

# The Impact of Digital Content Marketing on the Purchase Intention of Connected Consumers: A Study Based on Natural Ingredient-Based Personal Care Products

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### **ABSTRACT**

Marketers of Personal Care Products are increasingly trying to cater the changing demands of the modern consumer who has information at their dispense, which is just a click away. The technology savvy connected consumers are constantly been updated through the extensive pool of information accessed by them on a daily basis. The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of Digital Content Marketing on the Purchase Intention of connected consumers towards natural ingredient based personal care products. Furthermore, Perceived Trust is positioned as a mediator within the context of this study to enhance the understanding of whether Perceived Trust contributes to mediate the relationship between Digital Content Marketing and Purchase Intention. Moreover, the researcher also attempts to understand the age group differences for the relationship highlighted above. Data were collected from 469 respondents via a structured questionnaire and such data were analyzed through quantitative means using SPSS with the conclusion that the direct relationship between content marketing and purchase intention has been accepted while the impact of content marketing on purchase intention mediated by trust was also accepted. Moreover, it was found that age acts as a moderator within the mediated relationship of trust between content marketing and purchase intention while also acting as a moderator within the simple linear relationship between content marketing and purchase intention.

**Keywords:** Digital Content Marketing, Perceived Trust, Purchase Intention, Connected Consumers

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Alongside the widespread concern and need for personal grooming, the search for natural remedies and natural ingredient-based products for personal care has also grown due to the health-conscious nature of most consumers. This is specifically true for products such as Facewash, Shampoo, Facial and Body Creams that majority of Sri Lankan consumers use on a daily basis.

A fact that's very evident in the Sri Lankan context is that, unlike many of the European, American and certain Asian countries, there is no official and approved symbol or sign that is visible and distinguishable to consumers pertaining to natural ingredient-based personal care products in Sri Lanka. Ideally there should be a unique element in the packaging or communication materials of these products that will assist consumers to buy the right product they're looking for while also acting as a symbol of assurance. For example, in the United States of America, organic products are endorsed or certified by USDA (United States Department of Agriculture), which serves as a tool of assurance on the contents or ingredients of the products available. Hence marketers of personal care products in Sri Lanka, need to be able to drive the consumer trust by developing reliable, trustworthy and genuine communication contents and practices. While these communications can be done in both conventional and digital platforms, the study under consideration mainly focusses on key digital marketing tactics that the marketers of personal care products utilize.

Moreover, according to The Nielsen Company (US), LLC., 2018 Digital tools are becoming personal advisors. While brands and retailers have granted consumers a seemingly endless range of range, digital tools, devices and platforms have empowered shoppers to find the precise products for them. And in the short period of time that digital has become omnipresent for many of us, our relationships with technology is already changing how we use it. While we might have previously asked a friend or retail associate for help in making this choice, we're now entrusting our devices to meet our needs. This provides brands and retailers new points at which to engage. Due to this omni-channel preference of customers, Consumers are becoming increasingly connected. Due to this behaviour of consumers, the concept of "Connected Consumer" has been a centre of attention in many recent articles as well as company marketing efforts. Accordingly, this study attempts to investigate on how the elements digital based marketing efforts or communication will contribute to the connected consumer's purchase intention towards natural ingredient-based Personal Care products.

# 1.1. Research Problem

The main reason behind conducting this research is the difficulty or the problem that the consumers face when shopping for natural ingredient-based personal care products, when attempting to select the products that are genuinely natural-ingredient based. There's limited to no initiatives that will properly support the consumers to make an informed purchase decision backed by assurance that the product

they are buying is formally assured to contain natural ingredients. When the consumer is surfing the internet to buy personal care products they require and are most appropriate for them, they should be able to distinguish natural products among hundreds and thousands of brands that have a digital footprint. According to Accenture Consulting, 2017 trust is rapidly gaining importance to digital brands, where trust is increasingly based on a composite of needs that underpin how we understand and manage the exchange of our information across many different experiences. Organizations are not doing enough to demonstrate or enhance trust around digital products and services - even amidst heightened consumer awareness of today's internet-based fraudulent communications. The risk they run is undermining consumer trust and brand loyalty toward their business - which may prove to be very costly for future competitiveness and growth (KPMG, 2019).

Problem Statement: Within this context, this study focusses on unveiling, the impact that, digital content marketing have on the connected consumer's purchase intention towards natural ingredient-based personal care products in Sri Lanka and how is the purchase intention being affected.

With the view of addressing the research problem elaborated previously, the researcher has identified the following objectives for this study.

# **Main Objective:**

To examine the impact of digital content marketing on the purchase intention of "Connected Consumers" towards natural ingredient-based personal care products.

## **Sub Objectives**

- 1. To identify the impact of Digital Content Marketing creating consumer trust, on the customer's purchase intention towards natural ingredient-based personal care products.
- 2. To determine whether age acts as a moderator within this described relationship studying the impact of Digital Content Marketing creating consumer trust, on the customer's purchase intention.

Accordingly, this research answers the following research questions addressing the main objective and the sub objectives.

- 1. Does Digital Content Marketing have an impact on the customer's purchase intention towards natural ingredient-based personal care products?
- 2. Does Digital Content Marketing creating consumer trust, have an impact on the customer's purchase intention towards natural ingredient-based personal care products.
- 3. Does age act as a moderator within this described relationship studying the impact of key Digital Marketing tactics creating consumer trust, on the customer's purchase intention.

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

# 2.1. Content Marketing

Over the course of time content, particular digital content has played a vital role in tracing the minds of the consumers. As per (Bala & Verma, 2018), the vitality of content is also reflected on all recent changes to Google's algorithm - be it Panda, Penguin or Hummingbird, leading to the fact that content is the most important metric while filtering search results. (Pulizzi, 2013) states that "content marketing is the marketing and business process for creating and distributing valuable and compelling content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience with the objective of profitable customer action" According to (Maczuga, 2014) there are some important reasons that why marketers decide to launch content marketing such as increasing brand awareness, increasing intention of customers into products or services, converting audiences into potential customers, increasing the company image, customer engagement, website traffic and increasingly change the direct sales.

### 2.2. Purchase Intention

Kotler & Armstrong, 2011 states that in the evaluation stage of the Buyer Decision Process, the consumer ranks brands and forms purchase intentions. Further in few other studies Purchase intention is defined as being characterized as a behavioural tendency that the consumer will purchase the product. Furthermore, academic researchers have often measured and used purchase intentions as a surrogate for the actual choice. As per an extraction of Essays, UK., 2018 purchase intention is considered a common measure that is usually employed to assess effectiveness of purchase behaviour. Keller, 2001 Identified Purchase intention as a key indicator to predict consumption behaviour while Schiffman & Kanuk, 2004 has described purchase intention as a measure of the possibility of a customer purchasing or buying a particular product.

### 2.3. Connected Consumer

In today's fast-moving, information-saturated and technology-immersed world, communication and marketing are becoming ever more challenging. We are facing a world of connected consumers; a virtual community where every voice can exert an influence. Building trust is increasingly difficult. The credibility of institutions is being questioned. Belief in the traditional media is at an all-time low (The Tetra Pak Index - In Collaboration With General Assembly, 2017).

### 2.4. Perceived Trust

The study by Pavlou, 2003 is specifically apparent with this study as it defines trust in the context of the online or digital environment. Accordingly, Trust is referred to as the belief that an individual possesses that the other party other party will behave in a socially responsible manner, and, by so doing, will fulfill the trusting party's expectations without taking advantage of its vulnerabilities. Pavlou, 2003

also goes into defining trust as the belief that allows consumers to willingly become vulnerable to Web retailers after having taken the retailers' characteristics into consideration. In his study Pavlou, 2003 has identified strong assurance systems as a solution to the problem of trust in internet environments. He has also mentioned that the use of the concept "trust anchor" or an authoritative body that provides assurances about data authenticity as a suggestion for addressing the reliability of routing information on the Internet. It is increasingly becoming the responsibility of brands to overcome the stigma of the web and build trust within the digital playing arena (Capozzi, 2019).

### 2.5. Age as a moderator

Chen, Lee, Tu, & Chao, 2012 has studied undergraduates as participants of the research and recommends that future studies within the study area should encompass or investigate on different age groups since these age groups may have other opinions. Lee, Goh, & Noor, 2019 has focused only on the responses of University students within the age range of 18-25 and suggests that forthcoming research can delve into a wider age group so that the effect of age groups on the purchase intention of skincare products can be evaluated.

### 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As reflected in the following model, Content Marketing is the independent variable, and purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is the dependent variable. According to the framework, the study attempts to understand the impact of Content Marketing on the Purchase Intention, whereby this relationship is influenced by the mediating variable of Perceived Trust. Moreover, the researcher also studies how the mediated relationship is impacted by age as a moderator. Gavrilas, 2017 has identified Content Marketing to lead within the top three digital marketing tactics of Content Marketing, Search Marketing, and Social Media Marketing. This ranking is also backed by Khorev, 2019. Importance of the problem lies in the fact that these tactics are identified as most difficult to implement while also being the most effective. Hence triggering the question whether such tactics implemented with so much effort put in actually results in consumer trust towards the brand and its content and thereby leading to a purchase intention.

Content
Marketing

Perceived
Trust

H1 (a)

Purchase Intention towards natural ingredient-based personal care products

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

## 3.1. Hypotheses

According to the conceptual model developed above, the following hypotheses are proposed and are expected to be tested in the course of the research based on the study objectives and research questions.

# Hypothesis 1

(H1): There is a significant positive impact of Digital Content Marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products.

(H1a): The impact of Digital Content Marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is moderated by age.

## Hypothesis 2

(H2): The impact of Digital Content Marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is affected by Perceived Trust.

(H2a): The mediated impact of Perceived Trust on the relationship between Digital content marketing and purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is moderated by age.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative research for which data is obtained through existing literature which comprises the secondary data, as well as through primary data in the form of a survey through a structured questionnaire. This study follows a deductive approach. A deductive approach has a well-established role for existing theory: it informs the development of hypotheses, the choice of variables and the resultant measures. The deductive approach starts with theory expressed in the form of hypotheses, which are then tested. (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

This study encompasses an explanatory research design as the emphasis is on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The research at hand adapts a Mono Method, as the researcher intends to combine a single quantitative data collection technique: a self-administered questionnaire, with quantitative data analysis procedures.

# 4.1. Sampling

The Target Population of this research study can be defined as "Connected Consumers" who use or expect/ prefer to use natural ingredient-based personal care products. From this population the sample for this study was selected from Colombo and Gampaha districts since (Computer Literacy Statistics – 2018 (First six months), 2018) has stated that these two districts within the Western Province has the highest computer literacy rates. A judgmental sampling (also known as selective, purposive sampling) is adopted as the research involves a qualifying question which is whether the respondent uses at least one digital or smart device.

### 4.2. Data Collection

The data were collected by means of a structured questionnaire and the survey was conducted among 469 connected consumers within the ages of 15-60.

## 4.3. Data Analysis

The collected data are analysed by employing quantitative analyses such as regression, process model for mediation, multi group analysis through employing IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0 to reach meaningful conclusions.

### 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0. The researcher uncovers the nature of the demographic characteristics of the sample, then goes on to study the validity and reliability measures to prove the accuracy and consistency of the data collected. Finally, the researcher conducts a comprehensive analysis and accordingly interprets the results of the analysis in order to achieve the main and sub objectives of the study.

With the view of deriving an understanding of the demographic makeup of the respondents, 56.1% and 43.9% of the sample of the research is represented by Females and Males respectively. Out of all the respondents who took part in the survey, the 15-34 age category represents that highest percentage of

74.4% whereas the 35-60 age category represents 25.6% of the sample. This age distribution also coincides with the Digital Literate population rates/percentages reported by Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, 2018 where more than 50% of the 15-34 age category was reported to have digital literacy whereas less than 50% of the 35-60 age category was reported to have digital literacy. 34.8% of the respondents are University Undergraduates, 31.6% are Private Sector Employees, 19.8% are Government Sector Employees, and 4.5% are Self-Employed while 2.3% fall into the other category. Higher percentage of the respondents were within the income bracket of more than Rs. 55,001.

# **5.1.** Descriptive Statistics

Referring to the Kurtosis and Skewness value of all the variables, the researcher concludes that the data recorded for all variables are approximately normally distributed as per the values provided by Kline, 2011. When looking at the mean value of the distribution of responses for the variables, Content Marketing has the highest mean of 3.9062 and Perceived Trust has the least mean of 3.1314. Concluding from the values of these means, it is possible to state that the consideration of content marketing of the respondents is high and the perceived trust towards brands that respondents come across digitally is "moderate". The standard error of mean is least for Perceived Trust and the highest for Purchase Intention. It is appropriate to report that since Perceived Trust has the lowest standard error of mean; it has a better accuracy in the reflection of the population compared to the other variables. It is evident from the table below that Purchase Intention has the highest standard deviation and hence its variance is higher than the other variables. Accordingly, it is possible to infer that the data distribution of Purchase Intention is more spread out or has a more dispersed data set compared to the other variables. On the other hand, Perceived Trust has the lowest standard deviation and hence its variance is lower than the other variables. Accordingly, it is possible to infer that the data distribution of Perceived Trust is less spread out or has a less dispersed data set compared to the other variables.

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

		Avg_CM	Avg_Per_Tru	Avg_PI
N	Valid	469	469	469
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean	C	3.9062	3.1314	3.1514
Std. En	ror of Mean	.03000	.01996	.03319
Median	1	4.0000	3.1250	3.0000
Mode		4.00	3.00	3.00
Std. De	eviation	.64971	.43227	.71872
Variano	ce	.422	.187	.517
Skewne	ess	-1.494	119	289
Std. En		.113	.113	.113
Kurtosi	is	4.502	.582	.612

Std. Error of Kurtosis	.225	.225	.225	
Range	4.00	3.00	4.00	
Minimum	1.00	1.63	1.00	
Maximum	5.00	4.63	5.00	
Sum	1832.00	1468.63	1478.00	

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

### 5.2. Preliminary Assessments

It is important in any academic study to carry out a preliminary analysis to assess the reliability, validity, and normality in order to get a foundational level understanding of the instrument used for data collection and the nature of the data collected.

### 5.2.1. Reliability

Table 2: Summary Representation of Cronbach's alpha

Measures	Cronbach's alpha value	Number of items
Content Marketing	0.722	5
Perceived Trust	0.758	8
Purchase Intention	0.863	4

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As summarized within the table above, the Cronbach's alpha for each of the variables is more than 0.7 and range from 0.722 to 0.863. Accordingly, with reference to Nunnally, 1978, it can be inferred that, all the constructs used within the measure (i.e. questionnaire) are reliable (i.e. consists of internal consistency), as it exceeds the Cronbach's alpha value (Cronbach's alpha > 0.7) provided by Nunnally, 1978.

## 5.2.2. Validity

Table 3: Summary Representation of Validity Values

Construct	KMO value	Significance	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Content Marketing	.781	.000	506.725
Perceived Trust	.785	.000	841.739
Purchase Intention	.826	.000	873.607

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

High values (between 0.5 and 1.0) indicate that factor analysis is appropriate and values below 0.5 imply that factor analysis may not be appropriate. Malhotra & Birks, 2007 and Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999 also points out that values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great and values above 0.9 are superb. Accordingly, it's evident from the above table that KMO value for each of the variables range from 0.757 to 0.826 (represent good

values to great values) and hence meet the criterion for KMO value. Moreover, the above table also reflects that the p value or the significance value for Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for each of the variable is below 0.05. Taking both these measures into consideration and since the values for all the variables meet the criteria stated above, it indicates that factor analysis is appropriate and that the sample is adequate.

# 5.2.3. Normality

Table 4: Representation of Normality Test Values

Variable Name	Skewness	Kurtosis
Content Marketing	-1.494	4.502
Perceived Trust	119	.582
Purchase Intention	289	.612

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

Kline, 2011 states that skewness index has to be less than 3 (Sk < 3) and Kurtosis has to be less than 10 (Kur < 10) for data to be normally distributed. Accordingly, with reference to Kline, 2011, these skewness and kurtosis values indicate that the data recorded for each of the variables are approximately normally distributed.

### **5.3.** Correlation Analysis

Table 5: Summary of Correlation Statistics

Relationship among variables	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Sig. Value	Decision	Strength of the relationship
Content Marketing and Purchase Intention	0.253	.000	Accepted	Small
Content Marketing and Perceived Trust	0.192	.000	Accepted	Small
Perceived Trust and Purchase Intention	0.487	.000	Accepted	Moderate
Content Marketing and Purchase Intention with Perceived Trust as a control variable	0.186	.000	Accepted	Small

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

### **5.4.** Hypothesis Testing

The researcher uses simple linear regression to assess the direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables while using the mediator analysis for the purpose of understanding the impact of perceived trust within the relationship of content marketing and purchase intention.

# 5.4.1. Regression Analysis for Content Marketing and Purchase Intention

Table 6: Model Summary of Content Marketing and Purchase Intention

# **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.253a	.064	.062	.69615

a. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As reflected in the table above, adjusted R square value is 0.062. This value can be interpreted as, how much of the change or total variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. Accordingly, if we convert this value into a percentage, 6.2% of the total variation in purchase intention can be explained by content marketing. To put this value into perspective, the remaining 93.8%, that's not explained by content marketing, is explained by other factors which are not included in this model.

Table 7: ANOVA of Content Marketing and Purchase Intention

## **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	15.430	1	15.430	31.839	.000b
	Residual	226.321	467	.485		
	Total	241.752	468			

a. Dependent Variable: Avg\_PI

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As depicted in the table above, it is evident that the significant level is 0.000 at a F statistic of 31.839. Accordingly, it can be stated that there's a statistically significant relationship between content marketing and purchase intention. This indicates that this model with Content Marketing as the predictor or independent variable and Purchase Intention as the dependent variable, as a whole is significant.

Table 8: Coefficients of Content Marketing and Purchase Intention

$\boldsymbol{\alpha}$	ee.	•		•
Cin	etti	CIE	ents	a

			Coefficients			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients t		Sig.
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.060	.196		10.502	.000
	Avg_CM	.279	.050	.253	5.643	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Avg\_PI

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

b. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

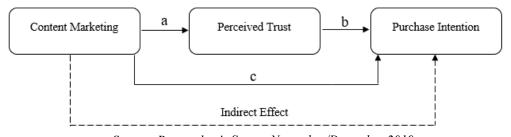
With reference to the above table, it's possible to derive the values to develop the model equation reflecting the relationship between the two variables under consideration. Accordingly, 2.060 is the constant ( $\beta_0$ ), 0.253 is the slope ( $\beta_1$ ), where this Beta value is significant at a 0.05 significant level (as depicted in the table the significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05). Based on these figures derived from the above table the model equation for content marketing and purchase intention can be generated as, *Purchase Intention* = 2.060 + 0.253(Content Marketing) + e

The slope  $(\beta_1)$  indicates that if Content Marketing is increased by 1 unit, Purchase Intention will be increased by 0.253 units. As proven from the positive slope (positive coefficient) of the equation above and significance level, it can be stated that this relationship is a significant positive one and hence the H1 hypothesis of the study can be accepted.

# 5.4.2. Mediator Analysis

The researcher has adapted the Process Model V3.0 by Andrew F. Hayes to carry out the mediator analysis. The analysis has been carried out through IBM SPSS Statistics 23.0. The researcher has utilized "Single Mediator Model", to study the mediating impact of perceived trust on the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention.

Figure 2: Single Mediator Model for the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust



Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

Through the analysis of the mediator analysis output tables, the researcher intends to derive each of the four values representing the relationship between the variables in the above figure (the mediating impact is reflected through the dotted line labelled as the indirect effect).

Table 9: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase

Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with perceived trust as the outcome variable)

Outcome Variable: Perceived Trust							
Model Summary							
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P	
.1918	.0368	.1804	17.8310	1.0000	467.0000	.0000	
Model							
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	

Constant	2.6330	.1196	22.0060	.0000	2.3979	2.8681
Content Marketing	.1276	.0302	4.2227	.0000	.0682	.1870

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The vitality of the above table lies in the figures highlighted, depicting the coefficient reflecting the relationship between Content Marketing and Perceived Trust (path "a") is 0.1276. With reference to both the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval, it can be stated that this relationship is significant, as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (positive figures for both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 10: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with purchase intention as the outcome variable)

Outcome Vari	Outcome Variable: Purchase Intention								
	Model Summary								
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P			
.5136	.2638	.3819	83.4905	2.0000	466.0000	.0000			
			Model						
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI			
Constant	.0650	.2485	.2616	.7938	4233	.5533			
Content	.1828	.0448	4.0806	.0001	.0948	.2708			
Marketing	.1020	.0440	4.0000	.0001	.0940	.2700			
Perceived	.7576	.0673	11.2508	.0000	.6253	.8899			
Trust	.7370	.0073	11.2300	.0000	.0233	.0099			

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

This table reflects the relationship or effect that each of Content Marketing and Perceived Trust have on the dependent or outcome variable which is Purchase Intention. The above table depicts the coefficients defining the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention (path "c") which is 0.1828 and the relationship between Perceived Trust and Purchase Intention (path "b") which is 0.7576. With reference to both the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval of both the relationships, it can be stated that both these relationships are significant (i.e. the direct effect is significant), as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (positive figures for both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 11: Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of Content Marketing on Purchase Intention

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:							
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI			
Perceived Trust	.0874	.0242	.0404	.1349			

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The above table depicts that the indirect effect of 0.0874 is significant as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval have positive figures). Since the coefficient is a positive value, it could also be pointed out that the relationship is positive. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the mediation effect of perceived trust between the relationship of content marketing and purchase intention is significant.

Therefore, it can be pointed out that, the relationship reflected within the model supports the H2 hypothesis of the researcher, which states impact of Digital content marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is affected by Perceived Trust.

**Standardized** P - Value **Hypotheses** Regression Result Beta H1: There's a significant Simple Linear 0.253 0.000 Accepted impact of Digital Content Regression Marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products.

Table 12: Summary of Hypothesis Testing (Regression Analysis)

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

Table 13:	Summary o	f Hypothesis	<b>Testing</b>	(Mediation Anal	ysis)

Hypothesis	Indirect Effect	Lower Bound (LLCI)	Upper Bound (ULCI)	Result
H2: The impact of Digital content	0.0874	0.0404	0.1349	Accepted
marketing on the purchase intention				
of consumers towards natural				
ingredient-based personal care				
products is affected by Perceived				
Trust.				

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

Based on the above analysis it can be concluded that both H1 and H2 hypotheses can be accepted.

# 5.4.3. Multi Group Analysis for testing Moderation (Testing H1a and H2a Hypotheses)

Here the researcher splits the data set into two, based on the two age groups. The base used for splitting the age categories into two groups, is the level of digital literacy of each of these two age groups, where the 15-34 age category has a digital literacy of more than 50% while the 35-60 age category has a digital literacy less than 50% (Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, 2018). Accordingly, this

comparison contributes to the understanding of how the behaviour of these two age groups having varying levels of digital literacy, changes.

Once the data set has been split into two based on the two age categories, the researcher has run the process of hypothesis testing conducted for the main/overall group (which comprises of the entire data set of 469 responses), for each of these two groups separately. The direct relationship was measured by simple regression and the mediating impact was measured through the process model similar to what was reported in the proceeding section for the overall data set in this write-up. Accordingly, the results generated from the analysis conducted for hypothesis testing (simple linear regression and process model) for each of the two groups separately have been comprehensively covered in the appendix while a summary of the analysis is depicted below.

# 5.4.4. Simple Regression results for the Age Groups

Table 14: Summary of Simple Regression results for the Age Groups

Hypothesis	Group 1 (15-34)			Group 2 (35-60)		
	Beta	P Value	Accepted Or Rejected	Beta	P Value	Accepted Or Rejected
CM-PI	0.273	0.000	Accepted	0.177	0.053	Rejected

Hypothesis		Overall (Total) Data	Set
	Data	D.Walma	Accepted
	Beta	P Value	Or Rejected
CM-PI	0. 253	0.000	Accepted

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As per the summary of the simple regression analysis depicted above, it can be concluded that the direct or "simple" relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention is significant for the 15 – 34 age category and the Total Data Set, as proven from the significance or p values reported for each of these two data sets. It can also be noted that for the second age group (35-60), the significant level or p value is 0.053 which reflects that for this age group the simple linear relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention is insignificant (since the significant level is more than 0.05). Since the significance of the relationship between content marketing and purchase intention changes from one age group to another, it can be concluded that for the direct relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, age serves as a moderator. Hence the Hypothesis H1(a) can be accepted.

### 5.4.5. Mediator Analysis results for the Age Groups

*Table 15: Summary of Mediator Analysis results for the Age Groups (15-34)* 

Hypothesis	Group 1 (15-34)					
	Indirect Effect	Lower Bound (LLCI)	Upper Bound (ULCI)	Accepted/ Rejected		
CM-PT-PI	0.0519	-0.0054	0.1082	Rejected		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

*Table 16: Summary of Mediator Analysis results for the Age Groups (35-60)* 

	Group 2 (35-60)					
Hypothesis	Indirect Effect	Lower Bound (LLCI)	Upper Bound	Accepted/		
	mairect Effect	Lower Bound (LLCI)	(ULCI)	Rejected		
CM-PT-PI	0.1662	0.0744	0.2646	Accepted		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

Table 17: Summary of Mediator Analysis results for the Age Groups (Total Data Set)

	Overall (Total) Data Set					
Hypothesis	Indirect Effect	Lower Bound (LLCI)	Upper Bound (ULCI)	Accepted/ Rejected		
CM-PT-PI	0.0874	0.0404	0.1349	Accepted		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As per these three summary tables reflecting the multi group analysis results for mediation, it can be observed that the hypothesized relationship of CM-PT-PI is rejected in the 15-34 age category data set and accepted in the 35-60 age category data set. The CM-PT-PI relationship becomes significant only in the 35-60 age category data set. Hence, it can be concluded that since the impact of content marketing on the purchase intention mediated by perceived trust changes from one age group to another, there's a mediated moderation impact through age. Hence the Hypothesis H2(a) can be accepted.

### 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main purpose behind the conduct of this research is to understand the impact or the effect of digital content marketing on purchase intention. While previous researches pertaining to this area was conducted in a more general sense, the researcher within this study has identified the key digital marketing tactic that has been highlighted as most effective within both commercial and academic researches as well as specialized by many of the digital marketing firms in Sri Lanka. Thereby, an analysis was conducted to understand whether digital content marketing contribute in the creation of perceived trust that ultimately leads to a purchase intent, while also looking at the direct impact of

digital content marketing on purchase intention. Furthermore, the researcher also assessed age as a moderator within each of these two main relationships.

Accordingly, Digital Content Marketing is found to have a significant impact on the Purchase Intention, while mediating effects of Perceived Trust mediated the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention. Moreover, the moderating effects of age moderated within the direct relationship between content marketing and purchase intention while also moderating the mediated impact of Perceived Trust on the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention which has practical and theoretical implications. Accordingly, it can be concluded that there's a mediated moderation within the hypothesized relationships for content marketing. This finding makes sense as content can be understood or picked up by different individuals of different ages in a different manner. For example a content that may offend an individual within the age group of 35-60 may not be as offensive or not at all perceived as offensive, by an individual or rather the individual may even be thrilled by such a content who falls within the age category of 15 to 34. The 35-60 age category can be considered as a more matured age category of which individuals may see another dimension to the content that may not be seen by a person belonging to the 15 to 34 age categories. In summation, all the four hypothesized relationships have been accepted during the course of this study.

Future researches can expand the scope of the research into other regions of Sri Lanka or even to other countries so that there would be a better generalizability of the findings covering different types of consumers and more cultural backgrounds. The researcher also proposes that the study should be conducted in different samples and contexts facilitating the direct comparability of the findings of this study and thereby contributing much robust insights to the knowledge base within the context of this research. Further researches may also dive into the understanding of different ways of improving the perceived trust of connected consumers towards the communications done through digital marketing tactics such as the use of certified digital labels confirming the authenticity of the ingredients communicated and more.

The study provides insightful findings as to how digital marketers of natural personal care products can use the digital content marketing and create more targeted digital communications to move the impacting audiences in order to create effective, trustworthy messages and communications. The study is an original contribution to the context of Natural Ingredient-based Personal Care Products. Furthermore, the moderating effects of age on the variable Content Marketing is unique to this study. Finally, previous studies have examined the impacts digital marketing on purchase intention in a more general sense while the researcher studied the impact of digital content marketing on purchase intention with specific reference to age and perceived trust within the context of this research, hence facilitating a more effective view on how digital content marketing serves as an impactful variable on purchase intention. These findings will serve as an initial step or a means for the digital marketers of natural

ingredient-based personal care products, to move away from being stranded in the entanglement of the lack of consumer trust on their digital content marketing efforts.

## 7. APPENDIX

# Simple Linear Regression Analysis (15 to 34 age category)

Table 18: Model Summary of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (15 to 34 age category)

# **Model Summary**

	D	D. Comono	A directed D. Corrego	Std. Error of the	
Model	K	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Estimate	
1	.273ª	.074	.072	.68166	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As reflected in the table above, R square value is 0.072. This value can be interpreted as, how much of the change or total variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. Accordingly, if we convert this value into a percentage, it is possible to state that 7.2% of the total variation in purchase intention can be explained by Content Marketing. To put this value into perspective, the remaining 92.8%, that's not explained by the Content Marketing, is explained by other factors which are not included in this model.

Table 19: ANOVA of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (15 to 34 age category)

# **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.957	1	12.957	27.885	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	161.238	347	.465		
	Total	174.195	348			

a. Dependent Variable: Avg\_PI

b. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As depicted in the table above, it is evident that the significant level is 0.000 at a F statistic of 27.885. Accordingly, it can be stated that there's a statistically significant relationship between the independent variable - Content Marketing and the dependent variable - Purchase Intention. This indicates that this

model with Content Marketing as the predictor or independent variable and Purchase Intention as the dependent variable, as a whole is significant.

Table 20: Coefficients of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (15 to 34 age category)

# Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

		Unstandardiz	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.946	.239		8.145	.000	
	Avg_CM	.315	.060	.273	5.281	.000	

a. Dependent Variable: Avg\_PI

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

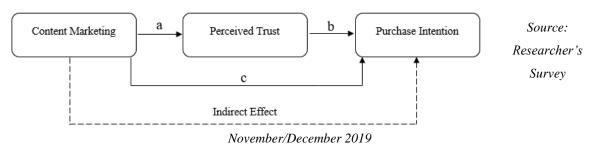
With reference to the above table, it's possible to derive the values to develop the model equation reflecting the relationship between the two variables under consideration. Accordingly, 1.946 is the constant ( $\beta_0$ ), 0.273 is the slope ( $\beta_1$ ) of the variable "Content Marketing". The Beta value for Content Marketing is significant at 0.05 significant level (as depicted in the table, the significance value is 0.000 this variable, which is less than 0.05). Based on these figures derived from the above table, the model equation for purchase intention and the significant independent variable can be generated as,

 $Purchase\ Intention = 1.946 + 0.273(Content\ Marketing) + e$ 

The slope ( $\beta_1$ ) indicates that each time when content marketing is increased by 1-unit, Purchase Intention will be increased by 0.273 units. As proven from the positive slope (positive coefficient) of the equation above and the significant levels, it is evident that there's a significant positive relationship among the variables, and hence the hypothesis H1 for the age group 15-34 is accepted.

## Mediator Analysis (15 to 34 age category)

Figure 5.3: Single Mediator Model for the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (15 to 34 age category)



Through the analysis of the mediator analysis output tables, the researcher intends to derive each of the four values representing the relationship between the variables in the above figure.

Table 5.21: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with perceived trust as the outcome variable) (15 to 34 age category)

Outcome Variable: Perceived Trust									
	Model Summary								
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P			
.1224	.0150	.1621	5.2791	1.0000	347.0000	.0222			
			Model						
	coeff	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI			
Constant	2.8386	.1411	20.1133	.0000	2.5610	3.1161			
Content	.0811	.0353	2.2976	.0222	.0117	.1505			
Marketing	.0011	.0333	2.2910	.0222	.011/	.1303			

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The vitality of the above table lies in the figures highlighted, depicting the coefficient reflecting the relationship between Content Marketing and Perceived Trust (path "a") is 0.0811. With reference to both the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval, it can be stated that this relationship is significant, as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (positive figures for both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 5.22: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with purchase intention as the outcome variable) (15 to 34 age category)

Outcome Variable: Purchase Intention								
		I	Model Summary	,				
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P		
.5013	.2513	.3769	58.0805	2.0000	346.0000	.0000		
			Model					
	coeff	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI		
Constant	1552	.3167	4900	.6244	7782	.4678		
Content Marketing	.2555	.0542	4.7121	.0000	.1488	.3621		
Perceived Trust	.7404	.0819	9.0434	.0000	.5793	.9014		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The above table depicts the coefficients defining the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention (path "c") which is 0.2555 and the relationship between Perceived Trust and Purchase Intention (path "b") which is 0.7404. With reference to both the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval of both the relationships, it can be stated that these relationships are significant, as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (positive figures for both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 23: Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of Content Marketing on Purchase Intention (15 to 34 age category)

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:								
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI				
Perceived	.0519	.0293	0054	.1082				
Trust	.0319	.0293	0054	.1002				

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The above table depicts that the indirect effect of 0.0519 is not significant as both the limits of the confidence interval do not have the same sign (lower bound of the confidence interval has a negative figure while the upper bound of the confidence interval has a positive figure). Since the coefficient is a positive value, it could also be pointed out that the relationship is positive. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the mediation effect of perceived trust between the relationship of content marketing and purchase intention is not significant.

# Simple Linear Regression Analysis (35 to 60 age category)

Table 24: Model Summary of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (35 to 60 age category)

# **Model Summary**

-	D	D. Cayana	Adjusted D. Cayona	Std. Error of the
Model	K	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Estimate
1	.177ª	.031	.023	.73132

a. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As reflected in the table above, R square value is 0.023. This value can be interpreted as, how much of the change or total variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable. Accordingly, if we convert this value into a percentage, it is possible to state that 2.3% of the total variation in purchase intention can be explained by Content Marketing. To put this value into

perspective, the remaining 97.7%, that's not explained by the Content Marketing, is explained by other factors which are not included in this model.

Table 25: ANOVA of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (35 to 60 age category)

### **ANOVA**<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.038	1	2.038	3.811	.053 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	63.109	118	.535		
	Total	65.148	119			

a. Dependent Variable: Avg\_PI

b. Predictors: (Constant), Avg\_CM

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

As depicted in the table above, it is evident that the significant level is 0.053 at a F statistic of 3.811. Accordingly, it can be stated that there's no statistically significant relationship between the independent variable - Content Marketing and the dependent variable - Purchase Intention. This indicates that this model with Content Marketing as the predictor or independent variable and Purchase Intention as the dependent variable, as a whole is insignificant.

Table 26: Coefficients of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis (35 to 60 age category)

# Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

		Unstandardiz	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta		Č
1	(Constant)	2.358	.350		6.737	.000
	Avg_CM	.178	.091	.177	1.952	.053

a. Dependent Variable: Avg PI

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

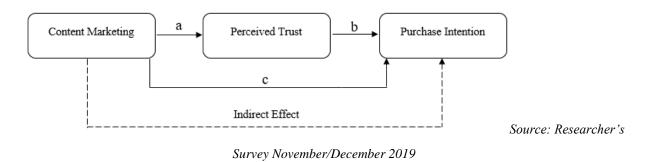
With reference to the above table, it's possible to derive the values to develop the model equation reflecting the relationship between the two variables under consideration. Accordingly, 2.358 is the constant ( $\beta_0$ ), 0.177 is the slope ( $\beta_1$ ) of the variable "Content Marketing". The Beta value for Content Marketing is not significant at 0.05 significant level (as depicted in the table, the significance value is 0.053 for this variable, which is more than 0.05). Based on these figures derived from the above table, the model equation for purchase intention and the two significant independent variables can be generated as,

 $Purchase\ Intention = 2.358 + 0.177\ (Content\ Marketing) + e$ 

The slope ( $\beta_1$ ) indicates that each time when content marketing is increased by 1-unit, Purchase Intention will be increased by 0.177 units. As proven from the positive slope (positive coefficient) of the equation above and the significant levels, it is evident that there's an insignificant positive relationship among the variables, and hence the hypothesis H1 for the age group 35 – 60 is rejected.

### Mediator Analysis (35 to 60 age category)

Figure 5.4: Single Mediator Model for the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (35 to 60 age category)



Through the analysis of the mediator analysis output tables, the researcher intends to derive each of the four values representing the relationship between the variables in the above figure.

Table 5.27: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with perceived trust as the outcome variable) (35 to 60 age category)

Outcome Vari	Outcome Variable: Perceived Trust							
		Mo	del Summary					
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P		
.2996	.0897	.2269	11.6326	1.0000	118.0000	.0009		
			Model					
	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI		
Constant	2.2960	.2280	10.0707	.0000	1.8445	2.7475		
Content	.2025	.0594	3.4107	.0009	.0849	.3200		
Marketing	.2023	.0374	5.7107	.0007	•0047	.5200		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The vitality of the above table lies in the figures highlighted, depicting the coefficient reflecting the relationship between Content Marketing and Perceived Trust (path "a") is 0.2025. With reference to both the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval, it can be stated that this

relationship is significant, as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (positive figures for both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 5.28: Model Summary of Mediator Analysis for relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention mediated by Perceived Trust (with purchase intention as the outcome variable) (35 to 60 age category)

Outcome Variable	Outcome Variable: Purchase Intention							
Model Summary								
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	P		
.5581	.3115	.3834	26.4657	2.0000	117.0000	.0000		
	Model							
	coeff	se	t	P	LLCI	ULCI		
Constant	.4623	.4042	1.1439	.2550	3381	1.2627		
Content	.0108	.0809	.1329	.8945	1494	.1709		
Marketing	.0108	.0809	.1329	.0943	1494	.1709		
Perceived Trust	.8258	.1197	6.9003	.0000	.5888	1.0628		

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The above table depicts the coefficients defining the relationship between Content Marketing and Purchase Intention (path "c") which is 0.0108 and the relationship between Perceived Trust and Purchase Intention (path "b") which is 0.8258. With reference to the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval for content marketing, it can be stated that this relationship between content marketing and purchase intention is not significant, as the limits of the confidence interval have different signs (negative figure for the lower bound of the confidence interval and a positive figure for the upper bound). With reference to the lower bound and the upper bound of the confidence interval for Perceived Trust, it can be stated that this relationship between perceived trust and purchase intention is significant, as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same signs (positive figure for both lower and upper bound of the confidence interval).

Table 5.29: Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of Content Marketing on Purchase Intention (35 to 60 age category)

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:								
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI				
Perceived	.1662	.0475	.0744	.2646				
Trust	.1002	.0473	.0/44	.2040				

Source: Researcher's Survey November/December 2019

The above table depicts that the indirect effect of 0.1662 is significant as both the limits of the confidence interval have the same sign (both the lower and upper bound of the confidence interval have positive figures). Since the coefficient is a positive value, it could also be pointed out that the relationship is positive. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the mediation effect of perceived trust between the relationship of content marketing and purchase intention is significant. Therefore, it can be pointed out that, the relationship reflected within the model reflects that the impact of Digital content marketing on the purchase intention of consumers towards natural ingredient-based personal care products is affected by Perceived Trust.

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