# EXPLORING TIKTOK INFLUENCER ATTRIBUTES AND EWOM IN SHAPING CUSTOMER TRUST: A STUDY ON SKINCARE PRODUCTS AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN BIÑAN CITY, LAGUNA

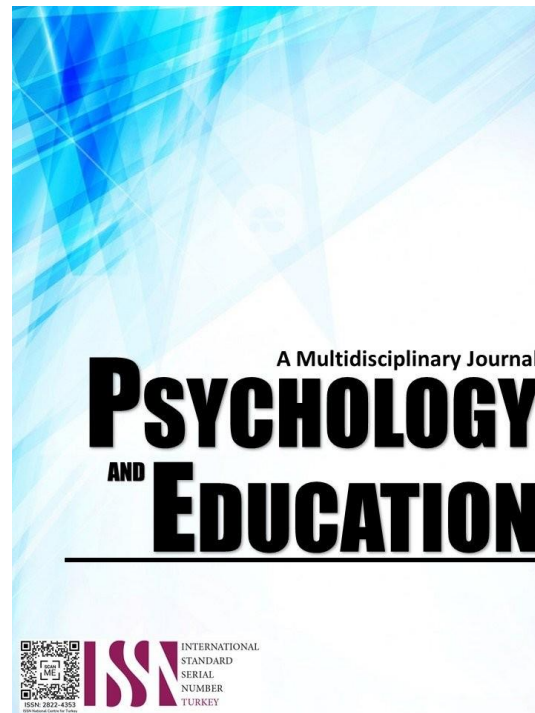# Exploring TikTok Influencer Attributes and eWOM in Shaping Customer Trust: A Study on Skincare Products Among Young Adults in Biñan City, Laguna

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## Abstract

This study was conducted with an aim to determine the most used skincare brand of the young adults; the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence; the quality of electronic word-of-mouth; and their customer trust. Likewise, the relationship between the said variables were also assessed. A total of 384 young adults in Binan City, Laguna participated in the study employing a descriptive-correlational research design. The study utilized proportionate, purposive, and snowball sampling techniques in gathering information. The researchers used a modified survey questionnaire with consent form to gather data. Frequency count and percentage, weighted mean and standard deviation, and chi-square test were used to interpret the data. The study noted that the most used skincare brand by the participants is Brilliant Skin Essential and the least preferred is Herskin. On one hand, the findings revealed that the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness is very attractive, interactivity as very interactive, creativity as very creative, and confidence as very confident. On the other hand, the quality of electronic word-of-mouth is excellent, while the level of customer trust is very high. Further, the results showed that the TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence have significant associations with customer trust. Electronic word-of-mouth was also found significantly associated with customer trust. Thus, the influencer's attributes and electronic word-of-mouth were considered as factors in shaping customer trust.

**Keywords:** *Tiktok influencer, electronic-word-of-mouth, customer trust, skincare products*

## Introduction

In the new era, people are very conscious of their health and have established a skin care routine. According to Allied Market Research (2023), skin care routine is a practice of maintaining and enhancing the physical appearance of the face of an individual with the use of skin care products, like cream, lotion, etc., to have clear and fresh skin regardless of pollutants or any damages to skin that may come along the way. In the Philippines, these products are easily accessible to its end users with the help of various distribution channels, such as supermarkets, online shops, drug stores, department stores, specialty shops, and beauty salons.

With the hit of the pandemic, many businesses had to drop and shutdown. This caused a major blow in every industry including the beauty industry because 85 percent of product purchases are made face-to-face. Businesses have no choice but to adapt with the current situation with the use of technology and connect with the market via online. Given the upsurge of Filipino income and their shift into healthier lifestyle, the Philippine market size for skin care products was valued at Php 51.8 billion in 2021 and expected to grow more in 2026 with a compound annual growth rate of 7.7 percent or Php 74.8 billion (Global Data, 2022).

Given the current growth of skin care product market size in the Philippines and the technological transformation after the pandemic, businesses are currently opting for great strategies to connect and promote with the use of social media to come up with greater edge through all competition (Strapagiel, 2022). According to Launch Metrics (2021), social media gives businesses a chance to have impactful marketing for their products. One of these social media platforms is TikTok. TikTok is one of the top social media channels with the quickest growth rate which surpasses Facebook, the social media king (Varney, 2023). Marketers are leaning with TikTok influencers to market their products, and having a creator or influencer helps them to achieve higher engagement rate (Baker, 2022).

Besides influencer content, customers are relying on other forms of communication. Before, customers were relying on friends and families for product recommendations called traditional word-of-mouth, but today, they seek information in the form of electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) (Gupta, 2022). They find it convenient since the words get fast and spread quickly globally online (Chu, 2021). Accordingly, 92 percent of consumers around the world are interested in and value suggestions of other customers online, especially those advertising type (Whitler, 2014). The efficiency and power of e-WOM had increased several times in the virtual age. Researchers stated that the use of e-WOM is favorable for customer's buying decisions (Mishra, 2016; Rani & Shivapasad, 2021; Arya et al., 2021).

During the pandemic, there is an increase in the e-commerce share from 14 percent to 17 percent of which e-WOM is the major factor in decision making (Rani & Shivaprasad, 2021). Consumers rely more on the recommendation of others, and e-WOM is referred to be the decisive criteria to measure the behavior of a product and stimulate buying intent. However, with more vigilant generation like young adults who are said to be digital native and constantly demanding for evidence (Moran, 2016), the ability of e-WOM reviews to influence the consumers is being questioned due to the possibility of manipulation by sellers (Weitzl, 2016).

Customer trust is essential for success in the commercial sector. The value of customer trust cannot be understated because it is essential to boost customer loyalty, gratifying consumer feedback, and eventually, income (Best Practice, 2023). Due to the growing market size of skin care products in the Philippines, the researchers conducted this study. This study determines the association of TikTok influencer's attributes and electronic word-of-mouth on customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skin care products. This study might be beneficial to TikTok influencers, local companies, and marketers for them to identify how TikTok influencer's attributes and electronic word-of-mouth are associated with customer trust.

**Research Questions**

This study sought to identify the relationship of TikTok influencer's attributes and electronic word-of-mouth on customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skin care products. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following problems:

1. What is the most used skincare brand of the young adults in Biñan City, Laguna?
2. What is the level of TikTok influencer's attributes towards skin care products as perceived by the participants in terms of:
    2.1. attractiveness;
    2.2. interactivity;
    2.3. creativity; and
    2.4. confidence?
3. What is the quality of electronic word-of-mouth as perceived by the participants towards skin care products?
4. What is the level of customer trust of the participants towards skin care products?
5. Is there a significant association between the level of TikTok Influencer's attributes and the level of customer trust of the participants towards skin care products in terms of:
    5.1. attractiveness and customer trust;
    5.2. interactivity and customer trust;
    5.3. creativity and customer trust; and
    5.4. confidence and customer trust?
6. Is there a significant association between the quality of electronic word-of-mouth and the level of customer trust of the participants towards skin care products?

## Literature Review

### *Skincare Products*

The cosmetics industry consists of different products from various categories, such as skincare, haircare, make-up, perfumes, toiletries, and deodorants. Innovist (2021) identified skincare as essential for the face of an individual and it is needed to maintain the health condition of the skin. Molvar (2022) added that good skin care needs a product that can help in skin care routine steps, such as cleansing, exfoliating, toning, moisturizing, and using SPF. Surber and Kottner (2017) stated that skincare products are available all over the world, and companies sell and promote these kinds of products based on its effect. However, businesses sometimes claim exaggerated product effects to attract more customers.

According to Petruzzi (2023), in 2021, skincare became the leading category in the cosmetics industry and in 2022, the global cosmetics market experienced growth of over 16 percent compared to previous years. Due to this data, it is now projected that the cosmetics industry will generate 188 billion U.S. dollars in 2026.

### *Young Adults*

Casey (2020) said that young adults are part of generation Z. Gen Z, in the year 2023, are those with age ranging from 11 years old to 25 years old. Particularly, the range from 11 years old to 17 years old is considered as a teen, while 18 years old to 25 years old is considered or classified as young adults. According to Higley (2017), young adulthood is a distinct developmental stage that occurs between the ages of 18 and 25, during which crucial developmental activities allow them to engage in self-exploration and identity building. There are various definitions and age range inclusions for young adulthood among various organizations, which causes uncertainty during program development, healthcare service delivery, and research.

Moran (2016) said that young adults are digital natives. They grew up with easy access to the internet or digital communication technology and they are already starting to earn money which they are comfortable to use to buy online. However, young adults are more vigilant online unlike other generations, as they demand convincing evidence to support the claims presented online. Szwajlik (2019) added that if the business wants to market to young adults, they need to be more innovative to communicate and use different online tools like social media.

Young adults' increased interest in skincare also skyrocketed as a result of the pandemic. Customers are worried about problems with their appearance because they have to stay in their homes for longer (Pikoos et al., 2020). People felt less pressure or fewer opportunities to wear makeup and as a result, there is less demand for makeup. However, not all signals are negative for the cosmetics industry. Rubin (2020) claimed that consumers are suffering from acne and are concentrating more on skincare products as a result of the current

climate being conducive to mask wear. Even though makeup products have lost popularity, sales of skincare products have gone in a different direction.

### TikTok

Diverse mobile applications add color and convenience to people's lives. Users can feel at ease and have a positive viewing experience because of humorous and engaging short video sharing. Due to the rapid growth of the short video industries, numerous applications have emerged, driving the short video industry's expansion. Content associated with a brand's product is displayed to customers, including reviews and experiences. According to Stephen (2016), it is easier for marketers to use digital marketing channels as a way to raise brand awareness. Another social media platform that featured a variety of short video clips gained popularity during this time. A well-known video-sharing social network called TikTok encourages users to upload and watch videos they like because the app is available.

Based on Iqbal (2022), TikTok is the app with the most downloads worldwide in 2020, with over 1.4 billion active users worldwide, and generated over $16 billion in advertising revenue in 2020. TikTok is without a doubt one of the most famous applications as of now. Teenagers have a new opportunity to express themselves on social media, as the majority of TikTok users are. Millions of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 20 upload short videos to TikTok as there is a high probability that a single video will go viral (Guo, 2022).

As per Zhou (2019), short videos on social media platforms are reshaping the experience of learning creative skills by providing instructional materials that are visually appealing as well as the communication skills necessary to inquire into and respond to those materials. It encourages more and more people to make short videos, which led to the new TikTok shooting trend. Even though TikTok is a private company, people begin to investigate TikTok potential for human resources because of its optimistic development.

### TikTok Influencer Attributes

Social media has altered the way individuals and businesses conduct activities in the digital arena these days. According to Newton (2022), influencer marketing is a type of social media marketing based on influencer partnerships and endorsements. Becoming an influencer is not easy as it requires a special set of skills to be successful. Influencers need to have a broad range of qualities that go far beyond just having a large social media following or being attractive, interactive, have creativity, and confidence (Nambakhsh, 2023). Typically, influencers getting endorsed are individuals with a large, highly engaged community of social media followers. Influencers are usually subject-matter experts whose dedicated social media follower base turn to their favorite influencers for more information and advice on a particular topic. In relation to this, influencer marketing elevated the brand recognition as online influencers emerged promoting brand products and increased potential buyers through creating significant content that reached wide target audiences especially if the influencer has a huge number of followers, and influences their audience to follow what they did and make decisions. As mentioned by Al-Darraji et al. (2020), influencer marketing is a new marketing approach. It is a process of identifying and activating individuals who have an influence over a specific target audience or medium in order to be part of a brand's campaign towards increased reach, sales, or engagement.

Furthermore, Lou and Yuan (2019) stated that for influencers to be more persuasive, they need to regularly make social media updates in their specialist areas. Influencers tend to add some personal touch to their content to create an enjoyable experience for their followers. As the influencer and consumer build strong relationships, the companies also expand their audience and eventually turn them loyal through trust and authenticity. Mid-tier influencers (have more than 100K followers but up to 500,000 followers) have polished content ability and experience working with brands and their content retains its authenticity, and their audience is still niche (Zalani, 2022). Moreover, this relationship comes from the content that the influencers create stipulations desired by people in which the influencer's follower relates to and leads their audience into a certain level of trust in the influencer's opinion.

Additionally, influencers today are becoming professional in addition to being aware of their role on social media. As they offer services to companies, influencer marketing became more important in promotion purposes since people have more trust in them and admire them more than any other brand promotion. Thus, companies need reassessment of their brand strategy. In today's generation, TikTok has easily become the main reference for reviews for young consumers, from beauty products to grocery store produce. With nothing but time on their hands, users have spent endless hours determining and purchasing the best products. As stated by Bentson (2020), the approach called 'skinfluencer' is emerging within the app as there are numbers of TikTok influencers who speak about their favorite products, helping all TikTok users' skincare concerns. These individuals combine their knowledge with current platform trends in order to grow their presence.

TikTok is a growing social media platform with numerous influencers who are approached by companies to engage in influencer marketing. Unlike Instagram where content requires more preparation due to the aesthetic nature of the platform, TikTok allows influencers to create spontaneous and unfiltered content that would contribute to higher perceived levels of authenticity and credibility by the public. Influencers and companies increasingly prefer to engage in collaborations with the use of TikTok. (Nambakhsh, 2023).

In the study of Koay et al. (2021), attractiveness of an influencer has a significant impact on a consumer wherein they are more likely to purchase a product if the influencer has a great physical appearance. From the study of Lee and Watskin (2016), it is said that

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customers tend to buy when the product is promoted by an influencer who is physically attractive. Customers purchase from them because they believe that the influencer who is physically attractive is credible (Sokolova & Kefe, 2020). However, in the study of Djafarova and Trofimenko (2019), it is concluded that attractive influencers cannot be specified as experts just because customers believe that they are credible. Influencers that are not "real" experts are only seen as competent individuals who disseminate information using an illusion of expertise to their followers.

Interactivity is a distinguishing feature of an influencer toward brands, and explores how it influences influencer authenticity, emotional attachment, and as a result, brand loyalty (Jun & Yi, 2020). It is a strategic way to create, develop, and enrich customer relationships, and achieve business performance (Lui, 2021). According to Kim and Kim (2023), attachment affects how followers perceive and react to the influencer's interactivity. Moreover, Belanche et al. (2020) stated that influencers should promote brands that complement their personal preferences because doing so will increase interactivity on their social media profiles. Glucksman (2017) defined interactivity as influencers who work together with the viewers to solicit feedback.

According to Kim and Kim (2022), users perceive their favorite social media influencers as close friends in the real world through online interactions due to the digitized interactive features of social media platforms, such as social foci, proximity, interaction frequency, and self-disclosure. Hamdan and Lee (2022) further stated that as brand encroachment decreases, there is an increasing importance of being interactive. Social media influencers must forge connections through interaction in environments with little brand intrusion as influencers build communities through higher levels of engagement, authenticity, and relatability. Brands should give social media influencers more chances to communicate with their audience while enhancing their intrinsic motivation and power as sources for these interactions.

In the study of Grafstom, Jakobsson, and Wiede (2018), creativeness of influencers is seen through having entertaining and inspirational posts that draw attention and attract followers and viewers. If the influencers have unique contents and do not turn these into ads, customer support can be expected. Additionally, those creative influencers who can create good quality videos in a low budget but can draw attention because of being unique, can reach a wider and precise target audience than those influencers who have many followers.

As per Marvick (2013), creativity is the ability of the influencers to provide new and different content periodically. This creativeness will be perceived as innovative, unusual, and sophisticated by the customers. Also, being creative can give advantage to the influencers since having this ability can give them their own identity from social media. Ooi et al. (2023) revealed that influencers who take great care when creating sponsored posts to keep their true voices and connect with their followers' interests are seen as more reliable than traditional marketing and have grown to be the most reliable medium for advertising.

According to Angie (2022), self-confidence is defined as an individual's recognition of his or her own abilities, loving himself or herself and being aware of his or her own emotions. There are two types of confidence: one is intrinsic confidence and the other one is extrinsic confidence. On one hand, intrinsicity is when an individual has emotion and thoughts about himself or herself. As it is about being pleased with oneself, self-esteem, self-love, self-knowledge, and stating concrete aims and positive thinking are the elements of intrinsic self-confidence. Extrinsic self-confidence, on the other hand, is the behavior and attitude towards others and its elements are communication and controlling emotion (Cherry, 2022).

### Quality of Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Word-of-mouth is considered as the oldest way of conveying information, and it has been defined in many ways. It is described as marketing information that plays a role in shaping consumer behavior (Alcocer, 2017). Consumers consider word-of-mouth as one of the major influential sources of information because of the customers' willingness to share and discuss products and services and brands to each other (Hossain, Kabir, & Rezvi, 2017). As per Baudis (2016), word-of-mouth is a major influential factor in consumer purchasing decisions.

Yang, Cheng, and Tong (2015) stated that before making purchasing decisions, consumers usually tend to seek word-of-mouth from friends and acquaintances. Saleh (2019) added that in order to increase brand awareness, 82 percent of marketers use word-of-mouth promotion, resulting in 5 times more sales than paid advertisement or promotion. Mican and Taut (2020) also viewed electronic word-of-mouth as becoming a major source of product information which has an increasing effect on purchasing decisions for online shopping customers. Moreover, Catadrellia (2019) revealed that many Filipinos are likely to value the opinions and expressions of other customers on products or services in social media and it influenced the customers' decision on purchasing products.

### Customer Trust

Customer trust is the belief that the brand is credible, competent, consistent, and would reach their expectations that the product will perform as promised (Zhang et al., 2020). According to Utami (2015), customer trust is the customer's awareness of the brand's performance expectations based on experience and confidence manifested as an attitude. Moreover, Wiganda and Marsasi (2023) stated that thoughts and a higher sense of gratitude for the product or organization will emerge from the customers once they have experienced the relationship marketing effort that a product or organization has made. The primary contributors of a business' long-term profitability and growth are customer loyalty and trust. Despite the e-commerce industry's explosive development and popularity, businesses still struggle to win over customer loyalty and trust (Aslam et al., 2020). According to Setiawanlt et al. (2020), satisfaction mediates the

relationship between service quality and price fairness and consumer trust.

### Relationship Between TikTok Influencer's Attributes and Customer Trust

***Attractiveness and customer trust.*** In the study of Celik (2022), it is concluded that customer trust had a positive increase when the influencer who is promoting has attractive appearance as they look more credible than the others. However, Yeh et al. (2020) stated that physical attractiveness could or may indirectly influence trust by satisfaction. With high satisfaction, it is more likely to gain more trust.

***Interactivity and customer trust.*** By establishing communications for collaboration and the sharing of mutual positive effects with followers, social media influencers build trust and popularity (Cocker & Cronin, 2017). Consumer trust in social media influencers is increased by their sense of connection with them, their honesty, and the fact that they sell products and services within their areas of specialty (Kamaldeep, 2021). However, in the study of Suprawan (2021), it is concluded that although customers follow certain influencers, they never follow the brand that the influencers are promoting. This suggests that there is no significant relationship between influencer's interactivity and customer trust because for customers, it is important that the brand itself interacts with them.

**Creativity and customer trust.** According to Blasco (2020), the quality of the video content is a reflection of the person who is posting the video or the brand. The quality of the brand or product should be seen on how they show it to the public and thus, it needs creativity. With great presentation and promotion, customers will feel that the content is not just branded content, but a type of content that will solve their problem by using the product. When customers feel that the content is not just a content, they will slowly give their trust. Forte (2023) added that the creativity given in a content is an effective building-trust strategy by the marketers. However, according to Hildago (2022), customers trust content with authenticity and more on like candid style content because it clearly shows transparency and purpose. Giving the consumer the candid style will benefit the business because it could appear that they are genuine and can be trusted.

***Confidence and customer trust.*** In the study of Adhimursandi (2023), find that quality of service and social media promotion has a beneficial impact on commitment and trust, and dedication as well as confidence are able to mediate the relationship between satisfied customers, quality service, and social media marketing and loyal customers. Alhaddad (2015) stated that the way to build trust is to be confident and be consistent, because a confident business is easy to trust. Trust comes within, if there's no confidence in oneself, no one will believe. Knowing how to gain followers' trust by being aware of the most important aspect of confidence is crucial (Choudhuri et al., 2023). In the study of Santiago et al. (2020), it was revealed that influencer confidence does affect purchase intention, and the trustworthiness of a brand is an essential need for both trust and intention to buy.

### Relationship Between Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Customer Trust

Yuanfei (2022) stated that the quality and professionalism of electronic word-of-mouth have a positive impact on the emotional trust of skincare products. In addition, cognitive trust and emotional trust of consumers have a significant impact on purchase intention. The number of electronic word-of-mouth also has a significant impact on consumers due to the mediating effect of consumer emotional trust. According to Kapadia (2018), 90 percent of people trust recommendations from their family and friends. Many works have generally described the effectiveness and efficiency of word-of-mouth. Specifically, 88 percent of consumers across Southeast Asia placed the highest level of trust in word-of-mouth recommendations from people they know, and 91 percent of Filipino consumers lead the way in trusting word-of-mouth marketing. They always value the opinions expressed directly to them (Segismundo, 2016).

From the conclusion of Moran and Muzelleca (2014), electronic word-of-mouth poses threats to the brands when the campaign or content is controlled by the brands, because customers may see it as brand-related content and lacking sincerity. In the study of Rellores et al. (2022), electronic word-of-mouth affects an endorsement's reputation, customer interest, and level of trust. The image of the website, meanwhile, boosts customer interest and trust.

## Methodology

### Respondents

Table 1. *Distribution of participants in Biñan City, Laguna*

| Barangay | Sample (N=384) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Barangay 1 (Sto. Tomas) | 77 | 20 |
| Barangay 2 (Langkiwa) | 77 | 20 |
| Barangay 3 (San Antonio) | 77 | 20 |
| Barangay 4 (Malaban) | 76 | 20 |
| Barangay 5 (San Francisco) | 76 | 20 |
| Total | 383 | 100.00 |

The respondents of the study were young adults with ages ranging from 18 to 25 years old since this age group is most likely to use skincare products, with 97 percent using at least one product daily (Sagar, 2023). They must also be active users of TikTok, must follow TikTok influencers with skin care related content, and must have purchased skincare products twice or more on TikTok app. The

participants must reside in the five selected barangays which are considered the most populous in Biñan City, Laguna, specifically Sto. Tomas, Langkiwa, San Francisco, San Antonio, and Malaban (Brinkoff, 2021).

For this particular study, a total of 384 young adults were considered as participants of the study based on the formula used from Cochran (1963) for an unknown population. The distribution sample of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna is presented in Table 1 which is equally distributed in the five most populous barangays in the city (Brinkhoff, 2021).

### Instrument

A modified survey questionnaire from the studies of Conteh (2021), Lin, Wu, and Chen (2013), Chan (2022), Suprawan (2021), Cardoso, Gabriel, Figueiredo, Oliveira, Rego, Silva, Oliviera, and Meirinhos (2022), and Gogoi (2021) was used by the researchers to get the suitable information needed. A request letter was forwarded to each author to seek permission to utilize their research instrument.

The survey questionnaire is divided into four parts. The first part presents the informed consent approval sheet wherein the voluntary participation of the participants is asked. The second part identifies the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence. The third part focuses on the quality of electronic word-of-mouth, while the last part measures the level of customer trust. A four-point Likert scale was used to measure the response of the participants. The scale is as follows: four (4) for strongly agree, three (3) for agree, two (2) for slightly agree, and one (1) for disagree.

Moreover, the researcher used gatekeeper questions in order to know if the participants are young adults with age ranging from 18 to 25 years old; if they are active on social media platform, specifically on TikTok; if they follow TikTok influencer with skin care related content; if they purchased skincare products twice or more on TikTok app; and if they are residing in the top five most populous barangays in Biñan City, Laguna, such as Sto. Tomas, Langkiwa, San Francisco, San Antonio, and Malaban. The gathered data were then used to determine the participant's relevance to the study.

Furthermore, a pilot testing was done to test the reliability and ensure the relevance of the survey questionnaire in providing answers to the objectives of the present study. The survey questionnaire was distributed to 30 young adults who are residing in Carmona, Cavite, using the TikTok app, and following TikTok influencers who promote skincare products. The result of the pilot testing was 0.936 which means that the instrument is reliable and is clearly understood by the participants.

### Procedure

The gathering of data was done face-to-face and utilized printed copies of the questionnaire. The researchers initiated a survey by stationing themselves at Biñan Town Plaza, where they engaged with individuals and inquired about their respective barangays of residence. For those residing in the researchers' pre-defined target barangays, permission was sought to conduct a survey and gather responses. A similar approach was undertaken at HisLife City Church where one of the researchers is an active member.

When the desired participant count is not reached, the researchers adapted their strategy through extending the survey, allowing a broader representation of the population in the survey and ensuring a more comprehensive and diverse data collection process. The researchers also coordinated with their family and friends to get the survey done of which printed copies of the questionnaire were given personally. An informed consent was provided to ensure the voluntary participation of the participants. Through this, the participants were informed about the possible risks and benefits they may encounter in participating in the study.

After the gathering the required data, the researchers began the tally and analysis of information with the use of applicable statistical tools.

### Ethical Considerations

Observing ethical standards in research is essential. At the core, this helped shape the true aims of the study, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error and promoted values essential to collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness. To ensure ethical research, this study followed and respected the principles of research ethics from the Belmont Report (2010). These principles respect a person's autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence, justice, informed consent, confidentiality and data protection, integrity, and conflict of interest.

## Results and Discussion

This section presents the study's findings, and these results are analyzed alongside pertinent sources to address the study's objectives. The objectives include the determination of the most used skincare products; the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence; the quality of electronic word-of-mouth; the level of customer trust; and the association between the said variables.

### Most Used Skincare Products of Young Adults in Biñan City, Laguna

Table 2 presents the most used skincare products of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna.

The distribution revealed that the most used skincare product brand of young adults is Brilliant Skin Essential with the highest

percentage of 29.00 percent, followed by Dermorepubliq with 21.40 percent. Herskin, with 13.80 percent, is the least used skincare product brand of the participants. This means that the participants from Biñan City, Laguna commonly use the brand Brilliant Skin Essential for their skincare routine. This can be proven by the recognition received by Ms. Glenda Victirio, CEO of Brilliant Skin Essential, given by the Asia Leaders Award, the largest business awards event in the Philippines and Southeast Asia. She was awarded as the CEO of the year under the health and wellness category for being the most successful entrepreneur in the field (Business Mirror, 2021). This only indicates that the brand has been recognized nationally and has been patronized by users across the country.

Table 2. *Most used skincare products of the participants*

| Brand | Frequency (N = 384) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Fairy Skin | 71 | 18.50 |
| Rosmar | 66 | 17.20 |
| Dermorepubliq | 82 | 21.40 |
| Brilliant Skin Essential | 111 | 29.00 |
| Herskin | 53 | 13.80 |
| Total | 384 | 100.00 |

**Level of TikTok Influencer's Attributes**

The level of TikTok influencer's attributes towards skincare products as perceived by the young adults in Biñan City, Laguna in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Level of TikTok influencer's attributes*

| Variable | Weighted Mean | Standard Deviation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attractiveness | 3.67 | 0.47 | Very Attractive |
| Interactivity | 3.63 | 0.50 | Very Interactive |
| Creativity | 3.66 | 0.48 | Very Creative |
| Confidence | 3.70 | 0.47 | Very Confident |

Attractiveness. The result showed that the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a grand mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 0.47, which is interpreted as very attractive. This shows that the participants perceived that TikTok influencers have very attractive facial features, have very clear skin, and are very eye pleasing. This is evident from the responses of the participants of which they can see that the TikTok influencer is classy, attractive, elegant, and good looking. Some of the low scores are associated with the perceptions of being sexy.

The present study has similar claims with Phung and Qin (2018) which stated that attractiveness is an important element for beauty products, especially that certain people are looking for attractive influencer to follow. The perception of TikTok influencers revolves around their perceived attractive facial features, clear skin, and overall eye-pleasing appearance. People generally associate these influencers with qualities, such as class, attractiveness, elegance, and good looks. The findings suggest that attractiveness plays a significant role, especially in the context of beauty products, and that individuals actively seek out influencers with these qualities to follow on TikTok.

Interactivity. The result showed that the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of interactivity as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a grand mean of 3.63 and standard deviation of 0.50, which is interpreted as very interactive. This shows that the participants perceived that TikTok influencers are very effective and efficient in communicating. This is evident from the responses of the participants on the survey of which they believed that the influencer responds to private messages, creating a sense of connection. Following closely, they appreciate the influencer's openness to duets, fostering engagement.

The present result is similar to Barta et al. (2023) which indicated that TikTok followers experience a sense of relationship to influencers when they communicate with them, perceiving that influencers are connected to them. This perceived closeness enables influencers to exert a greater influence. Therefore, they perceived the TikTok influencer as highly effective and efficient in their communication, fostering a sense that the influencer would be responsive if they were to send a private message. The influencer's adeptness in conveying information and engaging with their audience results in a strong connection, making viewers feel valued and heard.

Creativity. The result showed that the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of creativity as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a grand mean of 3.66 and standard deviation of 0.48, which is interpreted as very creative. This shows that the participants perceived that TikTok influencers have very unique ideas on its content. This is evident by how participants really appreciate the skincare influencers on TikTok who excel in creating visually appealing contents. The top spot goes to those with great backgrounds and lighting, while the second spot is for influencers who share videos with clear and high-quality resolution. Come in third is for the influencers who create trends.

The present claim is aligned with the study of Raitaluoto (2023) which stated that visually appealing content is important to the business because it has the ability to capture the attention of the viewers. The creativeness that can be seen in every video will leave a lasting impression on the audience. This means that skincare influencers need to stand out in the crowded online beauty world. To do this,

they must share unique and visually appealing ideas or even create a trend. In a fast-changing digital space, presenting fresh and engaging content is key. Viewers appreciate influencers who not only share skincare knowledge but do it in a visually interesting way. For influencers to succeed, they must keep being innovative and creative to capture and maintain their audience's attention.

Confidence. The result showed that the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of confidence as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a grand mean of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.47, which is interpreted as very confident. This shows that the participants perceived that TikTok influencers are very sure of themselves which make them very reliable and credible on their content. They noticed that influencers who promote skincare products on TikTok are not afraid to post the behind the scenes or bloopers, ignore haters and continue to post great and positive content, and post videos of themselves not wearing makeup or no filters.

Similar to the article of Hanson (2023), other people see bloopers as embarrassment and unprofessional, but for influencers, it helps them to show their personality and authenticity on the online presence. Furthermore, people perceived that TikTok influencers exude a high level of self-assuredness, which in turn, enhances their reliability and credibility regarding their content. Observing that these influencers are unafraid to share behind-the-scenes moments and bloopers reinforces the authenticity and transparency in their content. This willingness to showcase the "real" aspects of their lives, including occasional mistakes or candid moments, humanizes the influencer and fosters a sense of trust among their audience. All in all, people value this authentic approach as it makes the influencer's content more relatable, enhancing their perceived trustworthiness.

## Quality of Electronic Word-of-Mouth

The quality of electronic word-of-mouth as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Level of quality of electronic word-of-mouth*

| Variable | Weighted Mean | Standard Deviation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Electronic Word-Of-Mouth | 3.70 | 0.47 | Excellent |

The findings indicated that the quality of electronic word-of-mouth as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a weighted mean value of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.47, which is interpreted as excellent. This indicates that the brand of skincare product has very good reviews, comments, and feedback from the current users. Furthermore, the participants observed that the online reviews or comments towards skincare products are clear, as they can understand it, and find it helpful and credible. The result is also aligned with the study of Hindarwati et al. (2022) which stated that high-quality electronic word-of-mouth involves well-articulated assessments from individuals using or consuming products, offering lucid and comprehensible feedback that is both accurate and valuable to fellow users or consumers of those products.

The result of the study implies that electronic word-of-mouth regarding skincare products is not only transparent but also includes overwhelmingly positive reviews, comments, and feedback. The clarity and abundance of positive sentiments surrounding these products create a strong online endorsement, boosting consumer confidence and interest. Potential customers are more likely to trust and consider purchasing skincare products with a clear track record of satisfied users and glowing feedback, as this electronic word-of-mouth serves as a valuable source of information and assurance in the digital age.

## Level of Customer Trust

The level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. *Level of customer trust*

| Variable | Weighted Mean | Standard Deviation | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Customer Trust | 3.70 | 0.46 | Very High |

The findings indicated that the level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products got a weighted mean value of 3.70 and standard deviation of 0.46, which is interpreted as very high. This means that the participants have a very high confidence towards the brand of skincare products. Also, they will share their positive experiences and recommend the product to their friends and relatives. Indeed, they are really proud of the skincare brand that they are currently using, as they think that the skincare products are of good quality, convey security, and are concerned about them. This is supported by the study of Lie and Apriliany (2022) which stated that having the trust of the customer has an effect on brand awareness which can further lead to purchasing decision. Customers who trust the brands will likely introduce it to their friends and relatives.

The result of the study implies that the participants really trust and take pride in their skincare brand. This high level of trust makes them excited to share good experiences and recommend the product to friends and family. Their genuine pride shows how much the brand means to them, turning them into enthusiastic advocates who actively promote the product. This highlights the brand's ability to create a strong connection with its customers, turning them into loyal supporters who happily share their positive experiences with others.

## Relationship between TikTok Influencer's Attributes and Customer Trust

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The relationship between the level of TikTok Influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence, and the level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna is shown in Table 6. Surprisingly, the result revealed that all attributes of TikTok influencers have a significant association with customer trust.

Table 6. *Association of TikTok influencer's attributes and customer trust*

| Variable | P-Value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| Attractiveness And Customer Trust | 0.00 | Significant |
| Interactivity And Customer Trust | 0.00 | Significant |
| Creativity And Customer Trust | 0.00 | Significant |
| Confidence And Customer Trust | 0.00 | Significant |

*a = significance level of 0.05*

Attractiveness and customer trust. The result showed that there is a significant association between attractiveness and customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products. This means that the attractiveness of TikTok influencers has played a significant role in building customer trust. When influencers possess a strong and appealing presence, viewers are more inclined to trust their recommendations and content. Their attractiveness can create a connection with the audience, making their endorsements and insights more persuasive, as viewers may associate the influencer's looks with the effectiveness of the products they promote. This alignment of personal attractiveness with product credibility is a vital factor in the influencer marketing landscape, as it can sway consumer perceptions and influence purchasing decisions.

The result has the same stand with the study of Adzharuddin and Salvation (2020) which noted that customers tend to place a higher degree of trust in the claims of attractive influencers who promote skincare products, often resulting in increased purchase intent. The attractiveness of these influencers can create a strong positive association between their personal appeal and the efficacy of the skincare products they endorse. This heightened trust can be a pivotal factor in motivating consumers to make purchases, as they are more likely to believe that the product will yield similar positive results as seen on the influencer. The influencer's attractiveness, therefore, becomes a potent marketing asset, impacting consumer decision-making and driving product sales within the skincare industry.

Interactivity and customer trust. The result showed that there is a significant association between interactivity and customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products. This indicates that the interactivity of TikTok influencers is crucial in building trust among customers. When influencers actively engage with their audience, responding to comments, questions, and messages, it fosters a sense of connection and reliability. This personalized interaction demonstrates that the influencer values their followers' opinions and concerns, further enhancing the perceived trustworthiness of both the influencers and the products they promote. The ability to establish a genuine rapport with viewers through interactivity can significantly influence customer trust and loyalty in the world of influencer marketing.

The result is supported by study of Jun and Yi (2020) which discussed that influencer's interactivity with the customers can lead to trust. Building emotional attachment and creating a relationship from the customer can directly affect the trust of customers with the influencer and the brands they promote.

Creativity and customer trust. The result showed that there is a significant association between creativity and customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products. This implies that the creativity or unique ideas and exceptional visual content created by a TikTok influencer who promotes skincare products play a pivotal role in building customer trust. When influencers consistently provide innovative, engaging, and visually appealing content, it not only captures the audience's attention but also fosters a sense of expertise and authenticity. Customers tend to trust influencers who showcase their knowledge and dedication through their content, and this trust can extend to the skincare products they endorse. The influencer's ability to deliver both creative and informative content contributes to a strong foundation of trust, making viewers more likely to consider and trust the products they recommend.

The result is aligned with the study of Chu et al. (2022) which noted that highlighting the creative process of TikTok influencers is paramount in understanding its constructive influence on authenticity and trust within the realm of marketing. The inventive content produced by these influencers not only captures the audience's attention but also fosters an environment of genuineness. Through their innovative and relatable content, TikTok influencers establish a deeper connection with their followers, making them more authentic figures in the eyes of their audience. This authenticity, in turn, serves as a cornerstone for building trust among customers, as they perceive the influencer as a credible source and are more inclined to engage with and trust the products or services they promote. In essence, the creativity exhibited by TikTok influencers is a powerful catalyst for reinforcing authenticity and cultivating trust, making it a pivotal element in modern marketing strategies.

Confidence and customer trust. The result showed that there is a significant association between confidence and customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products. This means that TikTok influencers who promote skincare products often exude self-assuredness, which enhances their reliability and credibility in the eyes of their audience. Viewers tend to trust influencers who project confidence in their content, as it conveys a strong belief in the efficacy of the products they endorse. This self-assuredness can make the influencer appear more trustworthy, further strengthening the perceived credibility of the skincare products they recommend. Customers are more likely to have confidence in and be swayed by influencers who come across as knowledgeable, assured, and genuine in their content.

**Relationship between Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Customer Trust**

The association between the quality of electronic word-of-mouth and the level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna is shown in Table 7.

Table 7. *Association of electronic word-of-mouth and customer trust*

| Variable | P-Value | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|
| Electronic Word-of-Mouth and Customer Trust | 0.000 | Significant |

*a = significance level of 0.05*

The result revealed that electronic word-of-mouth has a significant association with customer trust. This means that clear, positive reviews, comments, and feedback from existing customers regarding skincare products play a significant role in building customer trust. When potential buyers see a wealth of favorable testimonials and comments from those who have already used the products, it instills confidence and reassurance. The transparency and positivity of these reviews and feedback serve as powerful endorsements, influencing prospective customers' perceptions and their decision to trust and purchase the skincare products.

The result of the study is aligned with the study of Indrawati et al. (2023) which noted that electronic word-of-mouth is perceived as more influential due to its independence to the company. In addition, consumer review represents personal experience of which it is highly associated with the trust of the customer, thinking that it lowers the purchasing decision risk on the product. Moreover, the result is similar with the study of Dwidienawati et al. (2020), stating that electronic word-of-mouth becomes a prominent source of information and holds greater power on the trust of customer than traditional word-of-mouth.

## Conclusions

The level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness as perceived by young adults in Biñan City, Laguna toward skincare products was interpreted as very attractive. This demonstrates that TikTok influencers have very attractive facial features, have very clear skin, and are very eye-pleasing. This implies that the facial features and skin of TikTok influencers who promote skin care are very noticeably scrutinized by the viewers. In terms of interactivity, it was interpreted as very interactive. This demonstrates that TikTok influencers are very effective and efficient in communicating. They feel that the influencers of skincare products on TikTok would rely on them if they are willing to know more about the products. In terms of creativity, it was interpreted as very creative. This demonstrates that TikTok influencers have very unique or witty ideas on its content. They can see that the influencers of skincare products have a great visual content like background or lighting. In terms of confidence, it was interpreted as very confident. This shows that TikTok influencers are very sure of themselves which makes them very reliable and credible on their content.

For the electronic word-of-mouth, the young adults in Biñan City, Laguna perceived its quality to be excellent. This demonstrates that the brands of the skincare products have received excellent online ratings, comments, and user feedback. This suggests that online recommendations for skincare products are not only honest but also frequently filled with glowing testimonials.

For the level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna towards skincare products, it was interpreted as very high. This indicates that they are extremely confident and they will share their favorable impressions urging their friends and family to purchase the item.

For the relationship between the level of TikTok influencer's attributes in terms of attractiveness, interactivity, creativity, and confidence, and the level of customer trust of young adults in Biñan City, Laguna, the result revealed a significant association. This implies that all attributes have an important role affecting customer trust. Thus, marketers may take into consideration the attributes of the TikTok influencers to make their product more reliable to the customers.

For the relationship between the quality of electronic word-of-mouth and the level of customer trust, the outcome showed a significant association. This indicates that online feedback, reviews, and comments have a significant role in affecting the trust of the customers towards the use of skincare products. Therefore, marketers may consider managing the quality of electronic word-of-mouth to increase the number of users of the product.

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