

Halal Beauty in the Digital Era: Influencer Promotion and Consumer Behavioral Responses

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ABSTRACT

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This qualitative study explores how influencer promotion strategies shape consumer responses in the halal cosmetics category among Indonesian Gen Z. Data were collected through netnography on Instagram and TikTok and through in-depth interviews with consumers marketers and influencers. Using thematic analysis, the study identifies three mechanisms that consistently appear in effective campaigns namely credible source signals communicative halal proof and community-based narratives. These mechanisms operate through a trust pathway that links exposure to intention and action. The study contributes a practice-oriented framework for halal beauty marketing and offers concrete guidance for evidence presentation creator selection and community engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid expansion of the halal cosmetics industry has transformed the global beauty market into one of the most dynamic sectors within the contemporary halal economy. In Indonesia, halal cosmetics are no longer perceived merely as products

complying with Islamic law, but also as representations of ethical consumption, product safety, and Muslim lifestyle identity. The increasing demand for halal-certified cosmetics is closely associated with the growing awareness of consumers regarding ingredient transparency, ethical production processes, and religious compliance in personal care products. At the same time, the rise of digital communication technologies has shifted marketing practices from conventional advertising toward influencer-centered promotional ecosystems. Within this transformation, social media influencers have become strategic actors capable of shaping consumer trust, attitudes, and purchasing decisions through persuasive digital narratives and visual communication. Consequently, influencer marketing strategies are increasingly regarded as essential instruments for halal cosmetic branding among younger Muslim consumers. Nevertheless, despite the rapid growth of the halal beauty market, important theoretical questions remain regarding how influencer promotion actually constructs consumer trust and behavioral responses within halal-oriented digital environments. Existing studies often emphasize statistical relationships without sufficiently explaining the communicative processes underlying consumer interpretation and trust formation. This condition highlights the need for deeper academic investigation concerning the interaction between influencer credibility, halal communication, and consumer behavioral responses within the halal cosmetics industry (Elasrag, 2021: 88).

Recent research demonstrates that influencer credibility and value congruence significantly influence attitudes and purchase intentions toward halal cosmetics among Indonesian Muslim youth. Consumers increasingly evaluate not only the promotional message itself, but also the personal credibility, authenticity, and ethical alignment of influencers delivering the message. In highly competitive social media environments, audiences tend to trust influencers who consistently represent Islamic values, transparency, and product knowledge. This phenomenon is consistent with Source Credibility Theory, which explains that message effectiveness depends heavily on the communicator's expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Influencers capable of combining aesthetic communication with credible halal explanations tend to generate stronger emotional engagement and consumer confidence. In the halal cosmetics context, credibility extends beyond beauty expertise toward the ability to explain halal certification, ingredient safety, and ethical production processes. Conversely, superficial endorsements lacking authentic halal understanding may reduce consumer trust and increase skepticism toward promoted products. Therefore, successful influencer strategies require the integration of authenticity, transparent communication, and religious sensitivity within digital promotional practices. These findings suggest that halal cosmetics marketing operates not only through visual persuasion but also through symbolic representation and ethical communication processes (Rokhmah, Oktari, & Widiastuti, 2025: 214).

The growing influence of social media personalities within halal cosmetics marketing also reflects broader transformations in contemporary consumer behavior. Digital platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube have changed consumers from passive audiences into active participants within online communities where meanings, identities, and consumption values are continuously negotiated. Under these circumstances, purchasing decisions are increasingly shaped through peer interaction, social validation, and community engagement rather than through traditional advertising exposure alone. This transformation aligns with Social Influence Theory, which argues that behavioral intentions are strongly affected by the attitudes and behaviors of socially

significant groups. Muslim consumers, particularly younger generations, often rely on influencers not only for beauty recommendations but also for guidance regarding halal lifestyles and ethical consumption practices. Consequently, influencers function simultaneously as marketers, lifestyle role models, and symbolic representatives of religiously aligned identities. However, although previous studies confirm the significance of social influence within halal consumption, many existing discussions remain predominantly quantitative and fail to explain how influencers establish legitimacy and trust in everyday digital interactions. This limitation creates an important academic gap concerning the socio-cultural mechanisms through which influencer narratives shape consumer responses toward halal cosmetics. Therefore, qualitative exploration becomes necessary to understand how digital interactions influence perceptions of halal authenticity and ethical credibility among Muslim consumers (Hassan & Rabbani, 2022: 133).

Another important theoretical issue concerns the relationship between advertising value, halal certification, and consumer response behavior. Studies applying the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework indicate that advertising value, perceived product quality, and halal logos significantly influence positive attitudes and purchase intentions toward halal cosmetic products. According to the S-O-R model, external stimuli such as influencer content and halal labels affect consumers' psychological states, which subsequently determine behavioral responses. However, many influencer campaigns still prioritize visual aesthetics and entertainment value while paying insufficient attention to communicative clarity regarding halal verification. Consumers frequently encounter difficulties in understanding certification numbers, issuing authorities, and product validity status. This condition creates information asymmetry and increases perceived risk, particularly among consumers with strong religious sensitivity regarding halal compliance. As a result, the effectiveness of influencer promotion depends not only on creative storytelling but also on transparent and accessible halal communication. Despite the increasing use of halal symbols in digital campaigns, limited research explains how consumers interpret, verify, and emotionally respond to halal evidence presented through influencer-generated content. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this unresolved issue by examining how influencer communication strategies shape trust and consumer behavior within halal cosmetics marketing environments (Hati et al., 2025: 57).

The increasing complexity of halal branding further emphasizes the importance of examining trust formation within influencer-based promotional strategies. Systematic reviews on halal brand image reveal substantial growth in halal marketing research over the past decade, yet they also highlight insufficient attention toward the communicative mechanisms through which trust and brand legitimacy are constructed across product categories, particularly cosmetics. Existing studies often focus on measuring purchase intention quantitatively while neglecting the symbolic and interpretive dimensions of digital promotional communication. In reality, consumers evaluate halal credibility through subtle communicative signals such as influencers' language choices, product demonstrations, ingredient explanations, and references to certification institutions. These symbolic practices shape emotional perceptions regarding authenticity, safety, and ethical legitimacy. Moreover, halal cosmetics involve intimate bodily consumption, making issues of purity and trust particularly important within consumer decision-making processes. Despite these complexities, current literature still lacks qualitative explanations regarding how symbolic interactions within influencer campaigns affect

consumer interpretation and trust formation. Consequently, further research is required to bridge the gap between abstract discussions on halal branding and the practical realities of influencer communication within digital beauty markets. Such investigation is necessary to better understand how trust operates within rapidly evolving halal consumer cultures (Noor et al., 2025: 301).

In addition to branding concerns, recent research on halal cosmetics adoption also highlights unresolved debates regarding the operationalization of behavioral determinants within social media campaigns. Previous quantitative studies have identified several important determinants influencing halal cosmetic adoption, including halal knowledge, religiosity, subjective norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioral control. These findings are largely grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, which explains that behavioral intention is shaped by attitudes, social norms, and perceived control over specific actions. However, while these variables successfully explain statistical relationships between psychological factors and purchase intentions, they provide limited insight into how such determinants function within actual influencer-generated communication environments. For example, consumers may possess strong halal awareness but still depend on influencers' explanations before trusting a cosmetic product. Similarly, subjective norms may emerge not only from family or religious institutions but also from online influencer communities that normalize halal beauty consumption through repeated interaction. Consequently, there remains a significant theoretical gap regarding how behavioral determinants dynamically interact within influencer marketing ecosystems. Addressing this issue requires qualitative analysis capable of capturing lived consumer experiences and interpretive processes within digital promotional environments. Such an approach may provide richer understanding concerning the mechanisms through which influencer communication shapes halal cosmetic purchasing behavior among Muslim consumers (Sudarsono et al., 2024: 118).

The academic gap becomes even more evident when considering the socio-cultural transformation of Muslim consumerism in contemporary Indonesia. The emerging Muslim middle class increasingly integrates religious identity with modern lifestyle aspirations, including beauty consumption, fashion, and digital engagement. Halal cosmetics are therefore positioned not merely as religious necessities but also as expressions of identity, ethical modernity, and self-care practices. This phenomenon reflects Consumer Culture Theory, which argues that consumption practices are deeply connected with identity construction and symbolic meaning-making processes. Social media influencers play an important role in translating halal values into visually attractive and socially desirable lifestyles for younger Muslim audiences. Through carefully curated narratives, influencers normalize halal beauty practices while simultaneously embedding them within broader discourses of empowerment, confidence, and ethical consumption. However, despite the growing cultural significance of halal lifestyle representation, existing studies rarely explore how consumers emotionally negotiate the relationship between religious commitment and aspirational digital lifestyles. This limitation creates an important opportunity for research examining how influencer communication shapes symbolic meanings attached to halal cosmetic consumption. Therefore, understanding influencer promotion strategies requires attention not only to marketing effectiveness but also to broader socio-cultural dynamics influencing Muslim consumer identities in digital societies (Wilson & Liu, 2018: 15).

From a practical perspective, the rapid growth of the halal beauty market also intensifies competition among cosmetic brands, thereby increasing the importance of

trust-based communication strategies. Industry reports consistently indicate rising consumer demand for transparency, ingredient traceability, and ethical accountability within halal cosmetics markets. Consumers increasingly seek verifiable evidence concerning sourcing processes, certification legitimacy, and production ethics before purchasing beauty products. In response, many brands collaborate with influencers to communicate halal credibility through educational, lifestyle-oriented, and testimonial-based content. Nevertheless, influencer marketing practices remain inconsistent regarding how halal information is presented, contextualized, and validated for audiences. Some campaigns prioritize emotional storytelling while providing limited certification evidence, whereas others focus excessively on technical information that reduces audience engagement. Consequently, brands face the challenge of balancing persuasive storytelling with transparent halal communication. Despite these practical concerns, academic literature still lacks integrated frameworks explaining how influencer strategies can simultaneously maximize emotional engagement and informational trustworthiness. This absence of practical communication models further strengthens the relevance of the present study for both academic discussion and marketing practice within the halal cosmetics industry (Koswara & Herlina, 2025: 72).

To address these theoretical and practical gaps, this study adopts an integrative qualitative approach combining netnographic observation and in-depth interviews to examine consumer response behavior toward influencer promotion within the halal cosmetics industry. The research specifically focuses on three central mechanisms considered crucial within digital halal marketing environments: credible source signaling, communicative halal evidence, and community narrative construction. Credible source signaling refers to how influencers demonstrate expertise, trustworthiness, and value congruence while promoting halal cosmetic products. Communicative halal evidence concerns how halal information is simplified, visualized, and made publicly verifiable through influencer-generated content. Meanwhile, community narrative construction refers to how influencer communities normalize halal cosmetic consumption within everyday social media interactions. By examining these mechanisms qualitatively, the study seeks to explain how consumers translate promotional elements into feelings of trust, safety, acceptance, and purchase intention. This approach extends beyond previous quantitative studies by emphasizing interpretive processes and lived consumer experiences within actual digital promotional contexts. Consequently, the research contributes not only to halal marketing literature but also to broader discussions concerning trust formation, digital communication, and Muslim consumer behavior in contemporary societies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed an exploratory qualitative research design to develop an in-depth understanding of how consumer responses are constructed through influencer promotion strategies within the halal cosmetics industry. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to explore consumers' lived experiences, interpretations, and meaning-making processes within dynamic digital environments where marketing communication continuously evolves. In addition, the research aimed to capture the broader socio-cultural context surrounding influencer-generated promotional practices and consumer trust formation in online spaces. The investigation specifically focused on actual promotional practices occurring in Indonesia so that the procedures and findings would accurately reflect real market conditions relevant to

stakeholders within the halal cosmetics industry. This approach also enabled the development of a process-oriented analytical framework capable of explaining the interrelationship between content strategies, halal evidence evaluation, and consumer trust construction. By emphasizing interpretive processes rather than statistical generalization, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how digital marketing communication shapes consumer behavioral responses within halal-oriented marketplaces. Furthermore, the exploratory design allowed the researcher to identify subtle communicative patterns that may not be captured through conventional quantitative approaches. Such flexibility is particularly important in studying social media interactions where meanings are fluid, context-dependent, and continuously negotiated among digital actors. Consequently, the selected methodology was considered highly suitable for investigating the complexity of influencer-driven halal cosmetics promotion within contemporary digital consumer cultures.

The researcher assumed the role of a passive participant observer during the netnographic stage and acted as an interviewer during the in-depth interview sessions, with strong emphasis placed on compliance with internet research ethics. Ethical guidelines for internet-based research highlight the importance of considering privacy expectations, contextual sensitivity, transparency, and participant protection when utilizing digital platform data. In this study, publicly accessible accounts and posts were treated as open data sources; however, all user identities were anonymized within the manuscript to preserve confidentiality and minimize ethical risk. Participants involved in interview sessions received detailed explanations regarding the research objectives, data usage, confidentiality procedures, and their rights as participants before providing informed consent. All interview recordings, transcripts, and observational notes were securely stored within password-protected digital repositories accessible only to the core research team. These procedures were implemented to ensure procedural integrity and maintain the ethical credibility of the research process. In addition, the study carefully avoided reproducing identifiable screenshots or sensitive personal information obtained from social media platforms. The ethical approach adopted in this research reflects the growing academic recognition that digital ethnographic studies require heightened awareness of participant vulnerability and contextual privacy in online interactions. Therefore, ethical reflexivity became an integral component of the methodological process throughout the study.

The study population consisted of three key groups: Generation Z consumers of halal cosmetics, influencers promoting halal cosmetic products, and marketing managers representing halal cosmetic brands operating in Indonesia. The unit of analysis was situated at the level of promotional campaigns and individual experiences associated with those campaigns, with primary observation contexts focused on Instagram and TikTok platforms. A purposive sampling strategy with maximum variation was employed to capture diverse experiences based on gender, intensity of social media usage, and geographical location. This strategy enabled the researcher to obtain a broader understanding of how different demographic and social backgrounds shape consumer responses toward influencer promotion. Data adequacy was determined using the principle of thematic saturation, whereby sample expansion ceased once additional data no longer contributed substantially new insights or thematic variations (Guest, Namey, & Chen, 2020: 67). The application of thematic saturation ensured that the resulting sample composition was sufficiently rich to identify recurring patterns while avoiding unnecessary over-collection of data. Furthermore, the purposive approach allowed the

study to focus specifically on participants with direct exposure to halal cosmetics promotional campaigns, thereby increasing the relevance and analytical depth of the findings. The diversity of participant backgrounds also strengthened the study's ability to capture variations in trust formation, halal verification practices, and influencer credibility assessment. Consequently, the sampling strategy contributed significantly to the robustness and contextual relevance of the research findings.

Data collection was conducted through two complementary methods: netnography and in-depth interviews. The netnographic observation process was carried out over a three-month period to systematically examine influencer promotional practices and community interactions within public social media accounts. This process followed the systematic procedures of online ethnography in digital marketing contexts, emphasizing field selection, observational trace documentation, contextual note organization, and continuous interpretive engagement with online interactions (Kozinets, 2020: 84). In practical terms, relevant posts, captions, comments, and interaction patterns were archived together with timestamps and documentation regarding how halal evidence was communicated within promotional content, including certification numbers and verification links from official halal institutions. This approach enabled the researcher to observe how halal legitimacy was symbolically constructed and negotiated through influencer narratives and audience engagement. Meanwhile, in-depth interviews were conducted online using semi-structured interview guides designed to maintain thematic focus while allowing flexibility for participants to elaborate on personal experiences and interpretations. All interview sessions were audio-recorded with participant consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim to ensure analytical accuracy. The integration of netnographic and interview data strengthened the study's ability to connect observable digital practices with subjective consumer experiences. Consequently, the dual-method data collection strategy provided comprehensive insight into both the communicative structures and experiential dimensions of influencer-based halal cosmetics promotion.

The development of research instruments was conducted iteratively based on an extensive review of literature concerning source credibility, halal verification practices, and digital community signaling. Preliminary interview guides and observational frameworks were pilot-tested with three participants to assess clarity of wording, conversational flow, and thematic relevance before the primary data collection stage commenced. The pilot study revealed the need to include additional questions concerning how participants verify halal certification numbers and interpret halal labels displayed within influencer content and product packaging. As a result, the interview guide was refined to better capture consumer evaluation processes regarding halal authenticity and informational trustworthiness. Data analysis was subsequently conducted using reflective thematic analysis, which involved stages of data familiarization, initial coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and narrative reporting (Braun & Clarke, 2021: 594). Reflective thematic analysis was selected because it enables researchers to systematically identify patterns of meaning across cases while integrating observational and interview-based data within coherent interpretive frameworks. This analytical approach also emphasizes researcher reflexivity, acknowledging that theme construction emerges through active engagement between researcher interpretation and participant narratives. By combining methodological rigor with interpretive flexibility, reflective thematic analysis provided an effective framework for exploring the complexity of trust formation and consumer response behavior in digital halal marketing environments.

Therefore, the analytical strategy strengthened both the conceptual depth and practical relevance of the study findings.

The trustworthiness of the findings was ensured through multiple validation strategies, including source triangulation, analytical documentation, peer debriefing, and selective participant clarification. Triangulation was achieved by comparing data obtained from netnographic observations, consumer interviews, influencer narratives, and marketing manager perspectives to identify converging and contrasting themes across participant groups. In addition, an audit trail documenting analytical decisions, coding revisions, and thematic development processes was maintained throughout the study to enhance procedural transparency and analytical consistency. The quality criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba were used as guiding principles to strengthen credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability within the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 301). Peer discussions were conducted periodically to evaluate thematic coherence and minimize subjective interpretive bias during data analysis. Furthermore, selected participants were invited to review portions of the interpretive findings to ensure that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected their intended meanings and experiences. These strategies collectively enhanced the procedural rigor and interpretive reliability of the study. The decision to employ netnography and reflective thematic analysis was ultimately grounded in their compatibility with the study's objective of understanding trust formation processes within digital communication channels. Moreover, the methodological framework enabled the findings to be meaningfully connected with practical campaign design strategies that may be replicated within broader halal cosmetics marketing contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Source Authority and Value Congruence

Previous studies demonstrate that influencer credibility significantly affects young consumers' purchase intentions toward halal cosmetics through the mediating roles of attitudes and social norms, indicating that creator reputation and value congruence are critical determinants of message acceptance (Rokhmah, Oktari, & Widiastuti, 2025: 214). These findings provide an important theoretical foundation suggesting that audience size alone is insufficient to generate positive consumer responses when audiences question the competence or integrity of content creators. The qualitative findings of this study further reinforce this argument, as participants frequently identified "consistently explaining ingredients and halal certification" and "being transparent about paid partnerships" as initial indicators for trusting influencer content.

This pattern confirms the relevance of Source Credibility Theory, which argues that communication effectiveness depends heavily on expertise, trustworthiness, and perceived authenticity of the communicator (Lou & Yuan, 2019: 61). Consequently, influencer selection strategies should prioritize thematic expertise and behavioral consistency rather than focusing exclusively on digital reach and engagement metrics. In practice, consumers increasingly expect influencers to demonstrate not only cosmetic knowledge but also an understanding of halal principles, certification procedures, and ethical product standards. Such expectations reflect the transformation of influencers from mere promotional agents into trusted mediators of halal-oriented lifestyle information. Therefore, brands operating within the halal cosmetics industry must carefully curate creators whose personal values align closely with the ethical identity of

the promoted products. This alignment contributes to stronger emotional resonance and increases the likelihood of sustainable trust formation among Muslim consumers. Ultimately, source authority in halal cosmetics marketing is not solely constructed through popularity, but through the perceived congruence between influencer identity, communication style, and Islamic ethical values.

Research examining the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework within the Indonesian halal cosmetics context also found that perceived product quality, advertising value, and halal logos positively influence consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, confirming that message sources and message content must reinforce one another simultaneously (Hati et al., 2025: 57). In the present study, audiences described the congruence between influencers’ lifestyles and halal values as an “initial filter” before they considered purchasing recommendations seriously. When influencers were perceived as inconsistent with the values they promoted, participants frequently categorized the content as “merely advertising,” which subsequently generated resistance toward purchase persuasion.

This finding aligns with congruity theory, which explains that consumers respond more positively when promotional messages are perceived as coherent with the communicator’s identity and behavior (Mandler, 2020: 118). Consequently, creator persona curation becomes essential within halal cosmetics branding strategies because audiences increasingly evaluate authenticity alongside promotional attractiveness. Consumers do not merely assess whether a product is halal-certified, but also whether the influencer authentically embodies the ethical values associated with halal lifestyles. Such evaluation reflects the growing sophistication of Muslim consumers in interpreting symbolic cues within social media environments. Therefore, influencer campaigns lacking value consistency may weaken trust despite having strong visual aesthetics or high engagement rates. This phenomenon illustrates that effective halal cosmetics promotion depends heavily on symbolic authenticity and ethical coherence rather than persuasive communication alone. Hence, brands must ensure that influencer identities, lifestyles, and communication patterns remain aligned with the broader moral expectations embedded within halal consumer culture.

Recent industry analyses mapping global halal beauty trends further emphasize increasing consumer sensitivity toward the integrity of both manufacturers and product endorsers, particularly within rapidly evolving markets such as Indonesia (Koswara & Herlina, 2025: 72). Contemporary consumers seek not only halal labels but also consistent narratives of authenticity, including trust in the individuals delivering promotional messages. The qualitative findings of this study strongly support this trend, as participants described influencers’ histories of discussing ingredient safety and halal certification issues as a “significant added value” that strengthened confidence in promoted products. These histories of educational engagement made promotional messages appear more natural and less coercive.

From the perspective of Social Capital Theory, such accumulated reputational trust functions as a form of symbolic capital that facilitates message acceptance within online communities (Putnam, 2020: 89). Influencers who consistently educate audiences regarding halal issues gradually build relational trust that extends beyond transactional endorsement relationships. This trust enables consumers to perceive promotional messages as recommendations grounded in genuine concern rather than commercial motivation alone. Consequently, creator reputation and learning history become valuable social assets mediating audience acceptance of promotional content. The findings

therefore suggest that influencer effectiveness within halal cosmetics marketing depends not merely on visibility but on long-term reputational investment through credible educational communication. In this context, authenticity becomes a strategic resource that strengthens consumer confidence and enhances the legitimacy of halal promotional narratives.

Furthermore, quantitative studies involving Indonesian Generation Z consumers indicate that religiosity, attitudes, and subjective norms related to halal consumption significantly influence purchase intention, suggesting that influencers capable of bridging personal values with product benefits occupy strategic positions in shaping consumer responses (Sudarsono et al., 2024: 118). The qualitative evidence gathered in this study reveals that influencers who “teach audiences how to read halal labels” and “differentiate between marketing claims and verified certification” help audiences rationalize purchasing decisions rather than merely imitate social trends. As a result, participants reported feeling more informed and empowered, describing their decisions as “conscious choices” rather than “following the crowd.”

These findings reinforce the educational dimension of influencer communication within halal-oriented digital marketplaces. The results also support the Theory of Planned Behavior, which posits that behavioral intentions are influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2020: 314). Influencers who provide educational content enhance audiences’ perceived control over consumption decisions by improving their understanding of halal verification processes. Consequently, audiences become more confident in evaluating product legitimacy independently. This process transforms influencer communication from simple persuasion into participatory consumer education. Therefore, the educational role of influencers represents a crucial strategic component within halal cosmetics promotion because it strengthens trust, reduces uncertainty, and increases the perceived legitimacy of purchasing decisions.

Communicative Halal Evidence

Recent research published in the Journal of Islamic Marketing concluded that halal logos and advertising value directly influence purchase intention, indicating that clear halal evidence functions as a decision-making signal rather than merely a symbolic marker (Hati et al., 2025: 63). The findings of this study further elaborate this relationship by showing that audiences considered certification numbers, official verification links, and concise explanations regarding halal labels as “turning points” that transformed curiosity into purchase interest. When halal evidence was presented communicatively and transparently, perceived risk decreased because consumers felt capable of independently verifying the information provided.

This condition aligns with Signaling Theory, which explains that transparent information signals reduce uncertainty and improve consumer confidence in situations characterized by information asymmetry (Connelly et al., 2019: 45). Consequently, audiences perceived themselves as actively involved in validating halal compliance rather than passively accepting promotional claims. Such involvement significantly strengthened trust toward both influencers and promoted brands. Therefore, easily verifiable evidence blocks should be treated as mandatory components within sponsored halal cosmetics content. This finding also suggests that contemporary Muslim consumers increasingly expect participatory verification opportunities before making purchasing decisions. In this context, communicative halal evidence functions not only as proof of compliance but also as an interactive trust-building mechanism. Hence, halal

communication strategies should prioritize transparency, accessibility, and consumer empowerment to strengthen behavioral responses.

Conceptual reviews mapping halal brand image development similarly emphasize the importance of transparency and consistency in evidence presentation for building trust across product categories, including cosmetics (Noor et al., 2025: 301). The present findings strongly support this argument, as participants frequently described “clear ingredient sourcing” and “visible certification numbers” as indicators that brands respected consumer intelligence. Conversely, when halal evidence was hidden or mentioned only superficially, audiences perceived the promotional content as less responsible and less trustworthy. This weakened the persuasive effect of influencer communication despite attractive visual presentation. Such findings align with Information Processing Theory, which explains that consumers evaluate message credibility based on the accessibility, clarity, and relevance of presented information (Petty & Briñol, 2022: 177).

Consumers within halal cosmetics markets increasingly demand not only persuasive storytelling but also transparent informational substantiation supporting halal claims. Therefore, concise, traceable, and prominently positioned evidence formats represent best practices capable of enhancing promotional credibility. In practical terms, placing halal verification information at the beginning of promotional content improves consumer engagement and trust formation. These findings suggest that informational transparency has become a competitive advantage within contemporary halal cosmetics branding strategies. Ultimately, communicative halal evidence strengthens both informational trust and emotional reassurance among Muslim consumers.

Recent reviews on halal cosmetics adoption propose integrative frameworks positioning halal evidence alongside safety, ethics, and sustainability concerns as interconnected drivers of consumer adoption (Raza et al., 2025: 145). The findings of this study reinforce this integrated perspective, as audiences responded more positively when halal verification was linked with personal benefits such as skin safety and ingredient transparency. Narratives combining “safe for sensitive skin” with “clearly halal-certified processes” encouraged audiences to perceive dual value dimensions—religious legitimacy and functional product quality. This integration significantly facilitated purchase intention formation because consumers interpreted halal certification not merely as religious compliance but also as evidence of product safety and ethical responsibility.

Such findings correspond with Value-Based Consumption Theory, which suggests that consumers evaluate products through multidimensional value frameworks involving emotional, ethical, functional, and symbolic considerations (Sheth & Uslay, 2020: 212). Therefore, halal evidence should not be presented as isolated technical information but integrated with practical benefits closely connected to users’ everyday experiences. Consumers increasingly prefer promotional narratives that contextualize halal legitimacy within broader concerns regarding health, sustainability, and ethical consumption. Consequently, successful influencer campaigns are those capable of translating formal halal certification into personally meaningful consumer benefits. This integrative communication approach strengthens consumer trust while simultaneously enhancing emotional attachment toward halal cosmetic brands. Thus, communicative halal evidence operates most effectively when embedded within broader narratives of lifestyle relevance and personal well-being.

Research concerning environmentally friendly halal cosmetics among Generation Z consumers further demonstrates that trusted labels and consumer knowledge significantly

influence attitudes and behavioral intentions, expanding the meaning of halal evidence among sustainability-conscious young consumers (Irfany, Khairunnisa, & Tieman, 2024: 97). The qualitative findings of this study add contextual depth to this argument by showing that audiences appreciated simple explanations regarding ingredient origins, production processes, and ethical sourcing practices, provided such explanations remained relevant to daily product use. However, participants also indicated that excessively technical explanations without clear connections to practical benefits often caused information fatigue and reduced message engagement.

This finding illustrates the importance of balancing informational completeness with communicative simplicity within halal cosmetics promotion. Cognitive Load Theory provides useful theoretical explanation here, suggesting that audiences process information more effectively when communication avoids excessive complexity and maintains clear relevance to user needs (Sweller, 2021: 54). Therefore, “communicative evidence” strategies require careful curation of informational details to remain both informative and easily understandable. Influencers must simplify halal verification processes without compromising informational accuracy or transparency. This communicative balance strengthens both educational effectiveness and audience engagement. Consequently, halal cosmetics brands should prioritize user-friendly evidence presentation capable of enhancing trust while minimizing cognitive overload among digital consumers.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to explain how influencer promotional strategies shape consumer response behavior in the halal cosmetics category by focusing on three key mechanisms: value-aligned source authority, communicative halal evidence, and community narratives rooted in everyday practices. Qualitative results indicate that creator credibility, demonstrated through thematic competence, behavioral consistency, and openness to paid collaboration, acts as an initial trigger for message acceptance. Providing easily verifiable evidence, such as certificate numbers and links to official verification pages, reduces ambiguity and shifts audiences from curiosity to trial. Narratives that encourage community interaction prolong the message's shelf-life through peer testimonials and repeated conversations, thus fostering positive attitude formation. These three mechanisms operate through trust pathways that bridge exposure to intention and action, clarifying how content influence operates in the context of Indonesia's youth. Conceptually, these findings integrate existing evidence on the role of attitudes, norms, and beliefs with communication practices specific to digital channels and provide scientific justification for creator selection, evidence block organization, and community conversation design as manageable levers. Practically, this framework advances the field by offering applicable guidelines for reimagining creator selection, a concise and traceable evidence format, and a consistent, user-experience-oriented community dialogue strategy.

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