

**THE IMPACT OF SPOKESMAN CREDIBILITY ON PURCHASE INTENTION:
THE MEDIATING ROLE OF HERD BEHAVIOUR IN THE BEAUTY CARE
INDUSTRY OF WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA**

S.P. Wilwaraarachchi^{1,*} and J.D.T. Madushanka²

^{1,2}Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka

*Corresponding author (Email: mk2020434@mgt.rjt.ac.lk)

ABSTRACT

The Western Province of Sri Lanka has a highly competitive beauty care sector, where trends and influencer-driven marketing constantly change customer preferences. Within this context, spokesperson credibility and herd behavior have become critical factors shaping purchase intentions, particularly because brands increasingly rely on credible influencers to enhance consumer trust. However, limited research has addressed how these factors interact in the beauty care sector of emerging markets, such as Sri Lanka, where consumers may exhibit a heightened susceptibility to social influence. This study examines the impact of spokesperson credibility on purchase intention, with herd behavior acting as a mediating factor. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a cross-sectional survey of 384 beauty care product users in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. Convenience sampling was chosen because of accessibility constraints, although this poses a limitation for generalizability. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire that measured three key variables: spokesperson credibility, herd behavior, and purchase intention. The analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), applied regression, and mediation analysis to test the six primary hypotheses. The results provided strong statistical support for all hypotheses, demonstrating a significant positive relationship between spokesperson credibility and purchase intention, with herd behavior mediating this relationship. Mediation analysis confirmed that herd behavior plays a crucial role in increasing the impact of spokesperson credibility on consumer purchasing decisions. These findings suggest that consumers in the Western Province are not only influenced by the credibility of spokespersons, but also tend to align their decisions with the behaviors of others, reflecting a reliance on social validation in beauty care product choices. This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by expanding the understanding of how spokesperson credibility and herd behavior interact to influence purchase intention within an emerging market context. Theoretical implications include extending consumer behavior and influencer marketing models by demonstrating how these dynamics operate in the beauty care sector. Practically, this research highlights the importance of marketers focusing on credible spokespersons and leveraging word-of-mouth and influencer-driven campaigns to build stronger brand relationships.

Keywords: Beauty care industry, herd behaviour, influencer marketing, purchase intention, spokesman credibility