

Research Article

Perceived Value and Purchase Influence of YouTube Beauty Vlog Content Amongst Generation Y Female Consumers

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Received 19 June 2024; Accepted 22 October 2024

Academic Editor: Mahmaod Alrawad

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Globally and in South Africa, the beauty industry, which includes high-involvement products such as skincare, fragrance, makeup, and haircare products, is experiencing robust growth, something partially attributed to the rapidly growing influence of beauty social media influencers. While increased attention is being paid to social media influencer marketing in academic literature, most of these studies focus on the characteristics of the social media influencer rather than on the content that they deliver. Moreover, there is a paucity of studies that specifically consider YouTube vlogs in relation to beauty products and Generation Y female consumers. The purpose of this research was to determine the perceived value and purchase influence of beauty vlog content on YouTube amongst Generation Y female (females born from 1986 to 2005) consumers from the emerging market perspective of South Africa. The study adopted an explanatory research design, whereby data were collected using an electronic questionnaire from 340 Generation Y female consumers. The results of the path analysis indicate that the beauty vlog content dimensions of informativeness, entertainment, and credibility collectively account for 72% of the variability in Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of beauty vlog content on YouTube. In turn, this perceived value, along with its predictors, accounts for almost 50% of the variance in the purchase influence of such vlogs amongst Generation Y female consumers. These findings confirm the salience of beauty brands engaging with YouTube beauty vloggers when targeting Generation Y female consumers. Moreover, when choosing which beauty vloggers to engage with, the results highlight the need to seek out those with a proven track record for delivering informative and interesting beauty product content and who consistently exercise a high degree of integrity in their beauty product review vlogs.

1. Introduction

Beauty products encompass any product that is used externally to care for and enhance a person's physical appearance and overall attractiveness to others [1] and include skincare, fragrance, makeup, and haircare products [2]. In terms of the involvement theory, the personal relevance of beauty products, coupled with their associated potential psychological, physical, social, and functional risks and, in the case of high-end beauty products, financial risk [3], means that beauty products are typically classified as being high involvement products [4]. Consumers who view beauty products as high-involvement purchases tend to have an elevated level of interest in beauty-related matters and products and tend to engage in a more extensive search for information prior to

making a beauty product purchase decision [5]. In the digital age, prepurchase information searches on high-involvement products, including those for beauty products, increasingly include consulting the content generated by social media influencers [6].

Globally, the beauty industry was worth an estimated \$430 billion in 2022, a figure forecasted to reach \$580 billion by 2027 [2]. Robust growth in this industry is also evident in the emerging South African economy, where revenue in the beauty industry was estimated at \$506.90 million for 2023, up from \$409.65 million in 2018 [7]. The key factors driving this growth in the beauty industry in South Africa include rising disposable income, urbanization, increased exposure to global beauty trends on social media platforms, increased beauty consciousness across genders and age groups, and the

rapidly growing influence of beauty social media influencers, who are increasingly shaping consumers' beauty product preferences [8].

The beauty industry is acknowledged as being one of the first industries to embrace social media marketing and to have recognized the potential of social media influencers [9]. An influencer is an opinion leader who has the power to influence the consumption-related behavior of others with whom they engage due to their perceived knowledge, expertise, or aspirational value in a niche product or service area [10]. These influencers are opinion leaders who have amassed a significant number of followers and who share their consumption-related opinions with their followers via social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube [11, 12]. Social media influencer bloggers typically share their thoughts and experiences about products or services in written form, while social media influencer vloggers share theirs in video form [13]. A beauty social media influencer is a person with established credibility concerning beauty products and services who leverages their social media presence, typically on YouTube, Instagram, and/or TikTok platforms, to influence their followers with their insights and opinions on beauty-related products, trends, and techniques [14]. Of these social media platforms, YouTube tends to be the "go-to" channel for beauty enthusiasts and beauty influencers alike, where beauty content and reviews are referred to as beauty vlogs and a beauty social media influencer as a beauty vlogger [15].

Beauty-related vlogger content such as makeup and skincare tutorials, cosmetic hauls, and product recommendations is amongst the most viewed content on the YouTube platform, with such content generating more than 169 billion views in 2018 [16]. The popularity of these beauty vlogs is because they are delivered by vloggers who viewers can relate to and because of the credibility of beauty vloggers—most of whom give a brutally honest review if they find fault with a beauty product [17].

The appearance-oriented Generation Y (people born from 1986 to 2005) [18–20] consumers with their strong purchasing power [21] are a leading generational target segment for the beauty industry [22]. Members of this generation spend a significant amount of their time on social media sites [23] and are known to place more trust in social media influencers' product recommendations than in formal marketing communication messages [24, 25]. These YouTube beauty vloggers speak directly to Generation Y consumers, creating an authentic connection between beauty brands and this lucrative market segment [26]. Although the target audiences of beauty vlogs on YouTube are not exclusively female, there are indications that females, particularly Generation Y females, are the predominant consumers of such content [27].

These vlogs are disrupting the beauty product industry and are significantly influencing Generation Y females' beauty product brand choices [6, 28]. Globally, social media platforms in general, and beauty blogs and vlogs in particular, have offered beauty marketers, in a sense, a lifeline given the decline in their traditional marketing communication channels, mainly glossy print fashion and beauty magazines.

The decline of these print publications was due to shrinking advertising revenue, rising publication costs [29], and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic [30]. In the South African beauty market scenario, the situation was even more dire, with the demise of the vast majority of glossy beauty and fashion magazines in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic [31].

While increased attention is being paid to the effect social media influencers have on consumption-related behavior in academic literature, most of these studies focus on the characteristics of social media influencers in terms of source characteristics and psychological-related influential factors [32]. These studies are undoubtedly valuable; however, there is also a salient need to ascertain target audiences' perceived value of these influencers' product review content and the antecedents of that perceived value, given that the focal object of engagement with a brand on social media sites is the consumption-related content [33]. In addition, academic studies on social influencer marketing are heavily skewed towards the Instagram social media platform [32, 34]. YouTube videos differ from Instagram videos in that they can be significantly longer, making this platform ideal for instructional or more detailed content such as how-to videos and in-depth product reviews [35]. This has led to calls for more research studies that specifically consider YouTube vlogs [36]. Furthermore, given the increasing significance of the beauty social media influencer strategy, especially YouTube beauty vlogs, to the beauty industry and the significance of Generation Y female consumers to this industry, there is a need for greater insights into the antecedents of the purchase influence of YouTube beauty vlog content amongst Generation Y female consumers [6]. In addition, most studies on the attitudes towards and the purchase influence of consumption-related information on social media platforms focus on developed markets, and the findings of such studies may not necessarily be mirrored in emerging economies [37, 38], such as South Africa.

In light of these limitations in the literature, the objective of this study was to determine Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of beauty product vlog content on YouTube, the factors that predict that perceived value, and the extent to which that perceived value exerts an influence on their beauty product purchase decisions in the context of South Africa's emerging market. Essentially, this study applies the well-established theory of perceived marketing communication value [39] in the new setting of social media influencer marketing in a specific industry on the video-focused platform of YouTube and amongst a delineated market segment.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

Theoretically, this study is underpinned by the advertising value model [39]. This model was derived from the uses and gratification (U&G) theory, which strives to explain why people consume certain media and the satisfaction they derive from that media [40] and posits that an individual's decision to interact with a specific medium and the extent of their involvement with it are influenced by how well it fulfills their needs—essentially, their perceived value of content

on a specific medium [41]. The advertising value model is aimed at elucidating why people consume marketing content on digital platforms and was originally designed to measure consumers' perceived value of advertising messages on the web [39]. The basic premise of both the U&G theory and the advertising value model is that an audience's perceived value of consumption-related communication content is contingent on their attitude towards the medium through which that message content is delivered and that this perceived value of the message content may predict their attitudes towards the brands showcased within those messages [39, 41].

This suggests that an audience's favorable attitude towards a particular communication platform is likely to have a positive influence on their attitude towards the communication content on that platform, which, in turn, increases the purchase influence of such content on their brand choices. From a marketing standpoint, this concept of the purchase influence of consumption-related communication content is pivotal as it is positively associated with purchase intentions and, more importantly, with purchase behavior [42, 43].

According to the advertising value model, an audience's perceived value of marketing communication content is positively related to their perceptions of the entertainment and informational value of that message and negatively related to the perceived irritation of the message [39]. This model has been used to explain the value of user-generated content, including assessing the perceived value of electronic word-of-mouth communication [44] and the perceived value of associative and aspirational reference group messages on Facebook [45], as well as assessing formal marketing content such as TikTok video advertisements [46], mobile advertisements [47, 48], Facebook advertisements [37, 38, 49], Twitter advertisements [50], Instagram advertisements [51, 52], YouTube advertisements [53], and in-game pop-up advertisements [54].

The perceived value of marketing communication messages reflects how consumers or target audiences subjectively evaluate the content conveyed in these messages and whether they find it valuable, beneficial, or useful to them [39, 54]. It refers to the perceived benefits, worth, or significance that individuals associate with the consumption-related content they receive from marketing and advertising efforts [55] or from informal sources [44], including influencers on social media sites [56].

The perceived value of YouTube beauty vlogs refers to the subjective assessment and worth that individuals place on content produced within the beauty vlogging genre on this platform [36]. It encompasses how viewers evaluate the content's relevance, usefulness, and overall impact on their beauty-related interests and product choices [57]; that is, the extent to which it helps them make better beauty-related choices, including beauty product purchase choices. These YouTube beauty vlogs may serve to inspire viewers to try new looks or products, find solutions to certain beauty concerns, or help them make better beauty product purchase decisions [58].

A number of studies have concluded that the perceived value of consumption-related content has a significant posi-

tive effect on target audiences' purchase intentions. For example, studies confirm that the perceived value of Facebook advertisements is a positive predictor of purchase intentions [37, 38, 53]. Similarly, the perceived value of advertisements on Twitter [50], TikTok [46], and YouTube [53] were found to influence purchase intentions significantly. Likewise, Abbasi et al. [59] concluded that the perceived value of tourist destination vlogs had a positive influence on audience members' intentions to visit a tourism destination. Therefore, this study contends that:

Hypothesis 1. *Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of YouTube beauty vlog content predicts the purchase influence such content has on their beauty product choices.*

The concept of the perceived informativeness of marketing communication message content refers to the extent to which consumers perceive the information contained in advertising or promotional content as being useful or valuable [47]. In other words, it assesses whether consumers believe that a marketing message provides them with meaningful insights, relevant details, or valuable knowledge about a product, service, or brand [39, 60]. The perceived value of any consumption-related content is contingent on its ability to aid receivers in making purchase choices that yield the greatest degree of satisfaction [44].

Key factors that contribute to the information value of beauty vlog content on YouTube include providing up-to-date information on new beauty trends and beauty product launches, providing visual step-by-step tutorials on the beauty product's application, and providing detailed information about the beauty product's advantages and disadvantages [57]. It requires posting quality beauty content frequently that reflects in-depth knowledge concerning the beauty products being reviewed, including the product's ingredients, packaging, how it should be applied, benefits, and potential side effects, as well as how it compares to other similar beauty products in terms of price, features, and benefits [61].

Shareef et al. [45] concluded that the perceived informativeness of consumption-related content on Facebook was the strongest predictor of that content's perceived value, regardless of whether that content was generated by an associative reference group, an aspirational reference group, or by marketers. Similarly, the informativeness dimension superseded the entertainment and credibility dimensions in predicting audiences' perceived value of content in web advertisements [39], Facebook advertisements [38, 49, 53], YouTube sponsored content [56], Instagram advertisements [51], Twitter advertisements [50], tourist destination vlogs [59], and YouTube advertisements [53]. Given the high involvement nature of beauty products, which is typically associated with increased prepurchase information search [5], the perceived informational value of beauty vlog content is likely to be an especially important antecedent of the perceived value of such content. Therefore, this study contends that:

Hypothesis 2. *Generation Y female consumers' perceived informativeness of YouTube beauty vlog content predicts their perceived value of that content.*

The perceived entertainment value of marketing communication messages refers to the degree to which consumers find advertisements, promotions, and other marketing materials entertaining, interesting, or enjoyable [39]. It relates to consumption-related content offering a form of diversion, escapism, or enjoyable emotional release [60]. This suggests that consumption-related content requires a level of creativity and originality, a compelling narrative, and visual and audio elements that are aesthetically pleasing. This concept of entertainment is important in the world of advertising and marketing because it directly affects how consumers engage with and respond to these messages [51].

The perceived entertainment value of beauty product vlog content lies in beauty vloggers' ability to educate, inspire, and entertain viewers through a combination of informative content, engaging personalities, a compelling narrative, relatability, and a sense of community [26]. It necessitates the use of high-quality video equipment and video editing software and editing skills, care with lighting, and the use of good-quality props [61]. These vlogs provide a platform for viewers to explore and appreciate the world of beauty and self-care in an enjoyable and interactive way [14]. The key to success is to use the interactive dimension of YouTube vlogs by responding to viewers' comments and messages timeously, thereby developing a relationship with them and fostering a sense of community [61]. This interactivity serves to enhance the enjoyment derived from consuming YouTube beauty-related vlogger content.

A study in Turkey found the entertainment dimension, rather than the informativeness or credibility dimensions, to be the strongest predictor of the perceived value of both social media advertisement and mobile advertisement content [48]. This underscores the sentiment that content needs to be framed in an interesting and enjoyable fashion to encourage audiences to engage with it actively [51]; that is, the message content needs to appeal to audiences' hedonic motives. In comparison to informativeness and credibility, this entertainment dimension also made a more substantial contribution to explaining the perceived value of content in mobile advertisements [47] and in-game pop-up advertisements [54]. Acikgoz and Burnaz's [56] study on the perceived value of YouTube-sponsored content found that the entertainment value dimension of the content was only marginally weaker than that of the informativeness dimension. Owing to beauty vlogs on YouTube being generally longer than those on Instagram and TikTok [35], YouTube beauty vlog content needs to be framed in a particularly interesting and entertaining manner in order to encourage audiences to commit the time to view such content. Therefore, this study contends that:

Hypothesis 3. *Generation Y female consumers' perceived entertainment of YouTube beauty vlog content predicts their perceived value of that content.*

The third dimension of the advertising value model is irritation, which Ducoffe [39] explains as advertising techniques that are perceived as being annoying, offensive, insulting, or overly manipulative and distracting. While it

is feasible that YouTube advertisements during beauty vlogs may be perceived as irritating [62], it seems unlikely that such vlogs would be irritating in themselves as viewers can simply stop the video and/or unsubscribe to that vlogger's channel. Therefore, the dimension of irritation was not included in this study.

In lieu of the irritation dimension, the dimension of credibility was added to the proposed model, as advocated by Brackett and Carr [63]. Marketing communication message credibility refers to the validity of the assertions made in the message content and relates to the perceived trustworthiness and believability of the information conveyed in the content of a marketing message [64]. It is a crucial aspect of effective marketing because consumers are more likely to engage with and act upon messages they consider credible [65]. In essence, if a marketing message lacks credibility, it may not achieve its intended objectives, such as persuading customers to buy a product or take a specific action [46].

The concept of credibility is crucial in the world of online beauty content [57]. Credibility, in this context, refers to the trustworthiness, reliability, and authenticity of these influencers and the content that they generate in the eyes of their audience [66]. The purchase and use of unsuitable beauty products and/or the incorrect use of beauty products carry certain potential risks, such as psychological, physical, social, and functional risks and, in the case of high-end beauty products, financial risk [3], which elevates the importance of beauty vloggers providing credible beauty product reviews and advice. Trustworthy vloggers provide honest and unbiased reviews of beauty products. Beauty vloggers also need to demonstrate a deep understanding of beauty products, skincare, haircare and styling, makeup techniques, and beauty trends in their vlog content to be deemed believable and as having the required authority to offer beauty advice. In addition, maintaining a consistent style and tone across beauty vlogs helps to build a vlogger's brand credibility [61]. Moreover, they should disclose whether they received the product for free or if they have any affiliations with the brand, given that such transparency is essential for building trust with their audience [67].

Several studies indicate that, in comparison to informativeness and entertainment, the dimension of credibility is the strongest predictor of the perceived value of consumption-related communication content. These studies where credibility made the strongest contribution to the perceived value of content related to social media travel destination images [68], TikTok short video advertisements [46], Instagram story advertisements [52], social media advertisements [55], and advertisements on smartphones [60]. While a number of studies concluded the informativeness of content to be the most important determinant of the perceived value of Facebook advertisements [38, 49, 53], a study in the emerging market of Morocco found credibility to be a stronger determinant of Facebook advertisements' perceived value [37]. Given the potential risks associated with making a poor beauty product purchase decision or incorrectly using a beauty product, the dimension of beauty vlog content credibility is expected to be an important determinant of the perceived value of such content. Therefore, this study contends that:

Hypothesis 4. *Generation Y female consumers' perceived credibility of YouTube beauty vlog content predicts their perceived value of that content.*

The hypothesized model of this study is presented in Figure 1.

3. Research Method

The study used a single cross-sectional sample and followed an explanatory research design.

3.1. Sampling. The study's target population was defined as females, 18 years of age or older, living in South Africa, classified as forming part of Generation Y, who watch beauty vlogs on YouTube. The services of a marketing research company were employed to gather data from a panel sample. The research company hosted an online survey and employed purposive sampling to recruit respondents who fit the criteria set out in the target population description. Owing to cost restraints, the sample size was limited to 400 respondents. The selected sample size is suitable for conducting structural equation modeling given that structural models with seven or fewer latent factors require a minimum sample size of 300 [69].

3.2. Measurement Instrument. A structured electronic questionnaire was developed to collect the necessary data during the online survey. The questionnaire encompassed an introductory letter detailing the purpose of the study and providing assurances of respondents' anonymity, together with questions designed to gather certain demographic information. The questionnaire also contained scaled-response items from previously validated published scales. The informativeness (seven items), entertainment (five items), and value of beauty vlog content on YouTube were measured using items adapted from the web advertising value scale [39]. Informative items included YouTube beauty vlogs, which "are a good source of beauty product information, supply relevant beauty product information, provide timely beauty product information, are a good source of up-to-date beauty product information, make beauty product information immediately accessible, are a convenient source of beauty product information, and supply complete beauty product information." Entertainment items included YouTube beauty vlogs are "entertaining to watch, enjoyable to watch, interesting to watch, fun to watch, and exciting to watch." Value items included YouTube beauty vlogs are "useful to me, valuable to me, and important to me." The credibility (five items) of such vlog content was measured using items adapted from the celebrity endorsers' trustworthiness scale [70]. These included beauty product reviews on YouTube beauty vlogs are "dependable, honest, reliable, sincere, and trustworthy." The purchase influence (three items) of the content of these vlogs was measured using items adapted from the online reviews' usage and purchase influence model [43]. These items included "I am influenced by YouTube vloggers' beauty product reviews when I choose a beauty product; I rely on YouTube vloggers' beauty product reviews when I purchase beauty products; YouTube vloggers' beauty

product reviews crucially influence my choice of beauty products."

Responses to all scaled-response items were quantified using a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*).

3.3. Data Analysis. The data were analyzed using SPSS 29 and AMOS 29. Data computations included frequencies and percentages for the sample description. In addition, Harman's one-factor test was carried out to test for common method bias, and univariate skewness values, univariate kurtosis values, and Mardia's normalized estimate of multivariate kurtosis were computed to assess the normality of the data set. Pearson's bivariate correlation analysis was conducted, and collinearity diagnostics were run to test for nomological validity and to rule out serious multicollinearity issues. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis and path analysis, using the maximum likelihood approach, were run.

4. Results

Data collection yielded 375 questionnaires. Of these, 35 were discarded as they had more than 10% of their responses missing. This resulted in 340 complete questionnaires and, given the target sample size of 400, a response rate of 85%. Table 1 furnishes a description of the sample's demographics.

As demonstrated in Table 1, the majority of respondents were aged 35 years old, resided in Gauteng, and indicated their home language as English. While each of South Africa's nine provinces is represented in the sample, only eight of the country's 11 official languages are represented, and the sample did not include anyone aged 23 or 36 years old.

Harman's one-factor test for common method bias was applied to the data set, whereby an exploratory factor analysis was run on all of the scaled items, with factor extraction fixed at 1. The total variance explained by one factor was 48.600%, which, while somewhat elevated, is still less than the prescribed threshold of 50.000%; hence, any seriously problematic common method bias was ruled out [71]. Thereafter, the normality of the data was tested in AMOS. The univariate skewness values were all within the ± 2 range, ranging from -1.535 to -0.498 , with an overall mean univariate skewness value of -0.895 , and were all smaller than their critical ratio values. The univariate kurtosis values, which ranged from -0.454 to 4.283 , with an overall average univariate kurtosis value of 1.41 , were below 7 in magnitude and were all smaller than their respective critical ratios, thereby indicating that none of the items were substantially kurtotic. AMOS returned a significant Mardia's normalized estimate of multivariate kurtosis of 89.232 , which is indicative of a departure from multivariate normality [72]. However, several authors point out that this z -statistic is inevitably statistically significant in larger sample sizes, such as is the case in this study, even when there are only slight departures from normality [69, 72–74]. In this regard, Kline [73] emphasizes the importance of interpreting multivariate normality in conjunction with measures of univariate normality. Nonetheless, bootstrapping was performed during the path

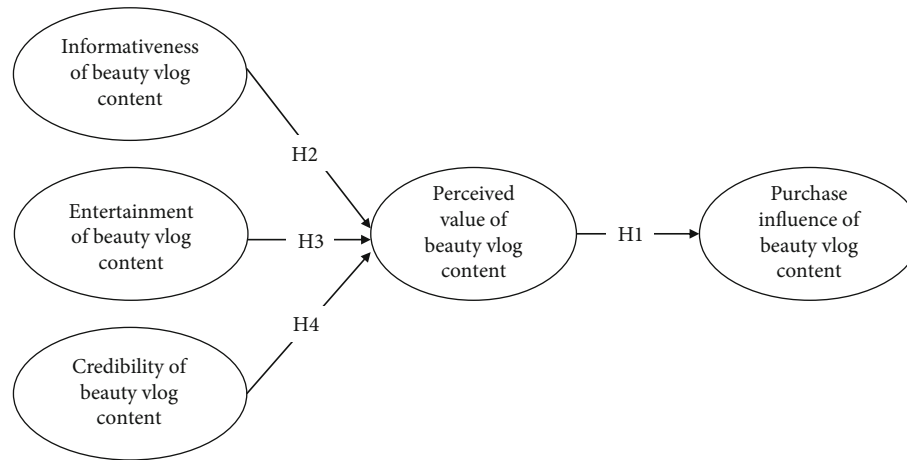


FIGURE 1: Hypothesized model.

TABLE 1: Sample demographics.

Age	Frequency	Percent (%)	Province	Frequency	Percent (%)	Language	Frequency	Percent (%)
18	3	0.9	Eastern Cape	17	5.0	English	144	42.4
19	13	3.8	Northern Cape	16	4.7	IsiNdebele	4	1.2
20	4	1.2	Gauteng	190	55.9	IsiXhosa	21	6.2
21	7	2.1	KwaZulu Natal	22	6.5	IsiZulu	52	15.3
22	15	4.4	Limpopo	13	3.8	Sesotho	0	0.0
23	0	0.0	Mpumalanga	13	3.8	Sepedi	0	0.0
24	9	2.6	Free State	15	4.4	Setswana	48	14.1
25	10	2.9	North West	10	2.9	SiSwati	0	0.0
26	4	1.2	Western Cape	44	12.9	Tshivenda	4	1.2
27	17	5.0				Xitsonga	7	2.1
28	20	5.9				Afrikaans	54	15.9
29	19	5.6				Other	6	1.8
30	31	9.1						
31	17	5.0						
32	20	5.9						
33	26	7.6						
34	21	6.2						
35	104	30.6						
36	0	0.0						

analysis to mitigate the risks associated with applying covariance-based structural equation modeling to data lacking multivariate normality [72, 75].

As a precursor to the confirmatory factor analysis, a matrix of Pearson's bivariate correlation coefficients was computed in order to test for nomological validity. In addition, collinearity diagnostics, namely, tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) measures, were run to assess the degree of multiple variable collinearity. The results of these computations are outlined in Table 2.

The correlation coefficients exhibited in Table 2 are all positive and statistically significant, which conforms with the underlying theory. As such, the nomological validity of

the proposed model is evident [69]. There are also no multicollinearity issues of concern with the computed tolerance values > 0.10 and the average VIF of $2.1744 < 10$ [76].

The measurement model was then assessed using confirmatory factor analysis to ascertain the model's reliability and validity and to test the proposed model's fit with the data in the sample. The factor loading of one indicator for each of the five latent factors was fixed to a value of 1.0, resulting in an overidentified model (299 distinct sample moments: 79 distinct parameters to be estimated and 220 degrees of freedom), with a $\chi^2 = 513.659$, $p \leq 0.01$.

Measures of the model's reliability comprised Cronbach's alpha (α) and composite reliability (CR), while those for

TABLE 2: Correlation matrix and collinearity diagnostic results.

	1	2	3	4	Tolerance	VIF
Informativeness					0.438	2.285
Entertainment	0.643*				0.455	2.197
Credibility	0.590*	0.566*			0.523	1.911
Value	0.692*	0.691*	0.618*		0.365	2.737
Purchase influence	0.540*	0.506*	0.599*		0.574	1.742

* $p \leq 0.01$.

convergent and discriminant validity included the standardized weight estimates, the average variance extracted (AVE), and the square root of the AVE ($\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$) values. The fit indices applied include the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), the incremental fit index (IFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). The estimates returned for the confirmatory factor analysis, together with the reliability and validity measures, are given in Table 3.

The findings from the confirmatory factor analysis of the measurement model, as presented in Table 3, demonstrate that the model fits well within acceptable limits. Specifically, the values for CFI, TLI, and IFI surpass the 0.90 threshold, and both the RMSEA and SRMR values fall below 0.08, in line with the criteria established by Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen [77]. Furthermore, the α and CR values, which are higher than 0.70, indicate robust internal consistency and CR. In terms of validity, the standardized loading weights and AVEs, each exceeding 0.50, show strong convergence validity. Additionally, the $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ values, which are equal to or greater than their corresponding correlation coefficients [78], and the absence of heterotrait–monotrait ratio values exceeding 0.85 [79], signify discriminant validity. Consequently, the results from the confirmatory factor analysis support the assertion that the perceived value and purchase influence of beauty vlog content on YouTube amongst Generation Y female consumers is a five-factor model.

Using the measurement model as a foundation, the hypothesized structural model was examined. This structural model posited that Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of YouTube beauty vlog content predicts the purchase influence such vlog content has on their beauty product preferences and that their perceived value of beauty vlog content is predicted by their perception of such vlog content as being informative, entertaining, and credible. Given the lack of multivariate normality detected in the data, bootstrapping was also performed. AMOS was instructed to perform a bootstrap on 10,000 samples using the maximum likelihood estimator and to provide bias-corrected confidence intervals (CIs) for each of the parameter bootstrap estimates at the 95% confidence level. The outcomes of the path analysis, together with the lower limit confidence intervals (LLCIs) and upper limit confidence intervals (ULCIs), appear in Table 4.

The results depicted in Table 4 indicate that all paths tested are positive and statistically significant at $p \leq 0.01$. In addition, the 95% bias-corrected CIs computed across

10,000 bootstrap samples are all definitively different from zero. Generation Y female consumers' perceived value ($\beta = 0.68$, $p \leq 0.01$, CI [0.562, 0.775]) of beauty vlog content on YouTube is a statistically significant positive predictor of the purchase influence such vlog content has on their beauty product purchase decisions. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is accepted. In turn, each of the three theorized predictors of this perceived value is statistically significant and positive. Of these predictors, perceived informativeness ($\beta = 0.37$, $p \leq 0.01$, CI [0.201, 0.556]) was the strongest predictor of their perceived value of such vlog content, followed closely by perceived entertainment ($\beta = 0.36$, $p \leq 0.01$, CI [0.170, 0.529]), and then perceived credibility ($\beta = 0.24$, $p \leq 0.01$, CI [0.114, 0.356]). As such, Hypotheses 2–4 are accepted. The fit indices again indicate acceptable to good model fit, with a CFI of 0.950, a TLI of 0.943, an IFI of 0.950, a RMSEA of 0.064, and a SRMR of 0.0559.

The results of this path analysis are shown in the structural model in Figure 2.

As shown in Figure 2, with a squared multiple correlation of 0.715, informativeness, entertainment, and credibility collectively account for 72% of the variability in how Generation Y female consumers perceive the value of beauty vlog content on YouTube, which, along with its predictors, accounts for 47% of the variability in the purchase influence such vlog content has on their beauty product preferences, that is, their beauty product purchase decisions.

5. Discussion

This study was aimed at determining the perceived value and purchase influence of beauty product vlog content on YouTube amongst Generation Y female consumers from the emerging market perspective of South Africa using an adapted version of the advertising value model [39]. This involved evaluating a measurement model comprising perceived informativeness, perceived entertainment, perceived credibility, perceived value, and the purchase influence of YouTube beauty vlog content amongst Generation Y female consumers in South Africa. The testing of this measurement model confirmed a five-factor model that exhibited construct validity, internal consistency, and CR and was acceptable to good model fit.

The results of the path analysis reveal that perceived informativeness, entertainment, and credibility explain 72% of the variability in Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of YouTube beauty vlog content. In turn, this perceived value, along with its predictors, accounts for almost 50% of the variance in the purchase influence of such vlog content amongst Generation Y female consumers in South Africa. These results are in line with a number of similar previous studies, including studies on tourist destination vlogs [59], YouTube sponsored content [56], TikTok video advertisements [46], and YouTube advertisements [53]. Given that the purchase influence of consumption-related communication content is positively associated with purchase intentions and purchase behavior, these findings confirm the salience of beauty brands engaging with YouTube beauty vloggers when targeting Generation Y female

TABLE 3: Results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

Latent factors	Standardized weight estimates	R^2	α	CR	AVE	$\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$
Informativeness	0.675	0.456	0.89	0.90	0.56	0.75
F1	0.825	0.680				
	0.814	0.663				
	0.747	0.558				
	0.654	0.427				
	0.728	0.529				
	0.760	0.578				
Entertainment	0.813	0.662	0.93	0.94	0.74	0.86
F2	0.874	0.763				
	0.888	0.789				
	0.888	0.789				
	0.838	0.703				
Credibility	0.763	0.582	0.92	0.93	0.71	0.84
F3	0.865	0.748				
	0.859	0.738				
	0.851	0.724				
	0.875	0.766				
Value	0.813	0.661	0.88	0.89	0.73	0.85
F4	0.898	0.806				
	0.846	0.716				
Purchase influence	0.868	0.753	0.91	0.91	0.78	0.88
F5	0.897	0.805				
	0.875	0.766				
Correlation coefficients	F1↔F2 0.70	F1↔F3 0.63	F1↔F4 0.75	F1↔F5 0.59	F2↔F3 0.59	F2↔F4 0.75
	F2↔F5 0.54	F3↔F4 0.66	F3↔F5 0.59	F4↔F5 0.65		
Heterotrait–monotrait ratios	F1↔F2 0.64	F1↔F3 0.58	F1↔F4 0.69	F1↔F5 0.54	F2↔F3 0.56	F2↔F4 0.69
	F2↔F5 0.50	F3↔F4 0.61	F3↔F5 0.55	F4↔F5 0.60		
Model fit indices	CFI = 0.953	TLI = 0.945	IFI = 0.953		RMSEA = 0.063	SRMR = 0.0496

TABLE 4: Path analysis and bootstrap results.

Paths	Standardized betas	z -values	p values	LLCIs	ULCIs	R^2
Informativeness → value	0.370	5.62	0.000	0.201	0.556	
Entertainment → value	0.356	5.97	0.000	0.170	0.529	
Credibility → value	0.238	4.48	0.000	0.114	0.356	
Value → purchase influence	0.683	11.96	0.000	0.562	0.775	
Endogenous factors						
Value						0.715
Purchase influence						0.467
Model fit indices	CFI = 0.950	TLI = 0.943	IFI = 0.950	RMSEA = 0.064	SRMR = 0.0559	

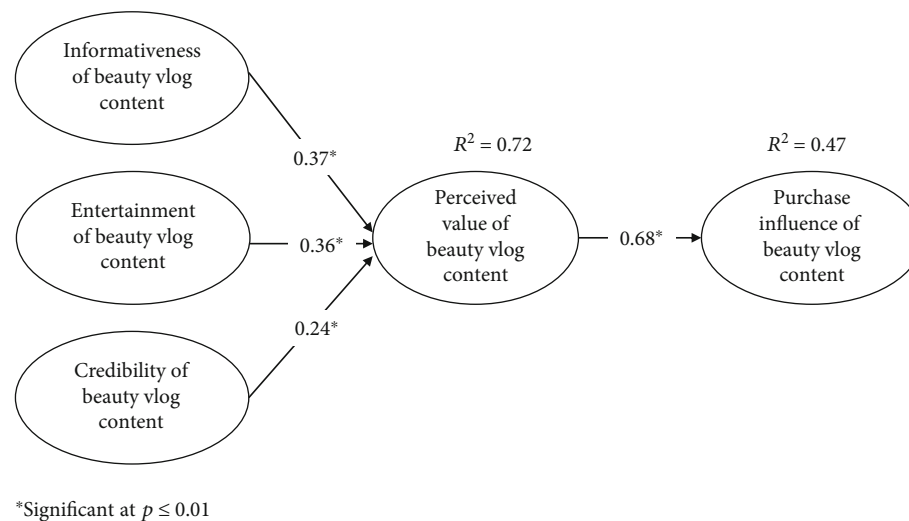


FIGURE 2: Structural model.

consumers in the South African market. The strongest predictor of their perceived value of such vlog content was perceived informativeness. The salience of perceived informativeness as a predictor of the perceived value of consumption-related content echoes that of previous studies on social media platforms, such as YouTube [53, 56], Facebook [38, 49], and Instagram [51]. Moreover, it supports the notion that consumers engage in a more extensive prepurchase information search with high-involvement products, such as beauty products or, in the case of the study by Abbasi et al. [59], tourist destinations. In order to be of value to their female audience, beauty vloggers need to supply relevant, detailed, current beauty-related information that is of high quality and provide rational, concrete, and complete beauty product reviews.

The perceived entertainment value of beauty vlog content was also a significant positive predictor of Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of beauty vlog content and, indeed, was almost as strong of a predictor as informativeness. The strength of entertainment as a predictor of perceived value supports the findings of Aydın [48] and is notably similar to those of Acikgoz and Burnaz [56]. The typical length of a beauty vlog on YouTube means that the content therein needs to be framed in a particularly interesting and entertaining manner to motivate audiences to commit the time to view such content. Furthermore, the ever-increasing number of beauty vlogs on YouTube competing for audiences' attention reiterates the importance of framing beauty vlog content in a professional, inspirational, and entertaining manner to better engage audience members. This would include taking full advantage of YouTube's interactive features to foster closer relationships with beauty vlog followers.

Interestingly, while this study found perceived credibility to be a statistically significant predictor of Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of YouTube beauty vlog content, it was the weakest predictor. This finding is in contrast to several other studies that found credibility to be the strongest predictor of the perceived value of consumption-related content, such as Abbasi et al. [68]; Dwinanda et al. [46]; Arya and Kerti [52]; and Chetoui, Butt, and Lebdaoui

[37]. While credibility is certainly essential in any form of content creation, including beauty vlog content, its importance may, as is the case in this study, be superseded by other factors such as the quality, relevance, and depth of information provided in beauty vlogs and such vloggers' ability to frame that content in an inspirational, interesting, and relatable manner using good quality production and editing techniques. However, one caveat here is that it is still crucial for beauty vloggers to be transparent concerning their commercial interests because, as indicated by Pfeuffer et al. [67], the ever-increasing trend towards sponsored product reviews on social media platforms such as YouTube is negatively influencing the perceived authenticity of such reviews. In addition, negating to mention the disadvantages of a beauty product in a vlog equates to not supplying complete information, which will decrease the information quality of such content.

From a beauty marketer's perspective, when choosing which beauty vloggers to engage with, the results highlight the need to seek out beauty vloggers who have a proven track record for delivering informative beauty product content in an entertaining and interesting manner and who consistently exercise a high degree of integrity in their vlogs. Essentially, such vloggers should have earned a reputation for being beauty aficionados who consistently post high-quality, detailed beauty content that has a consistent style and tone. In addition, the style and tone of both the content and the vlogger must be consistent with the beauty brand's image and value proposition. It is always important to bear in mind that the very purpose of partnering with a beauty vlogger is to enhance the beauty brand's image and engage in an authentic manner with the target audience.

6. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Research pertaining to consumers' perceived value of consumption-related user-generated content on YouTube and the influence it exerts on their purchase decisions is still limited, particularly in terms of beauty product content and Generation Y female consumers in emerging economies

such as South Africa. The findings of this study contribute theoretically by applying the extended advertising value model to YouTube beauty vlog content in an emerging economy and amongst a specific generational segment, namely, Generation Y female consumers. This is particularly important in the wake of the decline in the circulation and influence of traditional print media. Marketing theory needs to evolve to stay relevant, and currently, this requires paying greater attention to the user-generated content of social media influencers on digital platforms, such as beauty vlog content on YouTube. In addition, from a practical perspective, the results emphasize the value of beauty brands building and maintaining partnerships with YouTube beauty vloggers when targeting Generation Y female consumers in the South African market. The fact that this study found that the perceived value of beauty vlog content, along with its determinants, explained close to half of the variance in the purchase influence of such vlog content amongst Generation Y female consumers attests to this. For beauty vloggers operating on YouTube, these findings underscore the necessity of continuously delivering detailed and authentic beauty advice to followers in a fun and relatable manner.

7. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

As is typically the case, this study has certain limitations that need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. The first limitation is that the study only considered the perceived value and purchase influence of YouTube beauty vlog content from one emerging economy's perspective, namely, South Africa. Cultural differences may result in different results in other emerging economies, which suggests a need to replicate the study in other emerging markets. There would also be value in comparing this female generational segment's perceived value and consequent purchase influence of beauty vlog content with those from developed economies. Furthermore, while the three independent variables explained 72% of the variance in Generation Y female consumers' perceived value of beauty vlog content, that perceived value, together with its three predictors, only accounted for 47% of the variance in the purchase influence of such vlog content; that is, 53% of that variance is unaccounted for. Even though this influence of perceived value on the purchase influence of beauty vlog content is undoubtedly noteworthy, research to uncover which additional factors predict the purchase influence of YouTube beauty vlog content on Generation Y female consumers' beauty product preference would add value to this theory. Possible factors to consider include the aesthetics of the vlogs, such as lighting, camera work, and background props.

Data Availability Statement

In accordance with South Africa's data privacy regulations, the data set used in this study is not openly accessible. However, the corresponding author is available to provide the relevant data upon reasonable request, in compliance with applicable legal and ethical guidelines.

Ethics Statement

The author declared no ethical issues related to this research article. Ethical clearance for the study reported in this research article was obtained from North-West University's Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences Ethics Committee (ethics clearance number: NWU-00568-20-A4).

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Funding

This research received no external funding. The study was supported by the WorkWell 551 Research Unit of the North-West University.

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