

## HOW IS THE INTERPERSONAL CHARISMA OF ONLINE BLOGGERS FORMED? A PERSPECTIVE OF THE SIMILARITY-ATTRACTION THEORY

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### *Abstract*

With the vigorous development of Internet technology and influencer economy, the number of self-media and the scale of fans are continuously increasing in China. Among them, bloggers are the more prominent influencers in online self-media. Bloggers interact with their audiences in their daily lives. They release interesting and novel information or videos to attract the attention of audiences, which in turn affect their purchase intentions. This research is based on the similarity attraction theory, taking attitude, Sense of worth, personality, perception, belief, and cognition ability as the key factors to create interpersonal attraction, and using product type as the moderating factor to construct a theoretical model of influencer economy.

A total of 491 valid samples were obtained. AMOS version 18 is used as an analysis tool for testing measurements and structural models. These data enable researchers to explore influencer economic models and analyze the causal relationship between audience and blogger's perception of similarity and purchase intentions. The test results are as follows: (a) Various similarity perception factors have a positive and significant effect on interpersonal attractiveness; (b) Interpersonal attraction has a positive and significant effect on trust; (c) Trust has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention (d) The type of product does not have a significant moderating effect between trust and purchase intention. Finally, this study points out the corresponding theoretical and managerial im-

plications based on the data analysis results.

Key Words: Similarity-Attraction Theory, Interpersonal Attraction, Product Type, Trust, Purchase Intention

### Introduction

From 2016 to 2019, the proportion of online shopping in China increased from 63.1% to 74.8%. Another noteworthy phenomenon is that in 2019, the number of online self-media bloggers and the size of fans in China increased by 51% compared with 2018. Among them, the number of bloggers with more than 1 million fans reached 23%. The booming of online bloggers business model also means that in the information explosion environment of internet, people are eager to get the product information with attractiveness. In other words, the sharing and recommendation of bloggers could help consumers shorten their purchasing decisions, which will produce more convenient and accurate online shopping benefits. Consumers will choose their favorite and trusted bloggers based on the similarity between themselves and the bloggers. Therefore, this study adopts similarity-attraction theory as a theoretical empirical to construct the interpersonal charisma of internet bloggers in china, and what the key factors affecting the audience's purchase intentions, which have important theoretical and practical implications for promoting the positive marketing development. Furthermore, this study considered with the actual conditions of consumer purchase behavior, the product type is used as a moderator. To sum up, this study has several research purposes.

1. Verified that the similar attitude has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
2. Verified that the similar sense of worth has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
3. Verified that the similar personality has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
4. Verified that the similar belief has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
5. Verified that the similar perception has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
6. Verified that the similar cognitive ability has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction.
7. Verified that the interpersonal attraction has positive and significant impact on trust.
8. Verified that the trust has positive and significant impact on purchase intention.
9. Verified that the product type has significant moderating effect between trust and purchase intention.

### Literature Review and Hypothesis

#### *Bloggers*

Yang (2016) believes that bloggers publish their own content on major platforms or other channels to attract a large number of fans. Nowadays, bloggers in the Internet age, with the help of e-commerce platforms, short video plat-

forms, live broadcast platforms, etc., are rapidly affecting many vertical fields, audiences, and play to its commercial value, to carry out a multi-faceted business model. The bloggers are the leaders in the modern network environment. Nowadays, in the network environment, the audience's true purchase intentions are invisible and intangible. They tend to refer to the bloggers' sharing and recommendations, then according to their own opinions and the degree of trust to the blogger to make consumption decisions. The bloggers have become opinion leaders or important reference groups for the Internet generation audience (Ao, 2016).

#### *Similarity-Attraction Theory*

Byrne (1971) pointed out that similar attraction theory, when an individual's attitude and beliefs are more similar to others, the more likely he is to be attracted to others, and the more similar his attitudes and beliefs to others are, and then he will be attracted to others which greater likelihood of being attracted. The similar activity preferences may be the most important factor in judging interpersonal attraction (Byrne, 1971; Parmelee, 1979). Therefore, those who are considered to be highly similar in attitudes, beliefs and values will also be considered worthy of respect and possess particularly ideal intellectual characteristics. The similarity attraction can also be reflected in the more popular blogger groups today. The more similar the blogger group and the audience, the more attracted the audience will be (Harrison et al., 2002). To sum up, this study

adopts the key antecedents of similar attraction theory, including attitudes, values, personality, beliefs, perception and cognitive abilities (Byrne, 1971).

#### *Attitude*

Kolter (1996) believes that attitude refers to an individual's relatively persistent positive or negative cognitive of people with evaluation, emotional feelings, behavioral tendencies, things, and ideas. Therefore, attitude is not only an evaluation, but also a state of tendentious mental readiness (Thurstone, 1929). The audience's attitude towards the blogger is a very important factor in the audience's purchase intention. Therefore, the attitude is the psychological tendency of the audience when purchasing a certain product or service, and it is a key influencing factor of consumers in purchasing decision. To sum up, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H1: The similar attitude has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Sense of Worth, SOW*

Sense of worth refers to the meaning of people to objective things. Wang (2014) pointed that sense of worth has three characteristics: First, sense of worth is stable and durable, and it will not be too big changing in a specific external environment. Furthermore, Sense of worth is optional. Everyone lives in a different time period and in a different environment, therefore the sense of worth is not same. Finally, Sense of

worth is subjective. People's evaluation standard for things is based on self-positioning and cognition of things as the standard for distinguishing between right and wrong. Nowadays, the bloggers share their favorite content and products to communicate with the audience on internet, and which blogger they like is also determined by the audience's own Sense of worth. Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H2: The similar sense of worth has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Personality*

Guilford (1959) believes that personality is the sum of personal characteristics and attributes, and is a continuous trait that drives individuals to be different from others, which is composed of the dynamics of a person's inner psychological and physiological system, which determines the individual's unique thoughts and behaviors. Nowadays, consumers in the online environment have a strong subjectivity in purchasing intentions; this is due to "personality" (Allport, 1961). With the vigorous development of the business model of online bloggers, scholars began to explore the relationship between personality and audiences' buying behavior. Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H3: The similar personality has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Belief*

Beliefs are people's own opinions and opinions, what they think can be assured, and people's tendency toward things and the opinions or attitudes of others (Pejans, 1992). Chen (2007) pointed out that the characteristics of the audience's belief in the blogger include. 1) The stability of the blogger's beliefs: the audience's belief in the blogger's gradually established process of interaction will tend to be popular and stable. 2) The primary and secondary nature of the blogger's beliefs: Some beliefs have a relatively small effect, but some beliefs can play a key role. 3) The broadness of bloggers' beliefs: The beliefs of a group of bloggers will broadly and strongly influence the perception and behavior of the audience. In summary, beliefs play a key role in guiding individual behavior and constructing internal knowledge and information. Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H4: The similar belief has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Perception*

Perception is the process by which an individual chooses, organizes, and interprets external information, and gives meaningful things to his inner world (Berelson, 1964). In most decision-making situations, an individual's purchase intention is determined by the trade-off between the audience's expected benefits of the product and the actual cost of ownership (Dong, 1999).

Therefore, this study believes that when the audience's perception of the blogger is more positive and strong, then Interpersonal attraction is also more positive and strong. Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H5: The similar perception has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Cognitive Ability, CA*

Liu (2014) pointed that the cognitive ability is the ability of an individual's brain to process, store and extract information, and it is the ability of an individual to control the formation of things and the basic laws that exist between things, Which the cognitive ability between the blogger and the audience has many characteristics. 1) Bloggers have autonomy in the perception of audiences: The audiences will chooses their cognitive ability based on the shared information sent by the blogger and combined with their own needs. 2) The blogger's perception of the audience is developmental: Bloggers must constantly learn new knowledge in order not to be eliminated, so as to spread it to the audience and improve their interpersonal attraction. 3) The audience hopes that through the sharing of bloggers, they can quickly and conveniently extract the information they want, form interpersonal attraction. Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H6: The similar cognitive ability has positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction*

#### *Interpersonal Attraction, IA*

Interpersonal attraction refers to the individual's emotional evaluation of others; and uses positive or negative methods to evaluate others, which can be said to be an individual's internal reflection of social phenomena. Mischel (1999) believes that interpersonal attraction is an affirmative form of interpersonal relationship, and it is a relative concept to interpersonal conflict, which It mainly includes emotional interpersonal attraction, work interpersonal attraction and social interpersonal attraction. Interpersonal attraction is also the positive tendency of mutual liking and recognition between oneself and others (Lv, 2009).

#### *Trust*

Trust is a kind of stable feeling that an individual has to depend on others or things, which also a gradual development process (Lu and Zhou, 2005). The online bloggers continue to interact with audiences and share and evaluate products, combined with external beauty such as external clothing, as well as internal beauty such as personality traits, perception, cognition and professional knowledge, positively enhance interpersonal relationships Attraction, which in turn gives the audience a sense of trust (Cui, 2016). Therefore, this study proposes the causal hypotheses:

*H7: Interpersonal attraction has positive and significant impact on trust*

#### *Purchase Intention, PI*

Dodds (1991) defined that purchase intention is the possibility of the audience buying a product or service, which is a strong subjective feeling. Trust is an extremely important consumer decision-making factor in today's online environment, and trust will directly affect the attitude of the audience in order to reduce the uncertainty and complexity of consumer decisions, thereby positively enhancing the audience's purchase intention. When the trust of the audience is higher, the purchase intention is stronger (Jarvenpaa et al., 1999). Therefore, the causal hypothesis was proposed:

*H8: Trust has a positive and significant impact on purchase intention*

*Product Type, PT*

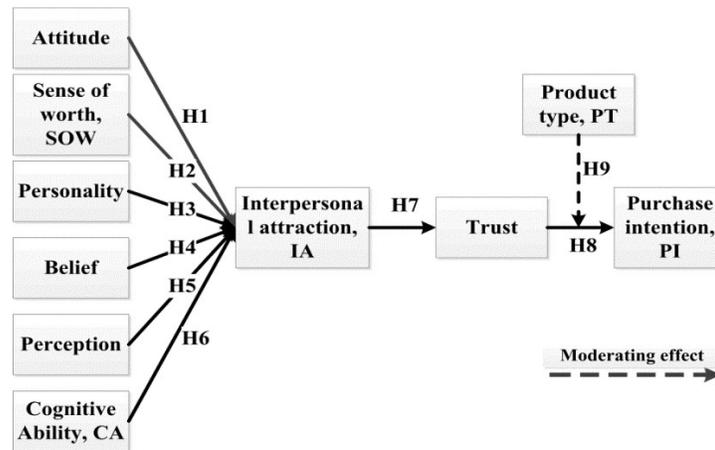
The vigorous development of Internet which certainly helps consumers

to easily obtain diverse product information (Yadav, 2005); however, Hasanein (2005) pointed that consumers have different perceived risk on trust and purchase intention for different product types even on E-commerce. Therefore, the causal hypothesis was proposed:

*H9: Product type has a significant moderating effect between trust and purchase intention*

*Theoretical Model*

Based on the similarity attraction theory, this study constructs a causal model of the influence of bloggers on the audience's purchase intentions. Among them, interpersonal attraction is determined by attitude, Sense of worth, personality, belief, perception, and cognitive ability (Byrne, 1971). The theoretical model is shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Theoretical Model**

Methodology

Research Design

Literature shows that Muijs's (2011) comprehensive work is useful to understand participants' consumption motivation of the BLOGGERS business model

in China. Data collection was based on Sedgwick (2014) i.e. a cross-sectional design, data from the sample were obtained at a single point of time, typically collected from multiple groups or types of people. Cross-sectional studies are generally quick, easy, and less expensive to conduct and often based on a soft or hard-copy questionnaire survey. To analyze the data, this study conducted Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) by using AMOS software.

#### *Sample and Data Collection*

A part of population called sample may estimate something about the whole population (Battaglia, 2011). The purposive sampling was applied to determine the respondents following the selection criteria i.e. the respondents must be consumers who have been used the Blogger business model for online consumption. The descriptive advantages of the online survey are following: first, study subjects can respond and complete the questionnaire anytime and anywhere. Second, the online survey can efficiently save research cost by transforming paper format into an electronic medium (Yun and Trumbo, 2000). Third, online survey provides opportunity to give a range of answers. Fourth, online survey is easier to access particular population's interests, attitudes and values (Wright, 2005). This study uses random sampling and convenience sampling for pre-testing and official sample data collection. The official questionnaire is issued from February 20 to March 20 of year 2020. A total of 575 questionnaires were distributed and 491 were received back of valid

sample, with a response rate of 85 percent.

#### *Questionnaire Development*

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section addressed the demographic variables of the consumers. The second section involved bloggers' Interpersonal attraction (Byrne, 1971) what included the value of Attitude (three items), Sense of worth (three items), Personality (three items), Belief (three items), Perception (three items) and Cognitive Ability (three items). The items were based on the literature (Zou, 2013; Pan, 2012; Wang, 2018; Xu, 2011; Han, 2011; Jiang, 2019; Lin, 2018). The third section involved consumers' trust (three items). The items were based on the literature (Mayer, James and Davis, 1999; Orth, Chameeva and Brand, 2013). The fourth section involved consumers' purchase intention (four items). The items were based on the literature (Su, Wang and Hsu, 2012; Hsu, Chang, Chu and Lee, 2014; Grewal, Roggeveen and Tsiros, 2008). The fifth section involved consumers' Product type (four items). The items were based on the literature (Wu, 2014). All survey items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale, except for the demographic characteristics.

#### *Data Analysis Tool*

The data were analyzed with AMOS. This software uses a covariance-based structural equation modeling of SEM method. It is less restrictive than other software (e.g., LISREL) in terms of sample size, distributional assumption,

and model complexity (Hair et al., 2013). Its use is expanding in marketing (Madupalli and Poddar, 2014; Rodríguez-Pinto et al., 2011; Sattler et al., 2010). This study adopts a two-stage analysis method (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) by using AMOS software with maximum likelihood estimation. First, the measurement model what each scale was investigated using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the reliability and validity of the latent variables. Second, to estimate fitness and to test causality among the variables on structural model (Fornell and Bookstein, 1982; Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). A multi- group comparison of structural equation modeling was applied to test the moderating variable of this study (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1996).

## Data Analysis and Results

### *Non-Response Bias test, NRB*

In view of the two methods of hard-copy and online questionnaire used in this study, in order to avoid significant differences in data sources and biases, the paper questionnaire and online questionnaire were tested for non-response bias. In this study, an independent sample t-test was used to test whether the two samples are homogenous, and whether the appeal possibilities of the two questionnaires are significantly different. As shown in Table 1, the result is not significant, so it can be inferred that there is no significant difference in the sample source of this study.

**Table 1. Independent sample t-test**

<b>sources</b>	<b>MEAN</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
<b>hard-copy</b>	5.30	0.78	0.189	0.936
<b>online</b>	5.28	0.56		

### *Sample Characteristics*

A total of 491 valid responses were received back via online platform (298 samples) and hard-copy (193 samples) Questionnaire in China. Descriptive statistics showed that 58 percent of the respondents were female and 42 percent were male. The majority ages of respondents between 20-29 years (49.2%). In descending order, ages 30 and 39 (38.5%), ages 40-49 years (10%), below age 19 years (2.1%), and over ages 50

years (0.2%). The educational background: college level (50.1%), high school (46.3%), junior high school or lower (3%) and Master's degree or higher (0.6%). The professions: service industry (40.7%) and the financial industry (28.6%), followed by primary industry (Agriculture, forestry, fishing, animal husbandry) (15.1%), military, civil service, and education sector (14%), manufacturing industry (1%) and commerce (0.6%). The follow-up frequency: less than 2 days / weekly (5.2%), 2-3 days /

weekly (7.8%), 4-5 days / weekly (38.8%), more than 5 days / weekly (48.2%). Have you bought the products recommended by the blogger: Yes (88.9%), no (11.1%).

### Measurement Model

Next, rigorous structural equation modeling was employed to perform statistical analyses and tests on the measurement and structural models. A confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the various dimensions to ensure questionnaire reliability and validity. In

the reliability analysis, all observed variables were required to have a factor loading (Hair et al., 1992) and squared multiple correlation (SMC) greater than 0.5 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). In the convergent validity analysis, the reliability, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) of each individual item was considered (Hair et al., 1998), as shown in Table 2. In the discriminate validity analysis, the square root of the average variance extracted (SQAVE) was required to be greater than the correlation coefficients of other dimensions (Hair et al., 1998), as indicated in Table 3.

**Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity Analysis**

Research Construct	Observed Variable	Factor Loading ( $\lambda$ )>0.5 (Hair et al., 1992)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)>0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981)	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )>0.7(Cronbach, 1951)	Composite Reliability (CR)>0.7 (Hair et al., 1998)
Attitude, ATT	ATT1	0.82	0.6698	0.853	0.8583
	ATT2	0.88			
	ATT3	0.75			
Sense of worth, SOW	SOW1	0.88	0.723	0.885	0.8867
	SOW2	0.84			
	SOW3	0.83			
Personality,PER	PER1	0.82	0.7827	0.911	0.9151
	PER2	0.94			
	PER3	0.89			
Belief, BEL	BEL1	0.88	0.6961	0.872	0.8727
	BEL2	0.84			
	BEL3	0.78			
Perception, PERC	PERC1	0.77	0.715	0.883	0.8822
	PERC2	0.84			
	PERC3	0.92			
Cognitive Ability, CA	CA1	0.88	0.7574	0.903	0.9035
	CA2	0.89			

	CA3	0.84			
Interpersonal Attraction, IA	IA1	0.80	0.7238	0.886	0.887
	IA2	0.87			
	IA3	0.88			
Trust, TRU	TRU1	0.90	0.7575	0.903	0.9035
	TRU2	0.84			
	TRU3	0.87			
Product Type, PT	PT1	0.78	0.6572	0.886	0.8845
	PT2	0.78			
	PT3	0.86			
	PT4	0.82			
Purchase Intention, PI	PI1	0.89	0.7387	0.911	0.9184
	PI2	0.87			
	PI3	0.91			
	PI4	0.76			

**Table 3. Discriminate Validity Analysis**

	CA	PERC	BEL	PER	SOW	ATT	IA	TRU	PI	MEAN	S.D.
CA	0.870									5.36	.98
PERC	0.869	0.846								5.10	.94
BEL	0.857	0.836	0.834							5.59	.90
PER	0.866	0.829	0.817	0.885						5.40	.96
SOW	0.862	0.843	0.826	0.877	0.850					5.48	.93
ATT	0.834	0.833	0.821	0.881	0.813	0.818				5.51	1.02
IA	0.867	0.825	0.833	0.884	0.846	0.813	0.850			5.45	.95
TRU	0.869	0.799	0.828	0.853	0.845	0.792	0.848	0.870		4.61	1.26
PI	0.820	0.727	0.827	0.777	0.769	0.721	0.836	0.850	0.859	5.16	1.01

NOTE:

1. The value of the diagonal elements (the part of shadow): AVE square root.
2. Off-diagonal elements: The correlations among the constructs.
3. Distinguish the discriminant validity: The value of the diagonal elements should be larger than the off-diagonal element.

### *Structural Model Test*

Fitness Assessment of the Theoretical Model.

The model fit evaluation of the theoretical model should include the evalua-

tion of the internal and external quality of the model. The evaluation of model suitability should use multiple adaptability index values for comprehensive judgment, because each model fit index reflects the calculation characteristics of different models, and index values that

do not meet the model acceptance criteria are also statistically significant. It should not be ignored. This study will refer to Bagozzi and Yi (1988), Bentler (1995), Hair (2009), etc. for model fit

analysis and verification of the overall structure model. The results show that the theoretical model has a good model fit (as shown in Table 4.).

**Table 4. the Model Fit of Theoretical Model**

Model Fit Index	Suggestion	This Study
$\chi^2$	The smaller the better	1267.391
df (degree of freedom)	The bigger the better	327
$\chi^2/df$	$1 < X^2/df < 5$	3.876
CFI	> 0.90	0.922
AGFI	> 0.90	0.913
RMSEA	< 0.80	0.077
SRMR	< 0.80	0.0374
TLI(NNFI)	> 0.90	0.922
CFI	> 0.90	0.932
IFI	> 0.90	0.933

*Structural Model and Hypothesis Test*

Through the calculation of AMOS, the path coefficients from H1 to H8 in the structural model are shown to be significant and reach the significant standard ( $p < 0.05$ ), whether between the observed variable and the latent variable or in the latent variable, to prove that we are in the structural model. The hypothesis is supported (see Figure 2. and Table 5.).

*Moderation Effect Test*

Multi-group Structural Equation Model.

This study uses the multi-group structural equation model to examine the effects of moderator variables. When testing the moderating effects, the fol-

lowing three steps to confirm the presence of moderating effects:

- i. Grouping the moderator variables (high group and low group).
- ii. Validating the effectiveness of grouping.
- iii. Multi-group structural equation model.

According to Joreskog and Sorbom (1996), this study uses the multi-group structural equation model (AMOS) to analyze second-order model of identical concept in both high group and low group, and to test whether the model presented moderator effect. First, constructing three structural equation models

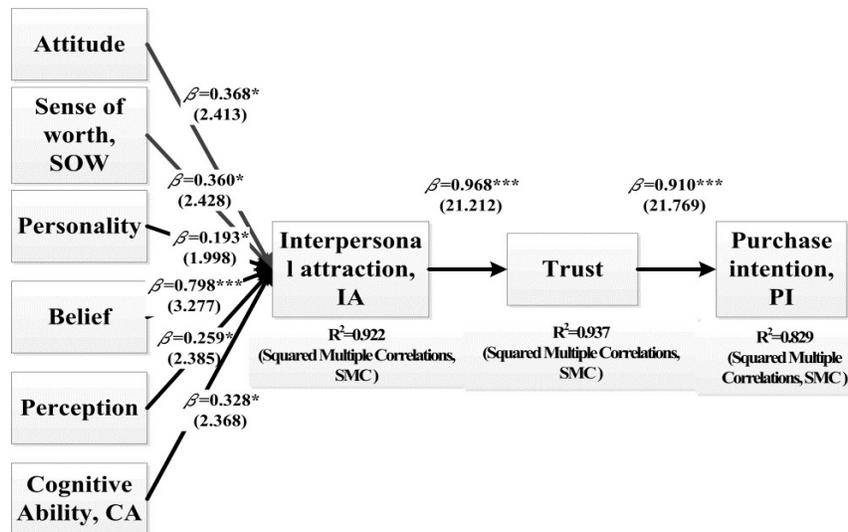


Figure 2. the Full Structural Model Path Test

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

Table 5. Results of Hypothesis Test

Path	C.R. (t-value)	P-value (Significant level)	Hypothesis
ATT → IA	2.413	0.013 (*)	Support H1
SOW → IA	2.428	0.015 (*)	Support H2
PER → IA	1.998	0.048 (*)	Support H3
BEL → IA	3.277	0.001 (***)	Support H4
PERC → IA	2.385	0.033 (*)	Support H5
CA → IA	2.368	0.038 (*)	Support H6
IA → TRU	21.212	less than 0.001 (***)	Support H7
TRU → PI	21.769	less than 0.001 (***)	Support H8

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01; \*\*\*p < .001

Table 6. Identical Test Results of Two Sample Path Coefficients

Model	Explanation	Chi-square value	Degree of Freedom	The difference of Chi-square value with model 1
Model 1	Baseline Model	1786.794	654	
Model 2	Moderating Model	1787.858	655	<b>1.064</b>

(SEM) include of full sample SEM, high group SEM and low group SEM to examine the model fit test of single sample. (See Table 6.).

Although the path coefficient of the high group is greater than the path coefficient of the low group (see Table 7.), the difference of the chi-square value between Baseline Model and Moderating

Model is not greater than 3.84 ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) under 1 degree of freedom. Thus, based on the analysis results of the moderating path, when the audience is in a "high trust state" with the blogger, there is no

significant difference in their purchase intentions for different product types. Product type has no moderating effect on trust and purchase intention. The H9 of this study was not supported.

**Table 7. Moderating Path Analysis Results of High and Low Group**

Path		TRU→ PI
The Estimated Value	Low Group	0.835
	High Group	0.973

### Conclusion

Based on the similarity attraction theory, this research attempts to establish a generalized model in the context of virtual interpersonal interactions of the Internet generation to effectively explain the key influence factors of bloggers' purchase intentions of audiences. According to the results of data analysis, this research has the following conclusions.

The similarity of sense of worth has a positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction. When the audience's Sense of worth is more similar to the blogger, the blogger's interpersonal attraction to the audience is higher. Although the blogger and the audience are "Netizens" who have never met in the physical world, as long as the blogger can make the audience feel that they have consistent sense of worth during the virtual interaction process, they can positively increase the audience's interpersonal attraction ability. In other words, the audience does not need to reinvest in

psychological and cognitive resources for the product information shared by the blogger to evaluate the consistency of their sense of self-worth, thereby reducing the cost of consumer decision-making and psychological burden.

The similarity of beliefs has a positive and significant impact on interpersonal attraction. When the audience's beliefs are similar to the blogger's beliefs, the blogger's interpersonal attractiveness to the audience is higher. Belief is one's own views and opinions, one that you think you can be sure of, and the tendency of people to treat things, others, or certain opinions. If the blogger and the audience can have similar views on a thing, then the blogger will have a better chance of attracting the audience's long-term attention. Therefore, the closer the blogger's beliefs are to the audience, the more the products they recommend will be recognized by the audience. In summary, as evidenced by many previous literatures that use physical situations as the background (Byrne, 1971; Riordan, 2000; Schneider et al., 1995). In the virtual context, this research also

confirms that the similarity with attitudes, personality, perception, and cognitive ability has a positive and significant influence on interpersonal attraction.

Interpersonal attraction has a positive and significant impact on trust. In consumption decision-making, there are more perceptual risks and uncertainties in the network environment than in the physical environment. Trust is a stable feeling that an individual has confidence in others or things. This feeling helps to greatly reduce the perceived risk and uncertainty of the individual. However, trust is a process of continuous accumulation and development. Only through the accumulation of similarity effects of Attitude, Sense of worth, Personality, Belief, Perception, and Cognitive Ability that can attract the long-term attention of the audience, and develop excellent interpersonal attraction ability. And to promote the audience's acquisition of external information and the construction of internal knowledge, it will be more Relying on the sharing of bloggers. And further enhance the trust in bloggers positively.

Trust has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. When the trust of the audience is more positive, the intention to purchase is stronger. Trust has always been an important factor in purchasing decisions. Especially in a virtual network environment, the audience cannot feel the authenticity of the product, and can only obtain information through the sharing and recommendation of bloggers. Therefore, in addition to establishing a good image during the in-

teraction process, bloggers must also have knowledge of the product in order to enhance the trust of the audience and positively influence the audience's purchase intention. Finally, the product type has no significant moderating effect on trust and purchase intention in this study. It means that the audience's strong positive sense of trust in bloggers is sufficient to eliminate many perceptual risks that may be caused by different product types.

## Discussion

### *Theoretical Implications*

Based on the similarity attraction theory, this study successfully transfers the situation of interpersonal attraction from the physical society to the virtual community interaction, trying to construct a general and effective explanation of the influencer economic model, and incorporates the product type as a moderating variable based on theoretical principles. The interpersonal similarity constructs used in this study include: attitude, Sense of worth, personality, belief, perception, and cognitive ability. The empirical results of this theoretical model are consistent with the previous literature results based on the physical context (Byrne, 1971; Riordan, 2000; Schneider et al., 1995). Moreover, the data of this research shows that exogenous variables explain the variation of interpersonal attraction the amount reached 92.2%. The ability to explain the variation of trust reached 93.7%. The ability to explain the variation of purchase intention reached 82.9%. Obviously, the similar attraction theory can effectively explain why the

current economic model of influencers in virtual communities is booming in China. In addition, it is worth noting that the results of this study show that product type does not have a significant moderating effect between trust and purchase intention. It is known from consumer behavior that consumers should have varying degrees of perceived risk and uncertainty for different product types, which in turn will have an interactive moderating effect on the individual's internal trust, and ultimately affect their purchase intention or behavior. In other words, in the face of high financial risk, high social risk, or high health risk and other types of products, consumers' trust in bloggers should be significantly weakened. However, the above viewpoints have no supported by data analysis in this theoretical model. Stand by. Why is it so? Looking back at the sample characteristics of this study, we found that 87% of the audience who followed bloggers for more than 4 days per week on average, and 88.9% of the samples who had continuously purchased products because of bloggers' recommendations. Both high frequency of attention and continuous purchase mean that the audience has a high degree of trust in the blogger. Therefore, the results of this research subvert the one-way logical interpretation of perceptual risk to trust in academic theory. On the contrary, a high degree of trust can eliminate a high degree of perceptual risk and uncertainty.

#### *Managerial Implications*

The blogger has made the self-media business model develop and succeed

rapidly. The results of this study also provide practical implications for practical operations. First, getting attention is the primary key factor that affects intention or behavior. The results show that if bloggers want to create a strong interpersonal attraction, they must use interaction to highlight their similarities with the audience in attitude, Sense of worth, personality, belief, perception, and cognitive ability. In other words, bloggers should pay attention to the content they publish or share, and value audience comments and participation. 1) Encourage the audience to express their opinions freely, and pay attention to their comments, especially negative comments. 2) The blogger must deliver real information and correctly guide the audience's cognitive ability. 3) The information posted by the blogger must be commentary. When the audience discusses the published information publicly, other audiences can also receive comments and give responses. 4) Bloggers should try their best to stay online, or publish regular online schedules to facilitate communication and interaction and solve audiences' confusion in a timely manner. 5) Bloggers can periodically hold offline fan interaction activities, which can either have face-to-face communication with loyal audiences, or eliminate virtual distances and further enhance their interpersonal attraction. Furthermore, according to the analysis results, the path coefficient of interpersonal attraction to trust is 0.968 ( $R^2=0.937$ ). More importantly, the audience's trust in bloggers, and there will not be significant differences due to the different perceived risks implied by different product types. The

path coefficient of trust to purchase intention is 0.91 ( $R^2=0.829$ ). Obviously, creating a high degree of interpersonal attraction is the main key factor that to acquire the audiences' trust, and indirectly dominates the purchase intention of consumers. Finally, a blogger is a brand, and the future of this type of influencer economy can develop towards a value chain model of industrialization, specialization, and division of labor in China. For example, the blogger's exclusive brokerage companies, the company responsible for subsequent marketing activities, etc.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

1. This research only revises the constructive questions developed by scholars through literature discussion. Perhaps through the process of qualitative research, we can further clarify whether there are differences in these measures or concepts, so as to put forward more valuable arguments. Therefore, this study suggests that subsequent researchers can conduct both qualitative and quantitative research and conduct comprehensive discussions.
2. Although this study demonstrates that a high degree of trust can eliminate the perceived risks caused by product types, however, looking back at the sample characteristics, high frequency of attention (more than 4 days / weekly: 87%), and purchase experience (yes: 88.9%), It does occupy the majority of the sample. Despite this, it was still actually reflects the results of random sampling. In this regard, whether follow-up studies can obtain different demonstration results with different sample characteristics remains to be carried out in the future.
3. In China, the influencer economy is a booming online business model. This study conducted a cross-sectional study at a specific point in time, although it has its theoretical and practical contributions. However, such conclusions are not sufficient to infer that the longitudinal study can show with environmental change factors. Therefore, follow-up research can carry out periodic empirical discussion.

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