

# Micro Influencer Strategy in the Men's Cosmetics Industry on Thailand's Facebook and Brand Fit an Effect on Intention to Buy

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## Abstract

This research demonstrates the empirical impact of micro influencer strategy in the men's cosmetics industry on Thailand's facebook. It showed the effect of micro influencer's features to intention on buy via the mediator variable that was brand congruency and trust. The micro influencer's features were tested, including Attractiveness, Expertise and Popularity. The research used the structural equation model on AMOS. The results found, expertise must be consistent with brand characteristics in order to generated trust and effected to intention to buy. On the other hand, popularity could be statistically significant for trust and generated to intention to buy.

**Keywords:** Micro Influencer, Brand Fit, Intention To Buy, Men's Cosmetics

## Introduction

Today, Micro Influencers is the most popular marketing strategies that widely used in many industries in Thailand due to It is a very powerful tool, building Brand image and lower cost than using a celebrity. (Kaya, Mulcahya and Parkinsonb, 2020) The influential micro has a large number of followers, helping build word of mouth on social media and offline as well they can communicate product information to their fan club easily. (Dhanesh and Duthler, 2019) We can match the target group with the personality of micro-influencers which various and hit to the points.

Men's cosmetics market is an interested market (Men's cosmetics market means cosmetic products intended men, skincare products, such as makeup, hair care products, body care products, perfumes and sunscreen products) because it has seen significant growth. The survey shows a steady growth of the trend in many Asian countries as South Korea, China, Taiwan and Thailand. (Positioningmag.com, 2020) The preliminary information shows the importance of this market, keep growing trend because nowadays men's lifestyle takes care of their appearance and more focus on products which enhance their image, many big name companies are trying to follow this culture by launch men product categories. (SMEthailandclub.com, 2019)

The interesting of Market and micro-influencers via social media strategies that many products are using make study want to research what factors that affect the purchasing behavior of the customer. Furthermore, the research aims to creating opportunities for small and medium enterprise to know what micro-influencers personality should use to with their business.

## Research Objective

To study how a micro-influencer has a characteristic that should use on a product or brand leading customers to purchase intent.

## Literature Review

**Micro Influencers:** The study found several definitions of micro Influencers as follows: Senft (2008) A person who is highly involved and popular on video, blog, sites and social media. Marwick and Boyd (2011) People who use social media to develop and maintain their audience. Mediakix (2016) gives a meaning concern with the number of followers as the Instagram owner, Producer of content on YouTube, bloggers, and other social media with less than 100,000 followers.

Vankiani and Chheda (2020) studied influencers on Instagram and give meaning to an expert or a specialist who publishes their work or a person who is talented and shows on social media with 10,000 followers.

Based on the definition that has been studied, this research set to define micro influencers from the number of followers not more than 100,000.

**Micro Influencer Attributes:** Several studies have been found that attempt to explain the impact of micro influencer attributes from three Exogenous Variables as Attractiveness, Expertise, and Popularity. Most study partially adjusted from research about Celebrity Endorsement. (Wen, 2019; Spry, Pappu and Cornwell, 2019; Ha and Lam, 2017)

**Trust** have shown that trust is a mediator variable. Trust influences the intention to buy on the research which involves to intention to buy. This is a variable that has been extensively studied and has confirmed, for example, Abreu's (2019) studied purchasing intention in the fashion industry using trust transmit or Bruns (2018) studied the customer's purchasing intent, transmitting on the perceived authenticity of the brand, the result shows the effect trust on the intention to buy. From the research result, trust is a variable that affects to the intention to buy.

**Brand fit or Brand Congruency:** Micro influencer strategy has developed from a celebrity endorsement strategy, as it can be seen from the variables used in Suki's work (2014) studied about their use. Micro influencer who impact Muslim purchasing intention. The researchers have found brand consistency variables was influence the intention to buy same as in Zafar and Rafique (2012) it relates to the consumer perspective and this variable should be studied.

**Intention to buy or Purchasing Intention:** It is a final marketing achievement from using strategy. Purchase intent is an Endogenous variable that is often measured study's result, especially if it is a marketing perspective, such as Zeng (2009) or Suki (2014) It's lot of widely used because it is the ultimate result for marketers. it can lead to the ultimate customer buying behavior.

## Research Methodology

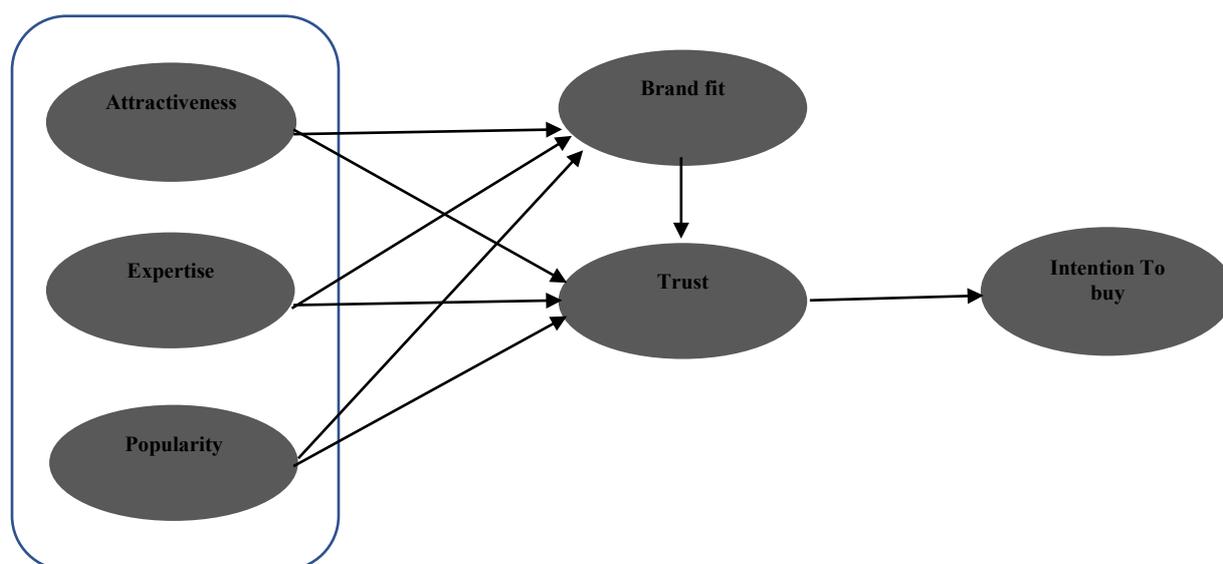
This research is quantitative research. Data were analyzed by Structural Equation Model (SEM) on SPSS and AMOS programs, the research divide into 2 parts as descriptive statistic which is to distribute information of structural and characteristics of the sample. Part 2 will be an impact test using a structural equation or SEM to determine the effect of the exogenous variables which are characteristics variables of micro influencers. Exogenous variables effect

to an endogenous variable via mediator variable as brand fit and trust. Intention to buy is an endogenous variable in this research. The methodology starts with the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) follows by confirming the composition. (confirmatory factor analysis: CFA) The questionnaire was used in this study, divided into 2 parts. The first part was the general information of the respondents and the second part was the Linkert Scale 5 levels consisting of 20 questions. The questionnaire was inspected the index of item by 3 experts. (Index of Item - Objective Congruence: IOC) Attractiveness consists of 4 questions, expertise 3 questions, popularity 3 questions, brand fit 3 questions, trust 3 questions, and intention to buy 4 questions, in total 20 questions.

### Sample Size and Sampling

This study determines the sample size by following the structural equation model according to the guidelines of Hair, J. et al (2010). The sample size must not be less than 100 samples. The proportion of sample size must be 10-20 samples per parameter in The questionnaire. This study used 20 samples per parameter. In total sample size was 400 samples. Selecting data collected from the male social media users of Facebook as well, select only those who have to answer the number of followers of the micro-influencer which are not more than 100,000. Moreover, Sampling was select only those who have ever bought or are thinking to buy men's cosmetic by watching pictures, videos, reviews, and other from micro-influencers whom they are following. Sampling used purposive sampling.

### Conceptual Framework



### Research Results

The structural information and characteristics of the sample can be summarized in Table 1.

[4]

**Table 1** Descriptive Statistic of the sample. (%)

<b>Sexuality</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Still male but want to be Tran female</b>	<b>Tran female</b>	<b>Gay</b>	<b>Queer</b>	<b>Not wish to answer</b>	<b>other</b>
	42.7	0.5	0	53.2	1.6	1.0	1.0
<b>Age (Year)</b>	16-18	19-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	Over 40	
	1.6	41.1	33.7	14.7	6.3	2.6	
<b>Income (Baht)</b>	under 15,000	15,001-25,000	25,001-35,000	35,001-45,000	45,001-55,000	55,001-65,000	Over 65,000
	18.9	32.1	26.3	6.3	3.2	3.7	9.5
<b>Occupation</b>	student	Company employee	Flight attendant / Pilot	Government officer	state enterprise employee	Business Owner	Self Employed
	14.2	42.1	0.5	9.5	5.3	6.3	2.6
	<b>Farmer</b>	<b>Freelance</b>	<b>Other</b>				
	0.6	8.9	10				
<b>Education</b>	Under High School	Vocational Certificate	High Vocational Certificate	Bachelor Degree	Master Degree	Doctor Degree	
	2.1	0.5	1.6	80	15.3	0.5	

Table 1 showed the general characteristics of the respondents. Due to the study was on the men's cosmetics market thus no female gender appears on this table. In the questionnaire, If the answer was female, it was not the sample of this research. According to gender was more complex to specify by gender as a result, this research divided by sexuality. (Thai National Health Commission, 2019) for understand sample insights. Career question section, self-employed includes mc, pretty boy, artists, celebrities and models. Sample conditions was following influencers who have not more than 100,000 followers. If respondents were qualified, it will be eliminated from the data. The respondents followed influencers who have an average number of followers 24,884. The respondents followed an average a number of influencers 14.25% and 68.9% of respondents had bought products because of influencers and were thinking to buy 31.1%.

### Structural Equation Model Result

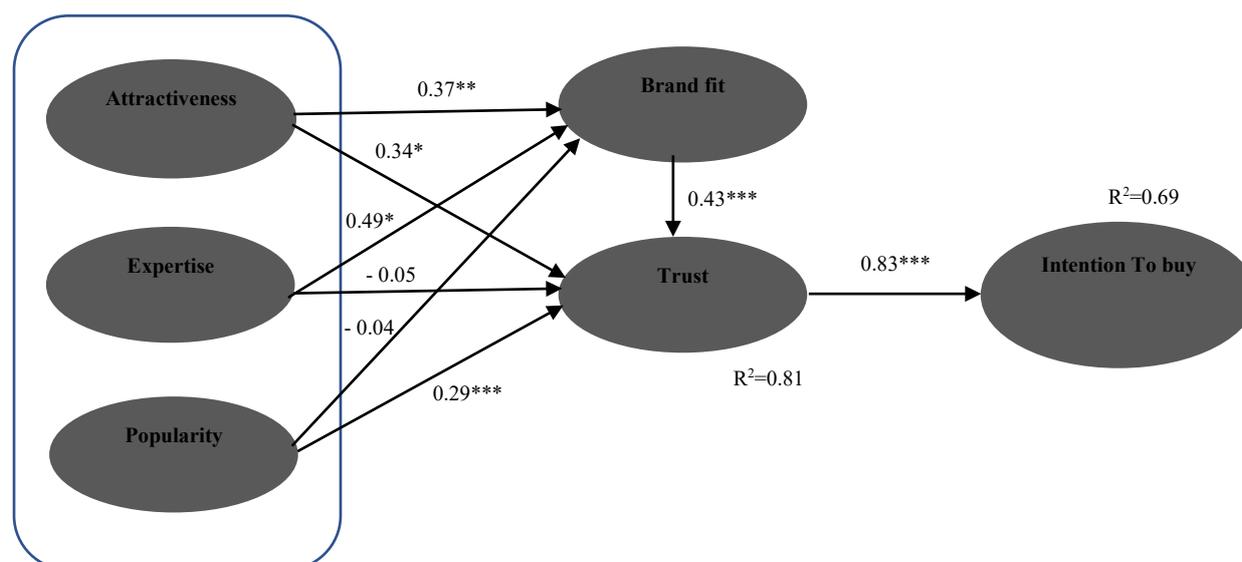
The reliability test and model fit test have shown in table 2. The data of 400 respondents tested the composition analysis. The results are shown in the following table.

**Table 2** Reliability test and model fit test result.

Statistics	Condition	Result	Reference
Cronbach's alpha	> 0.7	0.952	Hair et al (2010)
Factor loading all item	> 0.6	> 0.6 all item	Hair et al (2010)
Chi-square/Degrees Freedom	< 5.0	1.716	Loo and Thorpe (2000)
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	> 0.9	0.910	Hu and Bentler (1999)
Normalised Fit Index (NFI)	≥ 0.9	0.922	Hair et al (2010)
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	≥ 0.9	0.902	Hair et al (2010)
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	≥ 0.9	0.985	Hair et al (2010)
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	≥ 0.9	0.981	Hair et al (2010)
Comparative fit Index (CFI)	≥ 0.9	0.985	Hair et al (2010)
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	< 0.08	0.034	Hair et al (2010)

Table 2 was showing the results of the composition analysis test, the values of the test result were following the analytical principles of the structural equation analysis model. The model was suitable. Path Analysis test would display the effect of each variable as the following picture.

### Micro Influencer



### Hypothesis test

**H<sub>1</sub>** - Attractiveness of micro-influencers had a positive effect on Brand fit at 0.01% significance level. H1 was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.37.

**H<sub>2</sub>** - Attractiveness of micro-influencers had a statistically positive effect on Trust at 0.05% significance level. H2 was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.34.

**H<sub>3</sub>** - Attractiveness of micro-influencers had a statistically positive effect on Intention to buy at 0.001% significance level via Trust. H3 was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.28.

**H<sub>4</sub>** - Attractiveness of micro-influencers had a statistically positive effect on Intention to buy at 0.001% significance level via Brand fit to Trust. H4 was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.132.

**H<sub>5</sub>** - Expertise of micro-influencers had a statistically positive effect on Brand fit at 0.05% significance level. H<sub>5</sub> was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.49.

**H<sub>6</sub>** - Expertise of micro-influencers did not affect on Trust at 0.05% significance level. H<sub>6</sub> was rejected.

**H<sub>7</sub>** - Expertise of micro-influencers did not affect on Intention to buy via trust. H<sub>7</sub> was rejected.

**H<sub>8</sub>** - Expertise of micro-influencers had a positive effect on Intention to buy at 0.05% significance level via Brand fit to Trust. H<sub>8</sub> was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.174.

**H<sub>9</sub>** - Popularity of micro-influencers did not affect on Brand fit. H<sub>9</sub> was rejected.

**H<sub>10</sub>** - Popularity of micro-influencers had a positive effect on Trust at 0.001% significance level. H<sub>10</sub> was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.29.

**H<sub>11</sub>** - Popularity had a positive effect on Intention to buy at 0.001% significance level via Trust. H<sub>11</sub> was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.24.

**H<sub>12</sub>** - Popularity had not an effect on Intention to buy via Brand fit to Trust. H<sub>12</sub> was not significant.

**H<sub>13</sub>** - Brand fit had a positive effect on Intention to buy at 0.001% significance level via Trust. H<sub>13</sub> was significant. The test results showed an effect level 0.36.

The results in SEM analysis demonstrated R<sup>2</sup> was 0.69. it indicated that the model was able to explain the effects of independent variables as Attractiveness, Expertise. And Popularity of micro influencers towards Intention to buy 69% via Mediators as Brand fit and Trust.

## **Discussions and Recommendation**

The results of the study could summarize and create an understanding of the characteristics of micro-influencers as follows: Firstly, the descriptive statistics analysis found that most buyers in the Thailand men cosmetics market are gay (53.2%) and following by males (42.7%). According to the data, Nowadays, it is necessary for men to use cosmetics because they want to have a better looking. Most users are between 19-25 years old, followed by 26-30 years. The education of respondents was a bachelor's degree as well income was between the range 15,001-35,000 baht, which these characteristics matched generation y and z segments in the market. The data represent the self-care of men is a new generation's trend.

Secondly, the attractiveness of micro-influencers should be consistent of the brand and product image which will build trust in their following fan and related to intention to buy. Attractiveness of micro-influencers was the appearance, personality, classy, and sexy. The research results were consistent with Zafar and Rafique (2012), which studied the attractive of celebrities. The study could demonstrate that very attractive micro-influencer could rise product sell too even if it may not consistent with to brand image.

Thirdly, micro-influencer expertise must be consistent with the brand image to lead to customer trust and intention to buy in the same as Dwivedi and Johnson's work (2013) who studied celebrity and artist. Expertise's characteristics include career and experience, educational and knowledge background.

lastly, in fact popularity could lead to the trust of the brand. Even, it was consistent with the brand image and related to the intention to buy. As the study of Sola (2012), the popularity of star artists, the famous people had also found an effect on the intention to buy. The characteristics of the popular micro-influencers compounded follower amount, leadership, and success.

Limitations in the study, the researcher recommended studying comparing each social media due to it has different features and ways of use. Besides, it should study other markets that might find different micro-influencers factors.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the research result was found that micro-influencer strategy in the men's cosmetics market needs to be considered with three factors as Attractiveness, Expertise, and Popularity. attractiveness and expertise must consistent with the branding of the product Therefore, it can affect buying behavior. In terms of popularity, it is a factor that creates trust and then leads the customer to buy cosmetic products. Therefore, in business use, it is considered to be divided into two parts: first, the attractiveness and expertise of micro-influencer must be considered to fit with brand image. Second, there must be a large number of followers to convince the customer and ultimately lead to a purchase.

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