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FOLLOWER LOYALTY TO INFLUENCERS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF COSMETIC PRODUCTS ON THE TIKTOK PLATFORM

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ABSTRACT

This study analyses the effect of influencer credibility on the cosmetic purchase intentions of users on TikTok. The focus of the study is on how three important elements of source credibility: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness impact influencer loyalty and purchase intention. It also analyses follower loyalty as a mediator in these associations. A quantitative methodology was adopted through an online survey among Thai consumers who follow or used to follow beauty influencers on TikTok. Out of 368 respondents, 368 valid responses were collected and the hypothesized relationships among the variables were tested using SEM. As hypothesized, all three credibility dimensions positively impact purchase intention. Attractiveness impacted the most, followed by expertise and trust. Additionally, all three dimensions positively impacted follower loyalty to influencers; once again, attractiveness had the largest impact. In addition, follower loyalty to influencers positively impacted purchase intention, reinforcing its mediating role in the proposed model. The proposed structural model fit the empirical data well, attaining reasonable thresholds for Chi-square, CMIN/df, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and RMSEA. The model accounted for 72 percent of the variance in purchase intention and 19 percent in follower loyalty. The findings indicate that with regard to marketing cosmetic products on TikTok, influencer attractiveness takes precedence, particularly during time and budget constraints. Marketers are advised to strategically target influencers of high attractiveness to maximize campaign efficiency. This study adds to the growing literature on social media marketing and offers actionable insights on influencer marketing tailored towards increasing consumer purchases in the digital marketplace.

KEYWORDS: Cosmetic Products, Follower Loyalty, Influencer Credibility, Purchase Intention, Tiktok Marketing.

1. INTRODUCTION

Today, most people can't imagine a day without checking some form of social media. These platforms let users post updates, share news articles, comment on friends' photos, or even start whole conversations; all framed within a familiar online community. Many logs in to reconnect with relatives, see what new trends are brewing, or ask strangers for product recommendations before making a purchase. Because of its massive audience and the amount of time users spend scrolling, marketers now treat social media as one of the strongest advertising channels available. Advertising comes in a carousel of shapes: banner ads that sit quietly on web pages, pop-up interstitials that flash as a video buffer, clickable links nestled in articles, and sponsorships that quietly back podcasts and events. Lately, enlisting real people-influencers-has surged, putting everyday faces at the center of the sales pitch for eager fans (Hossain et al., 2025).

Influencers are everyday people who have built trust within specific circles, letting them nudge followers toward new opinions or behaviours simply because followers believe they know what they are talking about. Marketing teams now turn to these smaller voices because working with them usually costs less than hiring a superstar and audiences often see the partnership as more genuine, not staged. Fame on a grand scale is not required; influencers shine in defined niches such as vegan cooking, budget travel, or DIY home repairs and their specialized insight can spark serious change there. Pick the right person-timing, tone, and audience all matter-and that connection becomes authentic content that speaks louder than polished ads (Li et al., 2025).

Influencer Marketing Hub reports that the global worth of influencer marketing was roughly 61.3 billion baht in 2016, then soared to more than 591.6 billion baht by 2022. In 2023 the figure climbed again, reaching 757.5 billion baht and following a steady upward path. For 2024 forecasters see the worldwide total hitting 865.7 billion baht, while Thailand is expected to invest about 2.482 billion baht in on-line celebrities' inclusion. Such expansion stems mainly from the sharp rise in content being produced year-on-year. Global content creators jumped more than 71 percent in 2024 alone. On top of that, a survey by Influencer Marketing Hub found that 82 percent of marketers intend to raise their influencer budgets by roughly 37 percent each (Mohd Fouzi et al., 2024).

Influencers sit at the heart of today's marketing landscape and brands are pouring more resources into these partnerships every year. Unlike traditional

celebrities, many followers view influencers as down-to-earth, approachable, and honest, lending these promoters a level of trust that ads often lack. This perception connects with (Yang et al., 2024) finding that people tend to believe social media posts more than they do average promotional content. Overall, research shows that how well an influencer campaign lands depends on credibility, expertise, personality, bond with followers, emotional ties, and whether an endorsement feels sensible in context. Extensive studies have looked at different angles of influencer power. Examples include work on how influencer marketing shapes shopper habits serious (Rungruangjit et al., 2024) exploration into the qualities that turn a person into a sought-after influencer and analysis of how a source's credibility steers consumer choice. Though scholars have explored influencer marketing across many arenas, few studies zero in on make-up and skin-care items pushed through TikTok, even though the app is booming in Thailand. This gap leads the current work to look at how an influencers credibility shapes shopper's intent to buy cosmetics featured on TikTok. Drawing on Ohanian's Source Credibility Theory-trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness- the team measures each factor to see its weight in guiding consumer attitudes. Findings should give brand managers and online marketers practical ideas while also helping creators fine-tune their pitches and build stronger audience ties on the fast-moving platform.

This study provides uniqueness by concentrating on the TikTok platform— a short form video social media platform that has quickly changed the way consumers interact with brands, particularly in the beauty and cosmetics domain. Unlike prior studies that often oversimplify influencer marketing by applying it to several contexts, this study is based on TikTok users in Thailand. The data set comes from Thai users who are actively following beauty influencers on TikTok, thus providing cultural and behavioural insights that are rarely studied in the literature.

2. CONCEPT OF FOLLOWER LOYALTY TOWARD INFLUENCERS

Loyalty is often described as a customer's readiness to engage with a particular brand over an extended period. Through the citation of (Katili et al., 2024), we understand that consumer loyalty correlates with an enduring commitment to repurchase or continue supporting a preferred product or service, irrespective of competing situational challenges or marketing endeavours. It

follows that a loyal consumer demonstrates a definite intention to repurchase, exhibits a positive posture towards the brand, and often recommends it to others.

In relation to social media influencers, the follower loyalty concept was outlined by (Haq et al., 2025) as the devotion of followers to interact with an influencer's content, accept the influencer's counsel, and propagate the influencer's account to associates. Loyalty is often defined by researchers as a repetitive purchase behaviour. However, such behaviour does not always capture true loyalty. Take, for example, a consumer who shifts brand allegiance due to persistent unavailability of other options: as soon as preferable options appear, that brand loyalty evaporates. This exemplifies that repeat purchasing does not suffice to measure loyalty. An evaluation of consumer loyalty from a more holistic perspective combines behavioural and attitudinal dimensions. The behavioural perspective concentrates on actions, while attitudinal perspective relates to favourable perceptions about the brand alongside the intention to advocate for it (Alcantara-Pilar et al., 2024).

The review of literature shows that quite a number of researches focusing on follower loyalty toward influencers have been conducted. One such research, *Examining the Impact of Social Media Influencers' Credibility Dimensions on Consumer Behaviour*, concluded that influencer credibility has a positive impact on follower loyalty and that follower loyalty acts as a mediating variable (Ong et al., 2024). In that study, follower loyalty was defined based on Cheng et al., (2025) as the behavioural and attitudinal span with which the followers interact with an influencer's account, including their engagement and willingness to promote the influencer through social media. Studies show that loyalty as a customer relationship has measurable impact on business profit. Purchase decision influenced by brand loyalty is common since loyal customers and consumers are almost guaranteed to repeat their purchases and sustain positive dispositions regarding the brand (Jun, S., & Yi, J. (2020). Research on social media influencers' follower loyalty shows that brand trust among loyal followers tends to support the purchase of products recommended by those influencers.

3. THEORETICAL CONCEPT OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY

Components that factor into source credibility include: trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness. Let us discuss each of them in turn:

3.1. Expertise

As defined by (Kant et al., 2025) expertise concerns the extent to which a communicator is viewed as a valid source of credible claims, based on relevant knowledge and experience. Hey et al., (2025) offered a similar definition, referring to expertise as the depth of knowledge and experience possessed by a communicator in a given area. Ullah et al., (2025) note that expertise incorporates an individual's capacity to offer pertinent and dependable information, through specialized skills and knowledge. With the recognition of experts comes the ability to navigate complex, specialized, and high-stakes fields due to their adequate overall competence. Jia et al., (2024) further asserts that expertise defines a communicator and stems from knowledge and experience, adding that expertise is what the communicator relies on in attempting to convince the audience. As Kim & Wang, (2024) note, social communicators influence audience attitudes through their perceived expertise. Recognition of an individual's expertise is rooted in their prior experience and associated accomplishments. Considerable support for this assertion comes from a survey conducted Chao et al., (2024) which revealed that around 64% of consumers consider the credibility of social media influencers proportional to their knowledge on the topics they engage with.

In marketing, expertise is defined as the recommender's knowledge concerning the product that is being marketed. As noted by Rudin et al., (2024), expertise is also defined as the presumed level of knowledge, skills, and particular attributes of the endorser. The more the source is perceived as an expert in the industry, the more credible he/she is perceived to be. Nonetheless, as Schillaci et al., (2024) states, expertise is more often than not, a perception, and not actual qualifications. Thus, expertise is the knowledge, skills, and experience the audience perceives the recommender to have in advocating for the product. This viewpoint supports Alam et al., (2024) who pointed out that an endorser does not have to be a genuine expert in the matter unless the audience requires that for the situation. Li et al., (2023) emphasized the direct influence of the credibility of the endorsing source on consumers. Focused influence is even greater when the endorsed product falls within the influencer's field of specialization. For this study, the meaning of expertise is framed as suggested by Kemp et al., (2024), which states that it is how much the receiver regards the recommender as having pertinent understanding level, competencies, skills, and relevant experience which makes him capable of

endorsing and advocating for the product, considering that the communicator is a trustworthy source of valuable information.

The Relationship Between Expertise and Purchase Intention

Influencers are more influential and their endorsement is more credible when they are perceived as knowledgeable and expert on the products. Followers' purchase intentions are indeed affected by influencer's expertise as demonstrated in several studies (Chan et al., 2025). This aligns with electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) studies that have examined how expertise impacts consumer behaviour through credibility models. For instance, Wang et al., (2025) noted that perceived expertise has a positive impact on purchase intention. In the same way, Diao et al., (2025) reported that social media influencers affect purchase decisions on cosmetic products, with influencer credibility—especially expertise—as a major contributing factor. However, not all findings are consistent. Wang et al., (2025) reported only a weak correlation between influencer expertise and followers' attitudes and intentions toward the brand. These diverse findings indicate the need to examine the issue more thoroughly.

Following from the previous discussion, the below hypothesis is put forward:

Hypothesis 1 (H1a): Expertise significantly and positively impacts purchase intention.

3.2. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness can be explained as lack of deception and fidelity alongside the credibility source. For a communicator to be regarded as trustworthy, they must be honest, friendly, and deeply appreciate the message being conveyed Aoki & Matsui (2025) noted how trustworthiness is shaped by the audience's perception of the endorser's purpose. The trustworthiness of a message declines if the endorser is thought to be acting out of self-serving interests. Perceived trustworthiness rises when the recommender's motivations seem neutral or altruistic. Dhiman & Bhati (2025) reported that a celebrity's perceived trustworthiness does not always align with their consumers purchasing motives for the endorsed products.

Based on the work by Fayyaz et al., (2025) the authors found out that among various factors impacting a consumer's purchase decision, source credibility—more particularly the credibility of the endorser—was the strongest determinant for low involvement consumers or those who had limited purchasing experience with the product. For these consumers, the credibility of the source was more

important than for highly engaged consumers. Among various competing factors, consumer trust tends to be low when the audience perceives a biased position from the communicator. Wang & Huang, (2025) argued that source bias can be divided into two major categories that can lead to the loss of credibility. The first is knowledge bias, which occurs when the audience perceives the communicator as lacking relevant or sufficient information concerning the topic. The second is reporting bias, which occurs when the audience believes the communicator does not present balanced information intentionally, even when the person is familiar with the subject. For this study, we define trustworthiness as a characteristic as described by Zhang & He (2025) which describes trustworthiness as a trait that entails a willingness, sincerity, friendliness, enthusiasm, and honesty that substantiates the message being conveyed.

These results match what Strano et al., (2025) found in her study on risk perception, trust, and the intention to buy insurance online. The study demonstrated that the level of trust in the buying and selling of insurance over the internet was quite high. Some of the attributes that enhanced this confidence were the excellent financial standing of the insurance companies providing the policies online and the presence of trust badges on their websites. In the same manner, Hossain et al., (2025) investigated the relationship between influencer traits, consumer attitudes as prosumers, and trust in brands in online apparel purchasing, focusing on POMELO as a case study. The outcomes from the hypothesis evaluations showed that the effectiveness dimension of influencer characteristics did not have a significant impact on either prosumer attitudes or brand trust.

The Connection of Trustworthiness and Purchase Intention

Trustworthiness has been noticed as one of the influential factors that impacts follower behaviour. There is a sufficient amount of literature confirming and showing that there is a positive relationship between follower's trustworthiness perceptions of social media influencers and their purchase intentions (Li et al., 2025). Also, Sohn et al., (2025) demonstrated that trustworthiness is the strongest determinant that shapes the followers' attitudes toward brand endorsements on social media. Likewise, Kim et al., (2025) showed how virtual endorsers' credibility composed of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness influenced consumer behaviour which included attitude toward advertising, perceptions of brand equity, and purchase intention.

These findings extend the previous literature emphasizing the important role trustworthiness

plays in the decision-making process of consumers. From this, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 2 (H2a): Trustworthiness significantly influences positively on purchase intention.

3.3. Attractiveness

Li et al., (2025) described attractiveness as a generally positive trait which encompasses an individual's character alongside their physical features. Diao et al., (2025) conducted a study and concluded that communicators who are deemed attractive have a higher likelihood of being appreciated and trusted, which results in a greater belief in the advertised commodity when compared to less attractive communicators. Hoque et al., (2025) also confirmed that attractive endorsers have a significantly beneficial impact on brand image and increase consumer purchase intentions. As noted by Shirai (2025), what is referred to the source's attractiveness is the social value associated with them by the audience, which may concern admires, personality, standing in the society, or a similarity to the receiver. Motivations of the social communicator's attractiveness may lead the audience to foster positive feelings towards the communicator and desire to imitate them. As the competition for advertisement attention increases, capturing the consumer's memory is increasingly more challenging. To pique the interest of the intended audience, marketers bring on board celebrities, models, and athletes who are of public interest. Out of all factors that impact the effectiveness of endorsers, source attractiveness is perhaps one of the most impactful. Kant et al., (2025) concludes that the more appealing a celebrity is, the more likely a consumer is to form purchase intentions. This supports Ciocodeică et al., (2025) assertion that endorsers who possess high attractiveness tend to be far more effective in eliciting positive attitudes toward the advertisement and the product than low attractive endorsers. Moreover, Cheng & Wang (2025) noted that appealing endorsers exert greater persuasive power on persons who are sensitive to judgment and external perception. Concerning advertisements that feature non-celebrity endorsers or ordinary people, research shows that both similarity and physical attractiveness enhance consumer perception of the endorser. This is further supported by Yoo et al., (2025) who highlighted that source attractiveness plays a vital role in shaping audience perception and their subsequent behavior. Therefore, it can be stated that the level attractiveness has a significant effect on buying behavior.

In the current study, in accordance with (Kim et al., 2025) attractiveness is described as a holistic trait since it includes one's physical features, personality, and skills. It can be noted that there are several studies that have built on the cited work. For instance, (Chen et al., 2025) analysed the correlation of influencer's traits, prosumer's attitude and trust towards the brand in online clothing purchase, taking POMELO brand as an example. It was revealed that the influencer's attractiveness significantly affected the prosumers' trust in the brand. Moreover, it was established that both the prosumer's attitude and brand trust contributed significantly to the purchasing decision.

The Impact of Attractiveness on Purchase Intention

It has been shown that the attractiveness of social media influencers is a major factor driving users' purchase intentions regarding the products that these influencers endorse. Specifically, physical attractiveness boosted the level of interest and willingness to buy beauty products among followers (Ta & Le., (2025). Appealing endorsers increase consumers' perceptions regarding the trustworthiness and credibility of the endorsed product as well the advertisers. Supporting this notion, Wei (2025) suggested that sexual attractiveness endorsers help to enhance satisfaction towards the brand among female consumers which drives favourable purchase intentions in the cosmetics market. However, not all findings are consistent. For instance, Chavare et al., (2025) observed no significant connection between perceived attractiveness alongside purchase intention while in some instances describing a counterproductive influencer attractiveness impact on purchase intentions among French consumers. Such contrasting findings illustrate gaps that require additional thorough assessment. Grounded on the literature presented, the following hypothesis has been formulated:

Hypothesis 3 (H3a): Attractiveness will have a positive effect on purchase intention.

3.4. The Concept of Purchase Intention

As for an intention to purchase, it is a consumer's actionable and mentally considered choice to acquire a product or service, using a specified brand. Cantos et al., (2025) interpret purchase intention as the cognitive and psychological step towards actual buying behaviour. This phenomenon supports intentions as a strong predictor of future actions far better than any of the other means, and also indicates a consumer's disposition to form plans to purchase a

product/service within a certain time frame (Behardien & Brown., 2025).

The consumer buy decision process is intricate, as it encompasses a woven set of perception, attitude and behaviours towards and including purchase intention. Shi et al., (2025) illustrates this as a consumer's awareness that he/she is willing to purchase a certain product/service after contemplating it for some time. Purchase intention is a good example of a reasoning associated with a decision where a consumer considers weighing his substantial rationale behind purchasing the product/service available with the brand as explained by Wang et al., (2025). It is safe to say at this point that the intention to purchase can also be regarded as the precise probability or likelihood of an action being taken after due consideration was given or a "plan" was devised or "suggestion".

Castellini et al., (2025) studied the role social media advertising and influencer credibility play in consumer purchase intention. The results indicated that purchase intention is influenced positively by the credibility of the influencer—it is to be noted that perception of credibility increased the likelihood of considering purchasing the advertised product. Earlier work corroborates that a positive perception of the information source raises the likelihood of intention to purchase, which indicates a higher likelihood of actual buying behaviour. Additionally, intentions to purchase are known to facilitate the willingness to act.

In this study, utilizing Bui et al., (2025) as a guide, we define purchase intention as an attempt to buy a product or service offered by a brand, reflecting an intention articulated by the consumer. Looking through literature, it seems that this concept has been examined quite extensively. One relevant study from Han & Jo, (2025) called "Influencer Endorsements: How Advertising Disclosure and Source Credibility Affect Consumer Purchase Intention on Social Media" found that follower count has a positive impact on source attractiveness, source credibility, and in the end the consumer purchase intention. These results align with the work of Hoque et al., (2025), who studied the impact of social media influencers on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram on the buying behaviour of people aged 20-55 living in and around Bangkok. The research found that users had a very high purchase intention after viewing marketing content, especially for clothing and snack foods. However, purchase intentions were only moderate for electrical and electronic appliances, furniture, home decor items, as well as services from hotels and other accommodation businesses.

Additionally, consumer satisfaction with the content presentation Instagram Stories directly influenced their purchase intentions after viewing the content, indicating a positive correlation.

Further support came from the work of Bouvier, (2022) "How Do Virtual Social Media Influencers Affect Millennial and Gen Z Female Consumers' Purchase Intention? A Comparison of Fast Fashion Versus Luxury Fashion Brands." This research indicated that the traits of virtual influencers have a considerable impact on brand image and brand trust, which in turn, influence consumer purchase intention for both mainstream and luxury fashion brands.

The Link Connecting Source Credibility and Follower Loyalty to Influencers

Brand loyalty demonstrates a consumer's ongoing dedication to a brand. In order to cultivate loyalty, brands create strong bonds with consumers. In the scope of influencer marketing, some studies have analysed the causes of follower loyalty to influencers (Vo et al., 2025). Influencers' credibility as a source is derived from their expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Particularly, the source expertise displayed by influencers serves as a major determinant of follower loyalty (Fakhreddin, 2025). Trusting followers consider influencers' posts as credible, accept their recommendations, and interact with their accounts on a frequented basis. This is supported by Melnychuk et al., (2024), who showed that perceived credibility positively influences a reader's motivation to follow a blogger's guidance and subsequently recommend them. More specifically, the influence of expertness perception positively affects the readers' loyalty actions. Nadanyiova & Sujanska, (2023) highlighted a parallel point stating that followers are more loyal to influencers who satisfy their information and competence needs through provided content.

Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis has been drafted:

Hypothesis 4 (H1b): Expertise influences positively followers' loyalty towards their influencers.

3.5. Summary of Variable Definitions

This study's conceptual model stems from the Source Credibility Theory which comprises three components: expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Per the definition, expertise is the influencer's perceived knowledge, competence, and skills regarding the product (Ohanian, 1990). Consumer behavior can be swayed more effectively through influencers perceived as experts.

Trustworthiness is the perception of honesty, reliability, and ethics of the influencer as viewed by the followers (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Attractiveness encompasses the appealing Physical, personality traits, and lifestyle to the followers which advances attention and persuasion

(Ohanian, 1990). Follower Loyalty is defined as the emotional and psychologically influenced behavior by the follower, in this case, the loyalty towards the influencer (Jain et al., 2022). These constructs form the framework on which purchase intention is studied.

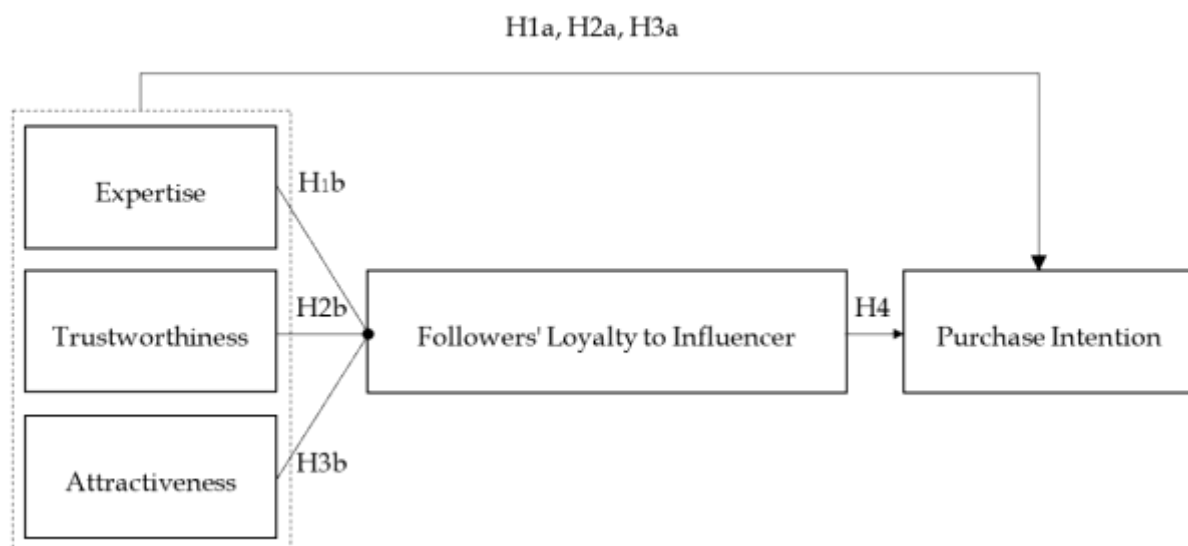


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research entitled “Follower Loyalty to Influencers and Its Influence on Purchase Intention of Cosmetic Products on The TikTok Platform” utilized survey design which falls under quantitative research. The data was acquired through an online survey, and the data analysis was performed using relevant statistical packages. For this study, the methodology was structured into the following components:

6.1. Population and Sample

This research applied purposive sampling to capture a very specific subset of TikTok users who actively engage with cosmetic influencers to ensure it aligned with the research goals. This approach enables the capturing of rich context regarding follower behavior. While quota sampling could enhance representativeness across demographic strata, in this case, purposive sampling is more favourable as it allows the researcher to focus on users who have experience with the measurements taken, in this case, influencer trust and purchase intention with regards to the TikTok cosmetic ecosystem. While the targeted approach strengthens within-group comparability, the approach risks generalizability to profiles of users who share

similarities. As per these criteria, the researcher tried to find a sufficient sample size. Hair et al. advanced the 10-times rule in 2010 which states that sufficient sample size is a minimum of ten times larger than the number of observed variables or questionnaire items. Because the questionnaire consists of 28 items, the required sample size is determined as: $28 \times 10 = 280$.

6.2. Data Collection

The data addressing the objectives of this study was retrieved through a survey instrument known as a questionnaire in Google forms. The questionnaire was administered to the intended audience through social media sites like LINE, Facebook, and Instagram. These channels were used because they are popular among the participants which saves time and money in reaching the respondents. The data collection period was from 1st March 2024 to 30th June 2024.

6.3. Instruments Used in the Research

6.4. Questionnaire Design Steps and Its Framework

This study applied a quantitative survey-based approach using a self-administered digital questionnaire. An extensive literature review pertaining to the content helped construct a self-administered online

questionnaire which ensured its validity.

The instrument was developed with Google Forms and divided into six main parts as follows:

Part 1: Screening Questions – Focuses on respondents' eligibility, such as following beauty influencers on TikTok.

Part 2: Demographic Information – Captures the age, gender, educational level, and occupation of the respondents.

Part 3: TikTok Usage Behaviour – Assesses the time and frequency TikTok is used by respondents.

Part 4: Influencer Credibility – Focuses on influencer expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness as perceived by respondents.

Part 5: Follower Loyalty to Influencer – Assesses the extent of loyalty respondents claim to have towards beauty influencers.

Part 6: Purchase Intention – Gauges respondents' intention to purchase cosmetic products endorsed by TikTok influencers.

Part 6 employed five-point Likert scale measuring intervals which provided respondents the ability to select their agreement level from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

6.5. Reliability Testing

The researcher assigned a reliability cadence

through a test evaluation based on the integrity of the research instrument with primary data collected using questionnaires. This evaluation was based on the awarding of marks awarded to each question collected using a questionnaire and how each respond or rather describes a given construct. As a measure to award a maximum of 1, given the isolation of items which means choice answering between yes and no, no responses would definitely count toward 0. In the calculation through the alpha coefficient yielded between 0 and 1 where 1 indicates more reliable. According to generally accepted guidelines, a coefficient value of 0.60 and above was found to be useful for primary data collection (Cronbach, 1990; Pallant, 2020).

6.6. Statistical Analysis

In this research, the relationships of interest between the variables were evaluated using hypothesis testing with a SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) approach, as well as model evaluation for the fitted model's overall goodness of fit evaluation. The analysis also included empirical assessment of the model's goodness of fit in order to determine the degree of overlap between the conceptual model and the empirical model. The fit indices and evaluation criteria used to assess model consistency are summarized in Table 1

Table 1: Model Fit Criteria.

Fit Index	Evaluation Criteria	Interpretation of Model Fit	Reference
Chi-square (χ^2)	p-value $\geq .05$	Acceptable fit	Bollen (1989), Diamantopoulos, Siguaw and Siguaw (2000)
Relative Chi-Square (χ^2/df)	< 2.0	Good fit	Bollen (1989)
	2.00 - 5.00	Acceptable fit	
Goodness-of-Fit Index: GFI Adjust Good-of-Fit Index: AGFI	> 0.9	Acceptable fit	Diamantopoulos et al. (2000), Walker (2001)
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	> 0.9	Acceptable fit	Diamantopoulos et al. (2000), Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation: RMSEA	< 0.05	Acceptable fit	Diamantopoulos et al. (2000), Hair et al. (2006)

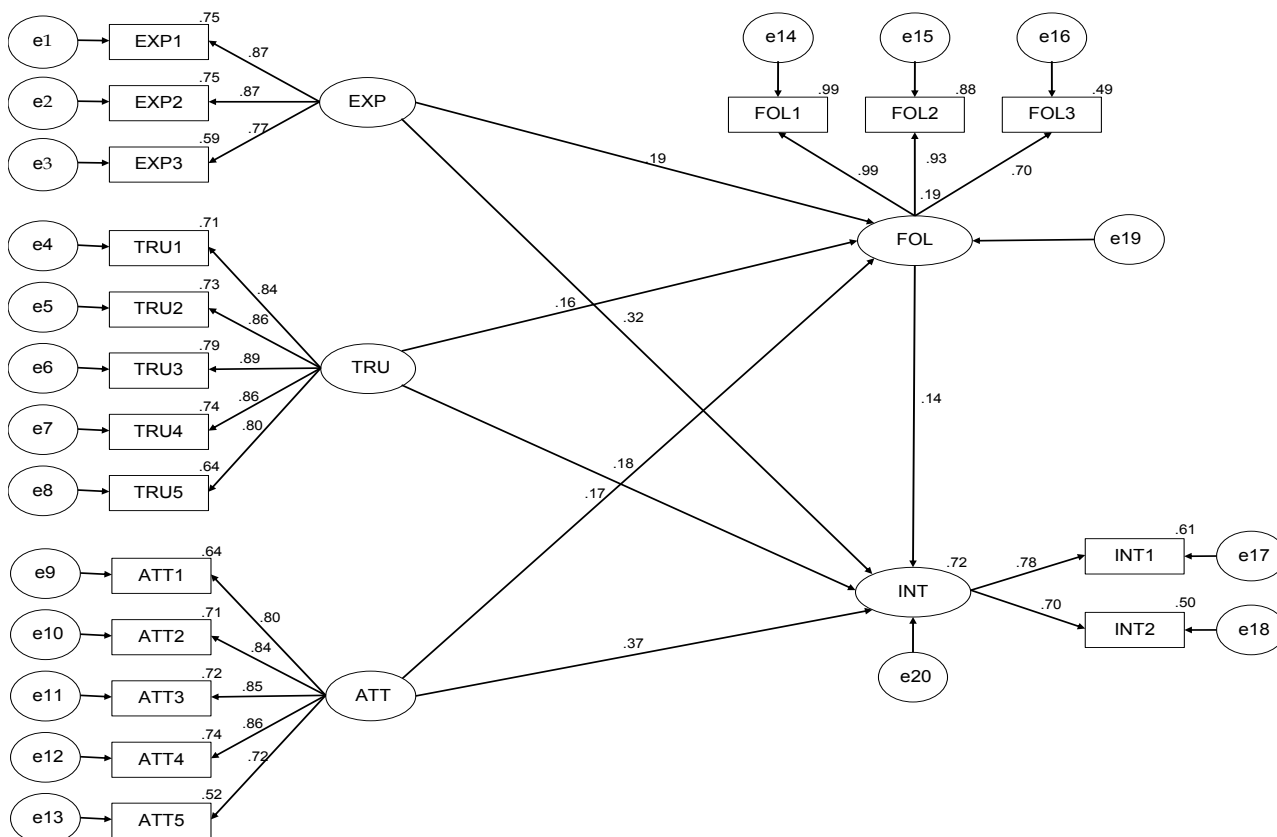
7. FINDINGS

The research "Follower Loyalty to Influencers and Their Impact on Intention to Purchase Cosmetic Products in TikTok Platform" focuses on influencer followers' loyalty and its impact on the cosmetic purchase decisions of individuals on the TikTok platform. This is a quantitative study which collected data through surveys. A sample comprising of 368 followers or former followers of beauty influencers

on TikTok was selected from Thailand. To test the hypotheses, the author employed SEM and checked how the dependent and independent variables were intercorrelated. For evaluating model fit, the researcher used Chi-square (χ^2), Relative Chi-square (χ^2/df), GFI, AGFI, CFI, and RMSEA. Calculation was performed using standard statistical software, and the findings are provided in the subsequent sections along with a discussion.

7.1. Structural Equation Model (SEM) Analysis of Influencer Trustworthiness on Purchase

Intention for Cosmetic Products on the Tiktok Platform



Along with calculating statistical significance, effect sizes were also measured to evaluate the practical implications of the findings. As per Cohen's (1988) classification, standardized path coefficients (β) of 0.10 indicating a small effect, 0.30 a medium effect, and 0.50 and above a large effect. Following these criteria, influencer attractiveness has a large effect ($\beta = 0.52$) on purchase intention while trustworthiness has a medium ($\beta = 0.33$) and expertise shows small to medium ($\beta = 0.27$) effect. These interpretations contextualize the amount of influence the constructs have on consumer behavior.

Based on the assessment, all indices of model fit are within the acceptable ranges which shows that

the structural equation model of the impact of influencer credibility on the purchase intention of cosmetic products on TikTok is aligned with reality. The model comprises three predictors: influencer expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness; one mediating variable: follower loyalty to influencers; and one outcome variable: purchase intention. The agreement of the model with empirical data supports that the measurement model has achieved some level of statistical rigor and hence the model provides a good fit (validity or "OK Fit Confirm") and accurately captures the relationships between the concepts as was hypothesized.

Table 2: Results of the Structural Equation Model Analysis of the Influence of Influencer Credibility on Purchase Intention for Cosmetic Products on the Tiktok Platform.

Variables (relationships)	λ	SE	t-value	p-value	Result
Expertise → Purchase Intention	0.32	0.073	3.830	0.000***	Support
Trustworthiness → Purchase Intention	0.18	0.074	2.125	0.034*	Support
Attractiveness → Purchase Intention	0.37	0.070	5.195	0.000***	Support
Expertise → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers	0.16	0.115	2.069	0.039*	Support
Trustworthiness → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers	0.16	0.124	1.991	0.047*	Support
Attractiveness → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers	0.17	0.118	2.407	0.016**	Support
Followers' Loyalty to Influencers → Purchase Intention	0.14	0.030	2.664	0.008**	Support

Based on SEM analysis regarding the impact of TikTok influencers on consumer intent on

purchasing cosmetic products, it was revealed that the model consists of the following parts: independent factors (influence, reliability, and physical appearance beauty), a mediating factor (loyalty of followers to endorsers 'brand ambassadors'), and a dependent variable (intent to purchase). With regard to the analysis, the focus was placed on the standardized regression coefficients in order to evaluate the effect and direction of the influence among the variables. These coefficients are the decision weights corresponding to the impact of each independent variable on the mediating and dependent variables. We present a summary of the hypothesis testing and regression coefficients results.

1. Expertise

The latent variable expertise is captured using three observable indicators EXP1 – EXP3 which have standardized regression coefficients between 0.77 and 0.87 and multiple correlation coefficients R^2 between 59% and 75%. The results from the structural equation model regarding the impact of influencer's credibility on the purchase intention for cosmetic products on TikTok supports the hypothesis relating to expertise. The model provided two direct causal relationships that were statistically significant and these were:

Expertise → Purchase Intention

Expertise has a positive direct effect on purchase intention as evidenced by a standardized coefficient of 0.32, standard error of 0.073, t-value of 3.830, and a statistically significant p-value of < 0.001 . This model captured 72% of the variance in purchase intention which was significant all the way down to the 0.001 level.

Expertise → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers

Expertise positively influences followers' loyalty to influencers. This was verified by a coefficient of 0.16, with a standard error of 0.115, t value of 2.069, and p value of < 0.05 . This explains 19% of follower loyalty variance and is significant at the 0.05 level.

2. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness as a latent variable is evaluated through five observable indicators (TRU1 – TRU5) with standardized regression coefficients between 0.80 and 0.89, and multiple correlation coefficients (R^2) ranging from 64% to 79%. The structural equation model results analysing the impact of influencer trustworthiness on purchase intention for cosmetic products advertised on TikTok support acceptance of the

trustworthiness hypothesis. Two notable direct effects were found:

Trustworthiness → Purchase Intention

Trustworthiness positively impacts purchase intention directly with a standardized coefficient of 0.18, standard error of 0.074, t-value of 2.125, and p-value < 0.05 . This explains 72% of the variance in purchase intention which is significant at the 0.05 level.

Trustworthiness → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers

Trustworthiness also positively affects followers' loyalty to influencers, showing a direct positive effect with a coefficient of 0.16, standard error of 0.124, t-value of 1.991, and p-value < 0.05 . This explains 19% of the variance in follower loyalty and is significant at the 0.05 level.

3. Attractiveness

Attractiveness is latent and is indicated by five observable indicators (ATT1 – ATT5) with regression coefficients from 0.72 to 0.86 and R^2 values between 52% and 74%. Results were supportive of the hypothesis concerning attractiveness as a result from the structural equation model testing the influencer's credibility on purchase intention toward cosmetic products within the TikTok social media platform. There were two direct effects found that were statistically significant.

Attractiveness → Purchase Intention

Attractiveness has a positive direct effect on purchase intention with a standardized coefficient of 0.37, standard error 0.070, t-value 5.195, and p value < 0.001 . This model explains 72% of the variance in purchase intention and is significant at the 0.001 level.

Attractiveness → Followers' Loyalty to Influencers

Attractiveness also positively influences follower's loyalty to influencers as a direct effect with a coefficient of 0.17, standard error 0.118, t value 2.407, p value < 0.05 . This relationship explains 19% of the variance in follower loyalty and is significant at the 0.05 level.

4. Commitment of Followers to Influencers

The latent variable loyalty of followers to influencers is measured by three observable indicators (FOL1 – FOL3) with standardized regression coefficients between 0.70 to 0.99 and multiple correlation coefficients (R^2) between 49% and 99%. Results from the structural equation model analysing the impact of influencer credibility on cosmetic product purchase intentions on TikTok supported the

influencer follower loyalty hypothesis. One direct effect was found to be statistically significant:

Followers' Loyalty to Influencers → Purchase Intention

Loyalty of followers to influencers has a positive direct impact on purchase intention with a standardized coefficient of 0.14, standard error of 0.030, t-value of 2.664 and p-value of < 0.01. Ninety-two percent of variance in purchase intention is explained by this path which holds significance at the 0.01 level.

5. Purchase Intention

The latent variable of interest 'purchase intention'

in this case purchase intention is defined by two observable indicators (INT1 – INT2). The standardized regression coefficients for these indicators lie between 0.70 and 0.78 and the R² values of the multiple correlations between 50% and 61%. This illustrates moderate to high explained variance. Thus, the model's predictors – expertise, trustworthiness, attractiveness, and follower loyalty to the influencer – account for a significant portion of the variance in the consumers' intention to purchase cosmetic products marketed through TikTok.

Table 3: Summary Of Structural Equation Model Influence Coefficients: The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Purchase Intention for Cosmetic Products on The Tiktok Platform.

Variable	Path Coefficient	Follower Loyalty to Influencer	Purchase Intention
Expertise	Direct Effect (DE)	0.16	0.32
	Indirect Effect (IE)	-	0.03
	Total Effect (TE)	0.16	0.35
Trustworthiness	Direct Effect (DE)	0.16	0.18
	Indirect Effect (IE)	-	0.02
	Total Effect (TE)	0.16	0.20
Attractiveness	Direct Effect (DE)	0.17	0.37
	Indirect Effect (IE)	-	0.02
	Total Effect (TE)	0.17	0.39
Follower Loyalty to the Influencer	Direct Effect (DE)	n/a	0.14
	Indirect Effect (IE)	n/a	-
	Total Effect (TE)	n/a	0.14
R²		0.19%	0.72%

7.2. Overview of Direct, Indirect and Total Effects within Structural Models

In regards to the structural equation model assessing the impact of influencer credibility on consumers' purchase intention on a TikTok platform, it includes the following elements: independent variables, which are influencer's credibility their attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise; as well as a mediating variable - follower loyalty to influencers, and an outcome variable - purchase intention. The analysis revealed the variable that had the most considerable impact on influencing purchase intention was attractiveness, having a total

path coefficient of 0.39. This was followed by expertise (0.35), trustworthiness (0.20) and influencer follower loyalty (0.14). Together, these variables explained 72% of the purchase intention variance. Attractiveness also had the highest impact as influencing follower loyalty to influencers. It had a total path coefficient of 0.17, followed by both trustworthiness and expertise with values of 0.16 each. Together, the variables accounted for 19% of follower loyalty variance. These results suggest the overall importance that both expertise and attractiveness have in driving follower loyalty and purchase intention in the context of influencer marketing on TikTok.

Table 4: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results from the Causal Structural Equation Model: The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Purchase Intention for Cosmetic Products on the Tiktok Platform.

	Hypothesis	Standardized Coefficient	t-value	P-value	Result
H1a	Expertise has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.	0.32	3.830	0.000***	Supported
H2a	Trustworthiness has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.	0.18	2.125	0.034*	Supported
H3a	Attractiveness has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.	0.37	5.195	0.000***	Supported
H1b	Expertise has a positive effect on Followers' Loyalty to the Influencer.	0.16	2.069	0.039*	Supported
H2b	Trustworthiness has a positive effect on Followers' Loyalty to the Influencer.	0.16	1.991	0.047*	Supported
H3b	Attractiveness has a positive effect on Followers' Loyalty to the Influencer.	0.17	2.407	0.016*	Supported
H4	Followers' Loyalty to the Influencer has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.	0.14	2.664	0.008**	Supported

8. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The results showed both attractiveness and expertise to have a strong impact on purchase intention. Instead of reiterating previous definitions, this interprets the empirical relevance of those constructs:

The results of hypothesis testing reveal that attractiveness positively influences purchase intention. This supports the findings of Li et al., (2025) as well as Diao et al., (2025), which showed that social media influencers' attractiveness significantly impacts users' purchase intention towards recommended products. Hoque et al., (2025) further revealed that endorsers' sexual attractiveness enhances brand satisfaction and positively influences purchase intention for cosmetic products among women. Hence, this research confirms the hypothesis that attractiveness positively affects purchase intention, further confirming its importance as a deciding factor in marketing through social media.

There are a number of influences that have been analysed that impact followers' loyalty to the social media influencer (Vo et al., 2025). Influencers are deemed to be credible based on their physical appearance, their level of trust, and their professional standing. These three elements of source credibility were proposed by Fakhreddin, (2025). In this scenario, source credibility which is represented by the influencer does greatly assist in cultivating follower loyalty with social media accounts.

Hypothesis testing results have shown that

expertise is a determinant factor for loyalty to an influencer, meaning it has a positive impact. This supports the findings by Wang et al., (2025) in which followers are likely to stay loyal to an influencer with whom they perceive can meet their informational and competency needs through the content shared. Hence this study stands confirmed the hypothesis put forward stating expertise positively impacts followers' loyalty to influencers.

The findings from our hypothesis testing show that trustworthiness positively influences loyalty from followers towards influencers. This aligns with earlier studies demonstrating that social media influencers perceived trustworthiness positively affects followers' loyalty (Li et al., 2025). Also, Sohn et al., (2025) showed that followers' views of an influencer's trustworthiness bolster their loyalty to that influencer. These results support the hypothesis of this study and confirm that trustworthiness influences followers' loyalty to the influencers positively which affirms the assumptions of this study.

From the analysis conducted above, it can be concluded that attractiveness positively influences followers' loyalty to influencers. This is consistent with earlier studies which showed that users are more likely to follow influencers with good looks. Furthermore, Hoque et al., (2025) reported that product endorsers' attractiveness improves their credibility, especially in regard to beauty products where the effectiveness is often linked to the

endorser's appearance. Thus, the results of this study confirm the hypothesis that social media users strongly subscribe to and follow beauty influencers due to their looks.

The analysis conducted confirms that the loyalty of followers to influencers impacts purchase intention in a favourable manner. This conclusion corroborates prior studies which underscore that loyalty creates value for a business (Katili et al., 2024). Brand loyalty, for instance, has great impact on purchasing behavior. Haq et al., (2025) found that followers who are loyal to an influencer tend to trust the products endorsed by the influencer, and thus their purchase intention is activated. For these reasons, the hypothesis is indeed supported that followers' loyalty to influencers positively influences purchase intention.

Although there is agreement with prior research, there are particular aspects where this study differs. For example, the role of influencer expertise has been documented with mixed results when it comes to influencer impact on purchase intention. Some research indicated strong influence (Lim et al., 2017), while other studies documented weaker or nonsignificant influence (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Expertise within this study moderately influenced purchase intention. One explanation for this difference might be the TikTok-centric context, which gives more importance to visuals, the image, and entertainment rather than technical prowess or professional influence. Moreover, socio-cultural context of Thailand could shape user perceptions of expertise in cosmetics, heavily influenced by popular or relatable, rather than formal, influencer credentials.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study looked into how the credibility of an influencer impacts the intention to purchase cosmetic products on TikTok.

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It was discovered that all variables that were tested—influence by expertise, influencer trustworthiness, influencer attractiveness and loyalty of followers—positively contributed to purchase intention. Of these, attractiveness proved to have the greatest impact, followed by expertise, trustworthiness, with followers' loyalty having the weakest direct impact. Regarding loyalty to influencers and their accounts, once again attractiveness was the most important factor followed by expertise and trust. These findings highlight that for situations that involve limited marketing resources (budget and time), the primary focus should be placed on influencer attractiveness when promoting cosmetic products on TikTok. Focusing on this aspect is assumed to lead to greater purchase intention and better consumer responsiveness.

Restrictions and Future Look into the Research

Some limitations of this study need to be noted. Firstly, the sample is limited to TikTok users located only in Thailand, which in turn, affects the applicability of the results in other cultural or regional contexts. Secondly, the information available was obtained through the participants' self-reported tools, which are prone to social desirability tendencies or inaccurate recall. Third, the study had a cross-sectional design which is inadequate to capture the changes in behavior over time.

To lift these restrictions, future studies may use a cross-cultural comparative design to examine if the influence of perceived credibility of the influencer and loyalty of the followers diverge in other countries. Moreover, the relationship could be established through the use of experimental or longitudinal designs which track the changes over time in consumer behavior. Lastly, the understanding of the influencer and consumer relationship would be much stronger with the addition of behavioral data such as purchase transactions.

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