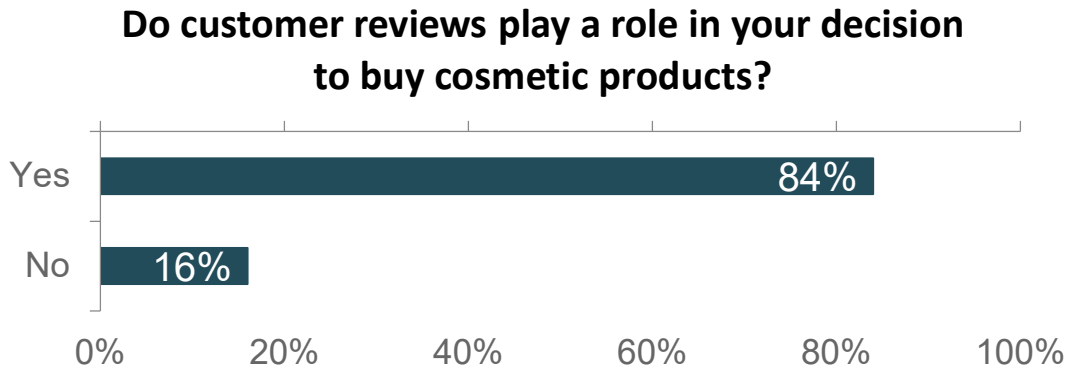


Figure 13. Answers to the question about the role of customer reviews in their decision to buy cosmetic products.

The chart demonstrates that 83.9% of respondents consider customer reviews when making cosmetic purchases.

Q15. Does celebrity endorsement affect your buying behavior for cosmetics?

Number of respondents: 119

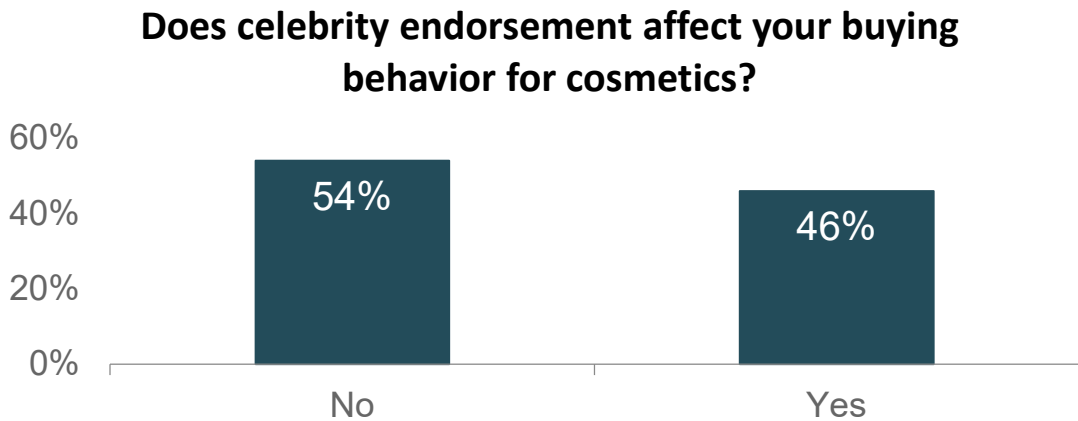


Figure 14. Answers to the question about the influence of celebrity endorsement on their buying behavior for cosmetics.

The chart reveals that 46.2% of respondents are influenced by celebrity endorsements when buying cosmetics.

Q16. How often do you try new cosmetic products or brands?

Number of respondents: 120

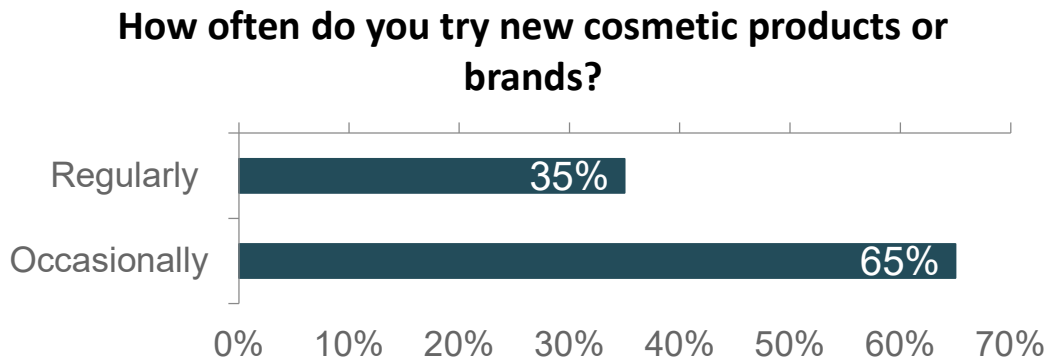


Figure 16. Answers to the question about how often they try new cosmetic products or brands.

The chart shows that 65.0% of respondents occasionally try new cosmetic products or brands, while 35.0% do so regularly.

5.2 Analysis and Discussion

This part of the thesis focuses more specifically on what empirical evidence means with respect to social media's impact on cosmetics purchasing within Kokkola city limits. It looks at vital findings from survey data and interview responses, explaining why they matter for consumers as well as businesses and scholars. For instance, studies may show that influencers can easily influence consumer purchasing decisions hence companies must devise effective influencer marketing strategies (Deloitte 2015). In addition, information about consumer preferences and activities on social media platforms may help companies design focused advertising campaigns and individualized product offerings.

This section assesses the study's theoretical contributions by determining if the empirical findings match with or contradict current theoretical frameworks in the field of social media influence and consumer behavior (Deloitte 2015). Researchers may discover new insights or subtleties that broaden or enhance current hypotheses, resulting in a better knowledge of the mechanisms by which social media influences customer perceptions, preferences, and purchase decisions. For example, research might give insight on the function of social identity theory or social cognitive theory in explaining consumer involvement with cosmetic material on social media platforms (Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş & Griffiths 2020).

The debate also addresses the results' practical consequences for cosmetic sector firms. It provides concrete tips for organizations looking to improve their digital marketing strategy and communicate with customers more effectively through social media. It is noticed that Instagram and YouTube are among the most in use as a social media platform. Businesses, for example, may benefit from collaborating with influencers whose beliefs are consistent with their brand identity and target audience. They may also be urged to invest in user-generated content and interactive features to develop genuine customer connections and increase brand loyalty.

Finally, the discussion section recommends future research directions based on the gaps and limitations discovered in the current study. Researches might provide some new topics of investigation or ways of studying social media influence on cosmetics buying. For instance, further studies could analyze the effectiveness of diverse influencer marketing strategies as well as the effect of emerging social media platforms on customer purchasing habits. This part suggests areas for future research that could increase existing academic discourse on social media impact and consumer behavior within the cosmetic industry.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion presents a succinct summary of important findings derived from empirical studies done in this study. Recapitulating survey data analysis results, interview responses through survey, and review literature findings are also highlighted there. For example, main findings can comprise such aspects as significant influence exerted by social media upon consumers' decisions making regarding purchasing in beauty products sector; pivotal role played by influencers and user-generated content affecting buyers' preferences, and the impacts of these findings on corporate entities and consumers within Kokkola city. By highlighting the key findings, the conclusion emphasizes the importance and relevance of the conducted studies.

The conclusion of this section highlights how the study advances knowledge in social media influence on consumer behavior. It discusses how empirical discoveries contribute to current theoretical frameworks or augment them or even repudiate them as well. For instance, by studying how social media affects consumer perceptions and behaviours in beauty industry, new insights into contemporary consumer culture complexities may be obtained by this research project. Through elaborating on such contributions, therefore, it stresses the value of this scientific inquiry for future explorations.

In its concluding remarks, it recapitulates with thoughts about what else this study implies for a larger context and what other areas can be covered in future research works or practical applications. It focuses on why ongoing research in this area is crucial to keeping pace with changing scenarios in social media and customer behavior patterns. Moreover, recommendations also be given towards firms which would prefer to develop their digital marketing tactics based on social digital platforms by interacting with the influencers and analysing the results. The observation from this study is that 74,6% of the respondents to the survey from the Kokkola region accepted that they are influenced by the social media influencers and read old customers' feedback or reviews before purchasing cosmetics products. This means that social media influences the customer a lot in their decision-making and buying preferences. Companies have to plan their marketing strategies in such a way that their marketing team follow the influencers or can hire the trending influencers and read customers' reviews or feedback before launching a new product and entering a new market. This study can be used in small or big businesses, other geographical areas and other products. This will help companies to analyse and monitor data to understand the con-

sumer trends, preferences and what are the factors that influence customer decision-making. The conclusion draws the study to a close by giving concluding observations and suggestions while also pointing to areas for future research and implementation.

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APPENDIX 1

1. How old are you?

- Under 18
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46 -55
- 56 and above

2. Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. Occupation:

- Student
- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed

4. Place or city: _____

5. How often do you purchase cosmetic products?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly

6. Which Social media platform do you use?

- TikTok
- Instagram
- Youtube
- Facebook
- Other:

7. How much time you have spent time (approx.) in a week on Social media platforms:

- 1-3 hours
- 4-6 hours
- 7-9 hours
- 10 hours or more

8. What influences your decision to buy cosmetic products?

- Brand reputation
- Price affordability
- Ingredient quality

9. Which type of cosmetic products do you prefer?

- Skincare
- Makeup

10. Does influencer influence your decision to buy cosmetic products?

- Yes
- No

11. Where do you prefer to purchase cosmetic products?

- Physical stores
- Online platforms
- Both

12. Are you loyal to specific cosmetic brands?

- Yes
- No

13. How do you prioritize quality versus price when buying cosmetic products?

- Quality
- Price
- Both

14. Do customer reviews play a role in your decision to buy cosmetic products?

- Yes
- No

15. Does celebrity endorsement affect your buying behavior for cosmetics?

- Yes
- No

16. How often do you try new cosmetic products or brands?

- Regularly
- Occasionally