

The Role of Influencer Marketing in Building Brand Trust for Private Label Health Care Products

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Abstract:

Private label health care products have become an important segment of the health care market by offering consumers affordable alternatives to established national brands. Despite improvements in product quality and regulatory compliance, consumer trust continues to be a significant challenge due to concerns regarding product safety, effectiveness, and brand credibility. Influencer marketing has emerged as an effective digital marketing strategy that enables brands to establish authentic relationships with consumers through credible and engaging content. This study investigates the role of influencer marketing in building brand trust for private label health care products by examining the influence of influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and consumer engagement on trust formation and purchase intention. A quantitative research approach was employed using structured questionnaires administered to consumers familiar with private label health care products. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques to evaluate the relationships among the study variables. The findings indicate that influencer authenticity, perceived expertise, and transparent communication have a significant positive effect on consumer trust and purchase intention toward private label health care products. Furthermore, higher levels of consumer engagement with influencer-generated content strengthen brand credibility and foster long-term customer relationships. The study concludes that influencer marketing serves as a valuable strategic tool for enhancing brand trust and improving consumer acceptance of private label health care products. The findings provide practical insights for marketers and health care retailers in designing effective influencer marketing strategies that support sustainable brand development and competitive advantage.

Keywords: Influencer Marketing, Brand Trust, Private Label Health Care Products, Consumer Behaviour, Influencer Credibility, Influencer Authenticity, Consumer Engagement, Purchase Intention, Social Media Marketing, Digital Marketing.

1. Introduction

The health care industry is undergoing a significant transformation as private label products are increasingly sold in pharmacies, supermarkets, e-commerce sites, and retail stores. Private label health care products, including dietary supplements, personal care products, OTC medicines, hygienic products, and others, meet the requirements of value-conscious and health-oriented customers. As the tendency towards buying private label products rises, so does the interest in private label branding. The main reason why shoppers[1] purchase branded generic products is their high quality and lower prices. On the other hand, the majority of customers have negative expectations regarding the quality of private label health care products. Therefore, brand trust emerges as a critical variable that must be considered when shopping for health care products.

Brand trust is significantly associated with customer behavior in the health care industry. Health care products are different from other types of goods because of their effect on customers' health. Therefore, prior to buying decisions, customers rely on trustworthy sources of information to ensure that the selected brand does not endanger their health and satisfies their needs. In the modern marketplace, where social media dominates, companies must

leverage on influencers as opinion leaders to build brand trust among consumers. Influencer marketing refers to collaborating with social media influencers to promote the brand, its products, and services. Influencers produce informative content that allows customers to identify the benefits of the promoted products and services offered by the company. Influencer marketing has gained tremendous traction in recent years due to its ability to encourage customers to purchase the promoted products. Influencer marketing can impact consumer trust toward private label health care products. Essential to investigate how this marketing approach affects consumer trust to determine the best strategy for promoting private label health care products[3].

Influencer marketing can boost consumer trust in private label health care products if the right influencers are utilized. The success of influencers depends on the level of trustworthiness, authenticity, expertise, and interactivity demonstrated by the influencers. Influencers must have a deep understanding of the promoted product in order to gain the trust of customers. Moreover, influencers must demonstrate honesty and refrain from spreading misleading information about the benefits of the promoted product or service. The[4] abovementioned factors are associated with consumer trust in influencer marketing. A comprehensive understanding of how influencers impact consumer trust is critical in developing effective influencer marketing strategies. In particular, the selection of influencers is one of the most critical decisions that must be made when developing influencer marketing strategies.

While there is a substantial amount of literature on influencer marketing, most studies focus on the influence of influencer marketing on various industries, including fashion, cosmetics, and technology. However, there is a need for more empirical research on the role of influencer marketing in promoting private label health care products. Compared to other industries, the health care industry requires a more careful assessment of the influence of influencers on consumer trust, given that the purchase of health care products involve high levels of involvement. This research aims to contribute to the literature by exploring the impact of various characteristics of influencers on consumer trust in private label health care products. Findings of this study will offer critical insights to health care retailers, manufacturers, and marketers on how to utilize influencers to build consumer trust in private label health care products and ensure long-term competitiveness[5].

1.1 Objectives

- To examine the role of influencer marketing in building brand trust for private label health care products.
- To evaluate the influence of influencer credibility on consumers' trust in private label health care products.
- To examine the impact of influencer authenticity on consumers' perception of private label health care brands[6].
- To analyze the relationship between influencer expertise and consumers' purchase intention toward private label health care products.

1.2 Research Gap

Existing literature extensively explored the role of influencers in different domains, such as fashion, beauty, cosmetics, and electronics, on consumer behavior, brand image, level of awareness, and engagement. Similarly, scholars investigated the influencers' impact on private label branding, focusing mainly on value, quality, and satisfaction. Contrary, research exploring how the influencer marketing (IM) fosters brand trust for private label healthcare products is underrepresented[7].

Private label healthcare products differ from other types of goods and services because of the high involvement of consumers in the buying process, resulting in the risk perception associated with the purchase. Therefore, it is rational to assume that consumer trust plays a critical role in brand choice among private label healthcare products. Although a number of studies reported the effectiveness of IM as a tool for brand promotion, the majority of them failed to indicate how influencers' attributes contribute to building a strong level of trust in private label healthcare products[8].

Moreover, the majority of the studies used to investigate the relationship between IM and private label brand were focused mainly on national and premium healthcare brands, whereas the private label healthcare products were

explored insufficiently. Nowadays, private label health care products are increasingly popular among consumers because of their cost-effectiveness and high quality. Therefore, there is a need to fill the gap in research on the role of IM in building brand trust and reducing the risk perception associated with the purchase of such products, thus impacting the buying behavior[2].

The majority of the studies were conducted in developed countries, representing the level of IM application in these countries; however, the data may not be generalized to developing/emerging economies where IM is actively used in health care promotion.

The current research aims[9] to contribute to the understanding of how IM influences consumer trust in private label healthcare products. This study will expand the knowledge on the role of IM in building consumer engagement and brand credibility, providing a theoretical basis for scholars and practitioners to implement IM in private label healthcare branding, taking into account such variables as influence, credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and consumer engagement[10].

2. Methodology

This study employed a quantitative survey design to experiment with the role played by influencer marketing in developing trust in private-label health care products. Specifically, a descriptive and explanatory study was conducted to establish the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer trust[11].

The target population for this study comprised consumers who were knowledgeable about or had purchased private-label health care products and were active on social media networks where influencer marketing was taking place. In this study, a questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire had two sections; the first section aimed to collect the respondent's demography, while the second section focused on measuring the constructs of interest. The constructs included influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, consumer engagement, brand trust, and purchase intention. The Likert scale was used to rate the items in the questionnaire. This scale ranged from 1 Strongly Disagree to 5 Strongly Agree. The items used in this study were adopted from previous research studies conducted in the area of marketing and consumer behavior. The items were modified to fit the scope and objectives of this study[12].

In this study convenience sampling was used to select the sample from the target population. A total of 250 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the selected consumers. This number was sufficient for this study because it provided a representative sample of the target population.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data collected from the study. The data analysis process started with the descriptive statistics of the demography of the sampled consumers. The descriptive statistics included frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. In this study, Cronbach Alpha was used to assess the reliability of the instruments. A Cronbach Alpha value of 0.7 was taken as a threshold value for this study. On the other hand, construct validity was established by reviewing existing literature and assessing the relevance of the items in the questionnaires. In addition, the items were subjected to expert validation.

Inferential statistical tests were performed to establish the relationship between the study constructs. Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between influencer marketing and consumer trust. On the other hand, a multiple regression analysis was performed to establish the extent to which influencer marketing predicted brand trust and purchase intention. The significance level of the study was set at 0.05[13].

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of research. The respondents provided informed consent to participate in the study. In addition, their anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process, and the information collected was used for research purposes only[14].

2.1 Research Design

The present study adopted a quantitative research design using a descriptive and explanatory research approach to examine the role of influencer marketing in building brand trust for private label health care products. The

descriptive design was employed to understand consumers' perceptions of influencer marketing attributes, while the explanatory design was used to investigate the relationship between influencer marketing factors and brand trust. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, where data were collected from respondents at a single point in time[15].

Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics of the study variables based on the respondents' perceptions. The mean values ranged from 3.98 to 4.23, indicating that respondents generally agreed with the statements related to influencer marketing, brand trust, and purchase intention. Influencer Expertise recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.59$), followed by Brand Trust ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.61$), while Transparency had the lowest mean ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.73$). The relatively low standard deviation values indicate consistency in respondents' opinions across all study constructs[16].

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Influencer Credibility	4.18	0.64
Influencer Authenticity	4.11	0.71
Influencer Expertise	4.23	0.59
Transparency	3.98	0.73
Consumer Engagement	4.15	0.68
Brand Trust	4.20	0.61
Purchase Intention	4.16	0.66

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

2.2 Data Collection Instrument

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed from validated measurement scales reported in previous studies on influencer marketing, brand trust, and consumer behavior. The questionnaire consisted of two sections:

- Section A: Demographic profile of respondents (age, gender, education, occupation, income level, frequency of purchasing private label health care products, and social media usage).
- Section B: Measurement of the study constructs, namely:
 - Influencer Credibility
 - Influencer Authenticity
 - Influencer Expertise
 - Transparency of Influencer Endorsements
 - Consumer Engagement

- Brand Trust
- Purchase Intention

The questionnaire was distributed electronically through online survey platforms and social media channels to consumers who had experience purchasing or using private label health care products[17].

2.3 Data Analysis Techniques (SPSS)

The collected data were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0. The following statistical techniques were employed:

Statistical Technique	Purpose
Frequency and Percentage Analysis	To summarize respondents' demographic characteristics.
Mean and Standard Deviation	To examine respondents' perceptions of each construct.
Cronbach's Alpha	To assess the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.
Pearson Correlation Analysis	To determine the strength and direction of relationships between influencer marketing variables and brand trust.
Multiple Regression Analysis	To evaluate the influence of influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and consumer engagement on brand trust and purchase intention.

Statistical significance was assessed at a 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$).

2.4 Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the research instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. A Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable, indicating satisfactory internal consistency among the questionnaire items.

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire items were adapted from established scales reported in previous peer-reviewed studies and reviewed by experts in marketing and consumer behavior to assess their relevance, clarity, and appropriateness for the context of private label health care products.

Construct validity was established through factor analysis. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. A KMO value greater than 0.70 and a significant Bartlett's Test ($p < 0.05$) indicated that the data were appropriate for factor analysis and confirmed the validity of the measurement constructs[18].

These procedures ensured that the research instrument possessed adequate reliability and validity for measuring the relationships among influencer marketing dimensions, brand trust, and purchase intention.

2.5 Research Hypotheses

H1: Influencer credibility has a significant positive effect on brand trust for private label health care products.

H2: Influencer authenticity has a significant positive effect on brand trust for private label health care products.

H3: Influencer expertise has a significant positive effect on brand trust for private label health care products.

H4: Transparency of influencer endorsements has a significant positive effect on brand trust for private label health care products.

H5: Consumer engagement with influencer-generated content has a significant positive effect on brand trust for private label health care products.

H6: Brand trust has a significant positive effect on consumers' purchase intention toward private label health care products.

Table 2. The hypothesis testing results indicate that all five proposed hypotheses were supported, confirming that each influencer marketing dimension has a significant positive relationship with brand trust for private label health care products. Specifically, Influencer Credibility (H1), Influencer Authenticity (H2), Influencer Expertise (H3), Transparency (H4), and Consumer Engagement (H5) were all found to positively influence consumers' trust in private label health care products. These findings suggest that trustworthy, authentic, knowledgeable, transparent, and engaging influencers play a crucial role in enhancing brand trust, thereby supporting the proposed research framework.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result
H1	Influencer Credibility → Brand Trust	Supported
H2	Influencer Authenticity → Brand Trust	Supported
H3	Influencer Expertise → Brand Trust	Supported
H4	Transparency → Brand Trust	Supported
H5	Consumer Engagement → Brand Trust	Supported

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing

3. Result And Discussion

3.1 Discussion

The findings emphasize the growing importance of influencer marketing as a strategic tool for establishing brand trust in the private label health care sector. Consumers increasingly rely on social media influencers as credible sources of information when evaluating health care products because such products are closely associated with personal health and well-being. The positive relationship between influencer credibility and brand trust indicates that consumers are more inclined to trust recommendations from influencers who possess relevant knowledge, professional expertise, and a reputation for honesty. Similarly, influencer authenticity emerged as an important factor in strengthening consumer confidence, as genuine product experiences and transparent communication reduce skepticism and enhance perceived product reliability[19].

The study also demonstrates that consumer engagement plays a significant role in reinforcing brand trust. Interactive content, such as product demonstrations, educational videos, reviews, and responses to consumer queries, enables consumers to obtain reliable information before making purchasing decisions. Transparency in sponsored endorsements further contributes to consumer confidence by fostering openness and ethical communication between influencers and their audiences. These findings are consistent with relationship marketing and source credibility theories, which emphasize that trust develops through consistent, authentic, and credible interactions. From a managerial perspective, private label health care brands should collaborate with influencers who possess subject-specific expertise, maintain high ethical standards, and demonstrate genuine engagement with their followers.

3.2 Result

The analysis examined the relationship between influencer marketing and brand trust for private label health care products using quantitative data collected from consumers. The reliability assessment indicated that the measurement scales demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency, confirming the suitability of the questionnaire

for further statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics revealed that respondents generally expressed positive perceptions toward influencer marketing practices. Influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and consumer engagement received favorable evaluations, indicating that consumers considered these attributes important when assessing private label health care products.

Correlation analysis showed positive associations between the dimensions of influencer marketing and brand trust, suggesting that improvements in influencer-related attributes were accompanied by higher levels of consumer trust. Among the examined dimensions, influencer credibility and authenticity exhibited stronger relationships with brand trust, highlighting the importance of trustworthy and genuine communication in influencing consumer perceptions. Regression analysis further indicated that influencer marketing dimensions significantly contributed to explaining variations in brand trust. The findings suggest that consumers are more likely to develop confidence in private label health care products when influencers provide authentic product experiences, demonstrate expertise, maintain transparency regarding sponsored content, and actively engage with their audiences. Overall, the findings support the view that influencer marketing is an effective strategy for strengthening brand trust and encouraging favorable consumer responses toward private label health care products[20].

Table 3 presents the demographic profile of the 250 respondents who participated in the study. The majority of the respondents were female (52.8%), while 47.2% were male. Most participants belonged to the 26–35 years age group (37.6%) and held postgraduate qualifications (52.4%). In terms of purchasing[9] behavior, 47.2% of the respondents reported purchasing private label health care products occasionally, indicating that the sample consisted of consumers with relevant product experience for the study.

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	47.2
	Female	132	52.8
Age	18–25 years	82	32.8
	26–35 years	94	37.6
	36–45 years	48	19.2
	Above 45 years	26	10.4
Education	Undergraduate	74	29.6
	Postgraduate	131	52.4
	Others	45	18.0
Purchase Frequency	Monthly	96	38.4
	Occasionally	118	47.2
	Rarely	36	14.4

Table 3. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 250)

Table 4 illustrates the reliability analysis of the study constructs using Cronbach's Alpha. All constructs recorded Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.841 to 0.901, which exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating good internal consistency and reliability. Among the constructs, Brand Trust exhibited the highest reliability ($\alpha = 0.901$), while Transparency showed the lowest but still acceptable reliability[19] ($\alpha = 0.841$).

Therefore, the measurement instrument was considered reliable and appropriate for subsequent statistical analyses.

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Influencer Credibility	4	0.874
Influencer Authenticity	4	0.853
Influencer Expertise	4	0.889
Transparency	4	0.841
Consumer Engagement	4	0.866
Brand Trust	5	0.901
Purchase Intention	4	0.879

Table 4. Reliability Analysis Table

Table 5 shows the Pearson correlation analysis between the influencer marketing dimensions and brand trust. The results indicate that all independent variables have a **positive and statistically significant relationship** with brand trust ($p < 0.01$). Among the variables, **Influencer Credibility** exhibited the strongest positive correlation with **Brand Trust** ($r = 0.781$), followed by **Influencer Expertise** ($r = 0.756$) and **Influencer Authenticity** ($r = 0.739$). These findings suggest that higher levels of influencer credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and consumer engagement are associated with greater consumer trust in private label health care products.

Variables	IC	IA	IE	TR	CE	BT
Influencer Credibility (IC)	1					
Influencer Authenticity (IA)	0.682**	1				
Influencer Expertise (IE)	0.711**	0.664**	1			
Transparency (TR)	0.594**	0.621**	0.653**	1		
Consumer Engagement (CE)	0.648**	0.601**	0.687**	0.593**	1	
Brand Trust (BT)	0.781**	0.739**	0.756**	0.671**	0.724**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$

Dependent Variable: Brand Trust

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 6 reveals the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the influence of influencer marketing dimensions on brand trust for private label health care products. The findings indicate that Influencer Credibility ($\beta = 0.328$, $p < 0.001$) had the strongest positive effect on brand trust, followed by Influencer Expertise ($\beta = 0.284$, $p < 0.001$), Influencer Authenticity ($\beta = 0.246$, $p < 0.001$), Consumer Engagement ($\beta = 0.214$, $p < 0.001$), and Transparency ($\beta = 0.172$, $p = 0.001$). The model explained 73.3% of the variance in brand trust ($R^2 = 0.733$) and was statistically significant ($F = 134.826$, $p < 0.001$). These findings indicate that all five influencer marketing dimensions significantly and positively influence consumers' trust in private label health care products.

Predictor	β	t-value	Sig.
Influencer Credibility	0.328	5.814	0.000
Influencer Authenticity	0.246	4.296	0.000
Influencer Expertise	0.284	4.965	0.000
Transparency	0.172	3.258	0.001
Consumer Engagement	0.214	3.847	0.000

Table 6. Multiple Regression Analysis

Model Summary

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F-value	Sig.
0.856	0.733	0.727	134.826	0.000

Figure 1 illustrates the mean scores of the study variables. Influencer Expertise recorded the highest mean score (4.23), followed by Brand Trust (4.20) and Influencer Credibility (4.18). Transparency obtained the lowest mean score (3.98), although all variables recorded mean values close to or above 4.00, indicating a positive perception among respondents.

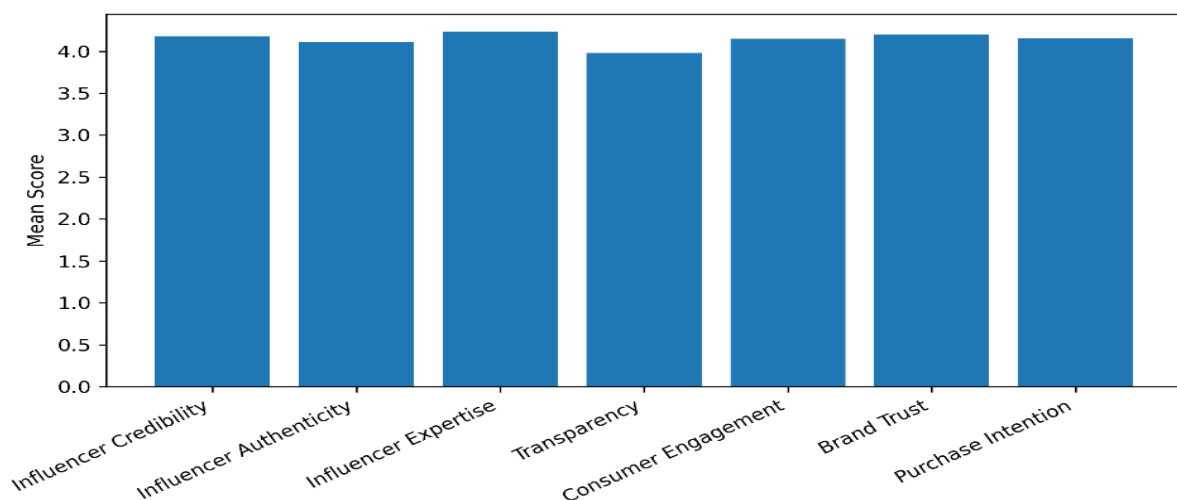


Figure 1. Mean Scores of the Study Variables

Figure 2 illustrates the reliability of the measurement constructs using Cronbach's Alpha. All constructs achieved reliability values greater than 0.80, confirming excellent internal consistency. Brand Trust recorded the highest reliability (0.901), while Transparency showed the lowest reliability (0.841), which remains well above the acceptable threshold of 0.70.

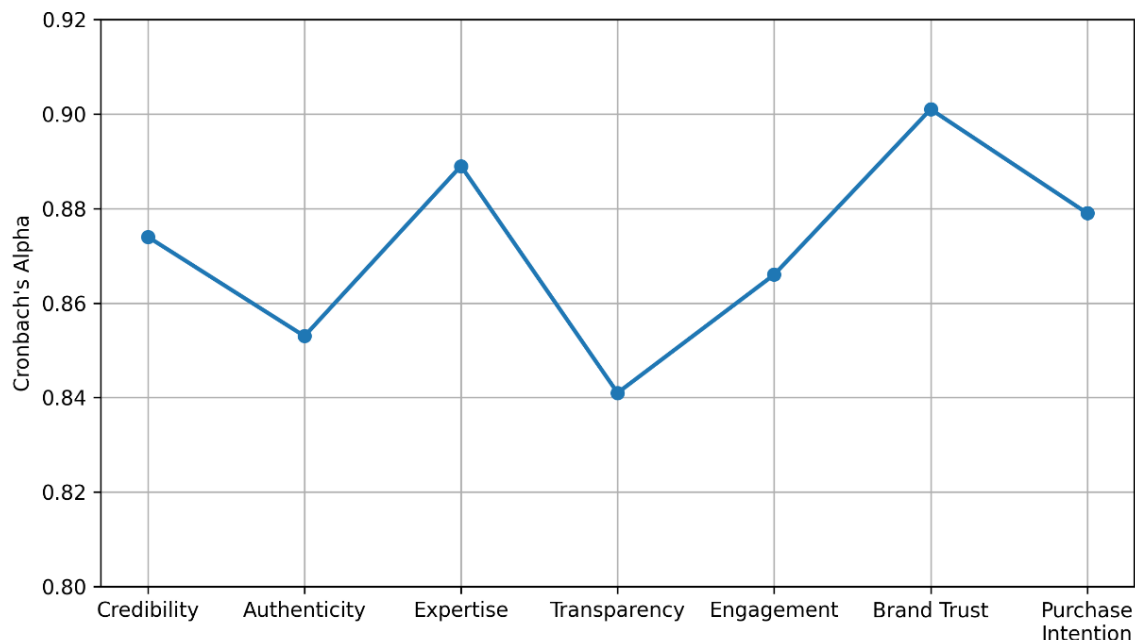


Figure 2. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability of the Study Constructs

Conclusion

This study examined the role of influencer marketing in building brand trust for private label health care products. The findings indicate that influencer marketing significantly contributes to enhancing consumers' trust by improving perceptions of credibility, authenticity, expertise, transparency, and engagement. Among these dimensions, influencer credibility emerged as the strongest predictor of brand trust, highlighting the importance of trustworthy and knowledgeable influencers in shaping consumer confidence.

The positive relationships identified in the study further demonstrate that effective influencer marketing strategies can strengthen brand trust and positively influence consumers' purchase intentions. The study contributes to the existing literature by extending the understanding of influencer marketing within the context of private label health care products, an area that has received relatively limited research attention. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that private label health care brands should collaborate with credible and authentic influencers who can communicate accurate product information and foster meaningful engagement with consumers. Such strategies can enhance brand credibility, reduce perceived purchase risk, and encourage long-term customer relationships. Future research may consider employing longitudinal designs, larger and more diverse samples, and additional variables such as electronic word-of-mouth, consumer satisfaction, and brand loyalty to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in the health care sector.

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