TikTok influencers and purchase intentions of the senior high school students in Divine Word College of San Jose

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Abstract

This research study investigated how TikTok influencers influence students' purchasing intentions by establishing three perceived characteristics of the TikTok influencers and considering the student's profile. It aimed to explicate the importance of comprehending consumer behavior and the extent of awareness in the context of making purchases on TikTok platforms. The research employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive-correlational design; the study surveyed 203 of the 432 Senior High School students from the Divine Word College of San Jose using a systematic sampling approach. Data was collected through printed survey papers using a modified-adapted questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale. The statistical tools used for the treatments were: weighted mean, which assessed TikTok influencers and purchase intention level; Pearson correlation coefficient, which explored the profile and purchase intention association; and Regression, which predicted TikTok Influencers' effect on purchase intention. Results revealed significant relationships between age and purchase intention, as well as sex and purchase intention, while monthly allowance and TikTok usage frequency showed no significant relationship with purchase intention. Moreover, parasocial relationship, expertise, and trustworthiness were found to have highly significant relationships with purchase intention. The study highlights a highly significant relationship

between TikTok influencer's characterizations and purchase intention. In conclusion, TikTok influencers significantly affect the purchase intention of Senior High School students. The findings suggest that brand owners should consider investing in TikTok influencers for product advertising strategies. This research contributes to understanding the dynamics of influencer marketing on the TikTok platform, particularly within the context of younger consumer profiles.

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1. Introduction

TikTok is one of the social media platforms that became popular worldwide and it significantly contributed to entertainment. It specifically emerged during the pandemic, through the year 2020. In 2020, amid a pandemic, young people turned to TikTok, using creativity to combat isolation and forge connections (Rajabi, 2020) . Therefore, the researchers perceive that using this application can affect people's choices and decisions regarding different matters. One aspect affected by this worldwide change is consumers' purchasing intention, specifically with the influence of TikTok influencers being dominant in the marketing field. This is an application in which people can share information by uploading videos. Based on Statista's report (2023), despite being launched in 2017, TikTok became well-known in 2020, reaching 313.5 million downloads and reportedly having 1.7 billion users worldwide in 2022. A lot of beneficial opportunities came, and this app became an instant. The growing number of TikTok users has pushed businesses to capitalize on the trend by hiring well-known influencers to promote their products. This app became the influencer's way to convey their remarks, thoughts, and judgments about a product. Individuals who consistently engage with this app are more susceptible to the influence and persuasive tactics employed by influencers from TikTok. A high engagement rate has also been a way for influencers to use this platform to buy and sell a product the same way around.

People tend to be more susceptible and highly exposed to social media as time passes, especially when the pandemic hits. The Philippines is always one of the most active nations on social media globally (Digital Marketing Institute, 2021). At the beginning of 2023, the Philippines had 85.16 million internet users, with an internet penetration rate of 73.1% of the total population (2023 Global Digital Report). As Joshi et al. (2023) reported, social media directly influences consumer behavior regarding what they are advertising, the influencers' self-gains, and the social media community. The TikTok platform is currently one of the prominent social media platforms that directly influence customers. Furthermore, the marketing strategies employed by TikTok influencers significantly affect consumers' attitudes and purchasing intentions. This can be mainly attributed to the appealing personalities of the marketing representatives, effectively persuading and convincing potential buyers (Moreno et al., 2015). Hence, social media influencers exert a more pronounced influence on consumers in contemporary culture compared to previous eras (Sudha & Sheena, 2017). To effectively target their desired market, many marketers use social media influencers' widespread popularity (Hamid et al., 2022).

The Philippines is one of the nations with a significant potential for social media influencer marketing and advertising. Based on a recent survey conducted by Rakuten Insight in May 2023, many internet users in the Philippines actively engage with influencers on social media platforms. The findings indicate that approximately 69% of these individuals have purchased directly from receiving recommendations from these influencers (Statista, 2023). This implies that influencers play a substantial role in shaping the purchasing behavior of Filipinos, namely in terms of purchase intention. However, it has also introduced a heightened risk of influencing followers' involvement and emotions for personal gain. TikTok influencers can leverage the trust, loyalty, and emotional connection established with their followers, with the sole intention of fooling consumers to boost the sale of a product, thereby augmenting sales and eventually generating more profits from the endorsement. Depending on various factors, it may even prompt impulsive consumer behavior, resulting in impulsive purchases that may be subject to regret over time.

Social media influencers are prominent in controlling and influencing consumer behavior, particularly among young adults and adolescents (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). As stated by Lajnef (2023), adolescence is the period between childhood and adulthood in which teenagers are neither fully childish nor capable of making adult-like decisions. Younger age groups, particularly adolescents, are considered the most sensitive consumer class.

Adolescents and young adults are at risk of negative social media influencer marketing. The main reason why the researcher wanted to conduct this study in Divine Word College of San Jose, specifically on Senior High School Students. The students in their senior year of high school are deemed ideal respondents for this study, as they encompass both adolescents and young adults who are between infantile and mature. In further explication, it can be observed that while these students can make rational purchasing choices, they remain vulnerable to the influence exerted by social media influencers. A significant proportion of students enrolled at Divine Word College of San Jose possess sufficient purchasing power and extensive social media exposure with various social media platforms. The students exhibit contemporary behavior and typically conform to established social media conventions. The students are updated and commonly follow social media norms. Hence, it is an appropriate subject for a study on consumer purchasing intentions.

This research endeavor aimed to explicate the importance of comprehending consumer behavior and the extent of awareness in the context of making purchases on the TikTok platforms. The researchers, students specializing in Accountancy, Business, and Management, want to investigate the purchasing behavior of the mentioned students. This can also be utilized in subsequent periods when researchers encounter the realm of commerce. This study aimed to understand the purchasing intentions of Senior High School students at Divine Word College of San Jose when exposed to TikTok Influencers. The purchase intention can be influenced by perceived characterizations derived from TikTok influencers. This study aimed to examine how the three perceived characterizations of the TikTok influencers affect the purchasing intention of Senior High School students. These three perceived characterizations are parasocial relationships, expertise, and trustworthiness. The consumers' primary concern is demonstrating support for the product rather than its efficacy. Some specific consumers make purchasing decisions based only on the product's recommendation by an influencer. This study can benefit stakeholders, including consumers, TikTok influencers, future researchers, students, and teachers. Furthermore, this study elucidated the significance of understanding consumer behavior and students' level of consciousness when making purchases on social media platforms like TikTok.

Statement of the Problem - The study aimed to investigate how TikTok influencers influence students' purchasing intentions by establishing three perceived characteristics of the TikTok influencers and considering the student's profile. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: (1) What is the profile of the students in terms of age, sex, monthly allowance, and TikTok usage frequency? (2) What is the level of TikTok influencer's perceived characterizations in terms of parasocial relationship, expertise, and trustworthiness? (3) What is the level of purchase intention of the Senior High School students? (4) Is there a significant relationship between the profile and the purchase intention of the Senior High School students? (5) Is the purchase intention of Senior High School students significantly affected by TikTok influencers in terms of parasocial relationship, expertise, and trustworthiness?

Significance of the Study - In a time where digital platforms dominate communication and advertising and advertising, TikTok has emerged as one of the fastest-growing social media platforms, especially during the pandemic. Understanding the effects of TikTok influencers is essential in the field of marketing. This research is of great importance because it addresses several vital factors. The researcher considered that the results of the study would provide a basis for the following: To consumers, this study provides insight into TikTok influencers' profound impact on their purchasing decisions. Consumers often face choices influenced by these charismatic TikTok online personalities in a world of persuasive advertisements. Armed with the insights from this research, individuals can better assess the relevance of influencer endorsements.

The study sheds light on the mechanisms at play and empowers consumers to make more informed and discerning decisions. TikTok Influencers can leverage this study to enhance their comprehension of their roles and responsibilities in shaping consumer behavior. This potential outcome can lead to more ethical and productive promotional strategies. The findings of this research can be instrumental in guiding influencers to evolve their approaches, fostering a heightened sense of ethics and responsibility. Ultimately, this can result in a constructive and value-added contribution to the ever-evolving landscape of TikTok influencer marketing. To business owners,

this study offers valuable insights regarding the effectiveness of TikTok influencer marketing, potentially serving as a compass for refining their marketing strategies to connect with their target audience more precisely. Business owners can acquire a comprehensive understanding of how influencer marketing can enhance their approaches, enabling them to tailor campaigns for specific audience segments and cultivate more profound levels of engagement. To students, this study helps students understand the strategies utilized by TikTok influencers to shape their consumer choices. This research is a powerful assistance for those who aspire to be wise consumers in an interconnected world, urging them to explore its findings and apply its insights to make more thoughtful and informed economic decisions.

Teachers can use this study as a valuable tool to enhance their teaching methods, demonstrating how TikTok marketing influencer significantly influences consumer behavior. By incorporating the insights gained from this research into their curriculum, educators can provide students with a practical understanding of the ever-evolving landscape of marketing trends and the persuasive role of influencers. This study can also be a real-world application, enabling teachers to equip students with valuable skills for navigating the digital age. This study serves as a foundation for future research in TikTok influencer marketing; it lays a solid foundation and offers a well-illuminated path to guide their investigations and inquiries. These invaluable findings facilitate a smoother commencement of their studies and provide a robust framework for building and expanding their research endeavors. In essence, this research does not merely stand as an endpoint; it serves as a springboard, encouraging the exploration and advancement of TikTok influencer marketing studies for years to come.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study - The primary objective of this study was to investigate the influence of TikTok influencers on the purchasing intentions of Senior High School students enrolled at Divine Word College of San Jose. Moreover, it was subject to subsequent constraints. This study focused exclusively on the TikTok platform, which currently exhibits greater efficacy in facilitating sales than other selling platforms. This can be attributed to its unique ability to entertain users while promoting products simultaneously. The research only concentrated on senior high school students at Divine Word College of San Jose who were attracted to following various TikTok influencers. The target respondents of this study are 15 to 21 and above, primarily adolescents. This group of students is particularly prone to the allure of purchasing things available on diverse online platforms. Adolescents in Senior High School possess the cognitive abilities necessary to discern moral distinctions, as they are at a developmental stage characterized by the transition into adulthood. Senior High School students are a demographic that is particularly immersed in the online realm, as they are part of a generation that has grown up with widespread access to the internet. Individuals often experience a rapid sense of being inundated as they face unknown information online.

This research has significant limitations. Senior high school students at Divine Word College in San Jose, aged 15 to 21 and above, were selected for this study; those younger than the specified age range were rejected. The research is limited to TikTok influencers within the TikTok application. The researchers prioritized the safety of the Senior High respondents, and owing to various schedules, the researcher only performed the research on school grounds using printed material. Students who do not fit this criterion cannot use the study's findings. The survey does not address the consumers' past experiences, which could influence their purchasing intentions. The study may not be generalizable because of its limited scope and focus on specific ages.

2. Methodology

Research Design - This study used a quantitative study with a descriptive-correlational design that aimed to determine the profile and the level of TikTok influencers and for the correlational relationship between profile and purchase intention and the influence of TikTok influencer to purchase intention, 15 to 21 years old and above, and Senior High School Students of Divine Word College of San Jose. This method is implemented in the study under a survey to collect and interpret data from a specific sample population, generation Z, who uses TikTok. In this study, the researcher investigates how the three perceived characterizations of the TikTok influencers affect the purchasing intentions of Senior High School Students. This methodology aims to measure and analyze opinions,

attitudes, behaviors, and other predetermined factors to provide evidence either supporting or refuting hypotheses related to a particular occurrence. Additionally, this approach can provide a broader understanding of the results obtained from the study sample by placing them within the context of a larger population.

Respondents of the Study - For the study, 432 senior high school students from Divine Word College of San Jose were selected using a systematic sampling approach. This means every second person from the population was chosen in an organized and structured manner, providing an evenly-spaced representation. A sampling frame was obtained from the Senior High School Office and compiled into a list to ensure a systematic sampling approach. The list of selected participants is based on a determined sampling interval. The sampling interval was determined using the number 2 to reach the specified sample size. This study aimed to analyze the data collected from the selected samples and draw meaningful insights. The selection of respondents that researcher made from each strand level and the overall sample size of Senior High School students was produced by utilizing Slovin's formula with a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. The sample size of 203 is based from the population of 432.

Research Instrument - The research instruments utilized in this study are adapted questionnaires with a four-point Likert scale. Four programs exhibit very strong disagreement and very strong agreement. In particular, the design of this study was modified in light of patterns identified in pertinent and associated literature. A set of research questions is composed of four discrete parts: The first section, Part I, comprises the profile of the participants, comprising factors like age, sex, allowance, and frequency of usage. Part II is the TikTok Influencers, which consists of three sub-variables: expertise, trustworthiness, and parasocial relationship. Five items comprise the parasocial relationship characteristic, adapted from Nilsson et al. (2023). Five questions have been modified and adapted from Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022) for the expertise. One of the five items on the trustworthiness scale was derived from Nilsson et al. (2023), with the remaining items being modified and adapted from Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022). The purchase intention scale, which comprises five survey questionnaires and was adapted from Khan et al. (2019), is the subject of Part III.

The instrument's validity is one of the most essential parts of a research study. It shows the appropriateness of instruments used in collecting reliable information. Experts or professionals are needed to establish the validation of the instrument. The adviser checked the "researcher-made" questions. Furthermore, modified questionnaires are credible because they have already been validated in the previous study. The assessment of a measurement instrument involves considering two essential components: validity and reliability. Various research and assessment instruments include conventional knowledge tests, skill tests, aptitude tests, and survey questionnaires (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). As this study used quantitative research, the survey questionnaire consists of 25 questions modified and adapted from different studies and a five-point degree Likert scale format adapted from different studies. This method of collecting data is designed to measure internal consistency and guarantee the instrument's reliability. The questionnaire was modified and subsequently evaluated for the reliability of participant responses. The researcher employed Cronbach's Alpha reliability approach to validate the instrument by making adaptations to the questions. This statistical measure is utilized to assess the reliability and internal consistency of an entire set of scale or test items (Goforth, 2015). Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for the various surveys from various sources are presented below.

Table 1
Reliability Results of the Adapted Questionnaires

Variable	Reliability Coefficients	Number of Items	Internal Result
Purchase Intention	0.824	5	High (Good)
Parasocial Relationship	0.8896	5	High (Good)
Expertise	0.878	5	High (Good)
Trustworthiness	0.8836	5	High (Good)

*Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items

Expertise and Trustworthiness were derived from Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022). The researchers employed SPSS software to conduct the reliability test using the Cronbach Alpha statistical test. Based on Nilsson

et al. (2023), a coefficient greater than 0.8 indicates a high level of reliability for the variables under consideration, as cited by Collis and Hussey (2014). Based on the data in Table 4, it is evident that the variables of purchase intention, parasocial relationship, knowledge, and trustworthiness exhibit values of 0.824, 0.8896, 0.878, and 0.8836, all of which surpass the threshold of 0.8. It may be claimed that every variable employed in the study exhibits high reliability and could be administered to the final set of respondents.

Data Gathering Procedure - The researcher in this study prepared a series of survey questionnaires specifically designed for senior high school students. The primary objective was to collect precise and pertinent data to support the research project. The researcher commenced the data collection process by first sending a formal request letter to the office of the senior high school coordinator. This correspondence aimed to obtain the complete senior high school students list and the total population. After determining the suitable sample size, the researcher sent a formal letter to request consent to conduct a survey on senior high school students at Divine Word College of San Jose. After the letter was approved, the researchers administered the survey questionnaires face to face to the chosen sample using printed copies for almost 1-2 weeks period. Following the process of data collecting, the researcher assembled the gathered responses, marking the commencement of the crucial stage of analysis and interpretation. The outcome of the respondents' survey questionnaires can ascertain the effect of TikTok influencers on the purchasing intention of senior high school pupils.

Statistical Treatment of the Data - The data analysis is essential to the research paper as it consolidates and evaluates the collected data. In this study, the data obtained underwent several statistical analyses. The weighted mean is a form of average where individual data points are assigned distinct weights. Unlike traditional means, where each data point contributes equally, in weighted means, specific data points hold greater importance than others in determining the final average. This was utilized to identify the level of TikTok influencers and their purchase intention. Regarding the association between the profile and purchase intention, the researchers employed Pearson's correlation coefficient, also known as Pearson's r. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a commonly employed statistical metric assessing the degree and direction of linear association between two quantitative variables. It ranges from -1 to +1, indicating a positive correlation when both variables increase together ($r > 0$), no correlation when there is no linear relationship ($r = 0$), and a negative correlation when one variable increases while the other decreases ($r < 0$) (Turney, 2024). The researchers employed the Regression to measure the effect of TikTok Influencers on purchase intention. Regression analysis comprises a collection of statistical techniques employed to estimate connections between a dependent variable and one or multiple independent variables. It evaluates the magnitude of the relationship among variables and constructs models predicting their future associations (Taylor, 2023).

Ethical Considerations - A collection of procedures known as ethical considerations helps researchers conduct studies with better outcomes. The researchers outlined specific ethical standards to ensure that they adhered to the ethical aspects of the study. To start, to prevent misunderstandings and discomfort, the researchers protected the privacy of the research participants, researchers, and other parties involved. The researchers provided an adequately informed consent form to guarantee the consent of the research participants. The researcher considered approaching experts in the field of research and requesting their approval, along with details regarding the funding source. Furthermore, the research utilized American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition citations to properly attribute the authors of the referenced information. All previously specified ethical criteria were considered during the process. The researcher ensured that there was no possible injury to possible participants. The survey questionnaires contained information for the respondents, such as a summary of the study, rules, the quantity of items, and the researcher's contact information. The researchers ensured that the information gathered would remain anonymous to protect our respondents' privacy. Furthermore, the researchers made every effort to present an objective and transparent research report that prevents misunderstandings by ensuring the design is carried out impartially.

To obtain informed consent, provide complete information regarding the study, its procedures, and potential risks. Protect participant privacy by collecting only essential data and ensuring secure storage. Emphasize

anonymity, using coding or other measures to prevent the identification of groups or individuals. Stress the voluntary nature of participation, allowing individuals to withdraw without repercussions. Avoid asking overly sensitive questions to prevent emotional distress. Seek ethical review to ensure adherence to established guidelines. Prioritizing ethical issues is critical in research investigations to safeguard the well-being and rights of participants. Participants were entirely told about the study's objective, procedures, and potential dangers so that they could provide voluntary and informed permission. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to safeguard their privacy. Researchers minimized potential harm and prioritized the participants' welfare throughout the study.

3. Results and Discussions

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Monthly Allowance and TikTok Usage Frequency n-203

Profile (Age)	Frequency	Percentage
15-17	130	64%
18-20	73	36%
21 and above	0	0
Profile (Sex)		
Male	95	46.8%
Female	108	53.2%
Profile (Monthly Allowance)		
Less than 1,000	42	20.7%
1,001 – 2,000	33	16.3%
2,001 – 3,000	37	18.2%
3,001 – 4,000	62	30.5%
More than 4,001	29	14.3%
Profile (TikTok Usage Frequency)		
Less than 1 hr a day	22	10.8%
2 hrs – 4 hrs a day	38	18.7%
5 hrs – 7hrs a day	75	36.9%
8 hrs – 10 hrs a day	47	23.2%
11 hrs and above/ a day	21	10.3%

Table 2 shows the percentage and frequency of the respondents' profiles in terms of age, sex, monthly allowance and tiktok usage frequency. The SHS students are differentiated through their profiles. In terms of age, 64% are between 15 and 17, indicating that this age range is the most exposed to the TikTok app. Following this, 36% of the respondents came from ages 18 – 20, and no participant was recorded for the last age range 21 and above. Similar to the study of Hoffmann (2017), all students in K-12 today can be considered digital natives. So, in today's society, seeing teenagers on social media is prevalent. They are the ones who engage in different online sites or applications. Additionally, consumer choices, consumption habits, and patterns differ significantly depending on age (Slabá, 2020). Therefore, age has a vital role in a consumer's behavior. In addition, in terms of sex, the female group garners 108 in frequency, or 53.2% of the total respondents. The study revealed that more female participants can participate in the surveying method than males. In San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, PhilAtlas (2024) provided a 2020 consensus stating that the number of females is dominant compared to males. There are 40,999 females and 38,864 males residing in the town. The discovery is substantial to the study of Becker (2017), who states that survey participation has been more advantageous for women and girls as educational options have increased. It was proposed that gender disparities in survey participation rates might result from men's lesser propensity to participate and their academic background and aptitude. The gender discrepancy in survey participation persisted across all polls, even after adjusting for social background, directly impacting school attainment.

In terms of monthly allowances within the surveyed population. The breakdown shows that a significant portion of individuals (30.5%) receive a monthly allowance of 3,001 to 4,000 pesos, while a minor proportion (14.3%) gets an allowance exceeding 4,001 pesos. This suggests students benefit from comparatively higher monthly allowances. The Divine Word College is a private school; therefore, students have relatively the capacity to have a high allowance. This aligns with the study of Munir et al. (2023) on various factors, such as the socio-economic status of the students' families or the tuition fees and expenses associated with attending a minute, has

swiftly acquired popularity and helps people pass the time when bored, particularly teens. private institution. Lastly, in terms of TikTok usage frequency, the data shows that most respondents spend significant time on TikTok, with the highest percentage (36.9%) dedicating 5 to 7 hours daily to the platform. These findings highlight the substantial engagement of respondents with TikTok, suggesting its pervasive influence on their daily routines. TikTok, an app that allows anyone to post videos from 15 seconds to one Additionally, TikTok, owned by ByteDance, has witnessed growing integration into marketing strategies due to its expanding market and engagement reach. With Generation Z as its dominant user base, short-form video content creation focuses on raising awareness and capturing their interest (Araujo et al., 2022). In a similar study by Nwafor and Nnaemeka (2023). Their data shows that 3% of the respondents use TikTok for 1-2 hours daily, indicating light usage, while 13% use it for 3-4 hours daily, indicating medium usage. However, 84% of the platform users use it for 5 hours or more daily, which indicates heavy usage. Thus, most respondents are heavy TikTok users. The data presented provide valuable insights into the frequency of TikTok usage among respondents. The distribution of usage time among respondents indicates a significant prevalence of heavy users, with 84% of respondents spending 5 hours or more on the platform daily. Overall, the data findings underscore respondents' substantial and widespread engagement with TikTok, thereby supporting the premise regarding the platform's significant influence on user's daily routines.

Table 3
Mean Level of TikTok Influencer's perceived Characterizations in terms of Parasocial Relationship, Expertise and Trustworthiness

INDICATORS (Parasocial Relationship)	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers, which makes me feel comfortable as if it were a close friend.	2.98	Agree
2. I get inspired by TikTok influencers, who I believe are natural and down-to-earth.	2.79	Agree
3. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who understand more about areas I want to learn more about.	2.78	Agree
4. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers whom I would like to meet in real life.	2.74	Agree
5. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers that I find attractive.	2.66	Agree
Composite Mean	2.79	Agree
INDICATORS (Expertise)		
1. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are experts in promoting the product.	2.84	Agree
2. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are experienced in promoting the product.	2.81	Agree
3. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are knowledgeable about the products.	2.71	Agree
4. I am inspired by TikTok influencers who are qualified to promote the product.	2.92	Agree
5. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are skilled in promoting the product.	2.87	Agree
Composite Mean	2.83	Agree
INDICATORS (Trustworthiness)		
1. I get inspired by TikTok influencers who act according to their beliefs and values.	2.90	Agree
2. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are dependable.	2.77	Agree
3. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers that are reliable.	2.77	Agree
4. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are sincere.	2.94	Agree
5. I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are honest.	2.74	Agree
Composite Mean	2.82	Agree

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree, 2.51 – 3.25 Agree, 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree

Table 3 discloses the mean level of TikTok influencers' perceived characterization regarding parasocial relationships, expertise and trustworthiness with a composite mean of 2.79, 2.83 and 2.82 respectively . This shows that the respondents agreed to TikTok influencers' perceived characterization. Similar to the recent research that has explored the role of parasocial interactions on social media as a marketing tool, notably observed on Kim Kardashian's Facebook page. Social media has enabled users to establish relationships with favored celebrities and influencers, fostering stronger brand connections through enhanced interactivity and openness in consumer-

business interactions (Lueck, 2012; Labrecque, 2014). Consequently, changes in media consumption patterns significantly impact consumer decisions regarding brands, including timing, location, and method of brand selection (Batra & Keller, 2016).

It also aligns with the study of Kim and Song (2016) that viewers may admire and aspire to emulate these traits, leading to closer relationships with influencers. Influencers, due to their close relationships with followers, are often seen as trustworthy sources of information, especially within industries such as beauty and cosmetics, and strengthened by the fact that parasocial interaction with influencers positively affects purchase intention (Hwang & Zhang, 2018; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). In a similar vein, advertisers often prioritize physically attractive influencers in their campaigns due to their heightened influence on shaping customer attitudes toward target brands (Wang & Scheinbaum, 2017).

In terms of expertise, the respondents agree that the expertise of TikTok influencers affects the motivation of the users to buy products from the application. This means that the influencers' expertise has the chance to shape the willingness of consumers to avail themselves of products. The credibility and trust influencers establish with their followers make influencer marketing successful. Because followers view certified influencers as trustworthy and experienced in their field, their endorsements carry greater weight when they do so. However, it still fits the fact that respondents agreed that it affects their perceived characterization of how TikTok influencers influence them. Before the study of Ahmadi and Hudrasyah (2022), a source's credibility was primarily determined by experience, knowledge, and reliability. For instance, when influencers sell things on TikTok or other platforms, their audience's perception of the advertised goods or services is influenced by their trustworthiness. An influencer's recommendation is more likely to be believable if people in that area see them as reliable and informed. Lastly, the overall composite mean of the study suggests that TikTok influencers are perceived positively about trustworthiness, with a weighted mean of 2.82. TikTok influencers are generally perceived as trustworthy by their audience.

The measured indicators include acting according to beliefs and values, dependability, reliability, sincerity, and honesty. Similarly, research by Nilsson et al. (2023) emphasizes the importance of trustworthiness in influencer marketing, defining it as the perception of individuals based on sincerity, honesty, or truthfulness, which significantly impacts consumers' perceived credibility, information processing, purchase intention, and attitudes toward purchase decisions. They highlighted that influencer trustworthiness significantly impacts consumers' perceived credibility, information, purchase intention, and attitudes toward purchase decisions. Likewise, Masuda et al. (2022) discuss how trustworthiness influences consumer behavior. They further argue that sincerity, characterized by authenticity and genuineness, holds more significant sway over consumer attitudes and behaviors. They also suggest that sincerity reflects a deeper emotional connection between influencers and their audience, fostering trust and loyalty.

Similarly, Aggad and Ahmad (2021) assert that customers value genuine and honest influencers who genuinely care about their followers' well-being. While honesty is essential, they highlight that sincerity encompasses a broader spectrum of qualities that resonate more profoundly with consumers. This emphasis on sincerity aligns with the findings in Table 7, where audiences prioritize inspiration from TikTok influencers perceived as genuine and authentic in their expressions and actions. The higher weighted mean for "I get inspired by TikTok Influencers who are sincere" underscores the significant impact of sincerity in shaping audience perceptions and preferences within influencer marketing. Conversely, Sekhon et al. (2014) evaluated trustworthiness within organizational contexts, emphasizing factors crucial for building trust between financial service providers and their customers. They found variations in the impact of different constructs on trustworthiness within the financial services industry, highlighting the complexity of trust formation across diverse contexts. Factors such as expertise and integrity were pivotal for establishing trust within the financial services sector, reflecting a different set of priorities and expectations compared to the research on influencer marketing discussed earlier.

Table 4
Mean Level of Purchase Intentions of the Senior High School Students

INDICATORS	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
1. The brands endorsed by TikTok Influencers draw my attention.	2.63	Agree
2. The brands endorsed by TikTok Influencers influence my purchase intention.	2.61	Agree
3. The personality of the TikTok Influencer I like makes me buy the brand.	2.60	Agree
4. The brand endorsed by my favorite TikTok Influencer influenced me to buy.	2.71	Agree
5. The brand endorsed by a TikTok Influencer makes me feel happy to buy.	2.72	Agree
Composite Mean	2.65	Agree

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00 Strongly Agree, 2.51 – 3.25 Agree, 1.76 – 2.50 Disagree, 1.00 – 1.75 Strongly Disagree

In examining Table 4, it is evident that respondents generally hold a favorable view regarding the impact of TikTok influencers on their purchase intention, with a composite mean of 2.65 means agree. This means that the respondents largely agree with statements suggesting that TikTok influencers influence their purchasing decisions positively and that TikTok Influencers' marketing and endorsing strategies affect the consumers' purchase intentions. This shows that TikTok influencer marketing is perceived as an effective brand strategy to engage and influence consumers. This is supported by Umraliyeva et al. (2022), which indicates that the way consumers make choices is accelerated due to being emotionally driven by the feelings of those influencers. However, the third indicator, "The personality of the TikTok Influencer I like makes me buy the brand," obtained the lowest weighted mean, 2.60. Nevertheless, it did not change the fact that the respondents still agreed that the influencer's personality affects their willingness to buy products. From the findings, it is evident that influencers have the potential to influence purchasing decisions in their roles as specialists, which demonstrates the relationship between influencers and purchasing behavior. Thus, it simultaneously implies an inherent connection to authenticity, credibility, trustworthiness, and other traits (Lisichkova & Othman, 2017). These findings underscore the substantial impact of TikTok influencers in shaping consumer behavior and highlight the effectiveness of influencer marketing strategies on the platform.

Table 5
Correlation Coefficients and p-values for Hypothesis Testing (Ho1)

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Effect Size (r^2)	Critical value	t-value	*P-value*	Interpretation
Profile (Age)→ Purchase Intention	0.138	0.019	1.972	1.98	0.05	Significant
Profile (Sex)→ Purchase Intention	0.198	0.039	1.972	2.86	0.005	Significant
Profile (Monthly Allowance) → Purchase Intention	0.009	0.000	1.972	0.13	0.90	Not Significant
Profile (Tiktok Usage Frequency) → Purchase Intention	-0.004	0.000	1.972	-0.06	0.95	Not Significant

Legend: p-value<0.05 Significant

The correlation analysis presented in the data's first row reveals a positive correlation coefficient of 0.138 between the age of high school students and their intention to buy, signifying a significant influence of age on purchasing tendencies. However, the effect size $r^2 = 0.019$ suggests a modest practical impact. Despite this, the null hypothesis is rejected because the t-value surpasses the critical value and the p-value is 0.05, confirming a strong correlation between age and purchasing intentions among senior high school students. Similarly, Nguyen (2021) found that social media, notably influencers, has ingrained itself into the daily routines of high school students, influencing their attitudes and behaviors significantly. The age of these students notably affects their trust in influencers and their inclination to act upon their recommendations. Align with Cabeza-Ramírez et al. (2022) stated that generational cohorts play a pivotal role in shaping attitudes and actions, particularly in purchasing behavior, with children relying on visual assessments or adult guidance, teenagers defing peer opinions or being swayed by enticing offers, and adults exhibiting brand loyalty based on personal preferences.

Age is a critical profile variable influencing buyer behaviors in product purchase decisions. TikTok stands out as the preferred platform for individuals aged 15-17, indicating the platform's significance among younger profile. Moreover, the study underscores the changing role of teenagers in family buying decisions, possibly due to smaller family sizes, leading to the increased influence of children in the purchasing process. The finding is supported by McLeay et al. (2018) that younger consumers, characterized by greater openness to experiences and lesser price sensitivity, are more inclined toward labeled products and demonstrate a heightened receptivity to testing new products and brands. They tend to make more instantaneous purchase decisions than older consumers, who prefer gathering comprehensive information before purchasing. Additionally, perceptions of online challenges vary between generations, with younger individuals viewing them positively while elders tend to express negative attitudes, perceiving such challenges as crazy or unsafe. This perspective contrasts the generational gap in attitudes toward online trends and activities.

It also shows the correlation between variables, specifically between the profile of the respondents and purchase intention. Specifically, the finding of the result indicates that profile in terms of sex has a significant relationship with purchase intention (r = 0.198). The claim that, in the context of TikTok, sex affects purchase intention is consistent with a larger pattern shown in consumer behavior and marketing studies. This finding correlates with Sethi and Sethi (2017), who underscores the importance of segmenting consumers based on profile factors such as gender and marital status to optimize marketing strategies and promotional budgets. In contrary to the female respondents, their research reveals that males are more inclined towards online shopping, constituting 48.8% of online purchasers. Conversely, a lack of significant correlation between monthly allowance and purchasing intention (r = 0.009) indicates the complexity of consumer behavior and the necessity for a more nuanced understanding of purchase decision determinants. Torabi and Bélanger's (2022) study further support this notion, suggesting that profile characteristics do not notably influence customer purchasing decisions, particularly among students, whose purchase intentions remain unaffected by monthly allowances, contrary to previous findings by Labito and Supramono (2017) regarding compulsive buying behavior among students.

Moreover, the analysis of TikTok usage frequency and its correlation with purchase intention reveals an insignificant relationship, as evidenced by the negligible correlation coefficient close to zero, the non-significant effect size, and the p-value exceeding the commonly used significance level of 0.05. This suggests that spending time on TikTok does not significantly impact individuals' inclination to make purchases. These findings align with prior research by Saima and Khan (2020) and Manzoor et al. (2023), highlighting the limited influence of social media influencer marketing and attributes on consumer behavior and purchase decisions. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for refining marketing techniques and designing effective strategies tailored to consumer preferences and behavior patterns.

Table 6

Correlation Coefficients and p-values for Hypothesis Testing (Ho1)

Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Effect Size (r^2)	Critical value	t-value	*P-value*	Interpretation
Parasocial→ Purchase Intention	0.785	0.616	1.972	17.96	0.000	Highly Significant
Expertise→ Purchase Intention	0.697	0.486	1.972	13.78	0.000	Highly Significant
Trustworthiness→ Purchase Intention	0.801	0.641	1.972	15.17	0.000	Highly Significant
TikTok Influencers→ Purchase Intention	0.788	0.621	1.972	18.15	0.000	Highly Significant

Legend: p-value = 0.000-0.001 Highly Significant, $0.002 \leq$ p-value ≤ 0.05 Significant, p-value > 0.05 Not Significant

The data shows the statistical results of significant relationships between the perceived characterizations of TikTok influencers and purchase intention. The first variable has a strong positive correlation between parasocial interaction and purchase intention, with a correlation coefficient of 0.785, an effect size of 0.616, and a p-value of 0.000, less than the 0.05 significance level. Which also has the highest significance on purchase intention. This

underscores the importance of consumers forming one-sided relationships with influencers or media personalities in driving their purchasing decisions. In a similar study from Yang and Ha (2021), the finding shows that marketers should target people wishing to socialize who also have a high parasocial interaction with influencers on Douyin if their marketing goal is to sell items. The level of trustworthiness of consumers is not so high but as consumers perceive the influencer as trustworthy they tend to have strong purchase intentions.

The positive link between perceived expertise and purchase intention has a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05., suggesting that consumers are more likely to purchase products recommended by individuals or entities they perceive to be experts in a specific domain. This aligns with the study of Martiningsih and Setyawan (2022); the expertise variable 0.002, thus, it can be said that the expertise variable has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention. The correlation coefficient of 0.801 and p-value of 0.000 less than 0.05 significance level between trustworthiness and purchase intention highlight trust's critical role in influencing consumer behavior. Consumers are more likely to consider purchasing products endorsed by trustworthy influencers or sources. This aligns with the study of Jaeed and Badgish (2021), who found that a person's attitude about online buying is positively impacted by their trustworthiness. With parasocial being the most significant variable and expertise being the least significant, it is clear that today's audiences prefer to believe in individuals who relate to them or make them feel safe. A personal connection with the influencer may appear more essential than the expertise expressed in their content (Nilsson et al., 2023).

The findings of the study supported by Persuasion Theory elucidates how TikTok influencers subtly shape consumer attitudes and behaviors through perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and the development of parasocial relationships, aligning with the study's focus on perceived characterizations and their impact on purchase intention (Gordon, n.d.; Masuda et al., 2022). Similarly, Social Learning Theory posits that individuals acquire knowledge and skills by observing and emulating the behaviors of others, with TikTok influencers serving as role models whose content influences viewers' attitudes and purchase decisions (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). The processes outlined in Social Learning Theory—attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation—provide a framework for understanding how exposure to TikTok influencers shapes purchase intention among SHS students, highlighting the role of social influence in consumer behavior within online platforms.

4. Conclusions

The significant findings led to the following conclusions: The majority of senior high school students are aged 15 to 17. This skew toward youth profile, particularly teenagers, emphasizes the dominating representation of younger individuals in the sample. Female students make up the majority of senior high school respondents. Most students receive a monthly allowance ranging from 3,001 to 4,000 pesos. Most students utilize TikTok for 5 - 7 hours daily. The respondents demonstrate a favorable perception of TikTok influencers' ability to foster parasocial relationships. The findings reveal that respondents generally believe TikTok influencers possess expertise in their respective domains. The findings indicate that TikTok influencers are perceived as trustworthy by respondents. The respondents hold a positive perspective regarding the TikTok influencers influencing their intention to make purchases. The respondent's age and sex exhibit significant relationships with the purchase intention of Senior High School students. However, no significant relationship was observed between monthly allowance or TikTok usage frequency and the purchase intention of senior high school students. The parasocial relationship is the most significant variable in purchase intention, the respondent is driven more by personal connection. The expertise is the least significant variable among the three but still has a positive effect on purchase intention. The trustworthiness is a significant variable in affecting purchase intention.

1. Recommendations

In relation to the conclusions derived from significant findings, the following recommendations are made: Brand owners may consider specific preferences or trends among adults and males that are not being addressed by current influencer marketing campaigns. Given the perception of low trustworthiness, brand owners may urge

TikTok influencers to prioritize authenticity in their content creation and collaborations with brands, positioning the brand as a trustworthy source of information and insight. Brand owners may contemplate broadening the spectrum of TikTok influencers to encompass a variety of personalities that resonate with diverse audience segments. Brand owners may focus on the effectiveness of the TikTok influencer targeting adolescents and most females. Brand owners may consider TikTok influencers who are well-trained and equipped to address customer inquiries, provide knowledgeable assistance, and resolve issues effectively. Future researchers may investigate additional characteristics influencing TikTok's purchasing intention and expand the respondents' profile.

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