

Influencing factors of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention

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Abstract. In recent years, more and more male beauty KOLs began to be active in the beauty industry, and their influence on consumers' purchase intention is on the rise. In view of this phenomenon, this paper establishes a model about the influence factors of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention based on SOR model, collects data through questionnaire survey, and analyzes the data by SPSS. Finally, it comes to the conclusion that attributes of male beauty KOLs has a positive impact on consumers' perception, social environment has a mediating effect on consumers' perception, and consumers' perception has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention.

Keywords: Male beauty blogger; KOL; purchase intention; KOL attributes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Subject Source

KOL (Key Opinion Leader) was first proposed by Lazarsfeld. In the field of marketing, KOL is usually defined as a person who has more accurate product information, is accepted or trusted by relevant groups, and has greater influence on the purchasing behavior of the group.

In the traditional beauty industry, almost all the users of beauty products are women, resulting in the source of beauty KOLs is considered to be only women. But in recent years, more and more men are active in the beauty industry. In the KOL Marketing Report of the 2019 Short Video of beauty conducted by Caas Data, only for Tiktok, 21% of beauty KOL was male, and a great number of fans were captured by their amazing make-up technology and strong label recognition. It can be seen that the status of male KOLs in the field of beauty is gradually rising, and its role in consumer behavior is becoming more and more important. Combined with this reality, the starting point of this paper is to explore the influencing factors of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention; referring to the existing literature research and model construction at home and abroad, the research topic of this paper is finally established.

1.2 Literature Review and Research Significance

1.2.1 Literature Review

1.2.1.1 Research on Beauty KOL

At present, there is no clear definition of beauty KOL in the academic circle. According to the understanding, some scholars interpret it as a beauty blogger who has a certain appeal and credibility in the field of beauty and has a great influence on the purchase behavior of her/his fans [1]. Previously, some scholars confused beauty KOL with online celebrities. Taking Li Jiaqi as an example, they explored their media image building and pointed out that the image created by online celebrities relying on social networks is a kind of image based on special purpose, with virtuality, complexity and variability [2].

Generally speaking, the research of domestic scholars on beauty KOL is based on the overall KOL, and beauty KOL have attracted great attention because of its strong ability to sell goods. With the continuous emergence of beauty KOL, the reason why a small number of beauty KOLs can receive much more attention lies in its unique marketing mode, including personal design, professional foundation, fan effect, word-of-mouth management, etc. [3].

1.2.1.2 Research on Male Beauty KOL

Male beauty KOL is a hot topic in recent years. The emergence of male beauty KOL has aroused scholars' thinking about the reasons for their rise and the exploration of content production strategy.

In terms of the rise of male beauty KOL, the rapid growth of male makeup market is inseparable. From August 2017 to July 2018, the sales of men's skin care products on Tmall and Taobao platforms reached nearly 3 billion [4]. Based on this, the subjective reasons for male beauty KOL's success are the high interactive consumption scenes, high professional product explanation, high recognition brought by various symbols and the characteristics of both male and female temperament made by male KOL; in addition, the rise of feminism, theory of the gaze of the other, male and female's self-cognition and other concepts about gender also play a role [5-7].

At the same time, in terms of the content production strategy of male beauty KOL, some scholars pointed out that distinctive character setting and cross gender differential positioning are the key points of its content production [8]. This is also consistent with the reasons of the rise of male beauty KOL. It can be seen that male beauty KOL attracts audience and produces content by virtue of its unique characteristics, and has a certain impact on consumers.

1.2.1.3 Research on Consumers' Purchase Intention

At present, the definition of purchase intention is not unified at home and abroad. This paper takes purchase intention as the possibility of consumers to buy the product (Rui Han, Zhilong Tian).

In the field of online shopping, some scholars have introduced SOR theory into the research of what influences consumers' purchase intention (Eroglu, 2001). Domestic scholars using this model have different interpretations of S, O and R: some scholars have studied the e-commerce anchor attributes (S), consumers' internal state (O) and consumers' online purchase intention (R) respectively [11], and some other have interpreted S as cognitive social presence and emotional social presence [9]. Other scholars use the long tail theory, scenario theory, perceived value theory and key opinion leaders to study their direct impact on consumption intention [10].

To sum up, at present, the factor discovery and model establishment of consumers' purchase intention are relatively perfect, and the influence of most factors on purchase intention is affirmed. Therefore, this paper refers to several influence models, and finally establishes the influence model of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention.

1.2.2 Research Significance

1.2.2.1 Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this paper perfects the research on the influence factors of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention. At present, this kind of research is rarely seen at home and abroad, more is to study the attributes of beauty KOL, the influence factors of e-commerce anchor or platform on consumers' purchase intention, or the reasons for the rise of male beauty KOL, so they only have a certain reference value for this study. In addition, previous studies have not established a direct relationship with the impact of consumers' purchase intention.

1.2.2.2 Practical Significance

This study analyzes the influence factors of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention, and puts forward some reference suggestions for the image building and marketing strategy of male beauty KOL. Besides, the research of this paper will help consumers more clearly understand the impact of KOL on themselves and have a deeper understanding of their purchasing behavior.

1.3 Research Contents and Methods

1.3.1 Research Content

At present, consumers' purchase intention is affected by many factors. If only considering male beauty KOL, the influencing factors come from many different aspects. This paper refers to the existing scholars' research on male beauty KOL and the research on the influencing factors of consumers' purchase intention in different aspects, starting from male beauty KOL, to explore their influencing factors on consumers' purchase intention.

1.3.2 Research Methods

Firstly, this paper summarizes some factors of KOL influencing consumers' purchase intention, some attributes of male beauty KOL and the reasons for their rise through literature research; in qualitative research, it refers to the existing model to design a new model, combines attributes and reasons for their rise with purchase intention to design a questionnaire, and establishes a connection through Richter scale. Finally, using the method of quantitative research, analyze the data collected from questionnaire survey by SPSS, and obtain the influencing factors.

2. Research Hypothesis

2.1 Research Hypothesis

2.1.1 The Influence of Male Beauty Kol Attributes on Consumer Perception

Male beauty KOL attributes refers to the characteristics of this kind of people that are not affected by the outside world, including appearance, voice, personality, ability and so on. It is the most direct stimulation that consumers face when they accept their marketing. Therefore, in this paper, the attributes of male beauty KOL play an important role in consumer perception. Through reading the relevant literature and interviewing the male beauty KOL users around, this study puts forward seven indicators to measure the attributes of male beauty KOL, involving the appearance, language and personality of male beauty KOL.

H1: Male beauty KOL attributes have a positive impact on consumer perception

2.1.2 The Impact of Social Environment on Consumer Perception

Most scholars point out that the rise of male beauty KOL cannot be separated from social reasons. In modern society, the rise of feminism has eliminated certain male stereotypes, and more and more men begin to wear makeup. No longer only the female image as an object to be consumed, men can also be used as product publicity. What's more, being affected by the fan economy, many beauty brands use male spokesmen to help them attract consumers.

In this paper, social environment refers to some current views on men and women and male beauty, which assist the attributes of KOL and work together on consumer perception.

H2: Social environment plays an intermediary role on consumer perception

2.1.3 The Impact of Consumer Perception on Consumers' Purchase Intention

Many studies have shown that consumer perception is an important factor affecting consumers' purchase intention. In the case of external factors driving consumption, consumers will have a purchase intention or impulse only when they perceive that male beauty KOL has brought them certain information or value.

This study suggests that in the SOR model, the organism is equivalent to the product introduction and other aspects of psychological cognition that male beauty KOL brings to consumers. It is also considered as KOL attributes lead to, being affected by social environment, and will trigger consumers' purchase intention.

H3: Consumer perception has a positive effect on consumers' purchase intention

2.2 Theoretical Model

To sum up, this paper provides three hypotheses:

H1: Male beauty KOL attribute has a positive impact on consumer perception

H2: Social environment plays an intermediary role on consumer perception

H3: Consumer perception has a positive effect on consumer purchase intention

The research model of this paper is based on all the above assumptions, as shown in the figure

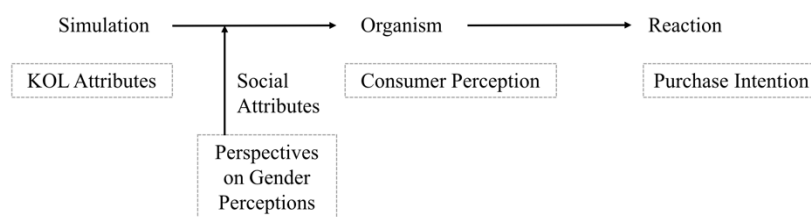


Fig. 1 Theoretical Model

3. Research Design

3.1 Questionnaire Design and Pre-Survey

This study uses the method of questionnaire survey to collect sample data. There are four variables in the research model, which are KOL attributes, social environment, consumer perception and purchase intention. The scale adopts the mature measurement standards in the relevant literature to ensure the validity and scientific of the questionnaire, and makes corresponding adjustments according to the characteristics of KOL. Finally, the research model scale of male beauty KOL influencing consumers' purchase intention is formed, which is composed of 25 elements as shown in Table 1. Each measurement item is measured by Likert 5 scale to ensure that the questionnaire has enough credibility.

3.2 Data Collection

In this study, 307 questionnaires were collected through the "Questionnaire Star" platform, of which 233 were valid, with an effective recovery rate of 75.90%.

3.3 Analysis of Sample User Information

Using SPSS, this study makes descriptive statistics on the samples. According to the basic information of the sample, the proportion of women and men in the sample was about the same; 77.25% of the samples are aged between 18 and 35, indicating that most of the samples are young and this is in line with the usage characteristics of social networks. 78.97% of the samples have a bachelor's degree or above, and most of the samples have stable occupations. 40.77% have a monthly disposable income of 5,001 yuan or above, which belongs to the high-income level.

3.4 Reliability and Validity Tests

3.4.1 Reliability Tests

Use Cronbach Alpha to do reliability analysis, and the data were shown in table 1:

Table 1. The results of the Cronbach Alpha for reliability analysis

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha
Overall	0.885
KOL Attributes	0.753
Social Environment	0.511
Consumer perception	0.818
Purchase Intention	0.678

It can be seen from table 3 that the overall data research has high reliability, and the data can be used for further analysis.

3.4.2 Validity Tests

Use KMO and Bartlett’s test to do validity analysis, and the data were shown in table 2:

Table 2. The results of the KMO and Bartlett’s test for validity analysis

KMO Measure of Sampling	0.890	
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1852.572
	df	300
	Sig.	0.000

It can be seen from table 4 that the data has validity, and there is not much difference in the degree of correlation between variables, and there is a significant correlation between the original variables, the data is suitable for factor analysis;

4. Empirical Research

In this study, SPSS regression analysis was used to study and verify the positive and negative effects of various factors and the degree of the effects, in order to verify whether the hypothesis is true or not.

4.1 The Influence of Male Beauty Kol Attribute on Consumer Perception

With KOL attributes as the independent variable and consumer perception as the dependent variable, establish a regression model, and the judgment coefficient of KOL attributes and consumer perception regression model is 0.591, and the regression coefficient b is a positive number under the condition of significance $P = 0.000$, which proves that KOL attributes has a positive impact on consumer perception, and the impact is significant. Hypothesis H1 is verified.

4.2 Mediating Effect of Social Environment on Consumer Perception

In order to prove whether social environment has a mediating effect on consumer perception, a two-step verification will be done as followed. Firstly, the regression model of social environment and consumer perception is established to analyze whether social environment has a certain impact on consumer perception; secondly, the regression model of KOL attribute and social environment on consumer perception is established; the results of the second step are compared with those of the first step and 4.1, which is the individual effects of KOL attributes on consumers, to analyze whether social environment has a mediating effect on consumers' perception related to KOL attributes.

After two-step verification, we can get that social environment plays a significant mediating role in the impact of KOL attributes on consumer perception, and hypothesis H2 is verified.

4.3 The Impact of Consumer Perception on Consumers' Purchase Intention

With consumer perception as the independent variable and purchase intention as the dependent variable, establish a regression model. In the results, the regression coefficient is 0.521, while the regression coefficient is 0.215 under significance of 0.000, which proves that consumer perception has a significant positive impact on purchase intention. Hypothesis H3 is verified.

5. Conclusion and Inspiration

Based on the stimulation collective reflection model, this paper establishes the influence model of male beauty KOL on consumers' purchase intention, collects data through questionnaire survey, analyzes the data by SPSS, and verifies that male beauty KOL attributes has a positive impact on consumers' perception, social environment has a mediating effect on consumers' perception, and consumers' perception has a positive impact on consumers' purchase intention.

In view of the above conclusions, this study puts forward the following suggestions:

First of all, for male beauty KOLs, they should strengthen the establishment of their own unique attributes such as in appearance image, language style, temperament shaping and fans interaction and other aspects.

Secondly, for beauty companies, they should seize the market of male KOL and increase the investment in male KOL. At present, the market of women's beauty KOL is nearly saturated, while men's beauty KOL is playing a more and more important role. It can be said that men's beauty KOL is a blue ocean of beauty KOL market. How to effectively promote their products to consumers through male beauty KOL is a topic that businesses can consider in the future.

Thirdly, the social environment should promote the issue of gender equality in more aspects. For consumers, if they accept more knowledge about gender equality and understand the real concept of gender equality, it will help them to accept non-traditional gender marketing and even be more interested in it.

Finally, for consumers, the first is to find KOL's reference according to their real needs. For female consumers, when referring to male beauty KOL's opinions, they should fully consider all the effects of gender differences; in addition, they should distinguish whether the consumption scene constructed by male beauty KOLs is true, and whether their consumption psychology is calm and objective when purchasing.

Male beauty KOL is a "blue ocean market" in the field of beauty KOL, which has not been fully explored. Neither for the development of KOLs themselves, nor for the development of beauty brands and beauty consumers is not perfect. Making good use of male beauty KOL will have a more profound impact on the marketing of beauty products.

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