The Impact of Word-of-Mouth from KOL on Consumers' Behavioral Intentions in the Beauty Industry

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Abstract: As an essential part of the Chinese economy, China's beauty industry has great significance to the upgrade of consumption. The rapid growth of China's beauty industry has benefited from the booming of China's beauty e-commerce and word-of-mouth from KOL has a vital influence on consumers' behavior. Therefore, this paper argues KOL's characteristics and social platforms' characteristics and constructs a model to study the impact of word-of-mouth from KOL on consumers' behavioral intentions in the beauty industry. This paper uses two different methods: questionnaire survey and quantitative analysis. Based on the data from the survey, the quantitative analysis, which comprised of descriptive analysis and empirical analysis, is conducted in this paper to test the hypotheses. According to Hypothesis test results statistics, both of the two dimensions are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers. Finally, this paper makes some management advice for both KOL and social media based on the results of this study.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 The Rapid Development of China's Beauty E-commerce

With the upgrade of China's consumption, China's beauty industry is growing rapidly. According to the forward-looking institute of the industry report, total sales of beauty markets, including skincare, makeup, perfume, and personal care, increased from 411 billion yuan in 2015 to 862 billion yuan in 2020, with a CAGR of 16.0% in 2015-2020 [1]. In a word, China's beauty market has enormous potential. The rapid development of China's beauty industry has benefited from the booming of China's beauty e-commerce. China is by far the world's largest e-commerce market, and the beauty industry is one of the most permeable types of the consumer e-commerce market in China, with an online penetration rate of 45.5% in 2020[1].

However, there are drawbacks to the e-commerce model. On the one hand, customers cannot try beauty products in advance. On the other hand, customers cannot return used products even if they are not suitable. Due to these reasons, people start to look for feedback on products and use it to make decisions.

1.1.2 The Growth of Social Platforms and the Emergence of KOL

In August 2021, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) released the 48th Statistical Report on the Development of China's Internet Network in Beijing. Based on the data from this report, as of June 2021, China's Internet users reached 1,011 million, the Internet penetration rate reached 71.6% [2]. The deepening popularity of the Internet has driven a rapid increase in the number of users of social platforms. For example, Sina Weibo reported its financial statement of Q1 on May

19, 2020. It was said that the number of active users reached 550 million in the first quarter, which created a relative growth of 85 million [3]. The growth of social platforms is also reflected in the increase of MAU (Monthly Active Users). A report from Topklout says the number of MAU on all five well-known social platforms, including Douyin, Weibo, kuaishou, Bilibili, and Xiaohongshu has increased. With such a large user base, more and more KOL emerge and become influential. By the end of 2020, over 86% of KOL on Douyin have between 1 million and 5 million followers [4].

1.1.3 Under the Epidemic, Beauty Consumption Needs a Push.

The outbreak of COVID heavily hit the economy of the world. After the outbreak of COVID, China's beauty industry also suffered. In February 2020, Bain and Alibaba Tmall compared the consumption data from the first day of the first lunar month to the thirteenth day of the first lunar month of the Spring Festival in 2019 and 2020, showing that online sales of beauty products have dropped by 30% and high-end beauty products have been more affected, with a drop of 40% [5]. The industry needs to figure out some new ways to stimulate consumption. KOL plays a critical role in promoting people to place orders. The content they post on their social media is the most effective and connective advertisement for customers.

1.2 Literature Review

Wang studied the two negative word of mouth by using survey methods to compare the type of negative WOM, number, negative degree, the relationship strength. She found that negative WOM and sender's professional have a critical positive impact on purchase intention. Also, she thought the sender should play their part with more subjective initiative [6].

Liu proposed an integrated model based on the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model to examine how Ewom sender's characteristics affect Ewom adoption, especially the capacities and attraction of Ewom sender. She concluded that interpersonal attraction has a great influence on the adoption of Ewom. Interpersonal attraction is a basic characteristic of Ewom's sender, especially in the network environment, so this paper regards it as an important feature of network word-of-mouth communicators [7].

Park et al. found that when consumers accept the network word-of-mouth, the higher the reputation of social networking, the higher the consumer's trust in word-of-mouth content [8].

According to Barbara Bickart and Robert M. Schindler, consumers are more inclined to collect product evaluations from online forums than the merchant's official website, which means independent websites play a very important role, and the interaction of these forums makes it reliable and relevant. In addition to the independence of the platform, the reputation of the website could also affect the platform [9].

Most scholars are mainly studied on only one-sided influence factors; very few scholars had tried to combine two factors to form a model. As a result, this paper will argue the characteristics of KOL and the characteristics of social platforms and construct a model to study the impact of word-of-mouth from KOL on consumers' behavioral intentions in the beauty industry.

1.3 Research Framework

Firstly, we start by sorting out relevant literature such as key opinion leaders and purchase intention. Secondly, we draw on the theoretical foundation of consumer behavior, marketing and combines China's beauty industry's characteristics and development trends to analyze the impact of word-of-mouth from KOL on consumers' behavioral intentions in the beauty industry. And we will construct the model in two dimensions, the characteristics of KOL and social platforms. Finally, based on the research results, this paper will present relevant opinions and suggestions on KOL in the beauty industry and social platforms.

2. Research Hypotheses

2.1 Influence of Characteristics of KOL on the Behavioral Intention of Receivers

This paper argues that the characteristics of KOL are composed of two dimensions: their information transmission capacity, i.e., the professional and active degree of the communicator, and interpersonal attraction.

The professional level and vitality of the word-of-mouth communicator positively influence the purchase behavior of the word-of-mouth receivers. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1a: The information transmission capacity of KOL is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

In previous studies, scholars regard individual, interpersonal attraction as an important factor to examine individual personality characteristics. Interpersonal attraction is a state of emotional intimacy between an individual and others. The interpersonal attraction of KOL also has a significant influence on the purchasing behavior of the receiver. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1b: The interpersonal attraction of word-of-mouth communicators is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

According to the above analysis, it can be seen that the characteristics of KOL will have a certain impact on consumers' behavioral intention. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The characteristics of KOL are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

2.2 Influence of Characteristics of Social Platforms on the Behavioral Intention of Receivers

This paper studies the influence of platform characteristics—the reputation of social platforms and consumers' dependence on social platforms—on the trusting attitude of word-of-mouth receivers.

The spread of word-of-mouth by KOL must rely on the network platform. Although it is difficult for consumers to control the platform's characteristics, they can choose more trusted platforms to search and receive word-of-mouth information according to the platform's positive performance and good reputation. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: The characteristics of social platforms are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

In today's society, where the Internet is widespread, and information spreads rapidly, reputation determines whether the social platform can survive and develop for a long time. According to the literature review, consumers are more likely to trust information from reputable platforms. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2a: The reputation of social platforms is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

In real life, when consumers want to know about a product or service through the Internet in a short time, they will directly and actively search for information on the websites they are familiar with and trust. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2b: The dependence on social platforms is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.

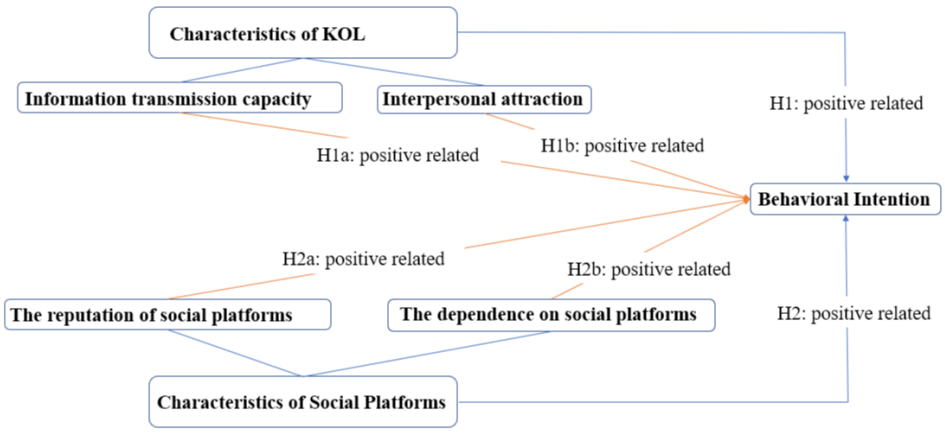

Fig 1. Research hypotheses.

3. Design of the Questionnaire and Investigation

3.1. Variable Definition and Design of the Scale

The scale in this paper refers to the scale done by Yan [10]. The design of the scale in this paper is based on the mature scale that ensured the accuracy and effectiveness of the scale. Also, the appropriate adjustments are made according to the specific topic. The scale could be divided into three parts, communicators' characteristics, social networking platform and behavioral intention.

Two dimensions present the characteristics of KOL. The ability to disseminate information reflects the professionalism and activeness of the communicator—the personality characteristics of communicators measured by the variable of interpersonal attractiveness. Then the scale measures both the reputation of social networking platforms and consumers' dependence on social networking platforms. Behavioral intention is defined as an individual's tendency to act on a particular behavior. For this paper, behavioral intention will be described as a word-of-mouth receivers' tendency to act on trust in the face of word-of-mouth information.

3.2. Design of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is used to obtain data in this paper. The questionnaire of the study is divided into two parts. The first part is divided into various variables in the study of the influence of KOL's word-of-mouth on consumers' behavioral intention in the beauty industry, including characteristics of communicators, characteristics of social networking platform, and behavioral intention, with a total of 21 questions. All questions in the first part were interviewed on a Likert scale with options of strongly disagree, disagree, average, agree, and strongly agree, and were assigned a score of 1-5 in that order. The first part is the main part of the questionnaire. The second part is a survey on the respondents' basic personal information, such as gender, age, education, and salary level.

Respondents recall that when they want to buy a brand of beauty products for the first time, they will learn about word-of-mouth information provided by KOL on online social media platforms. Use the most impressive and credible experience you had on social media platforms as an example.

4. Results and Data Analysis

The quantitative analysis of descriptive analysis and empirical analysis of the collected data is conducted to test the hypotheses.

4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

4.1.1. Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

In the demographic analysis of the sample, out of 250 respondents of this survey, there were 78 males and 172 females from the gender distribution. The number of females was higher than males. According to daily experience, females are more inclined to look for advice and opinions from the outside world when purchasing beauty products, so the sample of this paper is slightly larger for females than males will not have much influence on the study. Regarding age distribution, the respondents were concentrated in the age range of 19-39, accounting for 98% of the total number of respondents. The salary of the respondents is mainly focused in the range of 2000-9999 RMB, which is close to 70% of the total number of respondents. The respondents' education is mainly concentrated among bachelor and master or above, which coincided with the questionnaire platform respondents' education level.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the sample.

	Choices	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	0.312
	Female	172	0.688
Age	18 or below	0	0
	19-29	182	0.728
	30-39	65	0.26
	40-49	3	0.012
	50 or above	0	0
The Highest Qualification	High school diploma or below	2	0.008
	Post-school qualification	14	0.056
	Bachelor's degree	207	0.828
	Master's degree or above	27	0.108
Income Level	No income	37	0.148
	2000¥ or less	20	0.08
	2000¥-4999¥	94	0.376
	5000¥-9999¥	77	0.308
	10000¥ or more	22	0.088

Note: This table presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including the information about gender, age, the highest qualification and income level.

4.1.2. Descriptive Analysis of Variable Measurements

The statistical results show that the skewness of all variables is between -0.614 and -0.328, with absolute values less than 1, and the skewness values are acceptable. The kurtosis is between -0.06 and 0.817, with absolute values less than 1, so the kurtosis values are also acceptable, because the questionnaire data are approximately normally distributed. The standard deviation of each variable is between 0.613-0.815, which indicates that the differences between the data are small. The data distribution is reasonable, and the data can be analyzed by regression.

Table 2. Summary statistics.

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	Std	Skewness	Kurtosis
Characteristics of KOL	1.78	5	4.052	0.693	-0.386	0.369
The Ability to Disseminate Information	2	5	4.21	0.632	-0.415	0.44
Interpersonal Attractiveness	1	5	3.73	0.815	-0.328	-0.06
Characteristics of Communication Platforms	1.67	5	4.15	0.663	-0.497	0.702
Reputation of Communication Platforms	1.33	5	4.09	0.712	-0.614	0.817
Dependence of Communication Platforms	2	5	4.21	0.613	-0.38	0.587
Receivers' Behavioral Intentions	1.67	5	4.16	0.679	-0.495	0.722

Note: This table presents the descriptive statistics of all variables in the research. Refer to the Appendixes for variable definitions.

4.2. Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is conducted on each variable and the questionnaire as a whole by adopting Cronbach's α test so that the reliability and consistency of the results can be tested. The value range of α is 0-1. The closer the value of α is to 1, the higher the reliability of the variable is. For the subscale, the value of α is expected to be above 0.7, and between 0.6 and 0.7 is acceptable.

Table 3 presents reliability statistics.

Panel A shows the reliability statistics of characteristics of KOL, which are drawn from 2 variables—information transmission capacity and interpersonal attraction. *Panel B* displays the reliability statistics of characteristics of social platforms, which are drawn from 2 variables—the

reputation of social platforms and the dependence on social platforms. *Panel C* shows the reliability statistics of the behavioral intention of word-of-mouth receivers. The overall α value of these variables is between 0.666 to 0.782 respectively, and the α value of each item is less than the α value of the dimension to which it belongs (the overall α value); that is, each item is within the research standard range, indicating that the overall internal consistency of the questionnaire is high and the reliability is acceptable. In addition, all CITC values are greater than 0.3, indicating that the correlation between the items is acceptable.

Table 3 Reliability statistics.

Panel A Characteristics of Word-of-mouth Communicators				
Variables	Question Number	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's α
Information Transmission Capacity	Q1	0.553	0.587	0.688
	Q2	0.493	0.584	
	Q3	0.384	0.693	
	Q4	0.325	0.674	
	Q5	0.373	0.653	
	Q6	0.367	0.652	
Interpersonal Attraction	Q7	0.568	0.736	0.764
	Q8	0.664	0.586	
	Q9	0.585	0.727	
Panel B Characteristics of Social Platforms				
Variables	Question Number	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's α
The Reputation of Social Platforms	Q10	0.482	0.561	0.666
	Q11	0.507	0.517	
	Q12	0.438	0.609	
The Dependence on Social Platforms	Q13	0.542	0.727	0.744
	Q14	0.661	0.552	
	Q15	0.545	0.701	
Panel C Receivers' Behavioral Intention				
Variables	Question Number	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's α
Behavioral Intention	Q16	0.568	0.747	0.782
	Q17	0.684	0.584	
	Q18	0.588	0.735	

Note: This table presents the reliability statistics of variables with data available to test the hypotheses. Refer to the Appendixes for variable definitions.

4.3. Validity Analysis

After reliability analysis, the validity of the scale should be analyzed. In this paper, the test is based on the structural equation model. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a multivariate statistical framework used to model complex relationships between directly and indirectly observed variables through AMOS 24.0. It can test the fit of a hypothesized "causal" model by estimating a system of linear equations. Therefore, firstly we need to visualize the hypothesized model based on theories. As shown in Figure 2, rectangles represent observed or directly measured variables, and ovals typically represent unobserved or latent constructs defined by measured variables. Unidirectional arrows mean causal paths, where one variable affects another directly, and double-headed arrows mean correlations between variables [11].

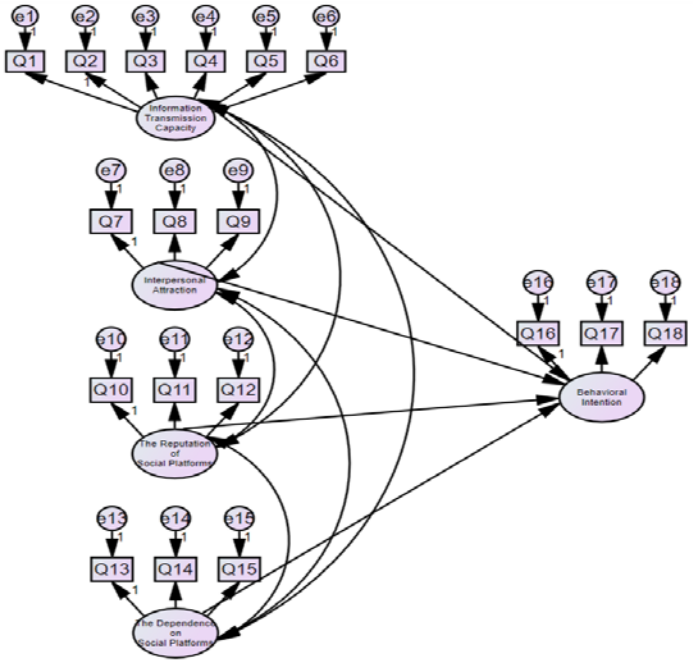

Fig 2. Structural Equation Modeling.

The validity analysis is to test the effectiveness and accuracy of the scale. The analysis results can reflect whether the measured values can match the characteristics of objects. Since the scale used possesses specific dimensions, a validity analysis was performed based on the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) imposed on the data in the structural equation model (*Figure 2*). This report adopts four absolute fitness indexes to test the validity: CMIN/DF, GFI, RMSEA, and RMR. When the GFI value is greater than 0.9, the CMIN/DF value is less than 3, the RMSEA value is less than 0.08, and the RMR value is less than 0.05, the measurement scales for each construct demonstrate high convergent validity.

The CFA analysis shows that the measurement model indicates a good fit with the data. The GFI value is 0.913, which was larger than the critical value of 0.9, the CMIN/DF value of 1.644 is below the suggested maximum value 3.0, the RMSEA 0.054 is under the index of 0.08, and the RMR 0.026 is below 0.05. In sum, all the data fit the criteria. The test results indicate the appropriateness of the measurement model. It can proceed to conduct regression analysis to examine the relationships among the constructs.

4.4. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is to tests the correlations among variables. We apply the approach of Pearson correlation analysis to analyze the relationships of the independent variables including the abilities of word-of-mouth communicators to disseminate information, interpersonal attractiveness of word-of-mouth communicators, the reputation of social network platforms, the dependence on social network platforms and word-of-mouth receivers' trust tendency, the mediating variable word-of-mouth receivers' trust attitudes and the dependent variable word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intentions. Pearson coefficient is a value between - 1 and 1. When the correlation coefficient between each of the two variables increases, the correlation coefficient tends to 1 or - 1; when the correlation coefficient is equal to 0, there is no linear correlation between them; when the correlation coefficient is less than 0, it indicates that there is a negative correlation between the two variables; when the correlation coefficient is larger than 0, it indicates that there is a positive correlation between the two variables The correlation coefficients among the variables and measurement dimensions are shown in Table 4. The correlation coefficients among the variables range from 0.472 to 0.664. At the same time, it can be seen from the table that the Sig value of each of the two corresponding variables is less than 0.001 (when the sig value is less than 0.05, the variables are related). Therefore, significant correlations exist among the variables, providing preliminary evidence for our hypotheses.

Table 4. Pearson correlations.

		Abilities to Disseminate Information	Inter-personal Attractive-ness	Reputation of Social Network Platforms	Dependence on Social Network Platforms	Behavioral Intentions
Abilities to Disseminate Information	Pearson Correlation	1	.467	.652	.626	.472
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
Interpersonal Attractiveness	Pearson Correlation	.467	1	.554	.533	.546
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
Reputation of Social Network platforms	Pearson Correlation	.652	.554	1	.664	.506
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
Dependence on Social Network Platforms	Pearson Correlation	.626	.533	.664	1	.596
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
Behavioral Intentions	Pearson Correlation	.472	.546	.506	.596	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	

Note: This table presents Pearson correlations among regression variables. Refer to the Appendixes for variable definitions.

4.5. Regression Analysis

Although the correlation analysis shows a correlation between various variables, the specific relationship still needs to be analyzed by regression. Therefore, this section uses SPSS software to conduct linear regression analysis on the data to more clearly test the causal relationships among variables and test the research hypothesis proposed in this paper and the model that has been built.

This section mainly reports the regression analysis results from the following two aspects:

Observe R and R^2 in the regression model, and judge whether the relationships among variables are significant, so as to determine the fitting effect of the model regression;

Observe the size of collinearity statistics to determine whether there is a collinearity problem. Generally, when the tolerance value is greater than 0.1 or the maximum value of VIF is less than 3, it is proved that the model does not have an obvious multi-collinearity problem.

4.6. Regression Analysis

4.6.1 Regression Analysis of Characteristics of KOL on Word-of-mouth Receivers' Behavioral Intention

The analysis of characteristics of KOL on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention contains three hypotheses, so the two dimensions (The abilities to disseminate information and interpersonal attractiveness) on characteristics of KOL are regarded as independent variables, and receivers' behavioral intention is regarded as the dependent variable. The regression analysis is illustrated below.

The significance P is less than 0.001, R is 0.582, indicating a positive correlation between characteristics of KOL and word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention. The decision coefficient R^2 is 0.338, indicating that the interpretation degree of each independent variable on receivers'

behavioral intention data is 33.8%, and the fitting degree is acceptable. Therefore, the regression fitting effect of this model is good. Moreover, the tolerance in collinearity statistics of each independent variable is greater than 0.1. The maximum VIF is 1.236 (VIF<3); it is proved that there is no obvious collinearity problem, and the model regression effect is good.

The standardized regression coefficient of the abilities to disseminate information on receivers' behavioral intention is 0.319. The significance is less than 0.001 (p<0.001). The standardized regression coefficient of interpersonal attractiveness on receivers' behavioral intention is 0.315. The significance is less than 0.001 (p<0.001), indicating that both the reputation of disseminating information and interpersonal attractiveness positively impact receivers' behavioral intention. Therefore, our findings support H1a and H1b.

Table 5. Regression analysis of characteristics of KOL on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention.

Model 1	Model Summary		Variance Analysis		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	R	R^2	F	Sig.	B	Std. Error			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)					1.636	0.282	5.804	.000		
Abilities to Disseminate Information	0.582	0.338	63.169	.000	0.319	0.074	4.329	.000	0.809	1.236
Interpersonal Attractiveness					0.315	0.042	7.442	.000	0.809	1.236

Note: This table presents regression results for testing the effects of the abilities to disseminate information and interpersonal attractiveness of KOL on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention. The dependent variable is word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention. Refer to the Appendixes for variable definitions.

4.6.2 Regression Analysis of Characteristics of Word-of-mouth Social Network Platforms on Word-of-mouth Receivers' Behavioral Intention

The analysis of characteristics of word-of-mouth social network platforms on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention contains three hypotheses, so the two dimensions (the reputation of social network platforms and the dependence on social network platforms) on characteristics of word-of-mouth social network platforms are regarded as independent variables and receivers' behavioral intention is regarded as the dependent variable. The regression analysis is illustrated below.

As shown in Table 6, the significance P is less than 0.001, R is 0.607, indicating a positive correlation between characteristics of Internet word-of-mouth social network platforms and receivers' behavioral intention. The decision coefficient R^2 is 0.369, indicating that the interpretation degree of each independent variable to receivers' behavioral intention data is 36.9%, and the fitting degree is acceptable. Therefore, the regression fitting effect of this model is good. Moreover, the tolerance in collinearity statistics of each independent variable is greater than 0.1, and the maximum VIF is 1.548 (VIF<3); it is proved that there is no obvious collinearity problem, and the model regression effect is good.

The standardized regression coefficient of the reputation of social network platforms on receivers' behavioral intention is 0.472, the significance is less than 0.001 (p<0.001) and the standardized regression coefficient of dependence on social network platforms on receivers' behavioral intention is 0.217. The significance is less than 0.001 (p<0.001), indicating that both the reputation of social

network platforms and their dependence have a positive impact on receivers' behavioral intention. Additionally, it can be seen that the influence of the reputation of platforms on receivers' trust attitudes is greater than the influence of dependence on platforms on receivers' behavioral intention. Therefore, our findings support H2a and H2b.

Table 6. Regression analysis of characteristics of word-of-mouth social network platforms on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention.

Model 1	Model Summary		Variance Analysis		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	R	R^2	F	Sig.	B	Std. Error			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)					1.286	0.241	5.333	.000		
Reputation of Social Network Platforms	0.607	0.369	72.097	.000	0.472	0.069	6.883	.000	0.646	1.548
Dependence on Social Network Platforms					0.217	0.057	3.815	.000	0.646	1.548

Note: This table presents regression results for testing the effects of reputation of social network platforms and dependence on social network platforms on word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention. The dependent variable is word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral intention. Refer to the Appendixes for variable definitions.

4.7. Results of Hypotheses Testing

This paper verified the research hypothesis of the theoretical model we proposed through regression analysis of the collected sample data. The final research hypothesis verification results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Hypothesis test results statistics.

Research Hypotheses	Verification Results
H1: The characteristics of KOL are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.	True
H1a: The information transmission capacity of KOL is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.	True
H1b: The interpersonal attraction of KOL is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.	True
H2: The characteristics of social platforms are positively correlated with behavioral intention of receivers.	True
H2a: The reputation of social platforms is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.	True
H2b: The dependence on social platforms is positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers.	True

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary of findings

5.1.1 The Characteristics of KOL are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers

This paper argues that the characteristics of KOL are composed of two dimensions: their information transmission capacity, i.e., the professional and active degree of the communicator, and interpersonal attraction. According to Hypothesis test results statistics, both of the two dimensions are positively correlated with the behavioral intention of receivers. This paper will give management advice for KOL focus on these two aspects hence.

5.1.2 The characteristics of social platforms are positively correlated with behavioral intention of receivers

To play the role of KOL, attention must be paid to the construction of social platforms. It has already mentioned in the research hypotheses that the reputation of social platforms and the dependence on social platforms are proposed as the characteristics of social platforms. Therefore, the management advice for social platform will concentrate on establishing a good reputation and enhancing the independence.

5.2 Management Advice

Based on the results of Hypotheses Testing from the previous section, we will make targeted recommendations on maximizing the impact of word-of-mouth from KOL. In this part, we will give opinions from the perspective of two different subjects: KOL and social platforms.

5.2.1 Advice for KOL

As for KOL in the beauty industry, information transmission capacity specifically refers to the degree of expertise about the beauty products. To be a reliable KOL in front of the public, it is necessary to gain more knowledge about the products and the state of the industry. Plus, KOL should be aware of the importance of integrity and fairness. According to the research on negative word of mouth by Wang [6], she concluded that the negative degree of word-of-mouth has a significant impact on consumers' purchase behavior, especially in the network environment. The more negative the word-of-mouth, the easier it is to be impressed. This finding requires KOL to be fair and cautious about the information and evaluation of beauty products they disseminate. However, from another point of view, it will help improve the credibility of speech by properly giving actual and negative reviews of popular products.

As for interpersonal attraction, the basis of this characteristic is about emotional intimacy between a KOL and other consumers. This could be achieved by using a new approach to deliver information. For example, compared with old-fashioned text comments, video reviews and live streaming provide viewers a more intuitive experience, which helps to build connections with consumers. Establishing a KOL also means creating an attractive persona on social platform, which means KOL should spend more time interacting with their followers and play their part with more subjective initiative because the process of information output is not one-way but interactive.

5.2.2 Advice for Social Platforms

The communication between KOL and consumers relies on social platforms. The extent to which word-of-mouth spreads depends on how well the social platform is evolving. Consumers value the reputation of social platforms because they want to receive the most trustworthy and reliable word-of-mouth information. The quality of online reviews positively affects consumers' purchase behavior [8]. This finding inspires the operator to work on quality control of the reviews on their social platforms. But paying attention to reviews' quality doesn't mean it is correct to eliminate all the negative reviews. The existence of negative reviews reveals the drawback that needs to make up for. A social platform with a good reputation is inclusive of different opinions.

Throughout the course of the research, we found that people have a preference for social platforms. If a person firmly trusts the information from a particular social platform, he will have a connection with this platform. As time passes by, the connection will turn into strong loyalty and help to attract

more users. Therefore, if social platforms want to boost the consumers' dependence on themselves, they have to provide wide a range of high-quality information as possible. Besides, social platforms need to build up their community. For example, Xiaohongshu, a social platform popular among Chinese women, has gradually become a priority for female consumers to get feedback on beauty products. Because of the female-friendly community culture, Xiaohongshu won a large number of loyal users. The surge in traffic has made more and more famous KOL open their accounts and promote beauty products, which helps to bring more traffic to this platform. As a result, when female consumers want to buy some beauty products or search for information about a connected topic like skincare or make-up, they will choose this platform rather than others.

6. Appendixes

Table 8. Variable definitions.

Panel A The Definition of the Characteristics of KOL		
Variables	Definition	References
The Ability to Disseminate Information	The receiver could perceive the KOL's ability to provide professional information and the ability to use the social media to stimulus the receiver. The professional information includes the information related to the product and the experience of using the product.	Gilly (1998) [12] Johnston (2010) [13]
Interpersonal Attractiveness	The degree to which the receiver likes to communicate frequently with KOL.	Ellegaard (2012) [14]
Panel B The Definition of the Social Network Platforms		
Variables	Definition	References
Reputation of Social Networking Platforms	The user's perception of the reputation and credibility of the website or platform.	Park&Lee (2009) [8] Hu (1994) [15]
Consumers' Dependence on Social Networking Platforms	The extent to which word-of-mouth receivers rely on social networking platform.	Hu (1994)[15]
Panel C The Definition of the Behavioral Intention		
Variables	Definition	
Behavioral Intention	Word-of-mouth receivers' behavioral tendency to adopt trust behaviors when facing with Internet word-of-mouth information.	

7. Questionnaire

Dear Mr. / Ms.:

Thank you very much for participating in this survey on word-of-mouth in the beauty industry.

Background of the questionnaire: When you want to buy a brand of beauty products for the first time, you will learn about the word-of-mouth information provided by KOL on social networking platforms. Please select the one that best fits your situation in the following questions.

(Word-of-mouth information includes reviews in various forms such as text, pictures and videos; online social networking platforms refer to Xiaohongshu, Weibo, bilibili, etc.)

Note: The results of this questionnaire will be used for the research of the paper, which will be conducted anonymously. All the information you provide, including some of your personal

information, is confidential and is for research purposes only, and is not available to anyone other than the researcher.

Part I:

No.	Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Average	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The KOL is experienced in purchasing this product (service).					
2	The KOL is familiar with the product (service).					
3	The KOL have expertise in the product or service.					
4	The KOL is familiar with the social platform.					
5	The KOL often publishes product (service) comments on social platforms.					
6	The KOL often energetic and in high spirits.					
7	I would like to be friends with this KOL.					
8	I could become close friends with this KOL.					
9	I communicate a lot with the KOL.					
10	I think the platform is trustworthy.					
11	I think the platform can keep your information safe.					
12	I think the word-of-mouth information on this platform is truly from consumers.					
13	I often visit this website or platform.					

14	I think this site is trustworthy among than other social networking platforms of the same type.
15	I think of this platform first when collecting word-of-mouth about products (services).
16	I would trust this word-of-mouth information.
17	I am willing to buy the product or service.
18	I am willing to post information about the product (service) on social media platforms after purchase.

Part II:

1.	Please choose your gender	Male		Female		
2.	Please choose your age	18&below	19-29	30-39	40-49	50&above
3.	Please choose your highest education	High school and below	Undergraduate		College	Master and above
4.	Please choose your highest education	None	2000 and below	2000-4999	5000-9999	10000 and above

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