



Digital influence and purchasing decisions among millennials: evidence from fashion and beauty

Influencia digital y decisión de compra en millennials: evidencia en moda y belleza

Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón¹  

Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos¹  

Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui¹  

Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas¹  

¹ Universidad Nacional de San Martín, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas. Tarapoto, Perú.

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Corresponding Author: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón 

ABSTRACT

Introduction: the article examined international, national, and local evidence on the impact of influencers—mainly on Instagram—on young people's purchasing decisions, with a focus on fashion and beauty. It reviewed theses and articles that used qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches to examine how the trust, credibility and familiarity projected by content creators guided consumer choices and strengthened brand recognition. **Development:** it identified that international studies confirmed a significant influence of influencers on purchase intent and behaviour, while national and local studies showed influencers as strategic partners who provided information on prices and promotions, reduced doubts and presented trends. It also showed that Instagram operated as the main consultation platform, complemented by YouTube and Facebook. It was described that influence acted throughout the decision-making process: from recognising a need and searching for information to evaluating alternatives and purchasing/post-purchase, mitigating perceived risks (performance, financial, social and psychological). Among millennials, engagement—measured by reach, interaction and positive evaluation—functioned as a proxy for persuasive effectiveness and loyalty building. **Conclusion:** the findings supported the conclusion that influencer marketing was effective in driving visibility, consideration and conversion among young consumers. It was recommended to prioritise collaborations with micro- and macro-influencers aligned with positioning, define performance metrics (weighted engagement, referral traffic and conversion) and ensure advertising transparency. Possible limitations such as sampling bias and platform dependency were noted, so it was proposed to expand product categories and incorporate longitudinal designs to strengthen generalisation and model mediations such as trust and perceived quality.

Keywords: Influencers; Instagram; Millennials; Purchase Decision; Fashion.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el artículo examinó evidencia internacional, nacional y local sobre la incidencia de los influencers —principalmente en Instagram— en la decisión de compra de jóvenes, con foco en moda y belleza. Revisó tesis y artículos que abordaron, mediante enfoques cualitativos, cuantitativos y mixtos, cómo la confianza, la credibilidad y la familiaridad proyectadas por los creadores de contenido orientaron las elecciones de los consumidores y fortalecieron el reconocimiento de marca. **Desarrollo:** identificó que los estudios internacionales confirmaron una influencia significativa de los influencers en la intención y el comportamiento de compra, mientras que los trabajos nacionales y locales mostraron a los influencers como socios estratégicos que informaron sobre precios y promociones, redujeron dudas y presentaron tendencias. Asimismo, evidenció que Instagram operó como principal plataforma de consulta, complementada por YouTube y Facebook. Se describió que la influencia actuó a lo largo del proceso de decisión: desde el reconocimiento de necesidad y la búsqueda de información hasta la valoración de alternativas y la compra/poscompra, atenuando riesgos percibidos (de desempeño, financieros, sociales y psicológicos). Entre millennials, el engagement —medido por alcance, interacción y valoración positiva— funcionó como proxy de eficacia persuasiva y de construcción de lealtad. **Conclusión:** el conjunto de hallazgos respaldó que el marketing de influencia resultó efectivo para impulsar visibilidad, consideración y conversión en jóvenes consumidores. Se recomendó priorizar colaboraciones con micro y macroinfluencers alineados al posicionamiento, definir métricas de desempeño (engagement ponderado, tráfico referido y conversión) y asegurar transparencia publicitaria. Se señaló como límites posibles sesgos de muestreo y dependencia de plataformas, por lo que se propuso ampliar categorías de producto e incorporar diseños longitudinales para robustecer la generalización y modelar mediaciones como confianza y calidad percibida.

Palabras clave: Influencers; Instagram; Millennials; Decisión de Compra; Moda.

INTRODUCTION

At the international level

Cáceres et al.(1) in their thesis: *The Impact of Instagram Influencers on the Clothing Purchase Decision of Young People*. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad Argentina de la Empresa. Buenos Aires, Argentina. Its general objective was to determine the influence of influencers on the clothing purchase decision of young people who use social networks, specifically Instagram. For the development of this research, a qualitative exploratory approach was used through triangulation, using interviews, surveys, and questionnaires with 344 people who use Instagram regularly. This study concluded that influencers have a significant influence on the clothing purchase decision of young people, verifying that companies that invested in online advertising on Instagram obtained greater recognition among people and increased their sales level.

Pérez et al.(2), in their research: *Influencer marketing in fashion. Study of the new consumption model on Instagram among university millennials*. (scientific article) Its purpose was to understand the fundamental digital marketing strategies in fashion companies and to analyze the interaction processes between influencers and young university millennials who use Instagram. For this purpose, 1 study was developed that involved 2 phases: in the 1st phase, the content of comments made by users on 48 posts by macro and micro influencers for the brands Garnier, Marie Dalgar, Freshlycosmetics, L'Oreal, Awlab, and Puma was analyzed; and in the second phase, a survey was conducted with a sample of people born between 1982 and 1999, users of Instagram and other social media who are interested in fashion and beauty consumption. The study concluded that influencers are an attractive point for university millennials and Instagram constitutes a consultation platform, where the most important factor is the figure of the influencer for the dissemination of the product and brand in the field of fashion. This research was taken into account because it serves as a guide in the interaction processes between influencers and followers.

Pérez et al.(3) in their thesis: *Influencer engagement, a communication strategy that connects with the millennial generation*. (Undergraduate thesis). University of Alicante. Alicante, Spain. Its objective was to understand the effectiveness of communication with Influencers or influencer engagement as a marketing technique. For the development of this research, a qualitative approach at an exploratory-descriptive level was considered, classified as a systematic review. This study concluded that influencer engagement is an increasingly frequent and effective strategy because influencers share content, have personality, have become professionals in prominence and reputation on social networks, and have a highly segmented target audience. It was appropriate to consider this research, since, by consisting of a systematic review and being exploratory and descriptive in approach, it offers a solid theoretical basis for the present research.

At the national level, Cortegana et al.(4), in their thesis: *"Influencers in the purchase decision of sports fashion: study of the consumption of Adidas, Nike, and Puma brands by millennials in Lima"*. (Undergraduate thesis). Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Lima, Peru. They set out as a general objective to analyze the relationship between Adidas, Nike, and Puma influencers and the purchase determinants used in the adapted model of Bae, Pyun, and Lee. For this purpose, they developed 1 study with qualitative and quantitative approaches, using tools such as a focus group with 10 people, virtual ethnographic observation, semi-structured interviews, and in-depth interviews. On the other hand, they also used quantitative-approach tools through surveys administered to 350 people. The study concluded that the factors "price," "habit," "attractive trends," and "confusion" are related to the influencer because the latter makes prices and discounts known; creates and displays fashion trends, resolves consumers' doubts, and provides recommendations. Finally, the influencer proves to be a strategic partner of the company because it generates loyalty between the consumer and the brand. This research was taken into account because it allows for understanding the phenomenon in the country and in the sector, in addition to providing empirical knowledge about this new marketing strategy that has been studied at the national level for only a short time.

Rodríguez et al.(5), in their thesis *Digital Influencers, a Key Element in the Purchase Decision for Makeup Products among Millennials from NSE A and B in Zone 7 of Metropolitan Lima*. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas. Lima, Peru. Its objective was to identify the role played by digital influencers in the purchase decision for makeup products among millennials from NSE A and B in Zone 7 of Metropolitan Lima. To this end, they conducted a study with a mixed, qualitative, and quantitative approach. The sample comprises 385 women aged 18 to 35 years from socioeconomic levels A and B in Zone 7 of Metropolitan Lima. In the first qualitative research stage, they conducted in-depth interviews and a focus group; and in the second quantita-

tive research stage, they conducted surveys. In this study, it was concluded that digital influencers are an important factor with respect to the makeup purchase decision among millennials, and it was found that the 3 most important variables are: the valuation of trust and satisfaction generated by influencers, purchase due to promotion and brand prestige; and finally, purchase due to quality and connection with celebrities. This research was considered because it allowed identifying key factors such as valuation of trust, satisfaction generated by influencers, promotion, and quality in the purchase decision. These qualities could have scope, also considering garments.

Fernández (6), in their undergraduate thesis, *Impact of fashion bloggers on the purchasing decision of clothing from independent design brands among young women from Lima*. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas. Lima, Peru. Its objective was to analyze the impact of considering fashion bloggers as one marketing strategy, specifically for Peruvian independent design clothing brands. To achieve this purpose, a correlational-level study with a mixed-methods approach was developed. The sample consisted of 384 young women from Lima aged 18 to 25 who followed fashion bloggers and belonged to socioeconomic levels A and B of metropolitan Lima. It was concluded that, thanks to technological advances, new communication channels, such as social media, have been generated that make it possible to meet consumer demand. In this way, fashion bloggers constitute an effective factor for the growth of independent design clothing brands in Peru. It is advisable to take this research into account due to the way the research is approached, considering the participation of 3 important agents: a fashion blogger, an entrepreneur with an independent design clothing brand, and a group of young women from Lima interested in fashion, using the snowball sampling technique, through which the initially selected participants propose and help find the remaining members of the sample. Its results will be useful for contrasting with the present study's own results.

Núñez et al.(7) in their thesis: *Influencers on the Social Network Instagram and Their Impact on the Purchase Decision of Fashion Items among Millennials in the Social Sciences Area of the Universidad Nacional de San Agustín de Arequipa in the First Semester of 2019*, Metropolitan Arequipa. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad Nacional de San Agustín de Arequipa. Arequipa, Peru. Its purpose was to establish the incidence of influencers, considered new actors, in the purchase decision of fashion apparel. For this purpose, a descriptive-correlational study with a non-experimental cross-sectional design was developed, applying one questionnaire to 388 students belonging to the millennial generation. This study concluded that millennials consider the opinion and recommendation of influencers when deciding to purchase one fashion item. In addition, they consider that these new actors improve the positioning and sales of fashion brands. This research was considered because, in addition to verifying the influence of influencers on the purchase decision, it considers that these referents are also responsible for brand positioning.

Farfán et al.(8) in their thesis *Consumption influenced by social media and its relationship with psychodemographic variables, case of followers of Peruvian fashion bloggers*. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola. Lima, Peru. Its objective was to verify whether there is a relationship between consumption preferences influenced by social media and one set of psychodemographic variables, obtained from Twitter and YouTube for followers of Peruvian fashion and style influencers. To achieve this purpose, a mixed-methods research study was developed in two stages. The first stage consisted of collecting the opinions of followers of Peruvian fashion bloggers, and the second stage is based on numerical data collected from a group of Twitter users. Additionally, focus groups were considered for 10 participants and online surveys to 384 women followers of influencers. It was concluded that there is indeed an inverse association between consumption influenced by social media and the leadership of fashion and style influencers recognized by female followers on Twitter.

Falla (9) in their thesis, *Peruvian digital fashion influencers and their relationship with fashion brands: analysis of interactions with their followers on social networks*. (Undergraduate thesis). Universidad de Piura. Piura, Peru. Its purpose was to review influencer marketing actions among the most important digital fashion influencers in Peru. For this purpose, a quantitative research study was developed, in which registration forms would be carried out and a social media measurement and monitoring tool called Quántico Trends would be used. At the end of the research, it is concluded that the power of the digital fashion influencer depends on the reach they have, the number of interactions with their followers, and the positive ratings of their comments. It is also concluded that Instagram is the platform from which influencers obtain a greater number of followers every day.

At the regional and local levels

In their thesis *El marketing mix y su relación con la decisión de compra de clientes de la empresa Representaciones Montero EIRL-Tarapoto, 2015* (Tesis de pregrado). Universidad Nacional de San Martín. Tarapoto, Perú, Carrillo et al.(10) aimed to determine the association between the marketing mix comprising the 4 P's (product, price, promotion, and place) and the purchase decision of the customers of the aforementioned company. For this purpose, a correlational, non-experimental study was conducted, using a survey with questions related to the marketing mix and the purchase decision, administered to 57 customers. This research concluded that low and competitive prices positively influence consumers' purchase decision; furthermore, the communication strategy should consist of good personal communication, "word-of-mouth communication", and should be bidirectional, honest, and positive. Finally, the most important factors in purchasing behavior are social factors, cultural factors, and the technological factor. This study demonstrates the importance of communication strategies in consumer purchasing behavior. For this reason, it is important that the brand knows where and when to communicate messages to its target audience, the best time to promote it, and how competitor companies promote.

DEVELOPMENT

Use of influencers

The use of influencers is a marketing tool and a social relationship resource that brands can count on to achieve their goals. An influencer is a person with the power to exert dominance in other people's purchasing decisions; not only because of their authority or knowledge but also because of the relationship they have with their followers. They can be celebrities, industry experts and intellectuals, bloggers and content creators, as well as micro-influencers. Celebrities were the original influencers with an important role, but with a participation that has been decreasing; industry experts and intellectuals are those whose position or opinion on a given brand is important due to their certifications, position or experience in some specialty sector; and bloggers or micro-influencers represent the majority of the influencer marketing group and have a space on social networks. The latter type is being recognized and valued by brands due to the close, authentic and active relationship with their followers.(11)

Díaz (12) argues that influencers play a significant role in certain segments in their purchasing decision-making; these individuals are characterized as opinion leaders, with the ability to exert influence over decision-making. They constitute the central element that communicates or connects the brand with the consumer, thus becoming an important asset in the digital medium. Influencers, moreover, are characterized by the following traits: their communication capacity, because they convey a message with natural, simple, and effective language; their familiarity, because they create trust with their community of followers and because of their expertise in a given subject; and their knowledge, which they can demonstrate through their publications. Their main function is to filter the zettabytes of data generated to make it digestible for consumers, and they work with brands through 2 forms: earned influencer marketing, in which there is direct interaction between the influencer and the product, that is, the influencer uses and enjoys the product; and paid influencer marketing, in which they are used to persuade consumers to consume a product or service.

According to LID de Marketing Directo (13), the use of influencers allows information about products or services to be generated with the help of social networks. Influencers generally specialize in a topic or category and frequently interact and share opinions and ideas with other users (14). They exert an impact on fashion, beauty, or lifestyles and are capable of mobilizing thousands of followers, conditioning purchase decisions, and setting the pace on the network. Influencers are bloggers, celebrities, YouTubers, etc., who use social networks and have become dominant figures in online marketing because of their large number of followers and interactions. Rebate (15) argues that they are accessible and authentic people who are credible on a specific topic and act as prescribers of a trend. In turn, Ramos (11) states that they are people who generate content that can be framed within the concept of testimonial advertising. Their main quality is the ability to convey sincerity, naturalness, and closeness to their followers. Likewise, they can be considered third parties in the supply chain, such as retailers, manufacturers, etc., or, as they are also called, value-added influencers, such as journalists, professional advisors, industry analysts, and academics.

Most frequently used social media platforms by influencers

According to a study carried out by Ipsos (2018), the social networks most used by Peruvians are Facebook (92%), Whatsapp (64%), Twitter (23%) and Instagram (14%). Datum International (2018) states that 94% of companies use social networks as a means of communication, 43.2% use them to serve their customers and 21.6% are looking to venture into these platforms.

The most popular social networks used by influencers, in order, are as follows: Instagram, where 2 types of posts are made: wall posts, which are permanent, and stories, which last only 24 hours. Both types can display content sponsored by brands, with the latter being more successful for advertising. Second is YouTube, the leading platform in video format, where many brands choose to sponsor their products. Finally, Facebook is included, as it is the social network most used by Peruvians.

The Importance of Using Influencers

The importance of using influencers lies in their ability to influence their followers' decisions. Because their position or opinion serves as a reference, brands consider them important for establishing collaboration agreements in order to improve brand positioning. Focusing on one person has a greater impact than a simple advertisement or the inbound or content marketing that a brand can produce; moreover, it offers the company access to an audience that would otherwise be impossible to reach. The most important aspect of the relationship between the influencer and their audience is the trust and transparency that the former conveys. In this way, influencers generate various benefits for the company, such as the reputation they can contribute to its brand or business, access to their community through different platforms, and authority regarding their opinions in their communities' purchasing decisions.⁽¹⁶⁾

Reality becomes visible through statistical data. In a study conducted in Spain in 2018, it was found that 9 out of 10 consumers have purchased a product on the recommendation of one influencer, and this is even more evident in the fashion and consumer technology sectors.⁽¹⁷⁾ This finding is verified in the statement by Socialpubli, which highlights the significant importance of influencers in fashion, where it has completely altered the public's perception, not only with proposals for "daily outfits" but also with the way clothing is purchased. Influencers, making use of social media, are the main source of information about the latest news from different brands. In this way, followers have the opportunity to see the reviews and the score of different garments, fully trusting the recommendations and opinions of the influencer.

The importance of fashion influencers lies in the fact that they constitute a fundamental piece for a brand to reach its target audience. A brand should have the figure of an influencer for the following reasons: first, their videos and comments are not considered direct advertising because their followers feel identified with their tastes and affinities; second, it is possible to see the product and learn its characteristics, thus the community can see the texture, usefulness, and quality, and above all can see another person using it; third, they use colloquial language similar to that of a friend when advising you about a product; fourth, they humanize your brand thanks to active communication with their followers; fifth, they increase the number of potential customers; and, finally, sixth, they improve the brand's online reputation because they are the ones who comment on positive aspects of a brand or company.⁽¹⁸⁾

Consumer behavior

Consumer behavior consists of the study of the various factors involved when people choose, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, or ideas to satisfy their needs and desires. Its main focus is understanding human beings, their needs, desires, emotions, etc. To this end, it seeks to understand the reasons why a consumer decides to purchase a specific product category, as well as to identify the rational and emotional processes when selecting a brand ⁽¹⁹⁾.

According to Alvarado, López, & García, consumer behavior refers to the study of the processes involved in the choice, purchase, and consumption of people's products and services for the satisfaction of their desires and needs. It consists of a complex activity, since it is influenced by a large number of internal and external factors, such as cultural, social, and psychological factors. For its part, Hotmart maintains that consumer behavior changes according to the era and social context. Currently, the ten main characteristics of today's consumer are the following: they seek solutions to their problems on the internet, they do not like being bombarded with advertising, they compare brands to better evaluate cost-benefit, they prefer to make purchases without much bureaucracy, they want to feel part of a community, they consider it important to know other people's opinions about a product, they are interested in learning about new market trends, they are influenced by

people they admire, they take care of ecologically correct products by avoiding waste, and they consider security important when making a purchase.

Purchase decision process

Talaya, as cited in Martínez,(20) maintains that the purchase decision process comprises four phases: the first is recognition of the need, which consists of identifying the problem that generates the need; the second is the consumer's search for information, in which the consumer, upon becoming aware of the existence of a lack, reviews information both internally (past experiences and own knowledge) and externally (information from friends and family or specialized media); the third phase is the evaluation of alternatives, where the consumer evaluates the different possibilities available for making the purchase according to the identified criteria and their individual beliefs, establishing attitudes that determine purchase intention and behavior. Lastly, the fourth phase is the purchase decision and evaluation, which occurs after selecting the most suitable option among the alternatives, where the consumer acquires the product or service and begins the feedback process related to the evaluation of the purchase made, and which serves as a supporting factor for future purchase decisions.

Dimensions of the purchase decision

This is among the most decisive phases of the purchasing process, since it is the stage at which the person will decide whether or not to make the purchase. This is the most relevant and complex link in the process, the end of a mental journey aimed at making the right choice, because after the purchase is completed, all that remains is to assume the risks and make an assessment through consumption. Different factors come into play in the purchase decision. Each of these dimensions that form part of the questionnaire is described below.

Pre-purchase evaluation

Sheth argues that pre-purchase evaluation is made up of fully planned purchase (the product and brand were already chosen prior to the moment of purchase); partially planned purchase (the consumer has already decided which product to buy, but the brand will be determined at the moment of making the final purchase); and unplanned purchase, which occurs when the consumer decides the product and the brand to buy at the point of sale itself.

Attitude of the social environment

Azjen states that the attitudes of other people who are part of the social environment could also have implications when deciding to purchase a product. Depending on the consideration or admiration that the consumer feels toward that person, it could reduce or reinforce the consumer's preference for a certain brand.

Conjunctural factors

Made up of work, the consumer's income level, product expectations, as well as affective situation, these are factors that form part of the conjuncture that could also have effects on the purchase decision.

Risk assessment

Taylor, for his part, argued that the buyer may perceive risks that could lead to changes in their purchase decision. 5 types of risks are usually considered: performance risk, when the product does not fulfill the expected function; financial risk because there is no coherence between the high price and the value offered by the product; physical risk, since the use or consumption of the product could cause harm to health or the environment; social risk when the consumer's family members or close contacts do not approve of the purchase; and psychological risk when the consumer is not satisfied or feels very bad for having made the purchase.

Definition of basic terms

Conative or behavioral component

The behavioral component is defined by Schiffman et al.(21) as the predisposition to action experienced by the individual, being the last component of the attitude model, which refers to the

probability or tendency for an individual to perform a specific action or behavior toward the brand.

Purchase decision

It is conceptualized as the procedure for collecting and processing data to evaluate and select the best possible option in order to solve a problem and make a decision at the time of purchase.(22)

Facebook

It is a social network that has allowed millions of users to interact with each other around the world; it was created by Mark Zuckerberg and was a means for students to identify themselves and help each other.

Generation

It refers to people who, according to their date of birth, may belong to a type of generation; the initial period of a birth range that ends with the decline of the birth range is considered a generation.

Influencers Mglobal (16) argues that influencers, also referred to as influential marketing, are people who have emerged from their YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Blogs, Facebook channels, among others, capable of achieving popularity or visibility for a brand. These individuals have gained credibility thanks to their figure and specialization in a certain category. This credibility and trust have led them to become brand ambassadors, making their role increasingly important in companies' marketing plans.

Instagram

It is an online community whose objective is to provide a space for people to communicate through stories by means of photos; it is currently a tool widely used by companies to interact with their target audience.(23)

Social media marketing

Social media marketing refers to the process of obtaining website traffic or attention through social media sites. Social media marketing programs generally focus on creating content that attracts attention and encourages readers to share it with their social networks.(24)

Millennials

BBVA (25) defines the term "Millennials" as the group of young people born from the 80s onward who are part of a digital and hyperconnected generation. These young people are characterized by being multiscreen consumers (capable of engaging with several platforms simultaneously); being prepared and entrepreneurial, who not only aspire to obtain university degrees and stable employment, but are also willing to undertake ventures with innovative ideas; being tolerant and social with a critical and demanding sense, being aware of the global situation and having values such as transparency, collaboration, commitment, and tolerance.

According to Comunicaweb (26), millennials or Generation Y share the following characteristics: they are highly qualified, with higher education and command of languages; they have high purchasing power due to their high educational level; they are fully connected since they are part of technological change; they tend to reward their satisfaction with a given brand by offering it loyalty; and, finally, they are demanding in their purchasing decision. For its part, Cegos Online University (27) maintains that millennials tend to have an optimistic, open, heterogeneous character, with academic training and a style of their own, and this is reflected in their high consumption of leisure and technology. This is a segment that translates the consumption of products into a way of getting to know others and defining their own personality. In addition, it considers that the most important thing is not the products or services themselves but the brand and the message it conveys.

According to Umaña, millennials are part of an Americanized model of young people in their 20s characterized by being born in free democracies, having encouraging parents, and growing up in a context full of opportunities for advancement. This generation is characterized by connectivity and access to the internet; however, there are economic and social gaps that mark differences within this group. This author also proposes 5 types of millennials: the connected, who see access to connectivity as useful and part of their context; the idealists, who see the global context as an opportunity to change the world; the teachies, with active participation through technology; the

old school, with values similar to those of previous generations; and finally, the limited, whose main motivation is survival, since they may have limited access to education, connectivity, and work.

Influencers and millennials

Millennials are individuals who guide their purchasing decisions according to social media. They are fickle, versatile, and volatile in their consumption choices. For this reason, brands need an alliance with influencers to achieve “engagement” or commitment with consumers.(25) Influencers are part of an important segment because this segment allows the creation of marketing strategies, with fashion, technology, and consumer products being the most relevant sectors. Because social media are one of the main media and millennials are the main Internet consumers, solid and active communication can be established between both parties.(27) Thus, the role of influencers is increasingly significant, reflecting millennials’ use of them for communication purposes. There are 4 reasons why young people follow influencers: inspiration and aspiration, proximity, learning about new trends, and interesting and entertaining content. The first characteristic is that millennials perceive influencers as a positive change for society because of the message they convey; the second is the desire to be close to a person they admire; the third is the need to stay fashionable; and finally, the fourth is the pursuit of entertainment.

YouTube

It is an online platform that belongs to the services of Google Inc. It is the most popular platform for uploading videos; various types of videos can be uploaded to it, including educational, comedic, sports, news, and gameplays, among others. In turn, this platform also offers the option to conduct live streams, or “lives,” easily. It is a very simple platform to use, since with a Google or Gmail account, users can access it and upload their own content (videos) at any time.(28)

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CONCLUSIONS

The synthesized evidence consistently demonstrates that influencers—especially on Instagram and, to a lesser extent, YouTube and Facebook—significantly influence the purchasing decisions of young consumers, with particular strength in fashion and beauty categories. The reviewed international and national studies, using mixed and qualitative approaches, converged on the finding that trust, perceived credibility, familiarity, and authenticity of the influencer operate as triggers of attention and persuasion, while variables such as price, habit, attractive trends, reduced confusion, and brand prestige mediate conversion. At the local level, it was corroborated that the influencer acts as a strategic partner by expanding recognition, stimulating sales, and strengthening loyalty, while facilitating the exploration and evaluation of alternatives during the decision-making process.

From the perspective of consumer behavior, influence is integrated into the classic stages (need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and decision/post-purchase), providing social signals and quality heuristics that reduce perceived risks (performance, financial, social, and psychological). Among millennials, who are highly connected and oriented toward digital communities, “engagement” functions as an operational indicator of effectiveness: reach, interaction, and positive evaluation sustain the influencer’s prescriptive capacity. The curatorial function of content—reviews, usage demonstrations, and recommendations—turns these actors into informational filters that narrow asymmetries between brand and audience.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest prioritizing collaborations with micro- and macroinfluencers aligned with the positioning and specific segments, establishing clear metrics (weighted engagement, referral traffic, and conversion), and ensuring advertising transparency and ethical appropriateness. It is advisable to combine organic and paid content and to design attribution experiments that distinguish short-term (visibility) and medium-term (loyalty) effects. Limitations include self-selection bias in the sample, platform dependence, and algorithmic variability; therefore, future research should expand product categories, incorporate longitudinal designs, and model mediations (trust, perceived quality) and moderations (NSE, gender, influencer type) to strengthen the external validity of the results.

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AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Data curation: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Formal analysis: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Investigation: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Methodology: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Project administration: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Software: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Supervision: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Validation: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Visualization: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Writing – original draft: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.

Writing – review and editing: Julio Manuel Sanchez-Alarcón, Gleiser Yoshrlin Chávez-Campos, Seidy Janice Vela-Reátegui, Pierre Vidaurre-Rojas.