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Effects of fashion vlogger attributes on product attitude and content sharing

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Abstract

Recently, general people posting vlog on newly shopped fashion and cosmetics items are gaining popularity, and it is growing more common to get consumer reviews or opinion through vlogs. In this paper, we examine the effect of vloggers' attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) depending on the types that the vlogs expose certain products in videos. Also we find out how emotional bond between vloggers and viewers affect the relationships of vlogger's attributes with content sharing intention and attitude towards products. Based on the results of one-way ANOVA, multiple regression analysis, and moderated regression analysis, we could enhance the understanding of vlog and vloggers' role in retail. Also, we applied para-social interaction to find out how emotional bond between vloggers and viewers affect their perception. This research implies the need of understanding vlog as a form of marketing mix that fashion retailers can utilize.

Keywords: Vlog, Vlogger, Content sharing intention, Attitude toward product, Para-social interaction

Introduction

With the rapid development of Internet technology, various new media platforms have emerged consequently impacting many aspects of our lives (Kim and Jeon 2016). The emergence of various media and communication platforms changed the way people exchange information, turned then-existed one-way communication into two-way communication, and laid the foundation for the development various social media. Furthermore by the creation of a platform to share videos, video content is getting more popular, leading the emergence of many websites that users can share various kinds of video content.

Recently, as marketing strategy has shifted to consumer-oriented methods rather than corporate-oriented methods (Shin 2007), the importance of word of mouth (WOM) information through social network services (SNS) has increased, and personal sources of information have played an increasingly important role in WOM (Cho and Jeong 2013). Also, consumers now prefer getting information from online video websites rather than from traditional form of media like television and radio (Herold 2008; Hu et al. 2016). Consumers are not only getting information easily through video sharing platforms, but also using them as an opportunity to express themselves through online

interaction (Barboza 2010; Wang et al. 2015). Furthermore, consumers also establish a strong “emotional bond” based on the emotional exchange that was previously considered possible only in offline settings (Wang et al. 2015).

Vlog (video blog) is a type of online video documentations of people recording themselves buying and using fashion and beauty products. Recently, general people posting vlog on newly shopped fashion and cosmetics items are gaining popularity, and it is growing more common to get consumer reviews or opinion through these kinds of vlogs. As a result, the existing social media outlets and information-providing websites began provide various additional services related to video content. In addition, retailers are realizing the popularity of vlog, and many retailers and product manufacturers recognize vlog as part of their marketing mix and are actively using it in marketing such as offering their products to vloggers (Harnish and Bridges 2016).

As video-sharing websites are growing rapidly and information delivery through video content are receiving much public attention, especially in the field of fashion, it is expected that the influence of video contents in blogs that can transmit visual information vividly in a casual setting, is expected to be great. It is necessary to study in depth the emotion and cognitive judgment that viewers feel while watching video contents. The purpose of this study is as follows. We focused on the ways of vloggers’ exposing fashion and cosmetic products, and the effect of vloggers’ attributes depending on the types of product exposure shown in videos. This paper also investigates whether the emotional bond formed between vlog viewers and vloggers has effect on the relation of perceived attributes of vloggers with sharing intentions, and with attitude toward the products in the video, respectively.

Literature review

The concept of VLOG (Video Blog) and difference in product exposure type on VLOG

Video Blogs (vlogs), a new information-providing method using video content, is spreading as a type of online WOM (word-of-mouth) information. A vlog is a video blog in which the content are mostly posted in video form. According to the Harnish and Bridges’ study (2016), the vlogs, which are “computer mediated,” can be described as informal communications directed at other consumers about the ownership, usage, or characteristics of particular goods and services. As a result, vlog encompasses product-related discussions and content, product evaluation, and direct recommendation (Berger and Iyengar 2013). Another previous study defines that a vlog is a video content in which the vlogger’s daily life is divided into several scenes (Harnish and Bridges 2016).

Vlog is a new type of video content and it has something in common with existing video content, such as movies and TV programs in that various products including fashion items are exposed to viewers through contents. According to a previous research on the traditional form of media-video contents, there are two types of product exposure type: implicit exposure and explicit exposure (Oh 2014). Implicit product exposure type refers to the form in which the product is exposed to the part of background of a scene in the video, while explicit product exposure type refers to the form that specific product directly exposed in the video by a direction mentions (Oh 2014). These product exposure types are also applicable to the vlog. The implicit exposure type is that products are showed through vlogger’s daily life, while the explicitly exposure type is that the vlogger

directly mentions the products in the vlog (Lee and Watkins 2016). Based on the previous studies about vlog, this study classified the types of products exposed in vlog into two categories as follows. First type is a vlog that shows vlogger's usual daily lives and implicitly expose their products; another type is a vlog that explicitly exposes the product, providing detailed information about it. In this regard, this study categorizes the types of products exposed in vlog as implicit/explicit, and expects that the viewer will perceive the attributes of the information source differently depending on how the vlogger exposes the product on vlogs.

Vlogger

Vlogger is a person who creates a vlog by planning and appearing directly in the video, and also called 'Content Creator'. Vloggers have a common denominator with celebrities in an aspect that they approach audiences through videos, just as celebrities who approach the public through traditional media outlets. However, vloggers are differentiated by the fact that they design the flow of video content by themselves, not just serving as a model in the video. Vloggers are also everyday people, not celebrities, so they play the same role as an acquaintances or friends of viewers. In other words, a vlogger performs various roles as video producers, models, and online "friends" in the vlogs. In this study, we predicted that the viewers will perceive and evaluate the role of vlogger differently according to the types of products exposure used in vlog, consequently evaluating their attributes differently as well.

Vlogger's attributes

People create vlog and some have attracted a large number of followers, vloggers upload videos about their personal life or reviews of product they use, therefore increasing browsing traffic from followers and other viewers. As a result, vloggers become key opinion leaders or important information sources on social media nowadays (Lee and Watkins 2016). Ohanian (1990) describes attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness as the three attributes of information sources. We also categorized the attributes of vloggers, who are information sources sending information through video blogging, into three: attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness.

The attractiveness of the information source can again be categorized into two: physical attractiveness and psychological attractiveness (Erdogan et al. 2001). According to previous studies, physical attractiveness is defined as a beautiful and attractive face and a perfect body, whereas psychological attractiveness means the extent to which consumers feel familiar with the information source or the extent consumers perceive the information source similar to themselves (Caballero and Pride 1984). Both types of attractiveness increase the effect of persuasive communication between information source and recipient (Kahle and Homer 1985; Dion et al. 1972). In a precede study on the impact of attractiveness, consumers are also influenced by the attractiveness of information sources, and generally, the more attractive the information source is, the greater the acceptance of the message (Na et al. 2005). Also, physical attractiveness determine the first impression in a moment, the appearance exert considerable influence on building human relationship. Especially, as impression formation through SNS is a common phenomenon nowadays, the attractiveness become

important factor in SNS (Cho and Kim 2017). The attractiveness of the information source has a positive effect on brand attitude and purchase intention regardless of product type (Bower and Landreth 2001; Till and Busler 1998). In this study, we predicted that the attractiveness of vlogger perceived by viewers after watching vlog will lead the viewer to have a positive attitude toward information and, consequently, affect the content sharing intention and the attitude toward the products exposed in the vlog. We posit a hypothesis as following.

H1 Perceived attractiveness of a vlogger will positively affect the viewer's content sharing intention (H1a) and the attitude toward the products (H1b) in the vlog.

Expertise indicates the extent to which information sources are well-informed about their field and have accurate knowledge (Kim 2005), information recipients evaluate the expertise of information sources on the basis of their level of experience, ability, intelligence, achievement, status, and knowledge on a given topic or issue (Kelly et al. 1992). However, expertise is an attribute that the information receivers perceive the information source, so the expertise of the information source is subjective attribute (Yun 2000). In other words, the information source does not necessarily have to be an expert by objective criteria (Friedman and Friedman 1979). Also, consumers respond more favorably when the information source appears to be professional in the relevant field of information. In addition, Wangenheim and Bayón (2004) examined that the higher information recipients perceived the expertise of information sources, the greater the influence of information diffusion happens. In line with this finding, this study also predicted that the expertise of vlogger perceived by viewers after watching vlog will influence the content sharing intention and their attitude toward the products exposed in the vlog.

H2 Perceived expertise of a vlogger will positively affect the viewer's content sharing intention (H2a) and the attitude toward the products (H2b) in the vlog.

According to studies, trustworthiness indicates the degree to which the recipient feels the information source is true or honest (Hovland et al. 1953; Shimp 2010; Moorman et al. 1993). Word-of-mouth information available in online moves faster than word-of-mouth information available in offline, and it includes not only simple product information, but also the consumer's subjective experience and feelings during the purchase process (Kim and Lee 2013; Kim and Hwang 1997). Also, as a large amount of information can be obtained online in recent years, the trustworthiness of the online information source is attracting researchers' attention as an important factor in on-line communication. Trustworthiness is an important attribute of online information sources. According to previous research, trustworthiness of information source has had a statistically significant effect on the acceptance of oral information, consequentially it effects on the attitude and purchase intention (Park 2009). We also posit a hypothesis that the trustworthiness of vlogger perceived by viewers after watching vlog will influence the content sharing intention and their attitude toward the products exposed in the vlog.

H3 Perceived trustworthiness of a vlogger will positively affect the viewer's content sharing intention (H3a) and the attitude toward the products (H3b) in the vlog.

Emotional bond

With the appearance and the rapid growth of social network services, online communication to be conducted in various ways, are developing various types of human relationships (Cho et al. 2014). Vlog is effective way to communicate and interact with the audience, because vlogs allow audience to notice the vloggers' emotions, body language, accent and tone (Safko 2010). For example, Zoella, one of the fastest-growing and most popular vlogger of the YouTube community, supports her product-oriented videos with vlogs that offer behind-the-scenes, intimate access to her lifestyle (Berryman and Kavka 2017). In so doing, Zoella's videos encourage intimacy between her audience and herself. Online SNS users often communicate each other through comments or direct message which can build emotional bond. Therefore, a strong emotional bond can be created online.

Vlog shares video contents through online, and is characterized by the emphasis on the interaction between the information provider and the recipient. Although the vlog varies slightly different depending on the vlog, the vlogger appears in the video in a tone that sounds like a telling a story to the friends or acquaintance, and each other communicate and interact with comment or direct message (DM). Therefore, it can be presumed that the emotional bond formed through the interaction between vloggers and vlog viewers will have an important influence on the effect of vlogger's attributes on the content sharing intention and on the attitude towards product on the vlog.

Para-social interaction

Para-social interaction is a concept that was first introduced to explain the interaction between audience and people in the media, and it gives the audience a sense of intimacy just as they have a face-to-face relationship with the persona (Horton and Richard Wohl 1956). At this time, persona is the object that appears in mass media such as radio, movie, and television, not an object to communicate directly like a friend (Horton and Richard Wohl 1956; Labrecque 2014). However, since the intimacy that the audiences feel towards the persona is similar to the intimacy that they feel towards real friends, the relationship between the audiences and the persona formed through the mass media can be seen as virtual friendship. Para-social interaction is the psychological friendship and bond that media users have even though they are physically distant from the person in the mass media. Para-social interaction is getting higher attention recently due to the spread of social media (Lee and Watkins 2016).

Stever and Lawson (2013) explains that para-social interaction is appropriate to explain the relationship between vlogger and vlog viewers. Also, another previous study (Rubin et al. 1985) argues that if this interactive relationship persists, viewers will consider vlogger as a more reliable source of information. Furthermore, according to a number of previous studies, emotional responses regulate the relationship between attribute perception-behavioral responses. Kim and Kim (2012) examine the moderate effect of

emotional response, it was indicated that the emotional reaction has a significant influence over perceived attributes-“interest” and “originality” of tourism destination storytelling and the behavioral response. Therefore, in this study we posit a hypothesis that the emotional bond formed between viewers and vloggers through para-social interactions actually has a moderating effect on the perceived attributes of vloggers-sharing intentions and perceived attributes of vloggers-consumer attitude.

H4 Emotional bond between viewers and vloggers will moderate the effect between the perceived attributes of vloggers (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) and the viewer's sharing intentions (H4a), and the attitude toward the product (H4b) on the vlog.

Content sharing intention, attitude towards product and purchase intentions

With the development of Internet technology, the importance of word of mouth through social media in marketing area has expanded (Blackshaw 2004). Also, marketing activities based on videos have become more active as interactive communication using video became more popular. Since the content plays a role in connecting products and consumers, “sharing” is an important element of content. According to previous studies, the positive attitude toward content is linked to content sharing intention, and this positive attitude toward content leads to the attitude toward the product exposed in the media content (Mangold and Faulds 2009; Venkatesh and Davis 2000).

‘Attitude’ is defined as the positive or negative feelings about a particular object (Bernstein 1984). As a result of studying the consumer's response to the product in the previous study, it was found that the more the positive attitude a consumer has toward the product, the more the purchase intention increased (Howard 1994; Jang and Park 2015). Furthermore, attitudes toward the brand are a key indicator in predicting consumers' future purchase intentions.

Therefore, in this study, we posit hypotheses that the content sharing intention stemming from the positive attitude toward content has a positive effect on the attitude toward the product exposed to the content, and it will be positively connected to the purchase intention.

H5 The content sharing intention will have a positive effect on the attitude toward the product.

H6 The positive attitude toward the product will have a positive effect on the purchase intention.

Method

Research question and research model

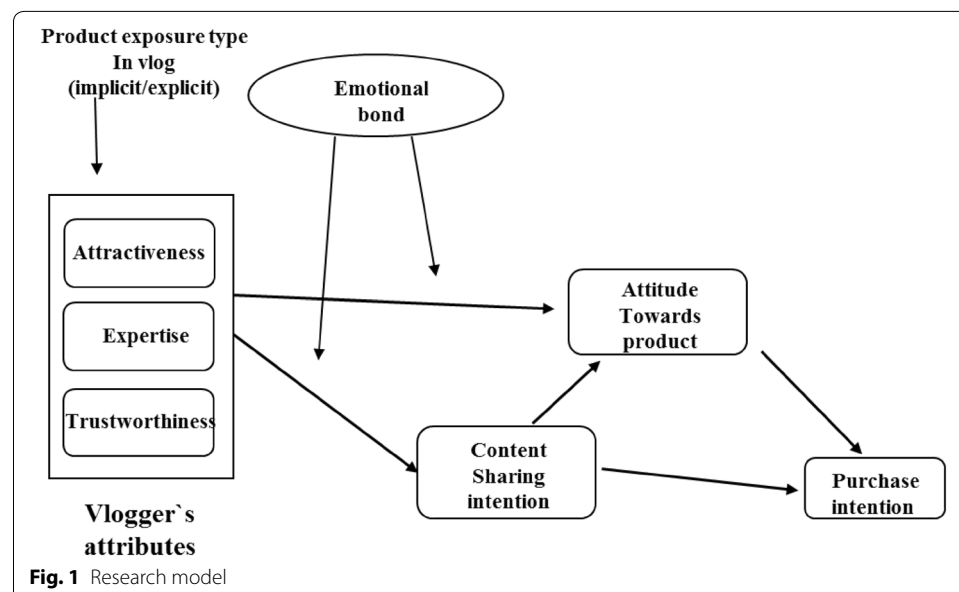
In this study we examine the following questions and tested the relevant hypotheses that we derived based on preceding research: First, how viewers' perception on a vlogger's attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) changes respectively,

according to the way a product is exposed (i.e., explicit or implicit); second, whether perceived attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness, affect viewers' attitude towards the products; third, whether consumer attitude and content sharing intention formed after watching vlogs, have effect on their purchase intention; lastly, whether the emotional bond that is formed among consumers and vloggers through para-social interactions has a moderating effect on the relationships of perceived attributes of vloggers with content-sharing intentions and with consumer attitude toward a product. We presented the research model in Fig. 1.

Procedure

We conducted an online survey to verify the abovementioned questions. For the survey, we used two type of vlogs-exposing the product implicitly and explicitly, created by one person. As in the Berryman and Kavka's study (2017) currently active on YouTube, we also selected the stimuli vlogs which are actively run on YouTube and have more than 5000 subscribers. Also we confirmed that the video selected for the survey was properly manipulated in advance (Appendix 1). Based on theoretical consideration in "The concept of VLOG (Video Blog) and difference in product exposure type on VLOG" section, we selected the two type of vlogs for survey-showing the vlogger's daily lifestyle video as implicit type, and product-review video as explicit type of vlog. We developed a questionnaire for the survey delivered to of women in age 18–39, who have experiences of watched vlogs. The participants were asked to answer a questionnaire after watching either a vlog with an explicit product exposure or an implicit product exposure.

The questionnaire items for the quantitative research were constructed based on the two selected videos to identify the research problems of this study. Questionnaire items were consists of six major parts: attributes of information source (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness), content sharing intention, attitude toward product, purchase intention, and emotional bond. Finally, all items except demographic



characteristics were measured the 7-point Likert scale (1 point = 'not at all' and 7 points = 'very much'). Participants' age range varied from teenage girls to women in their 30 s, all with past experience of watching vlogs. Total of 223 participants were randomly assigned to watch either one type of vlog—111 of them watched the implicit exposure vlog, and 112 watched the explicit exposure vlog.

Before testing the research hypotheses, we confirmed reliability and validity of the scales used in the study. First, we extracted factors by conducting principal component analysis using Varimax rotation method. Then, we analyzed the reliability coefficient for statistical confirmation of reliability of measurement items. The mean value of survey response values resulted from factor analysis were used in later analysis. The cumulated data were statistically analyzed using SPSS 23.0 program. Cronbach's alpha value and the results of the factor analysis were presented in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

First, we conducted one-way ANOVA to confirm the difference of viewers' perception of vloggers' attributes according to the type of product exposure. Next, we conducted a multiple regression analysis to investigate the effects of viewer's perceived attributes of vloggers (i.e. attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) have on content sharing intention and viewers' attitude towards products. Another multiple

Table 1 The result of principal factor analysis for vlogger's attributes

Factor name	Item	Eigen-value	Variance explained % (cumulative variance %)	Cronbach's α
Trustworthiness	This vlogger would be sincere every time	7.047	50.337 (50.337)	.908
	This vlogger would not either exaggerate or lie			
	This vlogger would not pretend to know about what she does not know well			
	This vlogger would not talk without grounds			
	This vlogger would frankly present her position, thoughts and opinions			
Expertise	This vlogger knows about the posting very well	1.870	13.354 (63.691)	.895
	It is an undeniable fact that This vlogger is an expert on the posting			
	This vlogger has a lot of experience with her vlog topic			
	This vlogger is likely to see a lot of magazines and videos related to her vlog content			
	This vlogger will give viewers information about her vlog content			
Attractiveness	This vlogger is pretty	1.438	10.274 (73.965)	.892
	This vlogger has a sophisticated image			
	This vlogger is very attractive			
	Others will want to resemble this vlogger			

Table 2 The result of principal factor analysis for content sharing intention

Factor name	Item	Eigen-value	Variance explained % (cumulative variance %)	Cronbach's α
Content sharing intention	The video I just watched is worth sharing If you share this video, your on/offline friends will also be interested in that video Followers of this vlogger would have similar interests I want to share this video online and to inform about this Vlogger I want to upload this video online again	3.445	68.903 (68.903)	.856

Table 3 The result of principal factor analysis for attitude toward product

Factor name	Item	Eigen-value	Variance explained % (cumulative variance %)	Cronbach's α
Attitude toward products	The product exposed on the video is likable Products in video can be trusted I feel positive about the products in video Products in video are reliable I like products in video	4.031	80.625 (80.625)	.938

Table 4 The result of principal factor analysis for purchase intention

Factor name	Item	Eigen-value	Variance explained % (cumulative variance %)	Cronbach's α
Purchase intention	I would like to use the products that have been exposed on the video I am willing to purchase the exposed products on video This video will help you make a purchase decision If the price is similar, I will buy the product exposed on the video	3.164	79.104 (79.104)	.908

regression analysis was conducted to find out if viewers' sharing intention and attitude affect their purchase intention. Also, we conducted a mediation analysis to confirm mediation effect of viewers' attitude toward product (Baron and moderating effect between vloggers' attributes (attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) and content sharing intention.

Table 5 The result of principal factor analysis for emotional bond

Factor name	Item	Eigen-value	Variance explained % (cumulative variance %)	Cronbach's α
Emotional bond	This vlogger is as comfortable as a friend	4.291	71.510 (71.510)	.920
	Communication with this vlogger is similar to communication with friends			
	This vlogger feels like a friend			
	This vlogger tried to communicate intimately with viewers			
	This vlogger seems to be interested in the viewers' opinion			
	After watching the vlog, I thought I wanted to comment			

Table 6 Multiple regression result of vlogger's attributes on content sharing intention

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Content sharing intention	Attractiveness	.262	4.470***	.516	77.803***
	Expertise	.340	5.487***		
	Trustworthiness	.260	4.491***		

*** $p < .001$

Result and discussion

Effect of product exposure type in vlog (implicit/explicit) on perception of vloggers

First, we conducted one-way ANOVA to confirm the difference of viewers' perception of vloggers' attributes according to the type of product exposure. There was a significant difference in the viewers' understanding of vloggers' attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness depending on the type of vlog they watched. The result demonstrated that vlogger's attractiveness ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 4.574$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 3.8504$, $F = 24.477$, $p = .000$), expertise ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 4.645$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 4.3464$, $F = 5.716$, $p = .018$), and trustworthiness ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 4.245$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 3.879$, $F = 8.679$, $p = .004$) were perceived higher when viewer watched vlog with an implicit product exposure, implying that viewers evaluated vlogger's attributes differently depending on the product exposure type on the vlog. It can be explained that even though the same person appears in the video, the extent of effect of vlogger's attributes can be different depending on the product exposure type in vlog. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in the emotional bond ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 4.032$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 3.243$, $F = 28.890$, $p = .000$) and the attitude toward the products ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 3.807$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 3.482$, $F = 4.692$, $p = .031$) depending on the type of vlog they watched. However, there was no significant difference in the content sharing intention ($M_{\text{implicit}} = 3.676$, $M_{\text{explicit}} = 3.591$, $F = .399$, $p = .538$) depending on the type of vlog they watched.

Table 7 Multiple regression result of vlogger’s attributes on attitude toward the products

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Attitude toward products	Attractiveness	.352	5.671***	.458	61.647***
	Expertise	.175	2.669***		
	Trustworthiness	.287	4.678***		

*** $p < .001$

Table 8 Multiple regression result of content sharing intention and attitude toward products on purchase intention

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Purchase intention	Content sharing intention	.267	5.349***	.775	379.236***
	Attitude toward the products	.658	13.176***		

*** $p < .001$

Effect of perceived vlogger’s attributes on content sharing intention and attitude towards the product

We conducted a multiple regression analysis on 223 participants to investigate the effects of viewer’s perceived attributes of vloggers (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) have on content sharing intention. The result demonstrated that all three attributes have significant positive effects on content sharing intention (Table 6). In other words, the higher viewers perceive the attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness, the stronger their intention grew to share the content, and the expertise has relatively the greatest influence on content sharing intention ($\beta_{expertise} = .340, p_{expertise} = .000$).

We also conducted a multiple regression analysis to investigate the effects of a viewer’s perceived attributes of vloggers (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) have on their attitude towards the products. The results demonstrated that all three attributes have significant positive effects on viewers’ attitude toward the products (Table 7). Higher evaluation on those attributes also had positive effect on their attitude towards the product, and the attractiveness has relatively the greatest influence on forming the attitude toward product. ($\beta_{attractiveness} = .352, p_{attractiveness} = .000$). Thus, hypotheses 1 and 2, 3 were adopted that vlogger attributes would have a positive effect on content sharing intention and attitude toward products.

Effect of content sharing intention and attitude toward product on purchase intention

Another multiple regression analysis was conducted to find out if viewers’ sharing intention and attitude to product affect their purchase intention (see Table 8). The results of the analysis showed that both content sharing intention and attitude toward product have significant effect on purchase intention (Table 4, $\beta_{Content\ sharing\ intention} = .267, p = .000 / \beta_{Attitude\ towards\ the\ products} = .658, p = .000$). It is noteworthy that positive attitudes toward products have a stronger influence on purchase intentions than content intentions. Therefore, we accepted hypotheses 5 and 6 that stated positive effect of content sharing intention and attitude toward products on purchase intention.

Mediation effect of attitude towards product

Additionally, we conducted a mediation analysis with the steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) to confirm mediation effect of viewers' attitude toward product between content sharing intention and purchase intention. As a result of the analysis, we confirmed that content sharing intention positively affect viewer's attitude towards product ($\beta = .768, p = .000$), and this attitude consequentially have a partial mediation effect. The result demonstrated that the positive sharing intention leads to the formation of positive consumer attitude.

Verifying moderating effect of emotional bond

Moderated regression analysis was conducted to test Hypothesis 4a and to prove emotional bond's moderating effect between vloggers' attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) and content sharing intention (see Table 9). The analyzed result shows that the emotional bond has the moderating effect on the trustworthiness' effect on content sharing intention ($\beta_{\text{trustworthiness} \times \text{bond}} = .126, p = .030$). The effect of other two independent variables—attractiveness and expertise—on content sharing intention, however, turned out to be not affected by the emotional bond ($\beta_{\text{attractiveness} \times \text{bond}} = -.067, p = .248 / \beta_{\text{expertise} \times \text{bond}} = .076, p = .184$). Therefore, H4a was partially accepted. Based on the result, we can conclude that the magnitude of effect that viewers' perceived attractiveness and expertise have on content sharing intention is not affected by emotional bond they have, whereas the effect of trustworthiness on the content sharing intentions is affected by the bond that individuals build with vloggers. In short, the effect of audiences' perceived credibility of vloggers on the content sharing intention grows larger when emotional bond between audiences and vloggers are stronger.

Next, another moderated regression analysis was conducted to test Hypothesis 4b and to verify the moderating effect of emotional bond on relationship between vloggers' attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness) and viewers' attitude towards products (see Table 9). The analyzed result showed that the bond has moderating effect only between attractiveness and trustworthiness and attitude ($\beta_{\text{attractiveness} \times \text{bond}} = -.152, p = .014 / \beta_{\text{trustworthiness} \times \text{bond}} = .128, p = .038$). We confirmed that emotional bond does not have any moderating effect between expertise and attitude ($\beta_{\text{expertise} \times \text{bond}} = .077, p = .203$). To summarize, the stronger the emotional bond is, the higher the effect of perceived trustworthiness had on audiences' attitude towards products. A noticeable result was drawn here: the regression coefficient of moderating effect of emotional bond on perceived attractiveness and audiences' attitude was negative. This indicates that the stronger the emotional bond is, the smaller

Table 9 Moderated regression analysis result

Dependent variable	Independent variable X moderator	
Content sharing intention	Attractiveness X bond	$\beta = -.067, p = .248$
	Expertise X bond	$\beta = .076, p = .184$
	Trustworthiness X bond	$\beta = .126, p = .030$
Attitude towards product	Attractiveness X bond	$\beta = -.152, p = .014$
	Expertise X bond	$\beta = .077, p = .203$
	Trustworthiness X bond	$\beta = .128, p = .038$

the perceived attractiveness' effect on their attitude towards products becomes. As the physical attractiveness has an effect on the first impression, the attractiveness may have significant effect on the attitude toward the product at the first time. But as forming the emotional bond with vloggers, the effect of the attractiveness on the attitude towards products becomes smaller.

Effect of perceived vlogger's attributes on content sharing intention and attitude towards the product depending on product exposure type in vlog

The participants of this study were grouped into two according to the types of video they watch (i.e., implicit exposure and explicit exposure), and their answers to the questionnaire showed that significant differences exist between those two groups in perceiving the three attributes of vloggers. Thus we reaffirmed the relationships between and among variables once again, in both explicit and implicit exposure group. Although we did not set a specific hypothesis regarding the effect of two different product exposure types on the relationships among research variables, we provides additional analysis results in order to present further discussion of roles of each research variable.

We conducted a multiple regression analysis to investigate the effects of viewer's perceived attributes of vloggers (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) have on content sharing intention and attitude towards the product depending on the product exposure type. As a result, the group that watched vlog with an implicit product exposure

Table 10 Multiple regression result of vlogger's attributes on content sharing intention—implicit exposure type

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Content sharing intention	Attractiveness	.148	1.719	.549	43.351***
	Expertise	.410	4.317***		
	Trustworthiness	.297	3.550**		

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 11 Multiple regression result of vlogger's attributes on content sharing intention—explicit exposure type

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Content sharing intention	Attractiveness	.437	5.990***	.565	46.803***
	Expertise	.267	3.519**		
	Trustworthiness	.238	3.238**		

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 12 Multiple regression result of vlogger's attributes on attitude towards products—implicit exposure

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Attitude towards product	Attractiveness	.172	1.849	.472	31.928***
	Expertise	.356	3.473**		
	Trustworthiness	.270	2.986**		

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 13 Multiple regression result of vlogger’s attributes on attitude towards products—explicit exposure

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	R ²	F
Attitude towards product	Attractiveness	.496	6.170***	.473	32.351***
	Expertise	.040	.477		
	Trustworthiness	.291	3.597***		

*** $p < .001$

Table 14 Moderated regression analysis result of emotional bond on relationship between vloggers’ attributes and content sharing intention depending on product exposure type

Dependent variable	Independent variable X moderator	Implicit exposure	Explicit exposure
Content sharing intention	Attractiveness X bond	$\beta = -.115, p = .232$	$\beta = .095, p = .154$
	Expertise X bond	$\beta = .098, p = .341$	$\beta = -.077, p = .274$
	Trustworthiness X bond	$\beta = .179, p = .045$	$\beta = .078, p = .243$

shows that expertise and trustworthiness positively affect content sharing intention (Table 10). When viewers watched vlog with explicit product exposure, all attributes were found to be having a positive effect on content sharing intention (Table 11).

In the case of viewers’ attitude towards product, expertise and trustworthiness have positive effect on the viewers’ attitude when the vlog has implicit product exposure (Table 12). In contrast, attractiveness and trustworthiness positively affect the viewers’ attitude when they watched explicit product exposure (Table 13). Also, in this case, attractiveness has bigger importance than other two factors. The result of this study shows that the attributes of vlogger that affects the content sharing intention and the attitude towards product are different according to the product exposure type in vlog.

Verifying moderating effect of emotional bond depending on product exposure type

Moderated regression analysis was conducted to prove emotional bond’s moderating effect between vloggers’ attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) and content sharing intention depending on the product exposure type in vlog. The analyzed result shows that when the vlog has implicit product exposure, the emotional bond has moderating effect on the trustworthiness’ effect on content sharing intention. However, the result shows that when the vlog has explicit product exposure, the effect of vloggers’ attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness) on content sharing intention turned out to be not affected by the emotional bond (Table 14).

Another moderated regression analysis was conducted to verify the moderating effect of emotional bond have on relationship between vloggers’ attributes (i.e., attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness) and viewers’ attitude towards products depending on the product exposure type in vlog. The result showed that when the vlog has implicit product exposure the emotional bond has significant moderating effect between vloggers’ attractiveness and viewers’ attitude towards products ($\beta = -.179, p = .099$), and vloggers’ trustworthiness and viewers’ attitude towards products ($\beta = .167, p = .094$). Also, we confirmed that there are significant moderating effect between vloggers’ expertise and attitude towards products when vlog has explicit product exposure (Table 15).

Table 15 Moderated regression analysis result of emotional bond on relationship between vloggers’ attributes and attitude towards product depending on product exposure type

Dependent variable	Independent variable X moderator	Implicit exposure	Explicit exposure
Attitude towards product	Attractiveness X bond	$\beta = -.179, p = .099$	$\beta = -.013, p = .866$
	Expertise X bond	$\beta = .128, p = .266$	$\beta = -.140, p = .085$
	Trustworthiness X bond	$\beta = .167, p = .094$	$\beta = .122, p = .112$

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to provide meaningful implications on how product exposure is more effective in the non-marketer-driven Vlog, and how it relates to the evaluation of the vlog’s attributes and the formation of emotional bond. Specifically, by investigating the effect of rapidly increasing vlogger’s attributes perceived by vlog viewers on content sharing intention, attitude toward products and purchase intention. In particular, participants of this study were grouped into two according to the type of video they watch (i.e., implicit exposure and explicit exposure), and we verified the research problem set in this study. Followings are academic and practical implications.

First, although vlog is rapidly spreads through online video sharing websites and has different features from existing video content such as movies, CE, and home shopping advertisements, there is not sufficient research on vlog being carried out. Therefore, in this paper, we focused on investigating consumers’ reaction such as their attitude towards vlog content as well as product and purchase intention, thereby enhancing the understanding of vlog’s role in retail. In particular, we have paid attention to the importance of the bond formed on the basis of online interaction by studying the influence of the influence of the bond with the information source depending on the exposing the product in the vlog.

Second, this study is meaningful to extend the previous study on the influence of attractiveness. In previous studies, the higher the attractiveness, the more positive attitude toward the product. However, this study suggests a new perspective on physical attractiveness, which is one of the important factors in video contents field, by verifying that the effect of attractiveness is reduced in relation to the person who forms bond.

Also we applied para-social interaction, a concept that has been used to describe celebrities and their fans, to find out how emotional bond between vloggers and viewers affect their perception. Especially, the research result showed that as the viewer’s emotional bond with vlogger grows stronger, the influence of the perceived attractiveness of vlogger on consumers’ attitude toward the product decreases—an interesting outcome, which requires further research. Especially, it is meaningful that this study applied para-social interaction, which is a concept applied between celebrity and the general public, to general vlogger.

Furthermore, our study implies the need of understanding vlog as a form of marketing mix that fashion retailers can utilize. This study reveals that exposing fashion products in the vlog has a positive effect on the attitude toward product and the purchase intention, so that we suggest that fashion retailers need to expose their products in the vlog. In particular, it is necessary to use vlog appropriately as marketing tools, paying attention to the high recognition of all attributes (attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness) of information sources when vlogger exposes the products implicitly rather than exposes explicitly.

Our research, however, has the following limitations. First, the scope of our research was confined to the fashion products that are exposed in vlogs. But in reality, various lines of products other than fashion can be dealt in vlogs, and the response of audience can vary depending on the nature of products. Second, we used non-celebrity vloggers' videos as stimuli, and the research focused on non-celebrity vloggers. Recently, however, an increased number of celebrities began to utilize vlog to communicate with their fans as YouTube-based vlogs gain popularity. Retailers acknowledged commercial value of vlogs as well, and are carrying out collaboration projects with non-celebrity vloggers or opening their own channels.

Authors' contributions

Both of authors developed the conceptual approach as well as analyzed data. WJC mainly developed hypotheses and research model through the literature review, collected data collection, and developed the results and conclusion. YL modified research framework, supported to improve overall research design, and interpreted results. Both authors contributed to the formatting and editing of the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Availability of data and materials

The data supporting the findings of the study is not shared at this moment because the ownership of the data is not wholly in the authors.

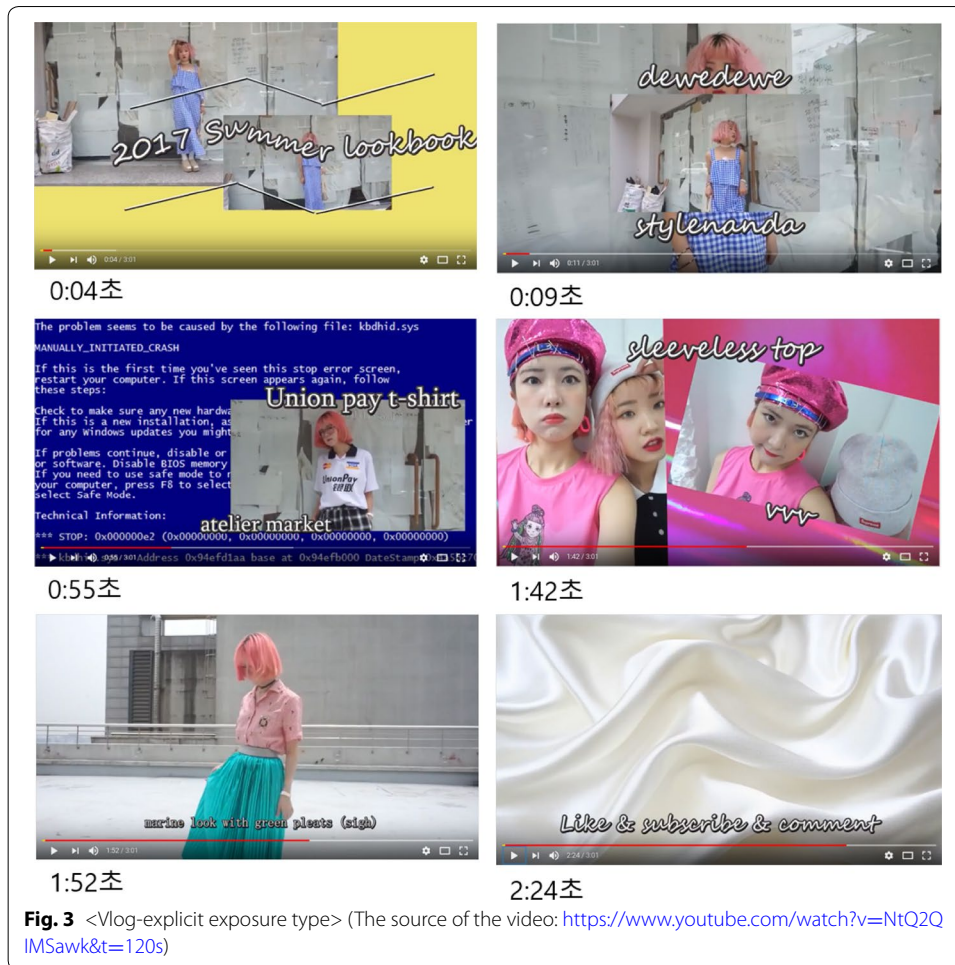
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Appendix 1

See Figs. 2, 3.





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