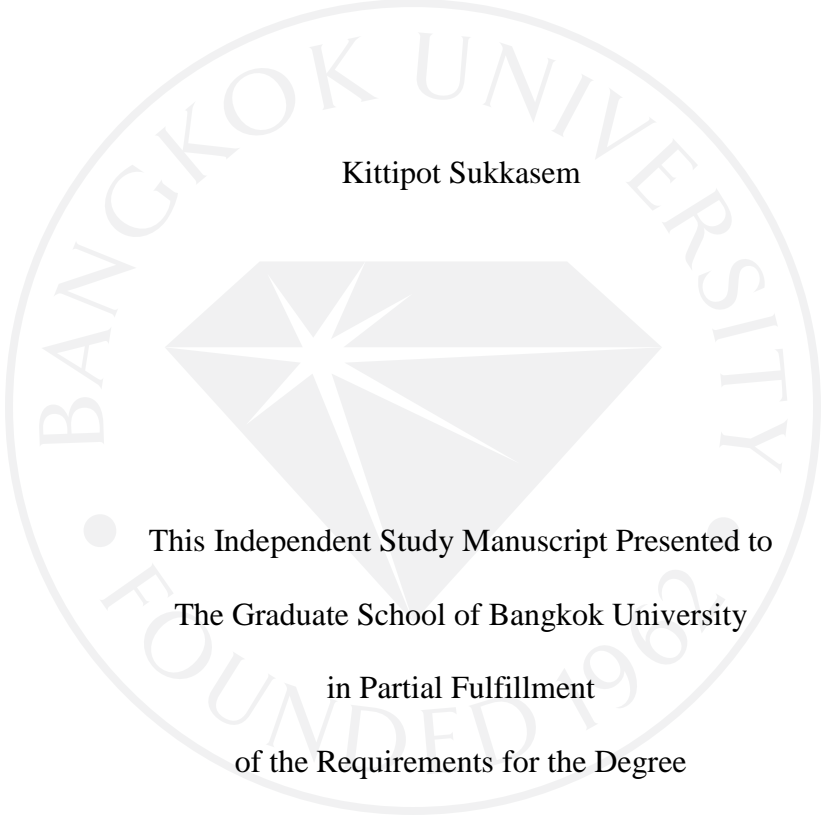


**INVESTIGATING THE IMPACTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE  
INFLUENTIAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE INTENTION TO PURSUE  
PLASTIC SURGERY AMONG GEN Y CONSUMERS IN THAILAND**



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Kittipot Sukkasem



This Independent Study Manuscript Presented to  
The Graduate School of Bangkok University  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Business Administration

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the Graduate School  
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Investigating the Impacts of Social Media on the Influential Factors Affecting the Intention to Pursue Plastic Surgery among Gen Y Consumers in Thailand (68 pp.)

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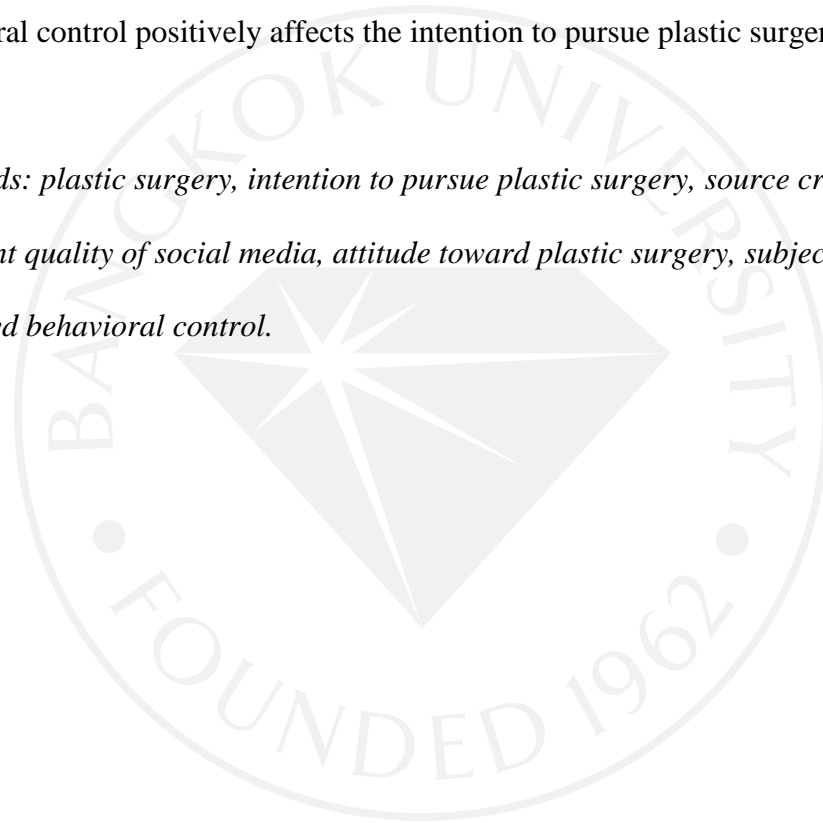
### **ABSTRACT**

This study intends to investigate the influence of source credibility and argument quality of social media on the attitude toward plastic surgery, and to further investigate the influence of attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

The quantitative approach was employed with the use of questionnaire survey focusing on Thai consumers aged 18-35 in Bangkok. The data collection involved the convenience sampling. The data was collected from 400 Gen Y respondents in Bangkok metropolitan area through online questionnaire provided by Google Forms. The multiple linear regression was used as the statistical technique for the hypothesis testing. Of 400 respondents, the majority of them were female, and were 23 – 30 years old. Most respondents had Bachelor's degree as their highest education level, and earned around 15,000 – 30,000 baht per month. All respondents in this study usually used social media in their daily lives, in which Facebook was mostly used; followed by Line, Instagram, YouTube, and Pantip, respectively.

The results from the hypothesis testing indicated that source credibility and argument quality can collectively explain the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y by 59.9%. Source credibility of social media negatively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery, while argument quality positively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. Meanwhile, attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

*Keywords: plastic surgery, intention to pursue plastic surgery, source credibility, argument quality of social media, attitude toward plastic surgery, subject norm, perceived behavioral control.*



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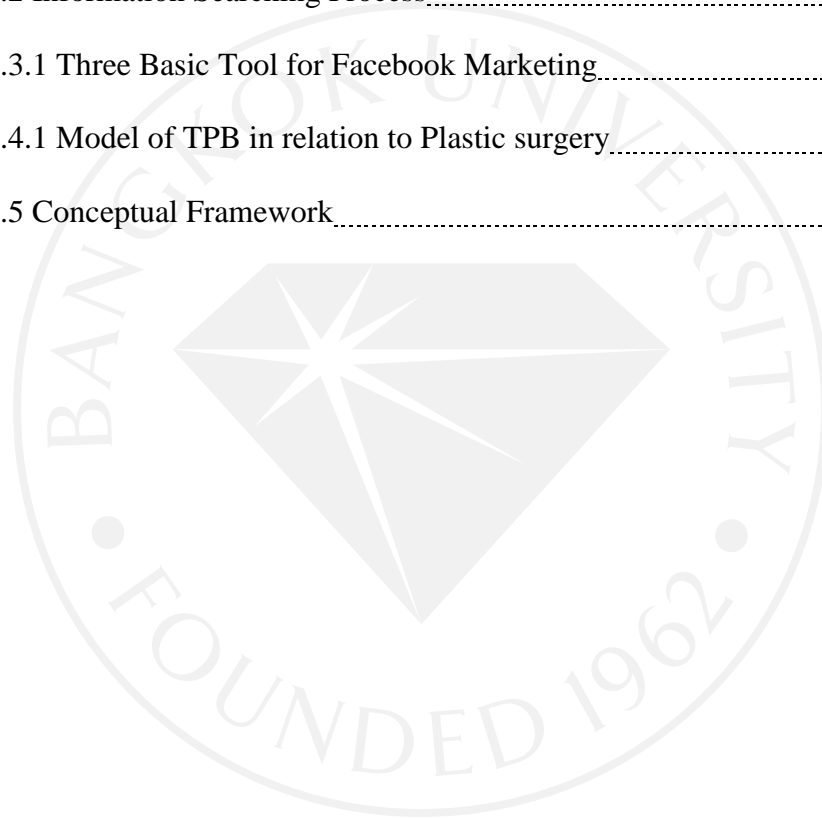
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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is to present research background, problem statement, research objectives, scope of research, and significance of the study.

#### **1.1 Research Background**

Following the suggestion of Dhanraj (2006), plastic surgery is a multifaceted problem-solving specialty combining function, form, principle, and technique where defects and deformities of the skin as well as underlying structures are dealt with. These require a unique solution to permanently change an individual's physical appearance, not for medical reasons but to please the eyes of the beholder. The American Society of Plastic Surgeons, as cited in Andrade (2010), defined plastic surgery as “procedures or operations changing the appearance, texture, color, position, or structure of bodily features, which are rarely undertaken for medical reasons”. In addition, plastic surgery involves a certain level of physical, psychological, and financial risks. Fischer et al (2013), potential medical complications and side effects from plastic surgery may include infection, mortality, loss of sensation, blood loss, scarring, blindness, nerve injury, embolisms, and significant pains. Meanwhile, psychological distress, disappointment, depression, and anxiety may occur postoperatively (Fischer et al, 2013). Boyle (2012) stated that the major driver for the growth of demand for plastic surgery is aging population and reflection of people's desire to stay looking young as well as to acquire

good social image. Kennard (2007) added that men also started to put more concern on their appearance and have sought the advantages provided by cosmetic therapies.

In 2014, there were over 20 million plastic surgical and nonsurgical procedures across the globe, according to data received of ISASPS Global Survey (2015). This included 9.65 million surgical procedures and 10.59 non-surgical procedures. In regard to plastic surgical procedures, breast augmentation is the most popular plastic surgery for women, while eyelid surgery is the most popular plastic surgery for men. The report revealed that plastic surgical procedures in men grew to 13.7% in 2014 from 12.8% in 2013. Further, the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery or ASAPS (2015) reported the growing number of young consumers across the globe that have positive attitude toward and opt for plastic surgery, in which young consumers whose ages under 34 years old accounted for about 20% of the total market. This phenomenon of plastic surgery is likely to be occurred among young consumers in Thailand. There has been growing number of population undergoing plastic surgical procedures for beauty in the country, in which the majority of them remained women (Marketeer, 2017). Common plastic surgery procedures like breast enlargement or augmentation can cost more than 30,000 baht, excluding the associated costs for implant replacement. The positive growth in Thai consumers preparing to accept the expenses and associated risks from plastic surgery reflects the bright prospects for the plastic surgery market, which was worth about 30,000 million baht in 2016, as reported by Marketeer (2017).

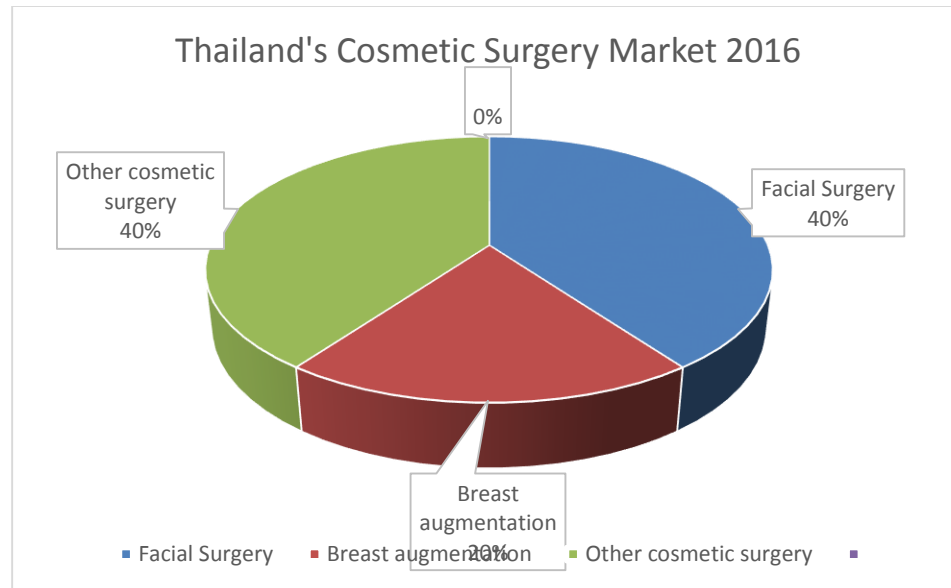


Figure 1.1: Thailand's Plastic Surgery Market in 2016

Source: Marketeer. (2017). *Thailand's Plastic Surgery Market 2016*. Retrieved from <http://marketeer.co.th/archives/78258>

From Figure 1.1, of 30,000 million baht, facial surgery is the largest market for 40%, followed by breast augmentation for 20%, and the rest 40% for other plastic surgeries. Although there was no exact market share of key players in the market, the major players which were reviewed and recommended in the social media such as Pantip.com mostly include those of private hospitals such as Asia Cosmetic Hospital, Yanhee Hospital, and Lelux Hospital, and beauty clinics such as Meko Clinic, Jintarak Clinic, Beyond the Sea Clinic, and Masterpiece Clinic (Marketeer, 2017).

One of the major reasons for the growing demand of plastic surgery has been attributed to consumers' media exposure (Wen, Chia, & Hao, 2016; Slevic & Tiggemann, 2010). Nabi (2009) suggested that the attitude toward plastic surgery positively affects the likelihood of undergoing plastic surgical procedures among young

consumers. Chia and Poo (2009) pointed out that media normally feature idealized celebrities for the admired appearance and body image that young consumers seem to have high involvement with such celebrities. They further added that a society with high power distance (like Thai society), young consumers are likely to be vulnerable to the effects of celebrity endorsement, and thus they are likely to adopt the behavior of celebrities undergoing plastic surgery as to achieve a look that is similar to that of their idealized celebrities. This research therefore intends to investigate the influence of social media on the attitude toward plastic surgery among young consumers in Thailand.

In regard to the adoption of business's social media regardless to its sizes, Shumanov and Ewing (2007) pointed out that there are growing number of marketers and brand owners engaging in the use of social media to interact and communicate with their customers and potential customers. In Thailand, the country had the internet users of about 38 million people, which accounted for 56% of total population in 2016, as reported by the research agency WeAreSocial (2016). Of which, 30 million people accessed to the internet through their smartphones, which accounted for 45% of total population. The top five active social platforms were Facebook, Line, Facebook messenger, Google+, and Instagram.



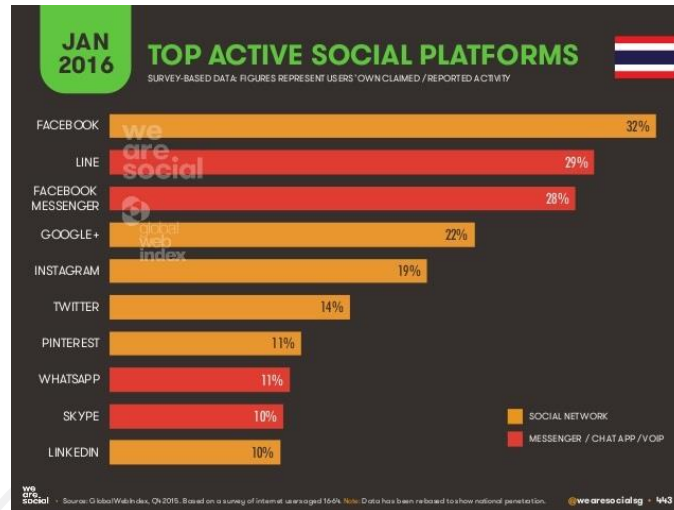


Figure 1.2: Most Active Social Platforms

Source: We Are Social. (2016). *Most Active Social Platforms*. Retrieved from <http://www.veedvil.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/10-Top-Active-Social-Platforms-in-Thailand-Jan-2016.jpg>

In regard to the fast growing social media users in the Thai market, it means that consumers in the market are satisfied with their social media use, which in turn has driven the importance of this digital technology to become a strategic tool for developing online distribution channel, as well as branding, and marketing strategies in many businesses across the industries, particularly in the B2C market. As explained by Elzinga, Mulder & Vetvik (2009), the growth of social media has become the major source of information in making the purchase decision of consumers. Meanwhile, Euromonitor (2016) mentioned that IT will continue to affect the sales and promotions in B2C market in Thailand. The use of social media in an effective manner should allow the business such as medical service centers to develop online communication channel to inform, and persuade the potential customers.

While most of plastic surgery was young consumers, this has driven the significance of factors affecting the purchasing decision, attitudes, and patterns among Gen Y consumers. The purchasing power of previous generation like the baby boomers has been an engine for the economic growth, but this group of consumers is now aging, as mentioned by Belleau et al. (2007). Although they are still a dominant market segment, the group of Gen Y has been growing its significant as larger segment with more spending power in a large number of consumer products, which is also true in the plastic surgery market in many countries. According to Martin and Bush (2000), Gen Y consumers seem to have more spending power, faster adoption to new product or service, stronger ability to be trendsetters, and greater potential for being a lifetime customer. Further, they recognize their purchasing potential and tend to spend their money as fast as they acquire it, particularly on a number of consumer goods and personal services, as suggested by Der Hovanesian (1999). Comparing with previous generations, Noble et al. (2009) observed that Gen Y consumers are likely to have different purchasing patterns that shape their purchasing behaviors. They seem to choose and consume product that reflects their self-identity, self-value, self-expression, and/or self-image. They also use their knowledge about updated trends, reputations, and images of brands, products, or sellers to be considered as an expert or leader among their social group. They seem to have a certain level of trust and confidence toward brand name products more than the previous generations. In addition, they have the desire for making the best decisions regarding to price, quality, and environments. They prefer not be sold, but to be seen,

known, and respected, which in turn require the understanding, insight, and empathy to pursue them (Yarrow & O'Donnell, 2009).

In this context, the researcher aims to incorporate the influence of social media to explicate the media influence of celebrities and information on Gen Y people's attitudes toward plastic surgery, social influence, perceived behavioral control or self-efficacy, and intention to pursue plastic surgery in Thailand. From the previous studies, according to the study of Marketing Conference Service (2013), the study of East Asian men and women revealed that self-esteem and self-image are the essential factors affecting the addictive consumer behaviors toward plastic surgery. The finding also indicated that young consumers have about 5 times higher than elder consumers to engage or repeat plastic surgery. Following the study of Wen (2017) on "Celebrity Influence and Young People's Attitudes toward Plastic surgery in Singapore: The Role of Parasocial Relationships and Identification", the results suggested that exposure to mediated celebrities has both direct and indirect influence on the attitude toward plastic surgery among young consumers, in which the findings confirmed the influence of celebrity endorsement and the further impact on health communication. Meanwhile, the study of Paraskeva (2016) on "An experimental study examining the impact of exposure to plastic surgery advertising on women's body image and intentions to undergo plastic surgery", suggested that women exposed to advertising that features models showed higher level of body dissatisfaction than those exposed to advertising with no model.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The popularity of undertaking plastic surgery in the Thai society has been driven mainly by appearance dissatisfaction, growing availability of less costly procedures, and normalisation of plastic surgery. According to Sarwer and Crerand (2004), body dissatisfaction is one of the major reasons of individuals undergoing a plastic surgery. Meanwhile, Slevic and Tiggemann (2010) argued that favorable attitude towards plastic surgery and body satisfaction are the best predictors for the intention to undergo plastic surgery in developed countries. The influence of media on the intention to undergo plastic surgery was also confirmed in the prior researches. For example, to Sarwer and Crerand (2004) pointed out that media coverage of marketing and advertisement for plastic surgery contributes significantly for the growth of plastic surgical procedures. With the large and growing number of social media users in the Thai market, there has been growing number of business regardless to their sizes and industries using social media to interact with its customers and potential customers as well as to enhance the relationship with them. However, the effectiveness of social media for marketing communication has not been proved yet and should be the interesting issues for the investigation. In this regard, examining the impact of social media on the factors affecting the intention to undergo plastic surgery for beauty would help marketers of beauty clinic centers or hospitals in Thailand to further enhance their marketing communication for attracting the potential customers.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

There are three research objectives, which are

- To investigate the influence of source credibility and argument quality of social media on the attitude toward plastic surgery.
- To investigate the influence of attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

### **1.4 Research Scope**

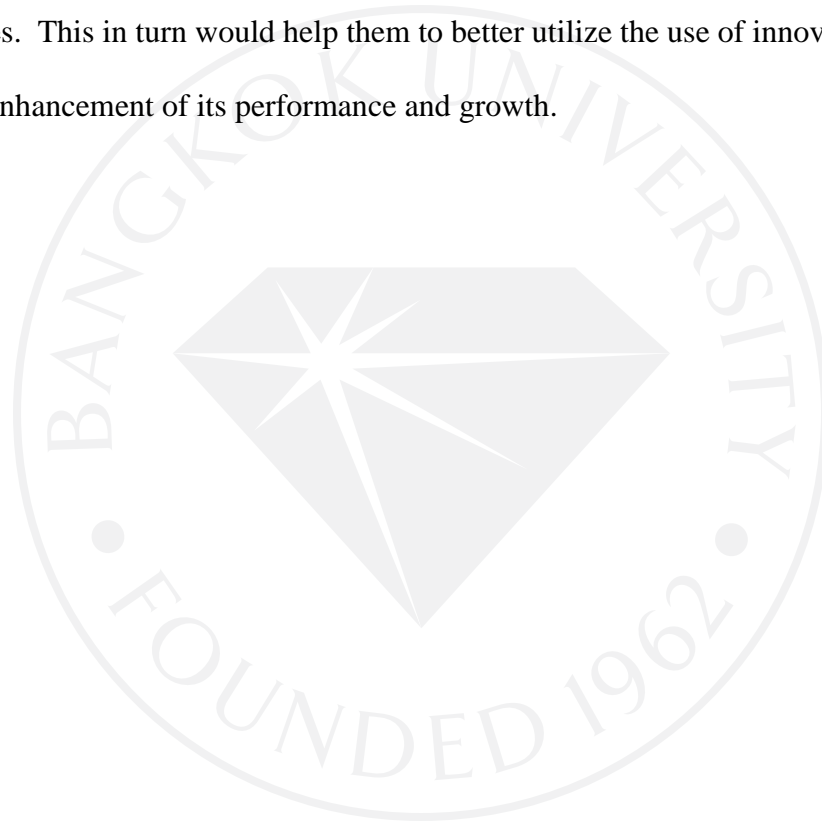
In concerning with the research objectives, the quantitative approach was employed with the use of online questionnaire survey focusing on Thai consumers aged 18-35 in Bangkok. The data collection involved the convenience sampling. The independent variables include attitude toward plastic surgery, social influence, perceived behavioral control; and one dependent variable which is the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

With the growing number of social media users in Thailand and across the globe, there is no surprise that social media platforms such as Facebook could attract the attention of SMEs to engage in type of technology for sales and marketing purposes. In the marketing context, social media is one of the important and powerful communication

tools. However, this new type of media requires the firms with distinguish marketing communication strategies in the form of firm-created content and user-created content.

The results of this research can help SMEs, particularly those in medical care service to strengthen their competitiveness in preparing for the digital economy, in which the results can be used as a guideline to enhance the effectiveness marketing communication strategies. This in turn would help them to better utilize the use of innovative technology for the enhancement of its performance and growth.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter is to demonstrate the relevant concepts, and theories relating to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), consumer's online information searching, and social media. In addition, the previous studies, conceptual framework, and research hypotheses are explained and stated in this chapter.

#### **2.1 Theory of Planned Behavior**

Ajzen (1991) proposed the model of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) for explaining planned behaviors, in which the theory adds the perceived behavioral control as an additional construct to the TRA. Based on the TPB, Ajzen (1991) demonstrated that behavioral intention is a function of an individual's beliefs in three areas, including behavioral beliefs reflecting the attitude toward the probable outcomes of the behavior, normative beliefs or subjective norm reflecting the beliefs about the normative expectations of influential others, and control beliefs or perceived behavioral control reflecting the beliefs about the absence or presence of factors facilitating the performance of the behavior. These three constructs under the TPB model are considered as influential factors affecting various behaviors both indirectly and directly through the mechanism of influencing behavioral intentions (Armitage & Connor, 2001).

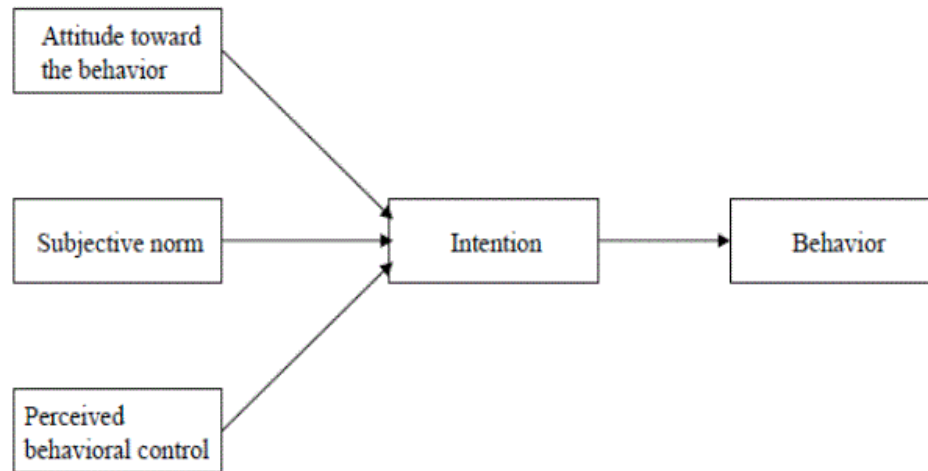


Figure 2.1: TPB Model

Source: Ajzen, A. (1991). *TPB Model*. Retrieved from

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/An-Extended-TPB-Model-to-Explain-Potential-to-in-Fang-Shao/51be4792db5298fc713740fcf0ccaa86b57e3cae>

As suggested by Ajzen (1991), the TPB, an extension of the theory of reasoned action incorporates both social influences and personal factors as predictors, specifying the influence of attitude, subjective norm (SN), and perceived behavioral control (PBC) on the intention, which further influence the behavior.

### 2.1.1 Attitude toward Behavior

Following the suggestion of Kretch et. al. (1962), attitude under TPB model is defined as “enduring systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional feelings, and pro or con action tendencies with respect to social objects”, in which Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) stated that the attitude holding by an individual towards any object is more likely to involve with the overall pattern of his or her response to such object. Further, Fishbein



et. al. (1974) suggested that attitude and behavior are associated when the behavior being observed is considered as being relevant to the attitudes; when the attitude and behavior are observed at comparable levels of specificity, as well as when mediation of the attitude-behavior relation by behavioral intention is being concerned. Fishbein et al (1974) mentioned that behavior is mediated by behavioral intention, which is affected by attitudes and social norms. In addition, Fazio (1986) suggested that the attitudes and behaviors are associated if such attitudes are relied on direct experiences with the attitude object, as well as to the extent that the attitudes are cognitively accessible. As suggested by Orji et al (2012), motivation to take action to undergo plastic surgery for beauty requires the belief that it will provide strong positive benefits and/or the tendency of reducing the negative ones. The personal perception of risk has been found to be an important perception in promoting the adoption of health-related behaviors (Abraham and Sheeran, 2005). Also, it deals with an individual's subjective belief in the extent of harm that can be caused from acquiring the disease or unhealthy state, as a result of a particular behavior.

### **2.1.2 Subjective Norm**

Under TPB, Ajzen (1991) defined the term subjective norm as the perception of social pressure in relevant to performing a particular behavior or not to performing such behavior, in which it influences one's decision to perform or not to perform such behavior. According to Kalafatis et al. (1999), the subjective norm can be created from friends, family, public, endorsers, politics, and others; while Teo and Lee (2010)

suggested that subjective norm in the forms of reference groups, family, friends, and co-worker significantly affects the intention of an individual toward a particular behavior. Jabareen (2005) pointed out that cultural and social factors play an essential role in influencing the choice preferences of individuals. Kobus (2003) explained that descriptive norms motivate the individual by providing evidence as to what will likely be effective and adaptive action: "If everyone is doing it, it must be a sensible thing to do". Ravis and Sheeran (2004) found that descriptive norms increased the variance explained in intention by 5 per cent after the TPB components had been taken into account. Cialdini, Reno and Kallgren (1990) stated that the social approval or disapproval of others, what others are doing, and the concern about what is right or wrong to do are evidently important in relation to the decision to undergo plastic surgery.

### **2.1.3 Perceived Behavioral Control**

Following the suggestion of Ajzen (1991), perceived behavioral control has been added as the modification of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) because of TRA involves with the contradictory problem in its result due to the confounding association between the attitude and subjective norm, and from the assumption that intentions directly contribute to behavior with no limitations, which in turn needs further modification in its concept into Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) model as the extension of TRA model to address such issue. Therefore, perceived behavioral control is an additional construct to the TRA for taking into account the more common situation where individuals do not have complete voluntary control over their behaviors such as

when they encountered with the lack of skills or resources for performing a specific task or behavior, as further explained by Armitage and Christian (2003).

Based on the TPB, Ajzen (1991) demonstrated that control beliefs or perceived behavioral control reflects the beliefs about the absence or presence of factors facilitating the performance of the behavior. According to Ajzen (1991), as cited in Taylor and Todd (1995), the perceived behavioral control can be classified into two dimensions, which are the availability of required resources needed for engaging in the behavior such as time, money, and others, and the individual's self-confidence in the capability for performing the behavior. The concept of perceived behavioral control is most compatible with the concept of perceived self-efficacy as suggested by Bandura (1982), which is concerned with assessing how well an individual can perform needed actions to deal with specific situations. In other words, the behaviors are significantly affected by one's confidence about his or her capability in performing such behaviors, in which the perceived behavioral control is to reflect individual's perceptions of his or her ability to perform a given behavior. As explained by Rosenstock et al. (1988), people may not want to attempt to do something new unless they think that they can do it. For instance, if someone believes that to undergo plastic surgery is good, but does not think that s/he is affordable of doing it, chances are that s/he will not try to pursue for the service. In this regard, perceived behavioral control is a significant determinant of intention to pursue plastic surgery for beauty.

## 2.2 Consumer's Information Searching

Following the suggestion of Xia and Monroe (2005), the process of information searching and acquiring are the essential issue involving with decision making of consumers and their buying behaviors. They described information searching as an important step after identifying the purpose of purchase and before making the final buying decision. The consumer behavior model assumes that consumers know about the product or service in which they conduct a direct searching of choices to seek for the appropriate alternative. As suggested by Case (2007), direct and purposive information seeking involves with passive or casual information obtaining activities like browsing or glimpsing. Wilson (1999) suggested that conceptualisation of consumer's information behaviors involve with various responses to information encounter. Further, he explained consumer's information behavior as activities to identify the need for information, information searching techniques, information using or transferring to others. In other words, it lies the notion of information need, as shown in Figure 2.2.

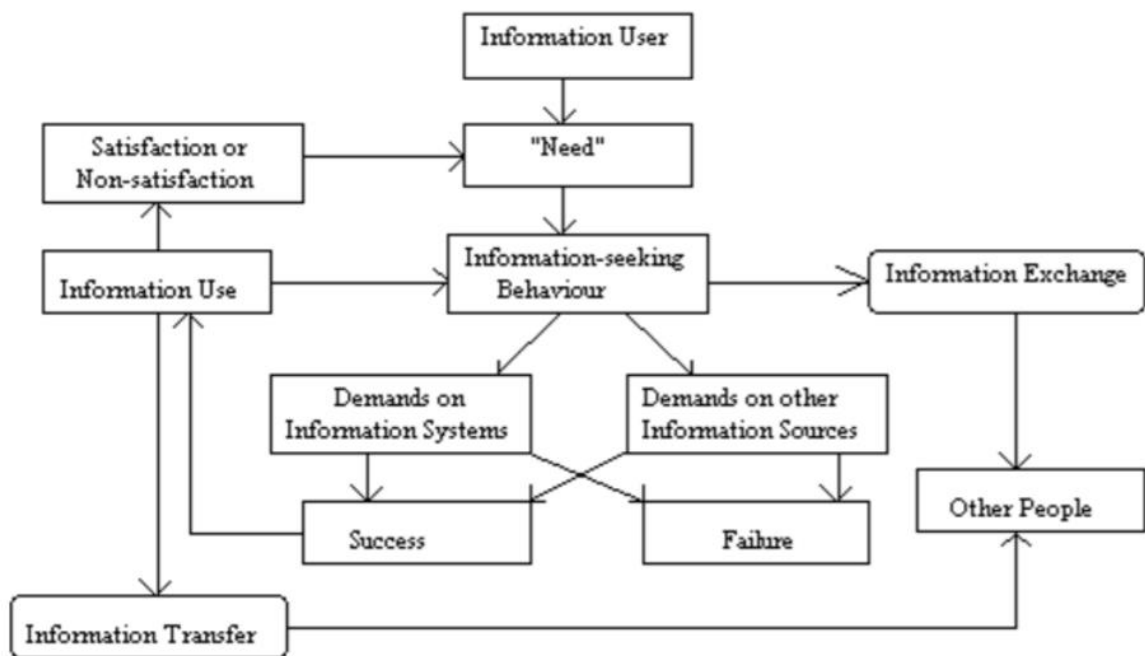


Figure 2.2: Information Searching Process

Source: Wilson. (1999). *Information Searching Process*. Retrieved from

[https://www.researchgate.net/figure/A-model-of-information-behaviour\\_fig1\\_235287687](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/A-model-of-information-behaviour_fig1_235287687)

### 2.2.1 Argument Quality

Argument quality is explained by Bhattacharjee and Sanford (2006) as a persuasive strength of argument embedded in a message. It has been widely discussed in the context of information systems and its significance has been highlighted and strongly validated in previous researches on information searching (Sher & Lee, 2009).

According to Negash et al (2003), better and more extensive information is likely to create higher satisfaction of consumers, which in turn further leads to higher purchase

intention of them. In this regard, they concluded that argument quality positively influence the purchasing intention of consumers. In the context of social media, because of reviews are posted by experienced users, thus even reviews with relatively low quality can offer useful and important information when they are positive. However, Negash et al. (2003) pointed out that more favorable intention toward the purchase of particular product or service will be created when high quality reviews are processed in the way that reviews containing relevant, understandable, and objective comments with reasonable recommendation will be more persuasive than those containing only feelings and unreasonable recommendations. In other words, reviews that are more understandable, relevant, and objective are perceived as higher quality, thus will have greater positive impact on consumer's purchasing intention (Negash et al., 2003).

### **2.2.2 Source Creditability**

Petty and Cacioppo (1986) explained source credibility as the perception of consumers as receivers toward the information source in terms of trustworthy, believable, and competent. In this regard, the credibility of communicators thus are not an intrinsic attribute of them because of the source may be perceived differently in term of credibility among different receivers. In the context of online communication, Wathen and Burkell (2002) pointed out that source creditability plays a significant role affecting the consumers' perception toward eWOM, particularly when they seek online product recommendations, which source credibility affects consumer's information persuasion process because of they are unlikely to assess the creditability of individuals providing

such recommendation. In other words, Wathen and Burkell (2002) stated that source credibility is a heuristic cue or non-content element that significantly influences consumer's information behavior. Apart from source credibility, Cheung and Tadani (2010) added that reviews valence (positive, negative, or neutral), consistency (claiming the same), volume (information quantity), and the eWOM rating are the important heuristic cues of information obtained. Meanwhile, Cheung et al. (2009) observed online product reviews are likely to provide information about reviewer together with product information. Further, today social media sites provide the personal information about individuals, and thus allows the information seekers with the ability to assess the credibility of source more conveniently. Further, Cheung et al (2009) pointed out that consumers are likely to assess the reviews together with the reviewer, in which the high level of perceived source credibility are those that are reliable, useful, and supportive knowledge transfer.

### **2.3 Social Media**

Kim and Ko (2012) mentioned that the adoption of social media by brands has grown aggressively since 2009 because of the IT technology allows the brands to interact with their customers and potential customers, in which such interaction are intended to create strong brand through improving awareness, recall, involvement, engagement, and further leads to purchase decision. Social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and others allows many businesses with a strategic tool to reach, interact, and capture the large number of target audience, as well as to build or strengthen the

relationship with the customers and potential customers in an efficient and effective ways. Yoo et al. (2000) indicated that traditional brand communication has been changed with the increasingly popularity of social media like Facebook among consumers across the globe, which make the control and management of brand communication are also dominated by consumers instead of only in the hand of marketers. Further, Yoo et al. (2000) mentioned that brand communication significantly affects the brand equity with the positive association. It means that the brand equity is enhanced if the brand communicating message can lead to positive responses toward the brand. They also indicated that effective brand communicating can leverage brand equity that it will lead to better chance to be considered by consumers in their considering options, which in turn can influence the purchasing decision of them toward the brand choice.

Bruhn et al. (2012), meanwhile, suggested that brand communication stimuli can lead to positive effects toward consumers as recipients, in which the perceived brand communication relates to a consumer's brand awareness with positive association. According to Li and Bernoff (2011), today consumers are likely to perceive firm-generated content as the advertising that arouses consumer's brand perceptions and brand awareness. At the same time, Gangadharbatla (2008) suggested that the consumers are more likely to engage in brand communication, particularly on brand communities on social media such as brand's fan page, which leads to the growing and significance of user-generated contents in term of consumer insights and brand conversation. Muntinga et al. (2012) argued that user-created content reflects the level of involvement that consumers have with the brand as part of their consumption behaviors.



In addition, Kim and Ko (2012) stated that the adoption of Facebook contributes to the spread of word of mouth and the trigger of viral marketing of many brands. As suggested by Alreck and Settle (1995), word of mouth is the interpersonal communication toward a product or service among consumers, which is considered as the influential source of information of today consumers. The spread of word of mouth either positive or negative over the internet is viral and very powerful, which can bring consumers to a common sphere for exchanging information and views. According to Kozinets (2006), social media such as Facebook offers consumers with a large space for self-expression over the Internet, in which there are many of influencers who are updated regularly with the new trends. Voltmer (2008) argued that social media like Facebook provides users with a free space for expressing their opinions, feelings, and experiences about whatever they want. Also, Facebook can be used as a tool for social interaction and bound among persons or groups, in which they are likely to engage in such interaction and bound as for finding emotional encouragement and/or support, exploring better ways in doing things, cultivating one's interest and skill, and other reasons, as suggested by Fournier and Lee (2009). According to Shumanov and Ewing (2007), the adoption and use of social media like Facebook by businesses or brands are likely to increase the chance to collect the customer insights and data, which are very useful in developing strategies to better serve their demands and expectations. On the other sides, the use of social media like Facebook offers consumers themselves with better chance to interact with seller, and other customers through their Like, Comment, and Share; and thus make them another source of brand communication (Li and Bernoff, 2011).



Figure 2.3.1: Three Basic Tool for Facebook Marketing

Source: Li and Bernoff. (2011). *Three Basic Tool for Facebook Marketing*. Retrieved from <http://www.b2bmarketingexperiences.com/2012/10/the-orchestrated-like-the-social-power-of-your-organisation/>

In the marketing point of view, the user-generated content about a brand is considered as very important. In other words, Berthon et al. (2008) described that this situation has decreased the marketers' capability, and in turn increased the complexity in controlling the brand communication in today marketplace. Meanwhile, Mangold and Faulds (2009) observed that consumer behaviors have been changed in response to the advance and rapid change of information technology that they trend to use the internet, and particularly the social media to search for the information they want; while they trend to turn away from traditional advertising media such as TV, newspapers, radio, and others, which in turn fuels the growth of online media.

## 2.4 Previous Studies

The study of Jovic et al (2014) created three scales for measuring intention of patients to undergo plastic surgery, namely attitudes toward plastic surgery, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, as main constructs of intention towards undergoing plastic surgery. Methodology presented in this work provides an excellent guide throughout the process of revealing and understanding factors that affects intention towards plastic surgery. At the same time, this methodology can be applied in different fields of contemporary business issues in the process of understanding behaviour of a modern customer.

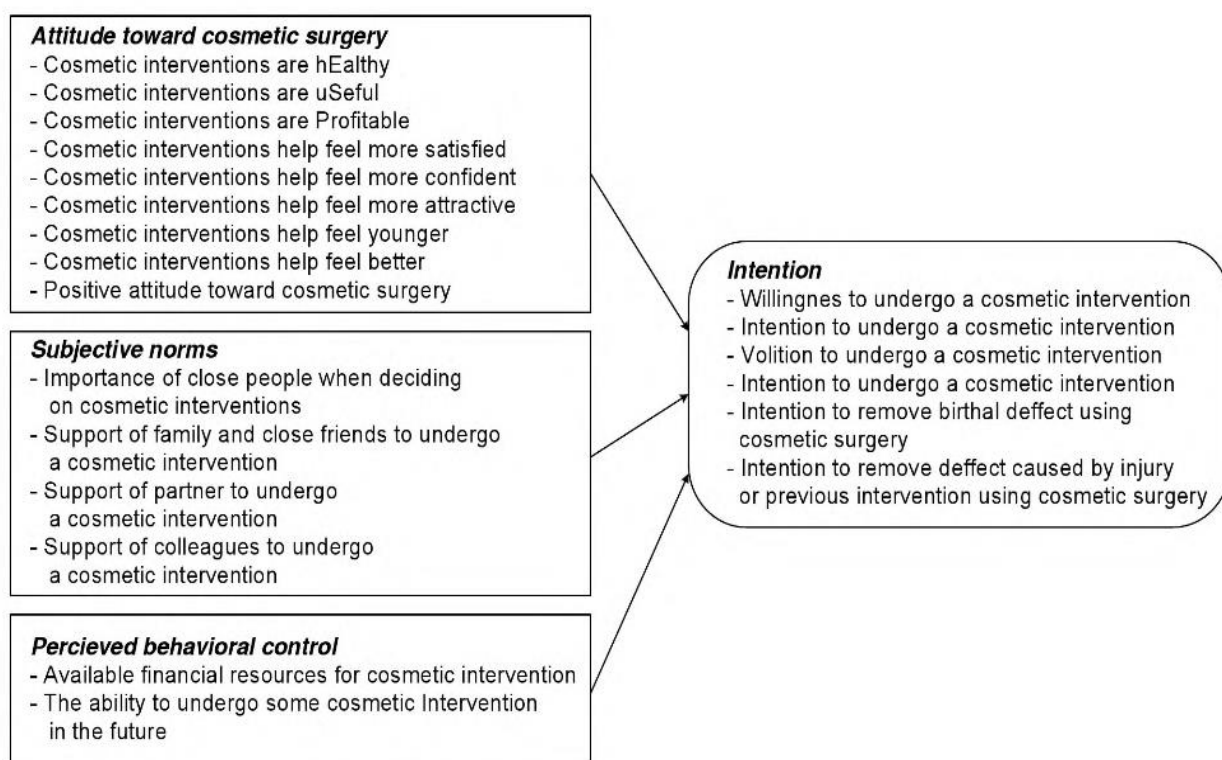


Figure 2.4.1: Model of TPB in relation to Plastic surgery

Source: Jovic et al. (2014). *Model of TPB in relation to Plastic surgery*. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274069283\\_Methodology\\_for\\_Exploring\\_Factors\\_That\\_Affect\\_Peoples\\_Intention\\_towards\\_Cosmetic\\_Surgery](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274069283_Methodology_for_Exploring_Factors_That_Affect_Peoples_Intention_towards_Cosmetic_Surgery)

Following the study of Fanoberova and Kuczkowska (2016), empirical findings demonstrated that factors of source credibility such as trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness have positive effects on the attitude toward using eWOM source, while only trustworthiness and expertise positively affect the attitude toward using neutral source. For eWOM and neutral source relationships between factors of information quality and the attitude toward using the information source were found insignificant. On the contrary, for retailer source only factors of information quality, accuracy and relevance, show positive effects on the attitude toward using retailer source. For all three sources attitudes toward using the information source and subjective norms positively affect purchase intentions.

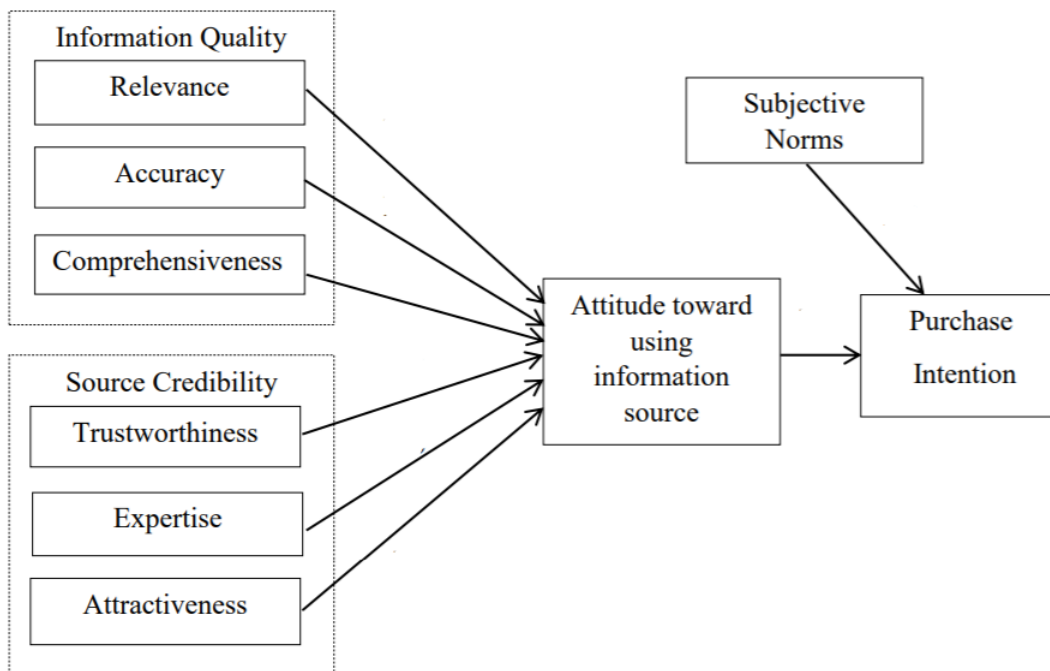


Figure 2.4.2: The Impact of Information Quality and Source Credibility

Source: Fanoberova and Kuczkowska. (2016). *The Impact of Information Quality and Source Credibility*. Retrieved from <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A946730&dswid=-8843>

Zhang et al (2014) studied “the influence of online reviews on consumers' decision-making: A heuristic–systematic model”. The model is empirically tested with 191 users of an existing online review site. The result indicated that argument quality of online reviews (systematic factor), which is characterized by perceived informativeness and perceived persuasiveness, has a significant effect on consumers' purchase intention. In addition, the result suggested that source credibility and perceived quantity of reviews (heuristic factors) have direct impacts on purchase intention.

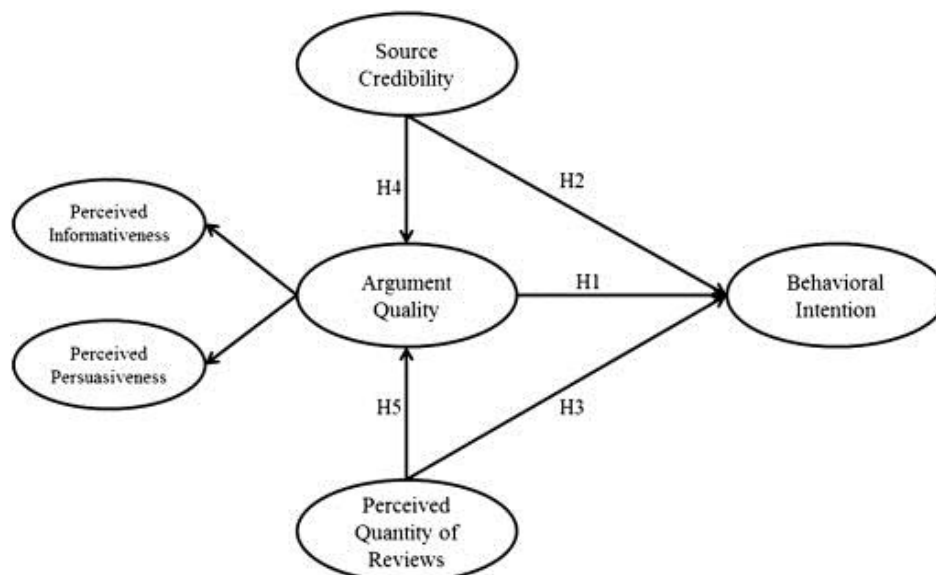


Figure 2.4.3: Influence of Source Credibility, Argument Quality, and Perceived Quantity of Review

Source: Zhang et al. (2014). *Influence of Source Credibility, Argument Quality, and Perceived Quantity of Review*. Retrieved from

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307898008\\_Influence\\_of\\_Source\\_Credibility\\_on\\_Consumer\\_Acceptance\\_of\\_Genetically\\_Modified\\_Foods\\_in\\_China](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307898008_Influence_of_Source_Credibility_on_Consumer_Acceptance_of_Genetically_Modified_Foods_in_China)

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study is to investigate the influence of source credibility and argument quality of social media on the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y in Thailand and their intention to pursue plastic surgery, as suggested by Fanoberova & Kuczkowska (2016) and Zhang et al (2014). In addition, the influence of attitude toward plastic

surgery, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control on toward the intention to pursue plastic surgery were applied in the study, following the study of Jovic et al (2014).

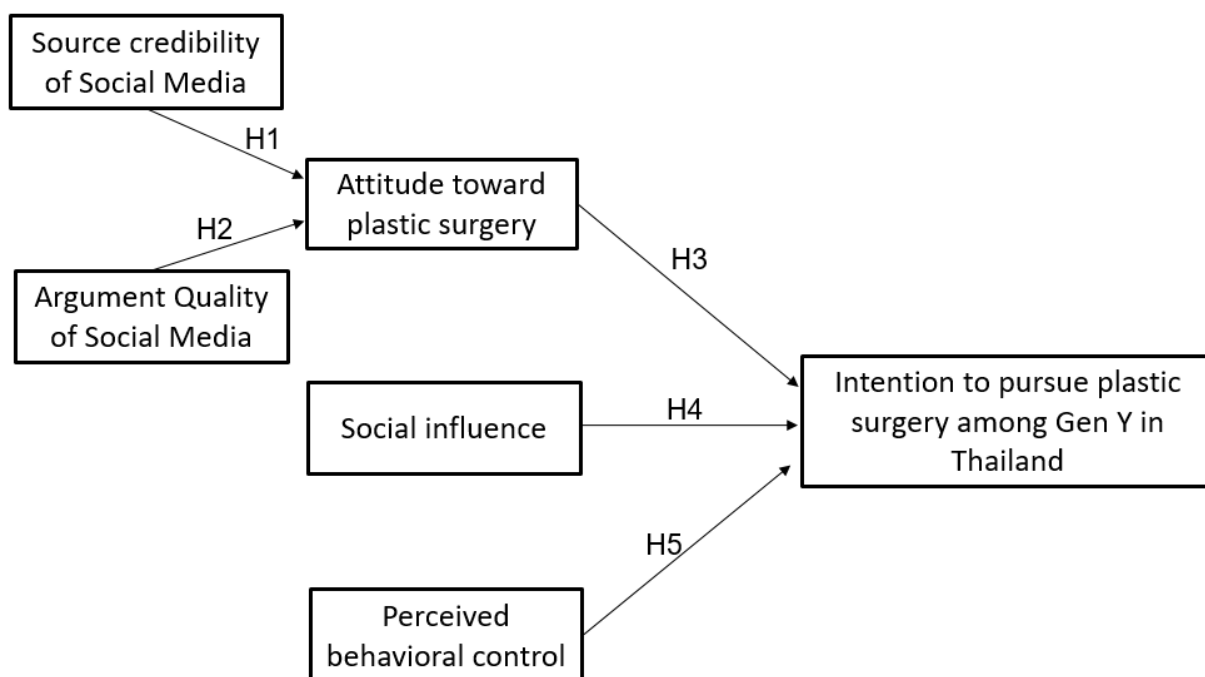


Figure 2.5: Conceptual Framework

## 2.6 Research Hypotheses

H1: Source credibility of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.

H2: Argument quality of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.

H3: Attitude toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

H4: Subjective norm affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

H5: Perceived behavioral control toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This chapter is to describe the research methodology that was used in this study. It involves with research methods, research population, sample size, sampling, research instrument, and data analysis methods.

#### **3.1 Methods of Research Used**

This study aims to investigate the influence of social media's source credibility and argument quality toward attitude toward plastic surgery, and the influence of social media's source credibility and argument quality, attitude toward plastic surgery, social influence, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y consumers in Thailand. To achieve the objective of this research, the large number of respondents are needed, thus a quantitative research is appropriate method. This research applied the quantitative research approach with the use of online questionnaire to collect the data. There are four methods of analysis used in this study. First, the Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of measurement scales used in the questionnaire. Second, descriptive analysis was used to describe and summarize the results in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation that are easy to interpret the demographic characteristics of respondents and results of variables. Third, Pearson correlation analysis was applied for investigating the relationship between variables. Finally, the Multiple Linear Regression analysis was also



used to predict the dependent variable by using multiple independent variables to predict the dependent variable based on the multiple linear regression equation as below.

### **3.2 Respondents and Sampling Procedures**

#### **3.2.1 Target Population**

Zikmund (2003) pointed out that research population is the whole particular population group that is relevant to research issue. Based on the research issue, the research population was defined as Gen Y consumers living in Thailand.

#### **3.2.2 Sample Size**

Davis and Cosenza (1993) suggested that sample is a part of a complete set of unit for undertaking of investigation. In other words, sample is described as a single element or group of them being chosen for investigating as the large number of population size demands more efforts and resources to examine every single unit in the population, and thus the researchers are required to determine the sample unit for the investigation (Zikmund, 2003). In regard to the population size of more than 100,000 which was the number of Gen Y population in Thailand, the precision level of +/- 5% indicated that the appropriate sample size of 400 was considered as appropriate for this research, in which the determining size of sample as suggested by Yamane (1967) is shown in the Table 3.2.2 below.

Table 3.2.2: Sample size for  $\pm 5\%$ , Confidence Level 95%.

Size of Population	Sample Size (n) for Precision (e) of:			
	$\pm 3\%$	$\pm 5\%$	$\pm 7\%$	$\pm 10\%$
500	a	222	145	83
600	a	240	152	86
700	a	255	158	88
800	a	267	163	89
900	a	277	166	90
15,000	1,034	390	201	99
20,000	1,053	392	204	100
25,000	1,064	394	204	100
50,000	1,087	397	204	100
100,000	1,099	398	204	100
>100,000	1,111	400	204	100

a = Assumption of normal population is poor (Yamane, 1967). The entire population should be sampled.

Source: Yamane, T. (1967). Sample size. Retrieved from [http://research-system.siam.edu/images/independent/THE\\_ANALYSIS\\_OF\\_INTERNATIONAL\\_TOURISM\\_IN\\_YANGON\\_REGION\\_OF\\_MYANMAR\\_/Chapter\\_3.pdf](http://research-system.siam.edu/images/independent/THE_ANALYSIS_OF_INTERNATIONAL_TOURISM_IN_YANGON_REGION_OF_MYANMAR_/Chapter_3.pdf)

### 3.2.3 Sampling Procedure

Non-probability sampling was employed with the use of convenience sampling in selecting the respondents based on their accessibility to reach the researcher through online survey. Under the non-probability sampling method, Zikmund (2004) explained that the chance of elements in the population to be selected is unknown. Quota sampling and convenience sampling technique were applied to collect the data from female and male for 400.

### 3.3 Research Instruments/ Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed and developed for data gathering, which Zikmund (2003) suggested that this research tool is simple, convenience, cost effective, and flexible in conducting research work. In addition, the process of responding is simple with the use of clear and precise choices being offered to respondents in minimizing the time and effort of respondents and researcher, in which the respondents only have to choose the best answer that could describe their views. Further, the questionnaire was developed online with the use of Google Form.

First, the screening question was asked to ensure that respondents were qualified to be part of research population through the question “Were you born in 1981 - 1995?” (Lub et al 2015)”; and “Do you currently live in Thailand?” The survey process will continue only if both answer is “Yes”.

Second, Part II: Demographic information of respondents intended to collect demographic information of respondents including gender, age, education, and occupation. The part used multiple choices questions that provide the respondents with all possible answer.

Third, Part III: Consumer Behavior intended to ask about the behaviors toward the social media used as well as experience and general knowledge about plastic surgery.

Part IV: Perceptions toward variables. The part used the five-point Likert scale questions, in which the questions were applied from the previous researches. In this part, respondents were asked to rate their agreement toward each statement, in which “1” reflects strongly disagree, to “5” for strongly agree.

The pilot test was performed to test the reliability test for the scales of measurement used in this study. The results were demonstrated in the table 3.3.1 below

Table 3.3.1: Reliability Test

<b>Variable</b>	<b>No. of Item</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha (n=30)</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha (n=400)</b>
Source Credibility	4	.724	.901
Argument Quality	4	.864	.728
Attitude toward plastic Surgery	7	.792	.941
Subjective norm	4	.721	.735
Perceived behavioral control	3	.744	.604
Intention to pursue	3	.713	.897

The results from the table 3.3.1 show the Cronbach's alpha of greater than 0.6 for all variables. It means that the scales of measurement used in this research were considered as reliable (SciELO, 2015).

### **3.4 Statistical Analysis Method**

After the data collection through online questionnaire survey, the data was processed for descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing. The descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the results in the form of frequency, percentage, mean,

and standard deviation that are easy to interpret the demographic characteristics of respondents and their experiences and knowledge toward plastic surgery. For the analysis part, Pearson correlation analysis was used to investigate the multicollinearity problem between independent variables. Pearson's correlation was considered as appropriate statistical analysis method in investigating the relationship among variables. Pearson's correlation coefficients can be ranging from -1.0 to 1.0.

Table 3.4.1: R-value and corresponding strength of association

Correlation coefficient range	Strength of correlation
0.00-0.30	Weak
0.31-0.50	Moderate
0.51-0.80	Strong
0.81-1.00	Very strong

Source: Scielo, A. (2015). *R-value and corresponding strength of association*. Retrieved from

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307898008\\_Influence\\_of\\_Source\\_Credibility\\_on\\_Consumer\\_Acceptance\\_of\\_Genetically\\_Modified\\_Foods\\_in\\_China](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/307898008_Influence_of_Source_Credibility_on_Consumer_Acceptance_of_Genetically_Modified_Foods_in_China)

then the researcher was used multiple linear regression to analyze the effect of source credibility and argument quality on the attitude toward plastic surgery, as well as those of source credibility, argument quality, attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y consumers in Thailand. Multiple linear regression analysis is a statistical technique that utilizes several explanatory factors to predict the outcome. It is used to

model the relationship between the explanatory and response variables (Scielo, 2015), as shown from the equation as  $Y = b + a_1 (X_1) + \dots + a_x (X_x)$

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter is to demonstrate the research results and analysis, which are divided into descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The first part is to describe the respondents' profiles and general information, followed by the descriptive results of variables, and the results of hypothesis testing.

#### 4.1 Respondents' Profiles and General Information

The data was collected from 400 who were born between 1891 – 1995 or about 23 – 37 years of age. All of them were living in Bangkok metropolitan area (100%). Of 400 respondents, the majority of them 214 persons (53.5%) were female, and another 186 respondents (46.5%) were male. The respondents were divided into two major groups based on their ages into those of between 23 – 30 years old, and of 31 – 37 years old. There were 304 respondents (76%) who were 23 – 30 years old, and the rest 96 respondents (24%) who were 31 – 37 years old. Most respondents 315 persons (78.8%) had Bachelor's degree as their highest education level; 74 respondents (18.5%) had

Master's degree or above; and 11 respondents (2.8%) had education at high school level or below.

Based on personal income of the respondents, there were 219 respondents (54.8%) who earned around 15,000 – 30,000 baht per month. There were 139 respondents (34.8%) who earned around 30,001 – 50,000 baht per month; 27 respondents (6.8%) earned 50,001 – 100,000 baht per month; 9 respondents (2.3%) earned less than 15,000 baht per month; and the rest 6 respondents (1.5%) earned more than 100,000 baht per month. All respondents (100%) in this study usually used social media in their daily lives, in which Facebook (60.5%) was mostly used; followed by Line (25.3%), Instagram (10.5%), YouTube (12%), and Pantip (0.8%), respectively.

Table 4.1.1: Respondents' Profiles

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender:</b>		
Male	186	46.5
Female	214	53.5
<b>Age:</b>		
23 - 30 years old	304	76.0
31 - 37 years old	96	24.0
<b>Education:</b>		
High school or below	11	2.8
Bachelor's degree	315	78.8

(Continued)

Table 4.1.1 (Continued): Respondents' Profiles

	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Master's degree or above	74	18.5
<b>Monthly Income (Baht)</b>		
< 15,000	9	2.3
15,001 - 30,000	219	54.8
30,001 - 50,000	139	34.8
	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
50,001 - 100,000	27	6.8
> 100,000	6	1.5
<b>Most Frequently Used Social Media:</b>		
Facebook	242	60.5
Line	101	25.3
Instagram	42	10.5
YouTube	12	3.0
Pantip	3	.8

There were 46 respondents (11.5%) who very dissatisfied with their weight; 121 respondents (30.3%) dissatisfied with their weight; 165 respondents (41.3%) neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their weight; and 68 respondents (17%) satisfied with their weight. There were 18 respondents (4.5%) who very dissatisfied with their facial appearance; 94 respondents (23.5%) dissatisfied with their facial appearance; 155 respondents (38.8%) neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their facial appearance; 125



respondents (31.3%) satisfied with their facial appearance; and 8 respondents (2%) very satisfied with their facial appearance. There were 14 respondents (3.5%) who very dissatisfied with their body size and shape; 176 respondents (44%) dissatisfied with their body size and shape; 140 respondents (35%) neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their body size and shape; and 70 respondents (17.5%) satisfied with their body size and shape. Most respondents for 234 persons (58.5%) had no experience of plastic surgery; while 166 respondents (41.5%) had an experience of plastic surgery. Of those who had an experience of plastic surgery before, the larger proportion was seen in the group of females.

Nose reshaping was mostly proceeded by the respondents who had an experience of plastic surgery, which accounted for 41.2% of them; followed by eyelid surgery (27%), breast augmentation (25.4%), facelifts (4.2%), and liposuction or fat removal (2.3%), respectively. Regardless to the affordability, plastic surgery procedure that the respondents preferred to pursue mostly were nose reshaping (19.3%); followed by facelifts (13.5%), eyelid surgery (12.3%), hair restoration (7.3%), breast augmentation (6.5%), liposuction or fat removal (5.8%), and other procedures (5.3%). There were 121 respondents (30.3%) who had no desire to have plastic surgery at all. The majority of respondents would consider to take plastic surgery procedure at beauty clinic mostly (71.5%), followed by private hospital (20.3%), and overseas institutes (8.3%). The most important factors concerning by the respondents in selecting the place for plastic surgery were doctor's reputation (34.8%); followed by service provider or place's reputation

(26.3%), review and information from social media (16.5%), price (13.5%), and recommendation from friends / family (9%), respectively.

Table 4.1.2: Respondents' Experience and Behavior

	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Experienced Plastic Surgery:</b>		
Breast augmentation	79	25.4%
Eyelid surgery	84	27.0%
Nose reshaping	128	41.2%
Liposuction (fat removal)	7	2.3%
Facelifts	13	4.2%
<b>Preferred Plastic Surgery:</b>		
None	121	30.3
Breast augmentation	26	6.5
Eyelid surgery	49	12.3
Hair restoration	29	7.3
Nose reshaping	77	19.3
Liposuction (fat removal)	23	5.8
Facelifts	54	13.5
Others	21	5.3
<b>Preferred Place:</b>		
Private hospital	81	20.3
Beauty clinic	286	71.5

(Continued)

Table 4.1.2 (Continued): Respondents' Experience and Behavior

Overseas (eg. Korea)	33	8.3
<b>Reasons</b>		
Price	54	13.5
Service provider or place's reputation	105	26.3
Doctor's reputation	139	34.8
Recommendation from friends / family	36	9.0
Review and information from social media	66	16.5

## 4.2 Descriptive Results of Variables

### 4.2.1 Source Credibility

There were four constructs of source credibility, including “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was knowledgeable on this topic”; “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was trustworthy”; “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was credible”; and “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media appeared to be an expert on this topic”. The descriptive results for source credibility are demonstrated in Table 4.2.1 below.

Table 4.2.1: Descriptive Results of Source Credibility

	Mean	SD
The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was knowledgeable on this topic.	3.41	0.941

(Continued)

Table 4.2.1 (Continued): Descriptive Results of Source Credibility

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was trustworthy.	3.33	0.838
The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was credible.	3.34	0.883
The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media appeared to be an expert on this topic.	3.36	1.094
<b>Source Credibility</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>0.829</b>

From Table 4.2.1, the mean score of “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was knowledgeable on this topic” was highest (mean = 3.41, SD = 0.941), while the mean score of “The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was trustworthy” was lowest (mean = 3.33, SD = 0.838). The average of source credibility was moderate (mean = 3.36, SD = 0.829).

#### **4.2.2 Argument quality**

There were four constructs of argument quality, including “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was informative”; “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was helpful”; “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was valuable”; and “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was persuasive”. The descriptive results for argument quality are demonstrated in Table 4.2.2 below.

Table 4.2.2: Descriptive Results of Argument quality

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was informative.	3.37	0.818
The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was helpful.	3.61	0.671
The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was valuable.	3.70	0.777
The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was persuasive.	3.92	0.885
<b>Argument Quality</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>0.587</b>

From Table 4.2.2, the mean score of “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was persuasive” was highest (mean = 3.92, SD = 0.885), while the mean score of “The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was informative” was lowest (mean = 3.37, SD = 0.818). The average of argument quality was high (mean = 3.65, SD = 0.587).

### **4.2.3 Attitude toward Plastic Surgery**

There were seven constructs of attitude toward plastic surgery, including “Plastic surgery is safe for my health”; “Plastic surgery makes me more satisfied”; “Plastic surgery helps to improve confidence”; “Plastic surgery helps me to be more attractive”;

“Plastic surgery helps me feel younger”; “Plastic surgery helps me feel better”; and “I have positive attitude toward plastic surgery”. The descriptive results for attitude toward plastic surgery are demonstrated in Table 4.2.3 below.

Table 4.2.3: Descriptive Results of Attitude toward plastic surgery

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Plastic surgery is safe for my health.	3.44	0.746
Plastic surgery makes me more satisfied.	3.71	0.876
Plastic surgery helps to improve confidence.	3.88	0.928
Plastic surgery helps me to be more attractive.	3.87	0.989
Plastic surgery helps me feel younger.	3.78	0.803
Plastic surgery helps me feel better.	3.72	0.931
I have positive attitude toward plastic surgery.	3.85	0.854
<b>Attitude toward Plastic Surgery</b>	<b>3.75</b>	<b>0.755</b>

From Table 4.2.3, the mean score of “Plastic surgery helps to improve confidence” was highest (mean = 3.88, SD = 0.928), while the mean score of “Plastic surgery is safe for my health” was lowest (mean = 3.44, SD = 0.746). The average of attitude toward plastic surgery was high (mean = 3.75, SD = 0.755).

#### 4.2.4 Subjective norm

There were four constructs of subjective norm, including “My family would support me if I want to undergo plastic surgery”; “My lover/partner thinks that undergoing plastic surgery is a good decision”; “My close friends think that I should undergo plastic surgery”; and “Most people from social media think that undergoing plastic surgery is usual”. The descriptive results for subjective norm are demonstrated in Table 4.2.4 below.

Table 4.2.4: Descriptive Results of Subjective norm

	Mean	SD
My family would support me if I want to undergo plastic surgery.	3.24	1.002
My lover/partner thinks that undergoing plastic surgery is a good decision.	3.24	0.928
My close friends think that I should undergo plastic surgery.	3.49	0.907
Most people from social media think that undergoing plastic surgery is usual.	3.82	0.971
<b>Subjective Norm</b>	<b>3.45</b>	<b>0.711</b>

From Table 4.2.4, the mean score of “Most people from social media think that undergoing plastic surgery is usual” was highest (mean = 3.82, SD = 0.971), while the mean score of “My family would support me if I want to undergo plastic surgery” was

lowest (mean = 3.24, SD = 1.002). The average of subjective norm was high (mean = 3.45, SD = 0.711)

#### 4.2.5 Perceived Behavioral Control

There were three constructs of perceived behavioral control, including “The price for plastic surgery is affordable”; “My family offers financial support for plastic surgery”; and “I can find the place for plastic surgery if I want to”. The descriptive results for perceived behavioral control are demonstrated in Table 4.2.5 below.

Table 4.2.5: Descriptive Results of Perceived Behavioral Control

	Mean	SD
The price for plastic surgery is affordable.	3.48	0.855
My family offers financial support for plastic surgery.	3.12	1.017
I can find the place for plastic surgery if I want to.	3.79	0.857
<b>Perceived Behavioral Control</b>	<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.682</b>

From Table 4.2.5, the mean score of “I can find the place for plastic surgery if I want to” was highest (mean = 3.79, SD = 0.857), while the mean score of “My family offers financial support for plastic surgery” was lowest (mean = 3.12, SD = 1.017). The average of perceived behavioral control was high (mean = 3.46, SD = 0.682)



#### 4.2.6 Intention to Pursue Plastic Surgery

There were three constructs of intention to pursue plastic surgery, including “I will undergo plastic surgery in the future”; “The likelihood that I will undergo plastic surgery in the near future is high”; and “I think it will be worth for me to undergo plastic surgery”. The descriptive results for intention to pursue plastic surgery are demonstrated in Table 4.2.6 below.

Table 4.2.6: Descriptive Results of Intention to pursue plastic surgery

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
I will undergo plastic surgery in the future.	3.73	0.788
The likelihood that I will undergo plastic surgery in the near future is high.	3.56	0.899
I think it will be worth for me to undergo plastic surgery.	3.88	0.884
<b>Intention to Pursue Plastic Surgery</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>0.782</b>

From Table 4.2.6, the mean score of “I think it will be worth for me to undergo plastic surgery” was highest (mean = 3.88, SD = 0.884), while the mean score of “The likelihood that I will undergo plastic surgery in the near future is high” was lowest (mean = 3.56, SD = 0.899). The average of intention to pursue plastic surgery was high (mean = 3.72, SD = 0.782).

#### 4.3 Pearson Correlation Analysis

The results from Pearson correlation analysis to examine the relationship between source credibility, argument quality, and attitude toward plastic surgery were demonstrated in Table 4.3.1 below.

Table 4.3.1: Pearson Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Source Credibility</b>	1					
<b>Argument Quality</b>	.742**	1				
<b>Attitude toward Plastic Surgery</b>	.465**	.761**	1			
<b>Subjective Norm</b>	.348**	.561**	.727**	1		
<b>Perceived Behavioral Control</b>	.383**	.616**	.608**	.754**	1	
<b>Intention to Pursue Plastic Surgery</b>	.319**	.609**	.746**	.816**	.794**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 4.3.1, the results indicated that there is no multicollinearity problem between source credibility and argument quality, given the r-value of .742 ( $< .81$ ). It means that source credibility and argument quality are not too correlated with each other. Further, the results suggested that there is a positive and moderate relationship between source credibility and attitude toward plastic surgery (r-value = .465). The results suggested that there is a positive and strong relationship between argument quality and attitude toward plastic surgery (r-value = .761).

Further, the results indicated that there is no multicollinearity problem between attitude toward plastic surgery and subjective norm ( $r$ -value = .727), attitude toward plastic surgery and perceived behavioral control ( $r$ -value = .608), and subjective norm and perceived behavioral control ( $r$ -value = .754). It means that attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are not too correlated with each other. Further, the results suggested that there is a positive and strong relationship between attitude toward plastic surgery and intention to pursue plastic surgery ( $r$ -value = .746). The results suggested that there is a positive and very strong relationship between subjective norm and intention to pursue plastic surgery ( $r$ -value = .816). The results suggested that there is a positive and strong relationship between perceived behavioral control and intention to pursue plastic surgery ( $r$ -value = .794).

#### **4.4 Hypothesis Testing**

##### **4.4.1 Testing of Hypothesis I-II**

Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the effect of source credibility and argument quality on the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area. The results are demonstrated in Table 4.4.1 below.

Table 4.4.1: MLR Analysis of H1-2

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	.089	.152		.584	.559
Source Credibility	-.201	.043	-.220	-4.665	.000
Argument Quality	1.189	.061	.925	19.566	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude toward Plastic Surgery

Adjusted R square = .599, F-value = 299.126, Sig. = .000

From Table 4.4.1, the results indicated that source credibility and argument quality can collectively explain the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y by 59.9%.

The results showed that there is a significant influence of source credibility on the attitude toward plastic surgery with the negative influence (Sig. < .05,  $\beta = -0.220$ ). Thus, H1 is accepted and is concluded that source credibility of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. The negative influence means that higher source credibility of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower source credibility of social media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery.

The results showed that there is a significant influence of argument quality on the attitude toward plastic surgery with the strongly positive influence (Sig. < .05,  $\beta = -$

0.925). Thus, H2 is accepted and is concluded that argument quality of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. The strongly positive influence means that higher argument quality of social media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower argument quality of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery.

#### 4.4.2 Testing of Hypothesis III-V

Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the influence of attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area. The results are demonstrated in Table 4.4.2 below.

Table 4.4.2: MLR Analysis of H3-5

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	Coefficients				
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-.099	.106		-.932	.352
Attitude toward Plastic Surgery	.286	.036	.277	7.908	.000
Subjective Norm	.364	.046	.331	7.834	.000
Perceived Behavioral Control	.432	.042	.377	10.306	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to Pursue Plastic Surgery

Adjusted R square = .774, F-value = 456.189, Sig. = .000

From Table 4.4.2, the results indicated that attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control can collectively explain on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area by 77.4%.

The results showed that there is a significant influence of attitude toward plastic surgery on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area, with the positive influence (Sig. < .05,  $\beta = 0.277$ ). Thus, H3 is accepted and is concluded that attitude toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery.

The results showed that there is a significant influence of subjective norm on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area, with the positive influence (Sig. < .05,  $\beta = 0.331$ ). Thus, H4 is accepted and is concluded that subjective norm affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that higher social support toward plastic surgery will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower social support toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery.

Finally, the results showed that there is a significant influence of perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area, with the positive influence (Sig. < .05,  $\beta = 0.377$ ). Thus, H5 is accepted and is concluded that perceived behavioral control affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that higher perceived behavioral

control will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower perceived behavioral control will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery.

Table 4.4.3: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1: Source credibility of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.	Supported
H2: Argument quality of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.	Supported
H3: Attitude toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.	Supported
H4: Subjective norm affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.	Supported
H5: Perceived behavioral control toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.	Supported

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is the final chapter as to demonstrate the conclusion, discussion, recommendations and suggestions for future research.

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The data was collected from 400 Gen Y respondents in Bangkok metropolitan area. The majority of them were female, and were 23 – 30 years old. Most respondents had Bachelor's degree as their highest education level, and earned around 15,000 – 30,000 baht per month. All respondents in this study usually used social media in their daily lives, in which Facebook was mostly used; followed by Line, Instagram, YouTube, and Pantip, respectively. Most respondents neither dissatisfied nor satisfied with their weight, and facial appearance. Most of them dissatisfied with their body size and shape. Most respondents had no experience of plastic surgery. Of those who had an experience of plastic surgery before, the larger proportion was seen in the group of females. Nose reshaping was mostly proceeded by the respondents who had an experience of plastic surgery; followed by eyelid surgery, breast augmentation, facelifts, and liposuction or fat removal, respectively. Regardless to the affordability, plastic surgery procedure that the respondents preferred to pursue mostly were nose reshaping; followed by facelifts, eyelid surgery, hair restoration, breast augmentation, liposuction or fat removal, and other procedures. There were 121 respondents (30.3%) who had no desire to have plastic



surgery at all. The majority of respondents would consider to take plastic surgery procedure at beauty clinic mostly, while doctor's reputation is the most important factor in selecting the place for plastic surgery.

Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the effect of source credibility and argument quality on the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area. The results indicated that source credibility and argument quality can collectively explain the attitude toward plastic surgery among Gen Y by 59.9%. Source credibility of social media negatively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery, while argument quality positively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. Meanwhile, multiple linear regression was used to analyze the influence of attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery among Gen Y in Bangkok metropolitan area. Attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

## **5.2 Discussions of Results**

H1: Source credibility of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.

Wathen and Burkell (2002) suggested that receiver's judgment of the source's credibility is a key stage in the information persuasion process. The results indicated that source credibility of social media negatively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. The negative influence means that higher source credibility of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower source credibility of social

media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery. The finding suggested that too high credibility of sources may lead to the negative perception in terms of fake reviews, or commercials. It means that consumers prefer to seek the information from peer review rather than from the brands or marketers. This argued the suggestion of Cheung et al (2009) which stated that information provided by highly credible sources is perceived to be useful and reliable, and hence facilitate knowledge transfer.

H2: Argument quality of social media affects the attitude toward plastic surgery.

The results suggested that argument quality positively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. The strongly positive influence means that higher argument quality of social media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower argument quality of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery. This proved the suggestion of Negash et al (2003), which stated that information quality can have a positive effect on the attitude of consumers, which in turn further affects the purchase intention. They explained that reviews are posted by people with actual usage experience, in which even low quality reviews can provide important and useful information when they are positive. It can be implied that reviews that are more relevant, objective and understandable about plastic surgery, will lead to higher quality or argument, which in turn will have a greater positive effect on the attitude toward plastic surgery and the intention to undergo plastic surgery among young consumers in Thailand.

H3: Attitude toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) stated that the attitude holding by an individual towards any object is more likely to involve with the overall pattern of his or her response to such object. The results confirmed that attitude toward plastic surgery positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. This proved the suggestion of Fazio (1986) which suggested that the attitudes and behaviors are associated if such attitudes are relied on direct experiences with the attitude object, as well as to the extent that the attitudes are cognitively accessible. As suggested by Orji et al (2012), motivation to take action to undergo plastic surgery for beauty requires the belief that it will provide strong positive benefits and/or the tendency of reducing the negative ones. Also, it deals with an individual's subjective belief in the extent of harm that can be caused from acquiring the disease or unhealthy state, as a result of a particular behavior.

H4: Subjective norm affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

According to Kalafatis et al. (1999), the subjective norm can be created from friends, family, public, endorsers, politics, and others; while Teo and Lee (2010) suggested that subjective norm in the forms of reference groups, family, friends, and co-worker significantly affects the intention of an individual toward a particular behavior. From the finding, subjective norm positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that higher social support toward plastic surgery

will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower social support toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. This is consistent with the suggestion of Jabareen (2005) which pointed out that social factors play an essential role in influencing the choice preferences of individuals. Cialdini, Reno and Kallgren (1990) stated that the social approval or disapproval of others, what others are doing, and the concern about what is right or wrong to do is evidently important in relation to the decision to undergo plastic surgery in the case of young consumers in Thailand.

H5: Perceived behavioral control toward plastic surgery affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery.

Finally, the results confirmed that perceived behavioral control positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The positive influence means that higher perceived behavioral control will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower perceived behavioral control will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. Ajzen (1991) demonstrated that control beliefs or perceived behavioral control reflects the beliefs about the absence or presence of factors facilitating the performance of the behavior. As suggested by Bandura (1982), which is concerned with assessing how well an individual can perform needed actions to deal with specific situations. In other words,

the behaviors are significantly affected by one's confidence about his or her capability in performing such behaviors, in which the perceived behavioral control is to reflect individual's perceptions of his or her ability to perform a given behavior. This is confirmed by the finding of this study in the case of young consumers in Thailand toward their intention to pursue plastic surgery. As explained by Rosenstock et al. (1988), people may not want to attempt to do something new unless they think that they can do it. For instance, if someone believes that to undergo plastic surgery is good, but does not think that s/he is affordable of doing it, chances are that s/he will not try to pursue for the service. The results thus proved that perceived behavioral control is a significant determinant of intention to pursue plastic surgery for beauty.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

There are five recommendation based on the results of this study

1. The results indicated that source credibility of social media negatively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. It means that higher source credibility of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower source credibility of social media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery. This may be because too high credibility of source will be perceived as commercial advertisement, and thus the information might be perceived as over claimed. On the other sides, peer-to-peer review is likely to perceive as low credibility of source, but will has the greater impact on the attitude toward plastic surgery. Therefore, marketers and operators of beauty clinic needs to pay attention about what other customers said about their business

and services. However, in future research, an advance statistics program could be applied in order to analyze the relationship between variables more accurately.

2. The results indicated that argument quality positively affects the attitude toward plastic surgery. It means that higher argument quality of social media will lead to more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery, while lower argument quality of social media will lead to less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery. Marketers and operators of beauty clinic are recommended to provide informative, helpful, valuable, and persuasive about plastic surgery on their social media use.

3. Attitude toward plastic surgery positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. It means that more favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while less favorable attitude toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. Certificates and customer profiles will help to improve confidence, perceived benefits, and to reduce perceived risk about plastic surgery with a specific beauty clinic or hospital.

4. Subjective norm positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. It means that higher social support toward plastic surgery will lead to higher intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower social support toward plastic surgery will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. Celebrity endorsement can be applied by marketers and operators of beauty clinic to create positive social influence. In addition, Like and Share will create social influence for customer awareness, and acceptance.

5. Finally, perceived behavioral control positively affects the intention to pursue plastic surgery. It means that higher perceived behavioral control will lead to higher

intention to pursue plastic surgery, while lower perceived behavioral control will lead to lower intention to pursue plastic surgery. Payment by installment will help to increase affordability of consumers.

#### **5.4 Suggestions for Future Research**

This study was to focus on Gen Y consumers in Bangkok metropolitan area. The results thus may not be applicable to other generations or even Gen Y in other locations. The future research is recommended to study other generations or in other locations for further comparison.

In addition, this study focuses on the influence of source credibility and argument quality on the attitude toward plastic surgery, and that of attitude toward plastic surgery, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on the intention to pursue plastic surgery. The definition and attitude toward these variables can be changed over time in regard to the aggregation of information obtained. Thus, the future research should also review any possible updated definitions and concepts. Additionally, the limitations of quantitative research employed in this study cause it not to be able to appropriately give a clear understanding about the context of phenomenon; while the collected data were not robust enough to explain complex issues toward the intention not to pursue plastic surgery. Therefore, the future research is recommended to apply qualitative research or even the mixed methods of both quantitative and qualitative approaches as to avoid the limitation of quantitative research. Furthermore, the future research is recommended to study the relationship among variables with advance statistics program.

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## Questionnaire (English Version)

### Part 1: Screening Question

1. Were you born between the year 1981 - 1995?

- Yes, please continue  
 No. End of survey. Thank You.

2. Do you currently live in Thailand?

- Yes, please continue  
 No. End of survey. Thank You.

### Part 2: Demographic2

1. Gender

- Male  Female

2. Age

- 23 – 30 (1981 – 1988)  
 31 – 37 (1989 – 1995)

3. Education

- High school or below  
 Bachelor's Degree  
 Master's Degree or above

4. Income per month

- Less than Baht 15,000  
 Baht 15,001 - 35,000  
 Baht 35,001 - 55,000  
 Baht 55,001 - 75,000  
 More than Baht 75,000

### Part 3: Consumer Behavior

1. What is social media platform that is frequently used?

- Facebook

- Line
- Instagram
- YouTube
- Pantip
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. How satisfied do you feel about your weight right now?

- very dissatisfied
- slightly dissatisfied
- neutral
- slightly satisfied
- very satisfied

3. How satisfied do you feel about your appearance right now?

- very dissatisfied
- slightly dissatisfied
- neutral
- slightly satisfied
- very satisfied

4. How satisfied do you feel about your size and shape right now?

- very dissatisfied
- slightly dissatisfied
- neutral
- slightly satisfied
- very satisfied

5. Have you ever had experience of plastic surgery?

- Yes
- No, skip to Q7

6. Which plastic surgery procedures have you ever experienced? (Can select more than 1)

- Breast augmentation
- Eyelid surgery

- Hair restoration
- Nose reshaping
- Liposuction (fat removal)
- Facelifts
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

7. If you could have a surgical procedure done for free, which plastic surgery procedure would you consider trying to pursue mostly?

- None
- Breast augmentation
- Eyelid surgery
- Hair restoration
- Nose reshaping
- Liposuction (fat removal)
- Facelifts
- Other\_\_\_\_\_

8. Which place would you consider to take plastic surgery procedure with mostly?

- Private hospital
- Public hospital
- Beauty clinic
- Overseas

9. Please rank the factors that affect your consideration in selecting the place for plastic surgery procedure from 1 = most important to 6 = least important

- \_\_\_\_\_ Price
- \_\_\_\_\_ Place Reputation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Doctor Reputation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recommendation from friends/family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reviews from social media
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transportation

#### Part 4: Attitude Rating

Please mark “✓” the extent to which you believe each statement. 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= agree, and 5=Strongly Agree

No.		Level of Agreement				
		1	2	3	4	5
<b>Source Credibility</b>						
Sc1	The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was knowledgeable on this topic.					
Sc2	The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was trustworthy.					
Sc3	The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media was credible.					
Sc4	The person providing the information about plastic surgery on social media appeared to be an expert on this topic.					
<b>Argument Quality</b>						
Aq1	The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was informative.					
Aq2	The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was helpful.					
Aq3	The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was valuable.					
Aq4	The information provided about plastic surgery on social media was persuasive					

<b>Attitude toward plastic surgery</b>						
At1	Plastic surgery is safe for my health.					
At2	Plastic surgery makes me more satisfied.					
At3	Plastic surgery helps to improve confidence.					
At4	Plastic surgery helps me to be more attractive.					
At5	Plastic surgery helps me feel younger.					
At6	Plastic surgery helps me feel better.					
At7	I have positive attitude toward plastic surgery.					
<b>Subject norm</b>						
Sn1	My family thinks that undergoing plastic surgery is a good decision.					
Sn2	My lover/partner thinks that undergoing plastic surgery is a good decision.					
Sn3	My close friends think that I should undergo plastic surgery.					
Sn4	Most people from social media think that undergoing plastic surgery is usual.					
<b>Perceived behavioral control</b>						
Pb1	The price for plastic surgery is affordable.					
Pb2	My family offers financial support for plastic surgery.					
Pb3	I can find the place for plastic surgery if I want to.					
<b>Intention to pursue plastic surgery</b>						
Ip1	I will undergo plastic surgery in the future.					
Ip2	The likelihood that I will undergo plastic surgery is high.					
Ip3	I think it will be worth for me to undergo plastic surgery.					

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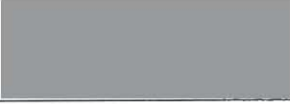
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