RJCM Vol. 7, No. 3, September-December 2026

e-ISSN 2821-9074
Print-ISSN 2730-2601
RICE Journal of Creative Entrepreneurship and Management, Vol. 7, No.3, pp. 16-30, September-December 2026
© 2026 Rajamangala University of Technology Rattanakosin, Thailand
doi:
Received 14.07.26 / Revised 01.10.26/ Accepted 07.10.26

Attitudes Toward Social Media Influencers and Coffee Shop Patronage among Generation Z in Bangkok: The Mediating Role of Followers' Loyalty

Ming Li[1*]

[1]International College, Rajapark Institute, Bangkok, Thailand
*Corresponding Author
E-mail: ming.li@rajapark.ac.th

Abstract

Guided by the Source Credibility Model, this study examined the relationships among attitudes toward social media influencers, followers' loyalty, and coffee shop patronage decisions among Generation Z consumers in Bangkok, with followers' loyalty tested as a mediator. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted using purposive sampling, yielding 400 valid responses. The instrument contained 17 five-point Likert-scale items. Data were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis, reliability testing, Pearson correlation, and mediation analysis with 5,000 bootstrap samples. The results showed that attitudes toward social media influencers positively predicted followers' loyalty and coffee shop patronage decisions. Followers' loyalty also positively predicted patronage decisions after attitudes were controlled, and the bootstrap indirect effect was significant, providing statistical evidence of partial mediation. The direct-effects model explained 10.3% of the variance in patronage decisions, indicating statistically significant but modest explanatory power. The findings suggest that influencer-related attitudes and loyalty support coffee shop patronage, but practical and experiential factors remain important in consumer decision-making. The study extends source-credibility research by showing that favorable influencer evaluations are associated with patronage decisions both directly and indirectly through followers' loyalty in a coffee-shop context.

Keywords: *social media influencers; followers' loyalty; patronage decisions; Generation Z; coffee shops*

1. Introduction

Thailand's coffee shop environment is increasingly competitive, with consumers choosing among independent cafés, specialty shops, and chains. Coffee shop patronage involves online information as well as beverage quality, price, accessibility, atmosphere, service, and previous experience. Thai specialty-café research links sensory, emotional, and cognitive experiences with satisfaction, recommendation, and repeat-purchase intentions (Meeprom & Kokkhangplu, 2025). Online recommendations must therefore be understood within a broader service context.

Social media influencers are recurring sources of product and lifestyle information.

The Source Credibility Model provides the principal theoretical basis for this study, emphasizing expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness as source characteristics that shape persuasive responses (Ohanian, 1990). In influencer marketing, these source evaluations operate alongside content value, audience characteristics, platform conditions, and influencer–product fit (Pan et al., 2025). Identification and perceived fit help explain why credible influencers are seen as relatable and relevant (Schouten et al., 2020; Belanche et al., 2021). These concepts are therefore treated as supporting mechanisms within a source-credibility perspective.

Generation Z is commonly defined as the cohort born between 1995 and 2010 (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). In this study, Generation Z refers to adults aged 18 to 29. Generation Z consumers use social media for information search, entertainment, identity expression, and recommendations. In food-service settings, influencer credibility, expertise, and attractiveness are associated with behavioral intentions through emotional and self-related processes (Ghosh et al., 2024). Favorable attitudes toward social media influencers may thus support enduring loyalty, which may in turn increase receptiveness to recommendations. Nevertheless, following an influencer does not remove practical constraints affecting coffee shop choices.

Relatively limited evidence addresses how attitudes toward social media influencers and established follower loyalty jointly relate to coffee shop patronage decisions among Generation Z consumers in Bangkok. Guided by the Source Credibility Model, this study treats social media usage behavior as descriptive context and tests a three-construct model in which attitudes predict loyalty and patronage decisions, while loyalty predicts patronage decisions and operates as a mediator.

1.1 Research Objectives

1. To examine the social media usage behavior of adult Generation Z consumers in Bangkok.
2. To assess their attitudes toward social media influencers, followers' loyalty, and coffee shop patronage decisions.
3. To examine whether attitudes toward social media influencers predict followers' loyalty and coffee shop patronage decisions, and whether followers' loyalty predicts coffee shop patronage decisions.
4. To examine the indirect effect of attitudes toward social media influencers on coffee shop patronage decisions through followers' loyalty.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Source Credibility Model

The Source Credibility Model provides the central theoretical foundation for this study. It explains persuasive responses in terms of how audiences evaluate the communicator, with expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness representing key dimensions of source credibility (Ohanian, 1990). In social media influencer marketing, these source evaluations remain important because followers assess both the dependability of the influencer and the value of the information being communicated. Recent research likewise identifies credibility, information value, and source-related characteristics as important determinants of consumer responses to influencer content (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Pan et al., 2025).

2.2 Social Media Usage Behavior

Social media platforms enable content creation, exchange, interaction, information search, and consumption-related evaluation (Aichner et al., 2021). Platform use varies across age groups, purposes, and platform affordances. Digital reports indicate extensive

social media use in Thailand, although advertising audience identities should not be interpreted as a representative count of unique individuals (DataReportal, 2025). In this study, platform, daily duration, influencer type, following reason, and following duration describe the sample and do not form a continuous predictor.

2.3 Attitudes Toward Social Media Influencers

Attitudes toward social media influencers represent consumers' favorable or unfavorable evaluations of influencer characteristics and content. The construct is operationalized through personality, content quality, presentation style, attractiveness, usefulness, and credibility. From the Source Credibility Model, source evaluations are shaped particularly by perceptions of expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness (Ohanian, 1990). Information value and credibility are important mechanisms in influencer marketing (Pan et al., 2025). Message value and influencer credibility can also strengthen consumers' trust in influencer-generated branded content, indicating that favorable attitudes are partly grounded in assessments of both information quality and source dependability (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Identification and perceived similarity can strengthen favorable evaluations (Schouten et al., 2020), while influencer–consumer–product congruence makes recommendations more relevant (Belanche et al., 2021). Favorable evaluations should consequently support continued relational commitment and receptiveness to recommendations.

2.4 Followers' Loyalty Toward Influencers

Followers' loyalty refers to an enduring commitment to continue following, support, recommend, and advocate for particular influencers despite alternative content creators. Its indicators include first recall, resistance to switching, recommendation, advocacy, favorable evaluation, and identity attachment. Influencer credibility and trust are associated with loyalty, purchase intention, and recommendation (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). The joint roles of credibility and parasocial interaction are particularly relevant because both source evaluation and perceived relational closeness have been associated with followers' purchase intentions (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Repeated exposure and parasocial relationships may further strengthen receptiveness to influencer advice (Masuda et al., 2022; Conde & Casais, 2023).

2.5 Coffee Shop Patronage Decisions

Coffee shop patronage decisions refer to patronage-related decisions and behavioral intentions, including visiting influencer-reviewed shops, expecting satisfaction, recommending the shops, revisiting after satisfactory experiences, and encouraging others. Coffee store experience also depends on atmosphere, service, beverage quality, price, design, and previous visits (Rancati et al., 2024; Li et al., 2022). Influencer-related variables are therefore expected to be supportive rather than dominant predictors.

2.6 Hypothesis Development

Attitudes toward social media influencers reflect followers' evaluations of influencers' content quality, usefulness, credibility, attractiveness, presentation style, and personality. Favorable evaluations provide a cognitive and affective basis for sustained follower–influencer relationships. Information value, source credibility, and influencer characteristics are central to consumers' responses to influencer communication (Pan et al., 2025). Identification and credibility also make influencers appear relatable and dependable (Schouten et al., 2020), while influencer–consumer–product congruence increases the relevance of their recommendations (Belanche et al., 2021). Repeated exposure to credible and personally relevant content may further generate familiarity and parasocial closeness (Masuda et al., 2022; Conde & Casais, 2023). Because credibility and trust are also associated with loyalty-related responses, positively evaluated influencers should receive stronger continued

support, recommendation, and advocacy from their followers (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). Accordingly:

H1: Favorable attitudes toward social media influencers positively predict followers' loyalty toward those influencers.

Followers' loyalty represents a durable commitment expressed through continued following, resistance to alternative influencers, recommendation, advocacy, and identity attachment. Such loyalty may increase acceptance of consumption recommendations by reducing source-related uncertainty and making the information more personally relevant. Influencer credibility and trust have been associated with loyalty, purchase intention, and recommendation behavior (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). Parasocial relationships similarly increase audiences' receptiveness to influencer recommendations (Conde & Casais, 2023) and help translate influencer attributes into purchase intentions (Masuda et al., 2022). Related evidence shows that credibility and parasocial interaction contribute to consumer purchase intentions (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020), while influencer characteristics affect Generation Z consumers' restaurant-selection intentions (Ghosh et al., 2024). In coffee-shop settings, however, patronage also depends on beverage quality, price, service, atmosphere, prior experience, and the broader customer experience (Rancati et al., 2024; Meeprom & Kokkhangplu, 2025). Loyalty is therefore expected to support, rather than solely determine, coffee-shop patronage. Accordingly:

H2: Followers' loyalty toward social media influencers positively predicts coffee shop patronage decisions.

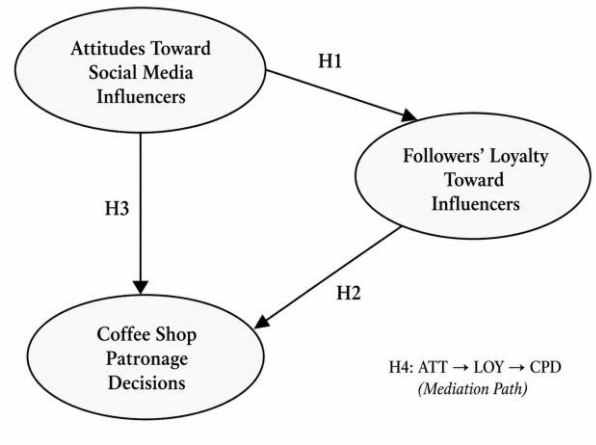
Favorable attitudes toward influencers may also affect coffee-shop patronage directly because influencer-generated content provides visual, evaluative, and experiential information before a visit. Information value and source credibility are important mechanisms through which influencer communication shapes consumer responses (Pan et al., 2025). Informative and credible content strengthens trust and purchase-related responses even before enduring loyalty has developed (Lou & Yuan, 2019). These effects are reinforced by identification, source credibility, product–endorser fit, and influencer–consumer–product congruence (Schouten et al., 2020; Belanche et al., 2021). Such information is particularly relevant to experiential services because consumers cannot fully evaluate beverage quality, service, or atmosphere before visiting. Influencer attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness have also been associated with Generation Z consumers' restaurant-selection intentions (Ghosh et al., 2024), while coffee-shop evaluations depend on expected quality, self-congruity, environmental cues, and anticipated experience (Li et al., 2022; Rancati et al., 2024). Favorably evaluated influencers may therefore place reviewed coffee shops within consumers' consideration sets. Accordingly:

H3: Favorable attitudes toward social media influencers positively predict coffee shop patronage decisions.

Taken together, these relationships extend the Source Credibility Model from source evaluation to both an informational pathway and a relational pathway. Through the informational pathway, favorable evaluations of credibility, usefulness, content quality, and influencer–product fit increase the perceived value and trustworthiness of coffee-shop recommendations (Pan et al., 2025; Schouten et al., 2020; Belanche et al., 2021). Through the relational pathway, repeated positive exposure may generate familiarity, parasocial closeness, and sustained engagement (Masuda et al., 2022), increasing followers' willingness to adopt influencer recommendations (Conde & Casais, 2023). Credibility and trust may consequently strengthen influencer loyalty, which then contributes to purchase and recommendation responses (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). Thus, influencer loyalty is expected to partially mediate the relationship between attitudes toward influencers and coffee shop patronage decisions.

H4: Followers' loyalty toward social media influencers mediates the relationship between attitudes toward social media influencers and coffee shop patronage decisions. Figure 1 summarizes the direct and indirect relationships tested in the study.

Figure 1 Proposed Research Model



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was used. The questionnaire consisted of five parts. Parts 1 and 2 measured demographic and social media characteristics using categorical items. Parts 3 to 5 measured attitudes, followers' loyalty, and patronage decisions using five-point Likert items, where 1 = lowest and 5 = highest. Mean scores were interpreted as 4.21–5.00 = Highest, 3.41–4.20 = High, 2.61–3.40 = Moderate, 1.81–2.60 = Low, and 1.00–1.80 = Lowest.

Table 1 summarizes the structure of the questionnaire, the response format used in each part, and the number of items allocated to each area of measurement.

Table 1 Questionnaire Structure Source: Developed by the author based on the research instrument (2025).

Part	Content	Format	Items
1	Demographic characteristics	Categorical	6
2	Social media usage behavior	Categorical	5
3	Attitudes toward social media influencers	Five-point Likert	6
4	Followers' loyalty	Five-point Likert	6
5	Coffee shop patronage decisions	Five-point Likert	5

As indicated in Table 2, the attitude items represented evaluations of influencer-related attributes, the loyalty items captured enduring relational responses toward influencers, and the patronage-decision items reflected visit, revisit, and recommendation-related intentions. The three constructs were therefore differentiated according to their theoretical focus rather than being treated as interchangeable forms of favorable consumer response.

Table 2 Conceptual Basis and Measurement Development Source: Developed by the author based on Pan et al. (2025), Schouten et al. (2020), Belanche et al. (2021), Alcántara-Pilar et al. (2024), Conde and Casais (2023), Meeprom and Kokkhangplu (2025), and Rancati et al. (2024).

Construct	Items	Conceptual basis	Measurement focus
Attitudes toward social media influencers	6	Pan et al. (2025); Schouten et al. (2020); Belanche et al. (2021)	Personality, content quality, presentation, attractiveness, usefulness, credibility
Followers' loyalty	6	Alcántara-Pilar et al. (2024); Conde and Casais (2023)	Recall, recommendation, advocacy, continued following, favorable evaluation, identity attachment
Patronage decisions	5	Meeprom and Kokkhangplu (2025); Rancati et al. (2024)	Visit, expected satisfaction, recommendation, revisit, encouraging others

Three experts assessed content validity, producing item–objective congruence values from .67 to 1.00. During expert review and pilot testing, four candidate items referring to recommendation satisfaction and coffee-shop experience were removed because they did not represent loyalty toward influencers. The final formal questionnaire contained six loyalty items. A pilot test with 30 eligible respondents required approximately eight minutes on average. Pilot Cronbach's alpha values were .824 for attitudes, .851 for loyalty, and .813 for patronage decisions; all final item corrected item–total correlations exceeded .40.

3.2 Data Collection

The study focused on Bangkok residents aged 18 to 29 who used social media, followed at least one influencer, and had visited a coffee shop. This age range represented the adult segment of Generation Z defined in this study (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). The final instrument contained 17 Likert-scale items. Applying a conservative respondent-to-item ratio of 20:1 yielded a minimum target sample of 340 respondents (Hair et al., 2019); therefore, the final sample of 400 exceeded this threshold. Purposive sampling was used because respondents had to satisfy the specific age, residence, social media, influencer-following, and coffee-shop-experience criteria, and no complete sampling frame for this population was available. Recruitment through coffee shop pages, employee groups, and online communities provided access to eligible respondents in the digital context examined. However, online purposive recruitment could disproportionately attract individuals who were more active on social media or more engaged with coffee shops, creating potential selection bias. Exclusion criteria included incomplete responses, failure to meet the age or Bangkok residence requirements, absence of influencer-following or coffee-shop experience, duplicate submissions, and inadequate response quality indicated by an implausibly short completion time or invariant responding. A total of 432 questionnaires were received. After excluding 14 incomplete responses, 7 responses that failed the age or residence criteria, 5 responses that did not meet the influencer-following or coffee-shop-experience criteria, 3 duplicate submissions, and 3 responses showing inadequate response quality, 400 valid questionnaires were retained, representing a valid-response rate of 92.59%. Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University before data collection (Certificate No. R. 643/2025, approved on October 25, 2025). All participants provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire, and no directly identifying information was collected.

3.3 Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage summarized demographic and social media characteristics. Mean and standard deviation summarized the three constructs. The final 17 Likert items were examined using principal-axis factoring with Promax rotation. An oblique rotation was selected because the three psychological constructs were theoretically expected to correlate, and principal-axis factoring was considered appropriate for identifying their

underlying common-factor structure (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Sampling adequacy, Bartlett's test, primary and cross-loadings were assessed. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's coefficient alpha and corrected item–total correlations (Cronbach, 1951). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was additionally conducted to verify the three-factor measurement structure. Model fit was evaluated using χ^2/df, CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, while composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and the Fornell-Larcker criterion were used to assess convergent and discriminant validity. Pearson correlations assessed bivariate associations. Regression-based mediation analysis was conducted using a model equivalent to PROCESS Model 4, with attitudes as X, loyalty as M, and patronage decisions as Y, 5,000 bootstrap samples, and 95% bootstrap confidence intervals (Hayes, 2022). Statistical significance was evaluated at .05. Linearity, residual normality, homoscedasticity, independence, multicollinearity, standardized residuals, and influential observations were examined.

4. Results

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

The final sample consisted entirely of adults aged 18 to 29. Table 3 presents the respondents' gender, age, education, occupation, monthly income, and frequency of coffee-shop visits. Each demographic block included all 400 respondents and totaled 100.00%.

Table 3 Demographic Characteristics Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	230	57.50
	Male	158	39.50
	Other / prefer not to say	12	3.00
Age	18–20	96	24.00
	21–23	143	35.75
	24–26	113	28.25
	27–29	48	12.00
Education	Upper secondary/vocational	65	16.25
	Diploma	36	9.00
	Bachelor's degree	271	67.75
	Postgraduate degree	28	7.00
Occupation	Student	155	38.75
	Private-sector employee	139	34.75
	Self-employed	45	11.25
	Government/state enterprise	39	9.75
	Other	22	5.50
Monthly income	Below THB 15,000	160	40.00
	THB 15,000–24,999	126	31.50
	THB 25,000–34,999	71	17.75
	THB 35,000 or above	43	10.75
Coffee-shop visits	Less than once a week	83	20.75
	1–2 times a week	163	40.75
	3–4 times a week	102	25.50
	5 or more times a week	52	13.00

Note. N = 400; every characteristic block totals 100.00%.

4.2 Social Media Usage Behavior

As presented in Table 4, Facebook was the most frequently used platform within the sample (42.75%), while 43.50% of respondents reported spending more than eight hours per day on social media. Food and café influencers were the most frequently followed

influencer type (33.00%), whereas identity and lifestyle were the most commonly reported reasons for following influencers (47.25%). In addition, 64.00% had followed their preferred influencers for no more than one year, suggesting that much of the reported follower–influencer engagement had developed relatively recently.

Table 4 Social Media Usage Characteristics Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Platform used most frequently	Facebook	171	42.75
	TikTok	101	25.25
	Instagram	77	19.25
	YouTube	39	9.75
	X/Other	12	3.00
Daily time spent on social media	Less than 1 hour	14	3.50
	1–3 hours	59	14.75
	4–5 hours	63	15.75
	6–8 hours	90	22.50
	More than 8 hours	174	43.50
Influencer type followed most	Food and café influencers	132	33.00
	Lifestyle influencers	104	26.00
	Travel influencers	74	18.50
	Celebrity/entertainment influencers	52	13.00
	Other	38	9.50
Main reason for following	Identity and lifestyle	189	47.25
	Food and café information	87	21.75
	Entertainment	62	15.50
	Credibility or expertise	33	8.25
	Promotions and trends	29	7.25
Duration of following	Less than 6 months	157	39.25
	6–12 months	99	24.75
	1–2 years	86	21.50
	More than 2 years	58	14.50

Note. N = 400.

4.3 Measurement Quality

Principal-axis factoring with Promax rotation supported the intended three-factor structure. KMO was .912 and Bartlett's test was significant, $\chi^2(136) = 3254.18$, $p < .001$. The three factors explained 60.71% of total variance. Primary loadings ranged from .65 to .85, and all major cross-loadings were below .30. Construct-level reliability was acceptable. As shown in Table 5, all 17 items loaded most strongly on their intended factors, with primary loadings ranging from .65 to .85. The highest loadings were observed for encouraging others to visit a coffee shop (CPD5, loading = .85), revisit intention (CPD4, loading = .83), and continued following despite alternatives (LOY4, loading = .82). Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .834 to .871, and all corrected item–total correlations exceeded .50, providing acceptable evidence of internal consistency and supporting the retention of the three constructs in the subsequent analyses.

Table 5 Exploratory Factor Analysis and Reliability Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Construct / item	Primary loading	Cronbach's α	CITC range
ATT1 Personality	.72	.846	.50–.66
ATT2 Content quality	.81		
ATT3 Presentation style	.74		
ATT4 Attractiveness	.65		
ATT5 Usefulness	.70		
ATT6 Credibility	.79		
LOY1 First recall	.69	.871	.56–.72
LOY2 Recommendation	.77		
LOY3 Advocacy	.71		
LOY4 Continued following	.82		
LOY5 Good-decision evaluation	.79		
LOY6 Identity attachment	.73		
CPD1 Initial visit decision	.80	.834	.52–.68
CPD2 Expected satisfaction	.74		
CPD3 Recommendation	.69		
CPD4 Revisit intention	.83		
CPD5 Encourage others	.85		

Note. Principal-axis factoring with Promax rotation. KMO = .912; Bartlett's $\chi^2(136) = 3254.18$, $p < .001$; explained variance = 60.71%.

A CFA was conducted to verify the three-factor measurement structure. The model showed acceptable fit, $\chi^2/df = 1.89$, CFI = .953, TLI = .944, RMSEA = .047, and SRMR = .042. Standardized loadings ranged from .65 to .85, CR values ranged from .876 to .888, and AVE values ranged from .543 to .615, supporting convergent validity. The square roots of AVE (.737–.784) exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlations (.260–.480), supporting discriminant validity.

Table 6 Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Construct Validity Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Construct	Loading Range	CR	AVE	√ AVE
Attitudes toward Social Media Influencers (ATT)	.65–.81	0.876	0.543	0.737
Followers' Loyalty (LOY)	.69–.82	0.887	0.567	0.753
Coffee Shop Patronage Decisions (CPD)	.69–.85	0.888	0.615	0.784

Note. CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted. Model fit: $\chi^2/df = 1.89$, CFI = .953, TLI = .944, RMSEA = .047, and SRMR = .042. All standardized factor loadings were significant at $p < .001$.

4.4 Attitudes Toward Social Media Influencers

As shown in Table 7, respondents' overall attitudes toward social media influencers were high (M = 4.20, SD = .32). Content quality received the highest mean score (M = 4.34), followed by credibility (M = 4.25) and personality (M = 4.23), indicating that respondents placed particular importance on the informational and source-related qualities

of influencers. Attractiveness received the lowest mean score (M = 4.10), although it remained at a high level, suggesting that visual appeal was positively evaluated but was less prominent than content quality and credibility.

Table 7 Attitudes Toward Social Media Influencers Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Aspect	M	SD	Interpretation
Personality	4.23	.44	Highest
Content quality	4.34	.47	Highest
Presentation style	4.16	.46	High
Attractiveness	4.10	.53	High
Usefulness	4.14	.43	High
Credibility	4.25	.51	Highest
Overall	4.20	.32	High

4.5 Followers' Loyalty

As presented in Table 8, followers' overall loyalty toward influencers was high (M = 4.16, SD = .59). The strongest response concerned the evaluation that following the current influencers was a good decision (M = 4.28), followed by continued following despite the emergence of newer alternatives (M = 4.23). Advocacy through sharing opinions received the lowest mean score (M = 3.93) and the largest standard deviation (SD = .97), indicating greater variation in respondents' willingness to publicly encourage others to follow the same influencers. The pattern suggests that personal continuation and favorable evaluation were stronger than outward advocacy.

Table 8 Followers' Loyalty Toward Influencers Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Item	M	SD	Interpretation
First recall of currently followed influencers	4.21	.87	Highest
Willingness to recommend the influencers	4.16	.81	High
Willingness to advocate for the influencers	3.93	.97	High
Continued following despite newer alternatives	4.23	.79	Highest
Following the influencers is a good decision	4.28	.83	Highest
Pride or identification with the influencers	4.16	.88	High
Overall	4.16	.59	High

4.6 Coffee Shop Patronage Decisions

Table 9 summarizes respondents' decisions and behavioral intentions concerning influencer-recommended coffee shops.

Table 9 Coffee Shop Patronage Decisions Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Item	M	SD	Interpretation
Decision to visit based on influencer reviews	4.58	.62	Highest
Expectation that recommended shops will be satisfactory	4.42	.49	Highest
Recommendation of reviewed coffee shops	4.33	.60	Highest
Intention to revisit after a satisfactory visit	4.52	.50	Highest
Encouraging others after a satisfactory experience	4.59	.67	Highest
Overall	4.49	.44	Highest

4.7 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the bivariate relationships among attitudes toward influencers, followers' loyalty, and coffee shop patronage decisions. The descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients are reported in Table 10.

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Attitudes toward social media influencers	4.20	.32	1		
2. Followers' loyalty	4.16	.59	.48***	1	
3. Patronage decisions	4.49	.44	.29***	.26***	1

*Note. N = 400. ***p < .001.*

4.8 Mediation Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

As summarized in Table 11, favorable attitudes significantly predicted followers' loyalty, B = .885, β = .480, p < .001, and also had a significant total association with patronage decisions, B = .399, β = .290, p < .001. After loyalty was entered into the outcome model, both attitudes and loyalty remained significant predictors. The indirect effect through loyalty was .104, and its 95% bootstrap confidence interval [.039, .181] excluded zero. Because the direct effect of attitudes remained significant after the mediator was included, the results indicated partial rather than full mediation.

Table 11 Mediation Analysis Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Effect / path	B	SE / Boot SE	β	t	p	95% CI
a: ATT → LOY	.885	.081	.480	10.92	< .001	[.726, 1.044]
c: ATT → CPD total effect	.399	.066	.290	6.05	< .001	[.269, .529]
c′: ATT → CPD direct effect	.295	.075	.215	3.96	< .001	[.149, .442]
b: LOY → CPD controlling ATT	.117	.040	.157	2.90	.004	[.038, .197]
Indirect: ATT → LOY → CPD	.104	.036	.075	—	—	[.039, .181]

Note. Regression-based mediation analysis equivalent to PROCESS Model 4 was conducted with 5,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes, 2022). Mediator model: $R^2 = .230$, $F(1, 398) = 119.16$, $p < .001$. Total-effect model: $R^2 = .084$, $F(1, 398) = 36.55$, $p < .001$. Direct-effects model: $R^2 = .103$, adjusted $R^2 = .099$, $F(2, 397) = 22.82$, $p < .001$.

The decisions concerning the four hypotheses are consolidated in Table 12 to provide a direct comparison between the proposed relationships and the empirical results.

Table 12 Hypothesis Testing Summary Source: Author's analysis of survey data (2025).

Hypothesis	Relationship	Result	Decision
H1	ATT → LOY	β = .480, p < .001	Supported
H2	LOY → CPD	β = .157, p = .004	Supported
H3	ATT → CPD	β = .215, p < .001	Supported
H4	ATT → LOY → CPD	B = .104, 95% CI [.039, .181]	Supported; partial mediation

Diagnostic tests indicated no serious violations of linearity, residual normality, homoscedasticity, independence, or multicollinearity. Skewness was −.61 for attitudes, −.46 for loyalty, and −.79 for patronage decisions; kurtosis ranged from .11 to .86. Durbin–Watson was 1.93, tolerance was .770, VIF was 1.299, Breusch–Pagan $\chi^2(2) = 3.26$, p = .196, maximum Cook's distance was .009, and the largest absolute standardized residual was 2.95.

5. Discussions

5.1 From Favorable Evaluations to Followers' Loyalty

H1 was supported: favorable attitudes toward social media influencers were positively associated with followers' loyalty, explaining 23.0% of its variance. Content quality and credibility received the highest ratings, suggesting that loyalty was closely related to perceptions of useful, dependable, and well-presented information rather than repeated exposure alone. This result accords with evidence that information value and source credibility underpin influencer-marketing effectiveness (Pan et al., 2025). Credibility, identification, and influencer–consumer–product congruence also enhance the relatability and relevance of influencer communication (Schouten et al., 2020; Belanche et al., 2021). Repeated favorable evaluations may further create familiarity and parasocial closeness, supporting sustained attachment and receptiveness (Masuda et al., 2022; Conde & Casais, 2023). The findings therefore indicate that favorable influencer evaluations among Generation Z consumers in Bangkok extend beyond immediate communication responses to continued following, recommendation, advocacy, and resistance to switching.

5.2 Followers' Loyalty as a Modest Predictor of Patronage Decisions

H2 was supported, but the relationship was modest. In the mediation outcome model, followers' loyalty remained a significant predictor of patronage decisions after attitudes were controlled ($\beta = .157$, $p = .004$). This indicates that loyalty made a statistically significant but limited independent contribution beyond favorable influencer evaluations. The result is consistent with evidence connecting influencer credibility, trust, loyalty, and purchase-related responses (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). Parasocial attachment may also make recommendations more familiar and personally relevant (Masuda et al., 2022; Conde & Casais, 2023), while credibility and parasocial interaction have been linked to purchase intentions (Sokolova & Kefi, 2020). Similar associations have been identified in Generation Z restaurant selection (Ghosh et al., 2024). Nevertheless, followers may remain loyal for entertainment, identity expression, or habitual content consumption without visiting a recommended coffee shop. Loyalty should therefore be interpreted as a supportive rather than dominant predictor of patronage.

5.3 Direct and Indirect Pathways from Attitudes to Patronage Decisions

H3 and H4 revealed complementary informational and relational pathways. Attitudes remained significantly associated with patronage decisions after loyalty was included, suggesting that credible, useful, and high-quality reviews can directly influence coffee-shop consideration. This interpretation is consistent with research on information value, source credibility, and consumer responses to influencer communication (Pan et al., 2025). Message value and credibility can strengthen trust and purchase-related responses (Lou & Yuan, 2019), while identification, product–endorser fit, and influencer–consumer–product congruence increase recommendation relevance (Schouten et al., 2020; Belanche et al., 2021).

The significant indirect effect indicates an additional relational pathway: favorable attitudes were associated with stronger loyalty, which was subsequently associated with patronage decisions. Repeated positive evaluations may develop into parasocial closeness and sustained engagement (Masuda et al., 2022), while credibility and trust may strengthen loyalty and subsequent behavioral responses (Alcántara-Pilar et al., 2024). Because both direct and indirect effects remained significant, loyalty functioned as a partial mediator. Thus, individual reviews may influence patronage without strong prior loyalty, while accumulated loyalty provides an additional basis for recommendation acceptance. However, because the data were cross-sectional, the indirect effect represents statistical rather than temporal or causal mediation (Maxwell & Cole, 2007).

5.4 Boundary Conditions and Limited Explanatory Power

Although all hypotheses were supported, the model explained only a limited proportion of patronage decisions. Attitudes and loyalty together explained 10.3%. This is reasonable because coffee-shop patronage is influenced by atmosphere, staff service, beverage quality, price, and previous experience (Rancati et al., 2024). Sensory, affective, and cognitive experiences also shape satisfaction, recommendation, and repeat-purchase intentions in Thai specialty cafés (Meeprom & Kokkhangplu, 2025), while design, perceived quality, luxuriousness, and self-congruity affect coffee-shop evaluations (Li et al., 2022).

Influencer communication may therefore place a coffee shop within consumers' consideration sets, but final decisions remain dependent on practical and experiential conditions. The high mean and relatively small standard deviation of patronage decisions may also have restricted variation and weakened the observed relationships. In addition, recruitment through coffee-shop pages and online communities may have attracted respondents already highly engaged with cafés and social media. The findings consequently define the boundary of influencer marketing: favorable attitudes and loyalty may support awareness and recommendation acceptance, but sustained patronage also requires competitive prices, convenient locations, product quality, consistent service, and satisfactory in-store experiences.

6. Conclusion

This study found that favorable attitudes toward social media influencers were positively associated with followers' loyalty and coffee shop patronage decisions among adult Generation Z consumers in Bangkok, while the indirect effect through followers' loyalty was statistically significant. Attitudes and loyalty together explained 10.3% of the variance in patronage decisions, indicating that influencer-related attitudes and relationships play a supportive rather than dominant role in coffee shop consumption. The findings are consistent with both a direct informational pathway and an indirect relational pathway, but practical and experiential factors remain important. Because the study was cross-sectional, the mediation result should be interpreted as a statistical indirect effect rather than evidence of temporal or causal mediation. The purposive sampling, single-city setting, social-media-based recruitment, and self-reported measures also limit generalizability. Recruitment through online coffee-shop and social-media communities may have overrepresented respondents who were already more digitally active or more engaged with coffee shops. The use of a single self-report questionnaire may also have introduced common-method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Future research should employ longitudinal, experimental, multi-city, campaign-tracking, or transaction-based designs and examine actual patronage behavior alongside factors such as price, location, service quality, atmosphere, online ratings, and prior experience.

7. Recommendations

Coffee shops should select influencers based on content quality and credibility, which received the highest evaluations within the attitude construct, together with food and beverage expertise, audience fit, geographic relevance, authenticity, and brand congruence rather than follower count alone. Attitudes toward social media influencers remained a significant predictor of coffee shop patronage decisions after followers' loyalty was controlled ($\beta = .215$, $p < .001$). Accordingly, managers should give greater attention to how consumers evaluate the quality and credibility of influencer communication rather than assuming that audience size alone will translate into patronage.

Coffee shops should cultivate long-term follower relationships through useful, transparent, and consistent content. However, followers' loyalty showed only a modest independent association with patronage decisions after attitudes were taken into account ($\beta = .157$, $p = .004$). Loyalty-building activities should therefore be treated as a supporting strategy rather than as a sufficient means of generating store visits. Influencer posts should accurately present menus, prices, location, atmosphere, service, and possible limitations. Because attitudes and loyalty together explained only 10.3% of the variance in patronage decisions, online promotion should be integrated with actual beverage quality, reasonable pricing, accessibility, service consistency, atmosphere, and promotional activities. These operational factors are likely to remain important in converting favorable online evaluations into actual patronage.

Marketing effectiveness should be evaluated through measurable outcomes, including coupon redemption, attributable visits, purchases, average spending, repeat visits, and customer reviews, rather than relying only on likes, views, or follower counts. Given the limited explanatory power of the model, managers should assess whether favorable influencer responses produce commercially meaningful outcomes rather than interpreting high engagement metrics as evidence of patronage effectiveness. Campaign evaluation should therefore focus on behavioral and transaction-related indicators that more directly reflect customer acquisition and retention.

8. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank all participants who took part in the survey and contributed to the completion of this study.

9. Conflict of Interest

The author declares no competing financial or non-financial interests that could have influenced the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

10. The Author's Biography

Dr. Ming Li is a lecturer at the International College, Rajapark Institute, Thailand. His research interests include consumer behavior, digital marketing, international education, higher education management, Eastern languages, and quantitative research methods.

11.References

Aichner, T., Grünfelder, M., Maurer, O., & Jegeni, D. (2021). Twenty-five years of social media: A review of social media applications and definitions from 1994 to 2019. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking, 24(*4), 215–222. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2020.0134

Alcántara-Pilar, J. M., Rodríguez-López, M. E., Kalinić, Z., & Liébana-Cabanillas, F. (2024). From likes to loyalty: Exploring the impact of influencer credibility on purchase intentions in TikTok. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 78,* 103709. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2024.103709

Belanche, D., Casaló, L. V., Flavián, M., & Ibáñez-Sánchez, S. (2021). Understanding influencer marketing: The role of congruence between influencers, products and consumers. *Journal of Business Research, 132*, 186–195. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.067

Conde, R., & Casais, B. (2023). Micro, macro and mega-influencers on Instagram: The power of persuasion via the parasocial relationship. *Journal of Business Research, 158*, 113708. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.113708

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika, 16*(3), 297–334. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555

DataReportal. (2025). Digital 2025: Thailand. https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-thailand

Fabrigar, L. R., Wegener, D. T., MacCallum, R. C., & Strahan, E. J. (1999). Evaluating the use of exploratory factor analysis in psychological research. *Psychological Methods, 4*(3), 272–299. https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.4.3.272

Ghosh, P., Upadhyay, S., Srivastava, V., Dhiman, R., & Yu, L. (2024). How influencer characteristics drive Gen Z behavioural intentions of selecting fast-food restaurants: Mediating roles of consumer emotions and self-construal. *British Food Journal, 126*(12), 4072–4092. https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-12-2023-1154

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2019). *Multivariate data analysis* (8th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Hayes, A. F. (2022). Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

Li, R., Laroche, M., Richard, M.-O., & Cui, X. (2022). More than a mere cup of coffee: When perceived luxuriousness triggers Chinese customers' perceptions of quality and self-congruity. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 64*, 102759. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2021.102759

Lou, C., & Yuan, S. (2019). Influencer marketing: How message value and credibility affect consumer trust of branded content on social media. *Journal of Interactive Advertising, 19*(1), 58–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2018.1533501

Masuda, H., Han, S. H., & Lee, J. (2022). Impacts of influencer attributes on purchase intentions in social media influencer marketing: Mediating roles of characterizations. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 174*, 121246. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2021.121246

Maxwell, S. E., & Cole, D. A. (2007). Bias in cross-sectional analyses of longitudinal mediation. *Psychological Methods, 12*(1), 23–44. https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.12.1.23

Meeprom, S., & Kokkhangplu, A. (2025). Customer experience and satisfaction in coffee consumption: An experiential marketing perspective. *Cogent Business & Management, 12*(1), 2450296. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2025.2450296

Ohanian, R. (1990). Construction and validation of a scale to measure celebrity endorsers' perceived expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. *Journal of Advertising, 19*(3), 39–52. https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1990.10673191

Pan, M., Blut, M., Ghiassaleh, A., & Lee, Z. W. Y. (2025). Influencer marketing effectiveness: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 53*, 52–78. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-024-01052-7

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879–903. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879

Rancati, G., Nguyen, T. T. T., Fowler, D., Mauri, M., & Schultz, C. D. (2024). Customer experience in coffee stores: A multidisciplinary neuromarketing approach. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour, 23*(1), 243–259. https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.2184

Schouten, A. P., Janssen, L., & Verspaget, M. (2020). Celebrity vs. influencer endorsements in advertising: The role of identification, credibility, and product–endorser fit. International *Journal of Advertising, 39*(2), 258–281. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2019.1634898

Seemiller, C., & Grace, M. (2016). *Generation Z goes to college*. Jossey-Bass.

Sokolova, K., & Kefi, H. (2020). Instagram and YouTube bloggers promote it, why should I buy? How credibility and parasocial interaction influence purchase intentions. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 53*, 101742. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.011