

Influencer marketing and its impact on customer purchase decisions in the fashion and beauty sector in Ecuador

El marketing de influencias y su efecto en la decisión de compra de los clientes en el sector de la moda y la belleza en Ecuador



Nivia Carolina González Marín. Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design. Master's in Business Administration with a specialisation in Project Management from Universidad Politécnica Salesiana.
University Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador
ngonzalezm1@est.ups.edu.ec
ORCID: 0009-0007-5242-0057



Rosa Virginia Guiracocha Arriciaga. Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Auditing. Master's in Business Administration with a major in Project Management from Universidad Politécnica Salesiana.
University Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador
rguiracochaa@est.ups.edu.ec
ORCID: 0009-0006-2409-1658



Jorge Cueva Estrada. Researcher and professor at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana. He has published more than 30 articles in scientific journals of international prestige. Apart from his academic activities, he is also editor-in-chief of the journal *Retos en Ecuador*, as well as a member of the following research groups: *Grupo de Investigación Socio-Económica y Empresarial* (GISEE); *Grupo de Innovación Educativa Mejorando las Prácticas Áulicas* (GIE-MPA); and *Grupo de Investigación en Enseñanza -Aprendizaje de Las Ciencias Para la Ingeniería* (GIEACI). His research study entitled "Influencer marketing and its impact on the buying behaviour of millennial consumers" was lauded as the best article in the Issue 25 of the Colombian journal *Suma de Negocios*. He also holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Salesiana Polytechnic University, and is currently pursuing a PhD at Rey Juan Carlos University in Spain as well. His main lines of research include Marketing, Administration, Management, Technology, and Education.
University Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador
jcueva@ups.edu.ec
University Rey Juan Carlos, Spain
jm.cueva.2022@alumnos.urjc.es
ORCID: 0000-0002-3055-1060

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Nicolas Sumba. Currently working toward a PhD in social and legal science at Universidad Rey Juan, Spain. He also holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and is a full-time lecturer and researcher at Universidad Politécnica Salesiana, Guayaquil Campus, Ecuador. He has been involved in various teaching endeavours, in addition to several research projects with positive results. Mr. Sumba is also the author of several publications related to the role of ICT in education, marketing, and educational inclusion. He has coordinated several social projects in connection with his studies in business administration, and is currently assistant editor of *RETOS*, a journal of administrative and economic science. He is also a member of the following research groups: *Grupo de Investigación Socioeconómica y Empresarial (GISEE)*; *Grupo de Innovación Educativa Mejorando las Prácticas Aulicas (GIE-MPA)*; and *Grupo de Innovación Educativa Tecnologías de la Información y Comunicaciones en el proceso de enseñanza - aprendizaje (GIE-TICEA)*
University Politécnica Salesiana, Ecuador
nsumba@ups.edu.ec
University Rey Juan Carlos, Spain
n.sumba.2022@alumnos.urjc.es
ORCID: 0000-0001-7163-4252

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Abstract:

The changing context in which companies develop their business activity has compelled them to modify their communication strategy, and this is where influencer marketing and its standard bearer, the influencer, come into play. The aim of this study is to analyse the impact of influencer marketing on the purchase decisions of customers in the fashion and beauty sector, for which a non-experimental design with a correlational scope was carried out. A questionnaire was administered to 402 fashion product consumers and 393 beauty product users. A strong positive correlation (0.863), as well as an average positive correlation (0.738), between this type of marketing and the consumer's decision to purchase fashion and beauty products, respectively, indicates that the proper use of this type of marketing can provide companies with an important tool for inducing the purchase of their products.

Keywords:

Beauty; purchase decision; influencer; influencer marketing; fashion.

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Resumen:

El contexto cambiante en que las empresas desarrollan sus negocios las ha obligado a modificar también su estrategia comunicacional, es aquí, donde el marketing de influencias y su abanderado, el influencer, entran en escena. El objetivo del estudio es analizar el efecto del marketing de influencias en la decisión de compra de los clientes en el sector de la moda y la belleza, para ello se realizó un diseño no experimental y de alcance correlacional. Se aplicó un cuestionario a 402 consumidores de productos de moda y 393 consumidores de productos de belleza. La correlación positiva fuerte (0.863) y correlación positiva media (0.738) hallada entre esta vertiente del marketing y la decisión de compra del consumidor de productos de moda y belleza respectivamente, permite indicar que una correcta aplicación de este tipo de marketing permite a las empresas dotarse de una herramienta importante para motivar la compra de sus productos.

Palabras clave:

Belleza; decisión de compra; influencer; marketing de influencias; moda.

1. Introduction

The effects of globalisation, together with advances in information and communication technology (ICT) have affected all activity carried out by various societies on a global scale. Moreover, companies are not exempt from these effects, as they compete fiercely among themselves to gain market share at the national and international levels. To do so, they use the benefits offered by ICT (Peñafiel and Lopez, 2012; Ramos 2022; González, Ipaz Erazo and Turriago, 2022). Within the business

environment, one of the most widely used strategies is marketing in all of its aspects, including the following: content, social, digital, green, influencer marketing (IM), and others. These marketing strategies can be used in diverse economic sectors, and they currently depend mostly on the internet and ICT, which is confirmed by Armstrong and Kotler (2012), who assert that companies need to consider new ways of offering value to their customers using digital media.

Emerging technology and the internet are factors that have led to the development and reinforcement of the digital ecosystem, in which individuals as well as companies and organisations, both public and private, are immersed (Sumba, Cueva and López, 2018; Rodas-Tobar et al., 2022; Spitsina, Kretinin and Spitsin, 2022). This ecosystem is the place where digital customers have appeared. Moreover, these consumers have ubiquitous access to information such as prices, product features, ratings, and other data obtained through digital mobile devices, while in constant interaction with other members of the digital community (Delgado, 2016; Guaña, Quinatoa and Pérez, 2017; Guerra et al. 2021).

This last point is where social networks come into play and assume a key role, as these platforms allow interaction and communication among individuals where virtual communities are created. Furthermore, not only are virtual consumers represented, but also companies with their diverse marketing strategies, some of which are based on influencer marketing (IM). This new type of relationship between customers and companies is having a significant impact on the buying behaviour of consumers, who are moving to the online environment to carry out their purchases. Given this situation, the following research question is posed: Are influencer marketing strategies effective in persuading fashion and beauty customers in Ecuador to make a decision to purchase (PD)?

1.1. Virtual communities

Virtual communities use social networks for communication and interaction, as these digital platforms allow individuals to share ideas, experiences, and opinions about products or services in real time, and from any geographical location. They also enable users to share diverse perspectives, criticism and debate (Neira, 2017; López, Beltrán, Morales and Caverro, 2018; Cueva et al., 2021). In this regard, Linares (2013) points out that this exchange of opinion among customers in virtual communities influences purchase decisions (PD), as potential customers are able to obtain information and evaluate various product options, in addition to receiving feedback and reviews from other consumers. Peña-García (2016) agrees, indicating that prior to making a purchase decision, consumers seek information about the desired product or service through social networks.

On the other hand, companies also use social networks, or at least they should, in order to provide their target market with detailed, relevant and interesting information about the products or services they offer. Social networks can be used by companies as a type of high-powered megaphone to achieve a multiplier effect of their message to the market (Nielsen, 2017). In this regard, Ponce and Cordelier (2019) point out that businesses can use emotional messages on social networks to try to achieve higher visualisation and interaction from their community, while at the same time gaining feedback on their consumers' tastes and preferences.

However, this positive scenario is not achieved by all companies, as some fail to develop a marketing strategy focused on specific market segments, and instead use a generalist approach, which produces feelings of fatigue and saturation in the individuals who comprise the virtual communities (Moreira-Avilés et al., 2023). Along these lines, Osorio, Peláez and Rodríguez (2020)

point out that the excessive reliance by companies on both traditional and digital media can lead to a decrease in engagement and interaction with the target audience receiving the message.

Virtual communities have been growing over the last two decades, fuelled by widespread internet access in society. According to World Bank data (2020), 74% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean use the internet, while the same report indicates that 71% of Ecuadorians use and have access to the internet. This high percentage of internet access enables the general population to have a wide choice of media outlets through digital platforms, as well as free access to information and resources, and the opportunity to work and study online (Ibujés and Franco, 2019).

Increased access to this vast digital communications network, as well as the exponential proliferation of technological devices, has meant that both customers and companies are changing the way they communicate and express ideas to each other, given that this interaction is now carried out in a bi-directional way thanks to this new technology. These new communication channels between companies and customers have opened up a wide range of options, including the joint creation and development of products that meet the latent preferences and needs of consumers. In this regard, Dávila (2018) points out that ICT allows companies to add value to their products and services, leading to a better consumer experience, while Wilches (2020) asserts that this joint development of products gives companies a competitive edge over their rivals, while generating greater satisfaction for their consumers in using their products and services.

1.2. Influencers and social networks

The rapid expansion of technological devices, as well as greater availability of internet access, has led to the design of advertising and marketing strategies aimed at luring and capturing the interest of consumers. However, the inappropriate and random use of technology by organisations usually has the opposite effect on consumers or potential customers, such as uneasiness due to excessive advertising in social networks and virtual environments. Such discomfort frequently leads to disinterest by users in the companies that generate this content, which is often managed in a way that is impersonal and not adapted to people's needs and preferences (Fransi, Ramón and Baldomar, 2013; Gómez-Nieto, 2016; Fernández-Barros 2017).

In this swirl of advertising that saturates email inboxes and social networks, influencers have appeared. As charismatic content creators intensely active in virtual communities, they have obtained significant numbers of followers on social networks. Due to the high level of trust and recognition they have gained through content creation, influencers have become modern day prescribers in the age of social media and the Internet. For Pérez and Clavijo (2017), influencers are opinion leaders on a specific topic, who are constantly updating their knowledge and experience in order to produce content for their followers, with whom they have a certain amount of influence due to the knowledge and experience they have in relation to the specific field in which they operate. Consequently, companies analyse the socio-demographic features of those who follow influencers in order to determine whether they are potential customers and, if so, the businesses try to recommend a product or service to them through these influencers.

In the search for information, which is the second stage of the PD process, the influencer can become an important role model for consumers and have a direct impact on their purchase decisions, which is why companies select one or several influencers to be ambassadors of their brands in virtual communities. However, to achieve this objective, the influencer's values must be

in line with those of the company, as these will be reflected in the advertising produced. In addition, the socio-demographic characteristics of the influencers must be similar to those of their target audience, and the “lingo”, or type of language used, must be in consonance with that of their followers as well. These qualities help influencers establish a close bond with their followers, while at the same time differentiating themselves from traditional influencers (Díaz, 2017; Farivar and Wang, 2022). Table 1 offers a detailed classification of influencers.

Table 1. Classification of influencers

Classification	Description
Celebrities:	These are people who are easily recognised thanks to their high profile in the mass media, yet their prescriptive influence is rather low, as their recommendations are seen as promotions or advertising. They change from having a strong presence in the offline world to taking an active role in the online world. They appear in announcements where heightened brand visibility is needed.
Opinion leaders:	These individuals are journalists, professionals, or experts on a specific topic. Their main attribute is that they provide high quality content to their followers. They can also be defined as ordinary individuals who become well known through social networks due to their mastery and constant updating of knowledge on a specific topic, and they collaborate with brands by conveying a message based on expertise and credibility.
Micro-influencers:	These people are very active on social networks, with a much smaller number of followers than the previous two types, but with considerable clout with their community. They help companies influence people's PD due to the high level of trust their followers place in them.

Source: created by the authors based on Díaz (2017)

1.3. Influencer marketing

Businesses are increasingly aware that they need to incorporate a diversity of communication and marketing tools and strategies to achieve higher profits, and to attain a stronger position in the market. With the arrival of influencers, together with the aim of companies to attract audiences and promote the marketing of their products and services, influencer marketing (IM) has emerged. Castelló and Del Pino (2015) point out that this aspect of marketing is important for increasing sales through recommendations given by celebrities and famous people to their followers about a product or service, as long as these followers have characteristics and interests that are similar to those of the company's target audience. Along the same lines, Liu (2022) points out that celebrity influencer characteristics, such as trustworthiness, attractiveness, credibility and expertise enhance impulsive purchases of products and the intention to buy.

Santamaría and Meana (2017) assert that advertising strategies based on the use of influencers began in the late 2000s with the advent and growth of personal blogs, which allowed readers to get the opinion of other people who might have had some degree of influence over them, thanks to their mastery of a particular topic. It should be noted that this individual may not be widely known, nor be an opinion leader, but they often gain recognition through content shared through other digital media that is trustworthy and of interest to their community.

Suárez (2021) describes it as a type of marketing based on recommendations made by third parties, generally outside the company, related to the consumption of a product or service. In this regard, Bentley et al. (2021) note that people interact with influencers because they offer content that is entertaining, timely and interesting. Likewise, Gutiérrez, Gassiot and Alabart (2021) point out that 80.7% of equestrian product consumers in Spain learn about new products through an influencer, and 55.4% claim to have made a purchase as a result.

For Sanmiguel (2020), IM can be classified into two large categories: 1) organic influencer marketing, in which a micro-influencer supports a brand in an advertising campaign but does not receive any remuneration from the company, yet both parties benefit in other ways; and 2) paid influencer marketing, a type of advertising in which companies pay for the services of the influencers who support the brand.

1.4. The fashion and beauty sector

According to a report by Statista (2022), there are around 300 million digital shoppers in Latin America, and this figure is expected to grow by more than 20% by 2027. However, the same report points out that the acceptance of e-commerce in the Latin American region is still lower than in other regions with emerging economies. This coincides with the findings of López and Andrade (2020), who state that only 23% of the textile companies in Ecuador use e-commerce in their business activity.

Nielsen (2021), a world leader in audience research, published the results of a study on fashion shopping and consumption habits in 2021. The study points out that most fashion purchases were made online, and that men's fashion comprised the largest number of purchases. In addition, the report adds that influencers have a 65% impact on women's fashion, with the most influential areas being clothing, perfumes, tourism and food.

Concerning fashion and beauty in Ecuador, Maldonado (2014) argues that the desire of Ecuadorians to have a good appearance has led to a profitable business sector, both for investors and Ecuadorian cosmetic producers, given that fashion and beauty is a sector in which consumers do not consider the cost of a product at the time of purchase. In this regard, some key data bear mentioning, which were published in a report by the *Corporación Financiera Nacional CFN* (2020) [national finance corporation]. The report states that 280 companies were founded in this sector in 2019, 74% of which are located in Guayas (40%) and Pichincha (34%). In addition, from 2016 to August 2020 the majority of exports in this sector were destined for the United States.

Thus, it can be inferred from the previous section that the fashion and beauty market in Ecuador is an important part of the country's economy. On the other hand, considering the current competitive and globalised world where companies conduct their business activity, they must look for innovative strategies to attract people's attention or try to influence their PD using other available means. Therefore, the aim of this research is to analyse the impact of IM on customer PD in the fashion and beauty sector in Ecuador.

2. Methodology

This research was conducted using an empirical and non-experimental methodology. For that reason, a survey was employed as the data collection tool. Moreover, the research method was also descriptive, which allows the object of research to be explained in detail (RO) by studying the characteristics of influencers and the values inherent to these attributes (Heinemann, 2003; Espinoza 2018). The study is also correlational, given that the aim is to identify the relationship between two concepts or variables and to measure those associations. To do so, the following steps must be carried out: 1. The variables must be measured; 2. They must be quantified; 3. They must be analysed; and 4. The value of the correlation must be established (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2014).

In the present study, it should be noted that the methodology used was focused on cross-sectional data collection (Cvetkovic-Vega et al., 2021), which took place during February of 2023.

The customers of businesses involved in the fashion and beauty industry were surveyed in Ecuador's three largest cities: Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca. The objective was to gather the opinions of customers in these sectors with regard to the IM strategies used by the companies, which allowed the authors to observe whether the strategies had an impact on their PD. The study universe consisted of individuals in the working age population (WAP) of Ecuador which, according to the *Instituto Ecuatoriano de Estadísticas y Censos* [Ecuadorian Institute of Statistics and Census] (INEC, 2022), is 8.4 million Ecuadorians.

As this study aims to analyse whether influencer marketing has a persuasive impact on purchases in both the fashion and beauty markets in Ecuador, two samples have been used, so that the results obtained can be inferred separately for both sectors.

Data collection was carried out in-person by a group of interviewers outside the establishments related to the sectors involved in the study. A strict selection criterion was used, whereby only those persons identified as regular customers of those establishments were included in the sample. This process was rigorously carried out until a sufficient number of people had been reached for the samples, thus guaranteeing the validity of the data collected.

Before conducting the interviews, pre-tests were carried out in order to assess their validity and reliability. The tool was validated by three marketing experts and subsequently tested on a sample of 30 individuals, after which the reliability of the survey was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. This phase contributed significantly to fine-tuning the survey, allowing for necessary adjustments to refine its ability to measure the variables of interest in an efficient manner.

The arrangement of the samples and the reliability of the tool can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of the samples

Independent Variable	Dependent variable	Sample size	Sample sub-division
IM in the beauty sector	PD process of customers in the beauty sector	393 Women I prefer not to give this information (CI 95%, 5%) Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.939	Quito, Guayaquil and Cuenca, at least 130 people surveyed in each city.
IM in the fashion sector	PD process of customers in the fashion sector	402 Men and Women I prefer not to give this information (CI 95%, 5%) Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.929	Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca, at least 130 people surveyed in each city.

Source: created by the authors

To determine whether IM strategies have a convincing impact on customer decision-making in the beauty sector in Ecuador, the first hypothesis was the following: IM has a persuasive effect on customer PD in the beauty sector in Ecuador. To test the hypothesis, a sample of 393 people was collected. The decision was made to include only women and people who preferred not to state their gender, as this sector involves the purchase and sale of creams, masks, make-up, and make-up powder, among other cosmetic products, which are mainly purchased by women.

In order to establish whether IM strategies have a convincing impact on customer decision-making in the fashion sector in Ecuador, the second hypothesis was set as follows: IM has a persuasive effect on the purchase decisions of customers in the fashion sector in Ecuador. A sample of 402 people was collected, including men, women and people who preferred not to mention their gender. It should be noted that this sector involves the purchase and sale of clothing and fashion accessories such as leather products, fabrics, and hats, among others.

Table 3 below shows the operationalisation of the variables used in the study, which is in line with the review of diverse research mentioned in the previous section.

Table 3. Operationalisation of the variables

Variable	Sector under analysis	Dimensions	Indicators
Influencer marketing	Fashion sector Beauty sector	Types of influencers by number of followers	1. Celebrity Influencer
			2. Opinion leader
			3. Micro-influencer
		Influencer characteristics	4. Number of followers
			5. Types of followers
			6. Interaction
		/ Platforms used by influencers	7. Website
			8. YouTube channel
			9. Social media
PD of the consumer	Fashion sector Beauty sector	PD process of the buyer	10, 11, 12. PD according to type of influencer
			13, 14, 15. PD according to the characteristics of the influencer
			16, 17, 18. PD according to the platform used by the influencer

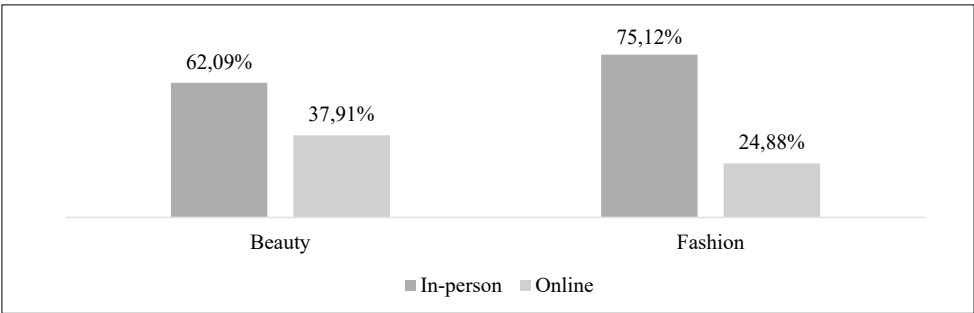
Source: created by the authors based on Díaz (2017)

The data collected were compiled and analysed using SPSS software version 25.

3. Results

In relation to the current situation of customers in the fashion and beauty sector, Figure 1 shows the preference of people in each of these sectors when shopping.

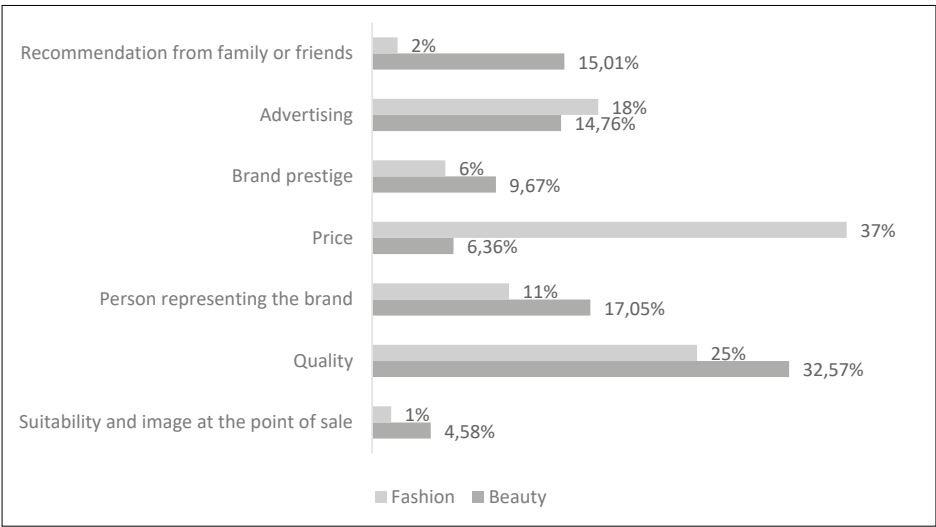
Figure 1. Buying preferences of fashion and beauty customers



Source: created by the authors

Regarding the factors that customers in both sectors believe exert an influence on their purchasing behaviour, Figure 2 shows the distribution of the results.

Figure 2. Factors that influence the buying behaviour of Fashion and Beauty customers



Source: created by the authors

To confirm the first hypothesis, each of the responses of the beauty customers in the IM and PD dimensions were aggregated. In order to interpret the data, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test (PNKS) was applied, and it was found that the data did not achieve normality. Consequently, Spearman’s Rho correlation coefficient (SR CC) was employed to verify the existence of a linear relationship between the variables. Table 4. Details of the correlation between the dimensions: IM and PD in the beauty sector.

Table 4. Spearman’s Rho calculations: IM and PD in the Beauty (B) sector

		Type_Influencer_B	PDB_Type_Influencer	Intensity
Type_Influencer_B	SRCC	1.000	.654**	Average positive correlation
		Characteristics_Influencer_B	PDB_Characteristics_Influencer	
Characteristics_Influencer_B	SRCC	1.000	.613**	Average positive correlation
		Platform_Influencer_B	PDB_Platform_Influencer	
Platform_Influencer_B	SRCC	1.000	.747**	Average positive correlation
N		393		

****Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral)**

Source: created by the authors

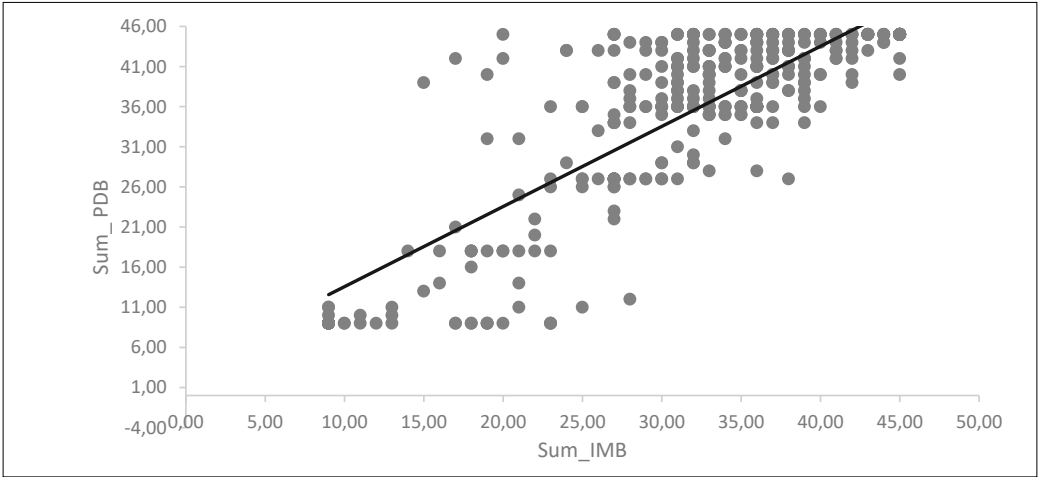
To get an overview of the relationship between IM and PD strategies of customers in the beauty sector, a scatter diagram was made (see Figure 3. Subsequently, the SRCC was applied to obtain a numerical result (see Table 5).

Table 5. Correlation of IM (Sum_IMB) and PD (Sum_PDB) of beauty sector customers

		Sum_IMB	Sum_PDB
Sum_MIB	SRCC	1.000	.738** Average positive correlation
	P-value (bilateral)		.000
	N	393	393
Sum_PDB	SRCC	.738** Average positive correlation	1.000
	P-value (bilateral)	.000	
	N	393	393

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral)
Source: created by the authors

Figure 3. Scatter diagram of IM (Sum_IMB) and PD (Sum_PDB) of beauty sector customers



Source: created by the authors

To confirm the second hypothesis, each fashion customer’s responses to the IM and PD dimensions were aggregated, and the same tests that were used for the beauty sector were applied. Table 6 shows the correlation between the IM and PD dimensions in the fashion sector.

Table 6. Spearman’s Rho calculations of IM and PD in the Fashion sector (F)

		Type_Influencer_F	PDF_Type_Influencer	Intensity
Type_Influencer_F	SRCC	1.000	.797**	Strong positive correlation
		Characteristics_Influencer_F	PDF_Characteristics_Influencer	
Characteristics_Influencer_F	SRCC	1.000	.783**	Strong positive correlation
		Platform_Influencer_F	PDF_Platform_Influencer	
Platform_Influencer_F	SRCC	1.000	.789**	Strong positive correlation
N		402		

**Correlation is found to be significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral)

Source: created by the authors

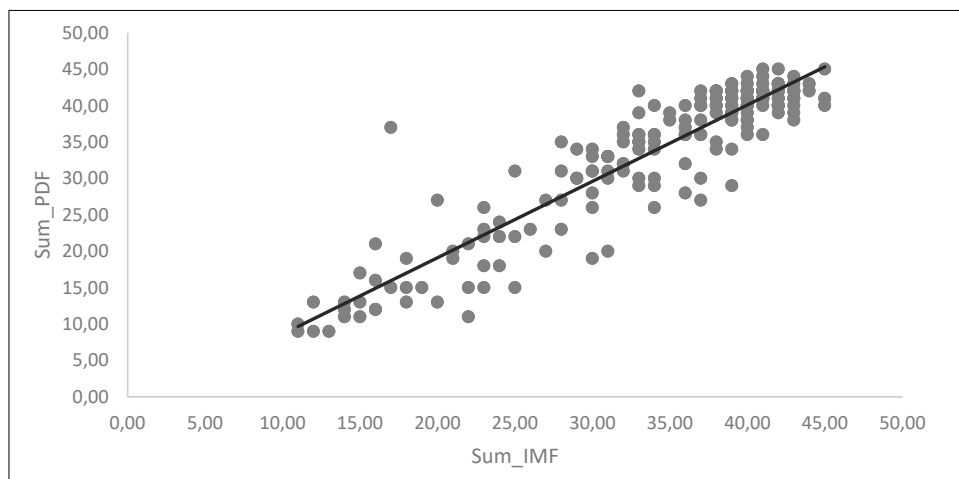
At this point, to give an overview of the relationship between the IM and PD strategies of customers in the fashion sector, a scatter diagram is provided (see Figure 4). Afterward, an SRCC was applied to get a numerical result (see Table 7).

Table 7. Correlation of IM (Sum_IMF) and PD (Sum_PDF) of fashion sector customers

		Sum_IMF	Sum_PDF
Sum_IMF	SRCC	1.000	.863** Strong positive correlation
	P-value (bilateral)		.000
	N	402	402
Sum_PDF	SRCC	.863** Strong positive correlation	1.000
	P-value (bilateral)	.000	
	N	402	402

**Correlation is found to be significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral)

Source: created by the authors

Figure 4. Scatter diagram of IM (Sum_IMF) and PD (Sum_PDF) of Fashion sector customers

Source: created by the authors

4. Discussion

At first sight, the strong positive correlation (Spearman's Rho, 0.863) between influencer marketing and the purchase decisions of fashion products by consumers seems to indicate that companies in this sector can benefit from proper implementation of this type of marketing. In this regard, Cuadros (2017) points out that people who follow fashion influencers and are impacted by them are generally interested in these types of products, given that they pursue and follow these leaders in order to gather information on current events and trends in fashion. However, these findings contradict those of Arocena (2022), who states that only 26.7% of the people in the sample in his study reported purchasing a product after hearing a recommendation from an influencer, and that 57% indicated that influencer recommendations do not impact their purchase decisions. These divergent findings do not enable the discernment of a clearly defined behavioural pattern. Consequently, they should be reviewed in the current context in which consumers have a wide variety of options and channels where they can search for information. Thus, although a recommendation made by an influencer might not lead to an immediate purchase, but it could trigger a search for information, price comparisons, and analyses of other consumers' comments on a given product. At a later date, a new trigger might reactivate this buying process, so that the consumer forgets or overlooks the fact that the purchase he or she is making was made based on an initial recommendation from an influencer.

As far as the beauty sector is concerned, the average positive correlation obtained (Spearman's Rho 0.738) between influencer marketing and the purchase decision also highlights the importance for companies in this sector to develop strategies that incorporate this type of marketing. Authors Yáñez, Fernández-Robin and Ogalde (2022) concur with this assertion, pointing

out that influencers have become a source of information for consumers of beauty products, as the latter follow them in order to discover their own needs and the variety of options available to them. Thus, influencers become part of the purchase decision. Maradiaga, Montoya and Ponce (2020) conclude that influencer marketing in the beauty sector is being used successfully by companies as a communication strategy. Furthermore, they assert that influencers have the power to persuade followers to purchase this type of product through their posts,

For the reasons mentioned above, brands in both sectors have started to rely social networks where they develop marketing strategies that involve influencers, taking into account that in addition to delivering the message of the organisation, these leaders strengthen the image and positioning of the brand and bring it closer to its target audience (Pérez and Luque, 2018, Pereira-Villazón, Portilla and Rodríguez-Salcedo, 2021). Palacios Saavedra (2020) agrees with this assertion and points out that influencers play a fundamental role in bringing fashion closer to people, who are enticed by observing the influencer wearing and displaying fashion products and brands, as long as the message is conveyed naturally, and the products and brands are compatible with their lifestyle and the image they want to transmit (Gomes, Marques and Dias, 2022). The conclusions of Cueva, Sumba and Villacrés (2020), who found a positive correlation between this aspect of marketing and the purchase decisions made by Ecuadorian millennial consumers, appears to be generally accepted.

5. Conclusions

The expansion of internet access and digital literacy in Ecuador has provided a favourable scenario for the development of commercial transactions, which has prompted companies to make a name for themselves in the digital ecosystem where societies carry out a large part of their activities. To do so, one of the strategies embraced by companies is influencer marketing, which attempts to deliver its message to its target audience through influencers, thereby enhancing the position and image of the brand.

In the fashion industry, consumers turn to influencers to learn about current trends and visualise garment combinations that they can use themselves. As such, they are an important resource that companies in this sector can use to enhance their brand image and position their products or services. However, in order for these tactics to be effective, they must be accompanied by digital marketing and content strategies, so that all of the visibility provided by the influencer contributes effectively to the purchase decision.

As far as the beauty market is concerned, influencers have become an important source of information for consumers who seek to understand what they need and desire, and what could be useful to them. This gives influencers the power of prescription over their followers when the latter try to make decisions regarding whether or not to buy a certain product. Therefore, companies in this sector should recruit influencers who have attributes that are in line with those of the businesses that hire them, in order to develop strategies that will be more effective than using traditional advertising media, as the influencers transmit feelings of trust and credibility with their followers.

For future lines of research, further segmentation of the beauty industry is proposed, such as facials, body treatments, cosmetics and others, in order to make an assessment and comparison of the effects of influencer marketing in each of these specific product

lines. Regarding the fashion industry, studies that involve the segmentation of men and women are also recommended, as well as diversity in age groups, in order to delve into the effect of this type of marketing on specific customer groups.

The present correlational research has explored the relationship between influencer marketing and the purchase decisions of customers in the fashion and beauty industries from the point of view of the buyers themselves. However, in order to explore this area more deeply, future research might consider taking an experimental approach. For example, a guided experiment could be designed in which influencer marketing strategies are tested on diverse groups, resulting in an assessment of the direct impact of such campaigns on the purchase decisions of a representative sample. This would allow researchers to understand not only the relationship between influencer marketing and purchase decisions, but to infer the causality between influencer marketing and consumer behaviour in these sectors as well.

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7. Specific contributions from each author

	Name and surname
Conception and work design	Nivia Carolina Gonzalez Marin. Rosa Virginia Guiracocha Arriciaga.
Methodology	Nivia Carolina Gonzalez Marin. Rosa Virginia Guiracocha Arriciaga.
Data collection and analysis	Nivia Carolina Gonzalez Marin. Rosa Virginia Guiracocha Arriciaga.
Discussion and conclusions	Nivia Carolina Gonzalez Marin. Rosa Virginia Guiracocha Arriciaga.
Drafting, formatting, review and approval of versions	Jorge Cueva Estrada Nicolas Sumba Nacipucha

8. Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in any part of this article.

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