

# **Credibility of Tiktok Fashion Influencers on Millennials' Purchase Intention in Malaysia**

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In this digital era, social media applications have greatly revamped the way people interact, engage, and communicate with each other. Spending on influencer marketing has increased significantly as marketers made it one of the vital marketing strategies for businesses. Recently, TikTok has grown drastically worldwide, and its active users aged below 30 years old are increasing in Malaysia. This has allowed the marketers to advertise their brands to the millennials on TikTok by partnering with credible influencers to reach out to the right audience, to influence consumer purchases, to develop positive brand connections, and to generate a satisfying return on investment. However, marketers are struggled with choosing the right influencers for brand collaborations in Malaysia. This is because influencers may conduct fraudulent acts that jeopardize their credibility, such as they might inflate the number of followers artificially to impress the marketers, engage and interact with their followers poorly, expose to scandals or lawsuit cases, advertise the products or brands unprofessionally, create video content that is too flawless or refined making it less believable to their audience. Hence, this study provides insights to marketers by examining the key credibility factors of TikTok fashion influencers that could positively affect millennials' purchase intention in Malaysia, and it is theorized based on trustworthiness, expertise, physical attractiveness, and similarity. Therefore, the researcher has conducted quantitative research among millennials who use TikTok and live in Klang Valley, Malaysia. An online self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the respondents, and a total of 389 valid data were collected. Based on the analysis outcomes, all hypotheses were found to be supported except for source expertise. As a result, this study suggests that credibility factors of TikTok fashion influencers, including perceived trustworthiness, physical attractiveness and similarity have a positive relationship on purchase intention of millennials in Malaysia. After all, this research provides implications to the marketers in Malaysia with regard to the perceived credibility factors of fashion influencers when engaging with their millennials users on TikTok and the impact on buying intention of the fashion products recommended by these influencers. Furthermore, this research adds to the current literature on millennials' purchase intention towards TikTok fashion influencers' recommended products, so advancing knowledge in the area of credibility of influencers. This study focuses on TikTok fashion influencers, which is an unexplored field in Malaysia as there are no other similar investigations applied to this platform. Remarkably, marketers should select TikTok fashion influencers based on their specialization and authenticity of reviews on endorsed products or services. Furthermore, marketers may develop a consistent style or character of influencers for their audience to follow, encourage active engagement with the followers by creating lifestyle videos, hosting fashion events,

broadcasting live streams and responding to their audience's comments sincerely. Lastly, practitioners should establish win-win partnerships with TikTok influencers since they can provide value to each audience, boost brand recognition and awareness, bring authentic content to the existing and new followers, and create new leads for business sales funnels in Malaysia.

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