

Study on the Influence of KOLs' Evaluation Posts of Cosmetics in Little Red Book on Consumers' Purchasing Willingness

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Abstract: The improvement in the quality of contemporary living standards has given rise to the rapid development of the beauty industry. A wide range of beauty products provides consumers with the freedom of choice. Meanwhile, it creates barriers for consumers to choose products to a certain extent. To solve the problem and give consumers a better purchasing experience, KOLs of beauty products show the effect by personally testing beauty products to show product effect, giving consumers a reference to buy their favourite beauty products. Nowadays, it has become prevalent for consumers to search for and refer to the review posts of KOLs on media platforms to make purchasing decisions before buying beauty products. With the development of the Little Red Book, it has gradually become a mature "sharing + shopping" online media platform, which is also favored by more and more young people. This paper studies the influence of KOLs' evaluation posts in the platform on consumers' purchasing intention and collects data from people who have a basic understanding of beauty products and have the need to buy them through questionnaires. In doing so, whether KOLs' evaluation posts in the Little Red Book impact consumers' purchasing intention will be investigated. The paper shows that the authenticity and popularity of KOLs' evaluation posts significantly impact consumers' purchasing intention and that perceived value mediates the relationship between popularity and authenticity. It is hoped that through the paper, better suggestions can be made on the evaluation posts. Meanwhile, merchants can better consider the relevant opinions and utilize the evaluation posts to promote their products and gain long-term profits to achieve a win-win situation for both manufacturers and consumers.

Keywords: Beauty KOL S-O-R Model; Purchasing Intention.

1. Introduction

In this context, this paper cuts in from the perspective of KOLs' evaluation posts of beauty products in the Little Red Book platform to explore the influencing factors that affect consumers' willingness to buy beauty products. The rapid development of the economy has changed people's consumption concepts in modern society. With the impact of the Internet on all aspects of modern society, online opinion leaders KOL have emerged, which has triggered research and thinking by experts and scholars from various industries and fields. Based on the theoretical knowledge of communication science, psychology and other disciplines, this paper analyzes and summarizes the influencing factors of KOLs' evaluation posts on consumers' purchasing willingness, starting from the current phenomenal Internet software - Little Red Book.

This paper aims to achieve:

(1) For most consumers, a professional makeup blogger's review is usually more authoritative than the feelings shared by others. This paper examines the beauty products industry, one of the most representative industries, and explores whether the two characteristics of KOLs' evaluation posts - popularity and authenticity - have an impact on the majority of consumers to guide platforms and brands to cultivate their own KOLs to achieve the effect of promoting popularity and sales.

(2) To clarify the factors affecting consumers' purchasing willingness so that the theory can better guide the practice. From the perspective of beauty brands, consumer psychology can be better understood, and the selection opinions of KOLs for our brands can be provided.

(3) From the perspective of diverse bloggers, it can help them find their own positioning and clarify the required capabilities and consumer preferences to find the precise direction. From the standpoint of platforms, It can help improve the popularity of platforms, increasing credibility and attracting more brands and consumers.

2. Literature Review

The paper focuses on the impact of the evaluation of KOLs of beauty products in the Little Red Book on the purchasing willingness of consumers, hoping to help platforms, brands, and bloggers find better choices, improve related work and increase income through the study. Through collecting data by questionnaire, the paper analyzes the impact of the evaluation of KOLs of beauty products in Little Red Book on the purchasing willingness, playing a guiding role in choosing KOLs for the brand, choosing the right brand recommendation for platforms and traffic orientation, and deciding the future development direction for bloggers.

2.1. Evaluation Posts in Little Red Book

2.1.1. Concepts

Concepts of evaluation posts in Little Red Book: Consumers write and share their experiences and feelings about the product on the platform through purchasing it. It aims to introduce the pros and cons of the product and share the authentic feelings and degree of recommendation, thus providing more sensible purchasing decisions for other users.

2.1.2. An Introduction to the Little Red Book

Founded in Shanghai in 2013, the Little Red Book is an experience-sharing community as well as an e-commerce

platform that integrates user sharing, shopping, clothing matching, food and other content. Users share their real experiences and insights on the platform and accurately upload product content with the help of big data and platform algorithms, thus providing users with a new way of socializing and support in shopping and consumption decisions. Users have favoured the app, which has grown rapidly in recent years. And it is a platform for many young users to share their lives and make consumption decisions.

The development of Little Red Book has gone through three main stages. Initially, it was an online sharing platform to provide users with more information. In December 2013, it launched a social sharing community for tips, eventually making it a consumer decision-making portal for young users.

In the second stage, Little Red Book established and improved the community system. On the one hand, constantly pushing high-quality content that meets users' needs attracts customers and improves community construction. It also constantly improved and optimized big data and algorithms for accurate pushing, providing users a good experience. On the other hand, the backstage administrator actively encouraged users to share and produce high-quality content by modifying the platform rules and launching some favourable incentive mechanisms. The Little Red Book has attracted many users through the advantages of user participation, sharing, interaction, etc., which laid a good foundation for KOL marketing and word-of-mouth marketing [1].

In the third stage, it joined the rank of e-commerce, forming the model of content community plus e-commerce. The Little Red Book combines social sharing with online shopping and cooperates with various celebrities or KOLs to create hot topics, increase community traffic, and create explosive products, which in turn drives the development of its internal economy.

2.2. The Impact of Consumers' Purchasing Willingness

2.2.1. Concepts

Online consumption willingness refers to the subjective probability and likelihood that a consumer will finally decide whether to pay for a purchase online after browsing product or service information through an online platform. Ajzen pointed out that willingness is necessary before consumption behaviour, plays a decisive role in consumer purchasing behaviour, and is an important indicator for predicting consumer behaviour. The strength of consumers' willingness to consume is directly proportional to the likelihood of online shopping. If there is little or no desire to buy, it is unlikely to generate online consumption behaviour [2].

2.2.2. Influence Factors of Purchasing Willingness

Consumers' purchasing willingness is behavioural, and this willingness can play a controlling role in consumers' behaviour. Fishbein & Ajzen proposed that when a person engages in a behaviour, it is usually dominated by a willingness. Typically, the stronger the willingness, the greater the probability that the relevant consumption behavior will occur. In his study, Yang illustrated the intrinsic connection between the process of purchasing willingness generation and information collection, that is, consumers' purchasing willingness is a combination of their own characteristics and needs, and through the integration of a large amount of information and analysis of the final determination of the positioning of the product, and the

synthesis of the prediction of whether or not they will be willing to purchase [3].

2.3. KOL

2.3.1. The Concepts of KOL

Paul Lazarsfeld first used the term KOL in his experiments with the "Irie" polls in the U.S. presidential election. The concept has attracted a great deal of academic attention. KOL has traditionally focused on public events or the political sphere. With the development of information technology, media communication channels have become more diversified, and new KOLs have evolved. According to Liu Yuanzhen, "new KOL" not only transmit information but also influences the direction of public opinion and plays a role in guiding public opinion [4].

3. Model Path Analysis and Hypothesis Test

3.1. Model Path Analysis

In this paper, the following research model is proposed to summarize the impact of the beauty products KOLs' evaluation based on the S-O-R model of existing studies. Meanwhile, this chapter will explain each variable's significance and the study's hypotheses.

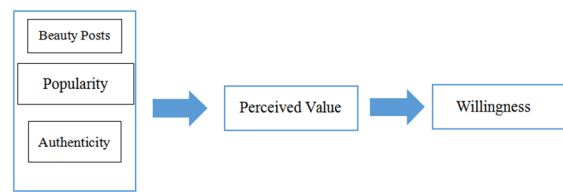


Figure 1. Research model

3.2. Defined Variable and Research Hypothesis

According to the above model, the independent variable should be the popularity and authenticity of "beauty posts", the mediating variable should be the "perceived value", and the dependent variable should be the "willingness".

(1)Hypothesis 1: the popularity of the "beauty posts"

There is a positive effect between consumers' perceptions of the popularity of the beauty evaluation posts and their willingness to purchase

(2)Hypothesis 2: the authenticity of the "beauty posts"

There is a positive effect between consumers' perceptions of the authenticity of the beauty evaluation posts and their willingness to purchase

Mediating variable perceived value hypothesis:

(1)Perceived value plays a mediating role in the perception of the popularity of beauty posts and consumers' purchase intention.

(2)Perceived value plays a mediating role between the perception of the authenticity of beauty posts and consumers' purchase intention

4. Empirical Research

4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The questionnaires for this study were sent via questionnaire stars. We collected questionnaires through QQ, WeChat, e-mail, Weibo and other channels. Finally, this paper collected 141 questionnaires. In this part, this paper will first analyze the basic demographic characteristics of the study participants with descriptive statistics using the SPSS

platform.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis of the Questionnaire

Basic Feature	Description	Frequency (people)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	81	57.4
	Male	60	42.6
Age	<18	2	1.4
	18~24	57	40.4
	25~30	46	32.6
	31~40	23	16.3
	>40	13	9.2
Education Background	≤Junior High School	4	2.8
	Senior High School	8	5.7
	Junior College	32	22.7
	Undergraduate	87	61.7
Profession	≥Postgraduate	10	7.1
	Student	40	28.4
	Self-employed/Freelancer	28	19.9
	Company Employee	61	43.3
	Civil Servant	10	7.1
Monthly Disposable Income	Others	2	1.4
	≤2000	42	29.8
	2001~3000	25	17.7
	3001~4000	35	24.8
>4000	39	27.7	

By analyzing the basic information of the respondents, women accounted for 57.4%, while men were relatively less,

accounting for 42.6%. Regarding age distribution, 18-24 years old accounted for the most 40.4%, followed by the 25-30 years old range, accounting for 32.6%. Only 1.4% were under 18 years old, 31-40 years old accounted for 16.3%, and over 40 years old accounted for 9.2%. The respondents' occupations are widely distributed, including students, civil servants, company employees, self-employed and freelancers.

4.2. Questionnaire Reliability and Validity Tests

The test of reliability and validity is a prerequisite for the empirical research of the paper. Only when the data meets the reliability and validity can the data analysis be reliable and the empirical research conclusions obtained be valid. Reliability is used to measure the consistency of a questionnaire. Generally speaking, reliability means that two different forms of the same test produce the same results. The higher the reliability, the greater the consistency. Validity is used to measure the correctness of the inferred results. The higher the validity, the more accurate the implied results.

This paper used the questionnaire star SPSSAU software to form a reliability analysis report.

Table 2. Questionnaire Reliability Analysis

Sample Size	Number of Programs	Cronbach.α
141	15	0.998

Table 3. Questionnaires Validity Analysis

Program	Factor 1	Commonality
I think the content in the "review posts" posted by beauty bloggers (or celebrities) in Little Red Book looks real and has high reference value.	0.99	0.983
I believe that bloggers (or celebrities) can explain the issues related to the products they recommend, analyze the pros and cons, and provide a visual reference for me.	0.99	0.974
The "evaluation posts" posted by beauty bloggers (or celebrities) on Little Red Book will mark the price, effect, experience feeling, etc. with pictures and text, which helps me better understand the product.	0.99	0.971
The evaluation post of bloggers(or celebrities) has a high collection and number of likes	0.99	0.979
Bloggers'(or celebrities') evaluation posts appear frequently on various platforms	0.98	0.970
Bloggers'(or celebrities') evaluation posts have a greater appeal and influence	0.99	0.980
Bloggers'(or celebrities') evaluation posts provide complete information about products	0.99	0.981
The overall descriptions of Bloggers'(or celebrities') evaluation posts are real	0.98	0.969
Bloggers'(or celebrities') evaluation posts give me a sense of reality	0.99	0.973
It's easier for me to find my favourite products through the evaluation posts of bloggers (or celebrities)	0.99	0.983
After browsing the evaluation posts of bloggers (or celebrities), I can filter the information I need, which reduces the time and energy I spend on a lot of inquiries, and enables me to make purchase decisions more effectively.	0.99	0.972
After browsing the evaluation posts of bloggers (or celebrities), I can increase my understanding of the products/services and make faster purchasing decisions.	0.99	0.977
The evaluation posts bloggers (or celebrities) shared significantly impacted my purchasing behaviour.	0.99	0.983
The evaluation posts shared by bloggers (or celebrities) that I refer to when purchasing an item will influence my final decision.	0.99	0.981
My desire to buy a certain product will be reduced or increased by watching the "evaluation posts" shared by beauty bloggers (or celebrities).	0.99	0.982
Characteristic value (before rotation)	14.66	-
Variance explanation rate (before rotation)	97.72%	-
Cumulative variance explanation rate (before rotation)	97.72%	-
Characteristic value (after rotation)	14.66	-
Variance explanation rate (after rotation)	97.72%	-
Cumulative variance explanation rate (before rotation)	97.72%	-
KMO	0.978	-
Bartlett's sphere test	6877.977	-
DF	105.000	-
P Value	-	-

According to the statistical analysis of the questionnaire reliability and validity data, the reliability of the questionnaire

is 0.998, according to the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value range for judging the reliability of the questionnaire and the

effect of the reliability can be seen: 0.80 to 0.90 is very good, so we can use this to judge that the questionnaire's reliability is high. And the validity analysis judgment criteria: (1) KMO value is more than 0.6°. (2) The factor loading coefficient of the question items on the corresponding factor is more than 0.4 (3) There is no serious deviation of the correspondence between the question items and the factor (4) The common degree is more than 0.4 (5) The cumulative variance explanation rate is more than 50%.

According to the data of SPSSAU validity analysis, it can be seen that the KMO value is 0.978, greater than 0.6, there is no serious deviation in the correspondence between the question items and the factors, the covariance of the variables are all greater than 0.4, and the cumulative variance explanation is 97.72% greater than 50%. So, the questionnaire meets the reliability testing requirements, and its data have reference value.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

This paper studies the influence of KOL evaluation posts on consumers' purchasing willingness, taking the popular beauty evaluation post as an example, starting from Little Red Book, analyzing it through popularity and authenticity respectively, mediating by perceived value, and constructing a research model with purchase intention as the dependent variable. This study reviews the relevant literature, defines the corresponding independent variables, and puts forward the research hypotheses of this paper.

In order to study each potential variable and collect corresponding data, the questionnaire for this article was formed. After the questionnaire was analyzed and organized, the collected valid data were analyzed through SPSS26.0, and SPSSAU software and the conclusions are discussed as follows:

(1) In the field of evaluation posts of beauty products, the focus group is still mainly young women, mostly aged 20-30.

The main reason is that women in this age group have a high demand for beauty products because they are students

and working women. However, in recent years, there has also been a growth in the male consumer group, and their consumption has increased [5].

(2) To study the relationship between KOL evaluation posts of beauty products and consumers' purchasing willingness. In this age of information explosion, consumers are unable to make judgments about products only by themselves.

Therefore, through the screening of KOL, the information obtained by consumers is filtered through a layer of filtration. At the same time, after their "beauty evaluation posts", consumers are easy to believe and make purchases [5].

(3) Perceived value has a mediating effect on "evaluation posts" of beauty products and consumers' purchasing willingness. Although consumers are easily influenced by the tendency of KOLs on the Internet, but because of advertising and profit motivation, many evaluation posts have lost their original purely recommending role, which makes consumers have to change their thinking, and their perceived value plays a key role in which only consumers feel the value of the recommended products will be consumed and purchased [5].

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