

**READING IN THE AGE OF INFLUENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF
BOOKTOKERS ON BOOK CONSUMPTION INTENTIONS**

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INTRODUCTION

The continuous advancement of technology has enabled broader access to digital environments, particularly social media platforms (Khan & Tao, 2022). Digitalization has become embedded in the daily lives of all generations, reaching a level of ubiquity that renders any reversal virtually impossible (Rideout *et al.*, 2022). As a result, several pre-existing social groups have also entered this digital space, including literary communities (Gee, 2005). This integration has enabled the creation of new communities, as well as the organization of regular gatherings focused on literary discussions and the promotion of reading (María, Rutten & Aliagas-Marín, 2024).

A significant portion of these literary communities is present on TikTok, a social media platform launched in 2014 that promotes content diversity through short-form videos (O'Brien, 2021). This digital environment is also characterized by the ease of liking and sharing content, with the goal of making users' posts go viral (Policarpo *et al.*, 2021). Taking advantage of this feature, literary communities can strengthen their presence by fostering connections in a more engaging setting, with greater potential for attracting and retaining followers (Haenlein *et al.*, 2020).

On TikTok, literary communities are known as BookTok (Scolari, Fraticelli & Tomasena, 2021), often described as a large digital book club (Merga, 2021; Teel & Lund, 2024; Judijanto *et al.*, 2025) that emphasizes the emotional response to reading. In other words, it prioritizes the feelings that literary works evoke in readers—such as sadness, joy, or empathy—so that the selection of a book is often based on the type of emotion it is expected to elicit (Merga, 2021). These communities foster a strong sense of belonging, where participants feel secure in expressing their identities and connecting with others who share similar interests (Jerasa, 2025).

On BookTok, authors and readers engage in constant interaction regarding both classic literary works and newly released publications (Merga, 2021). As in any digital environment, social media influencers also stand out within this virtual literary community. These opinion leaders share their personal reading habits and literary preferences, thereby fostering an increasingly dynamic and strategic environment (Khamis *et al.*, 2016). These influencers are known as BookTokers (Stewart, 2021), as they create spaces for opinion exchange by offering recommendations and fostering discussions about memorable characters and emotionally engaging stories found in books (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). Consequently, they can stimulate their followers' interest in book consumption and reading (Merga, 2021).

Due to the dynamic nature of short and engaging videos, BookTokers can also attract non-readers, transforming them into readers, rekindling a love for reading among those who may have lost it, appealing to adolescents from diverse cultures, and producing viral content (O'Sullivan, 2022). A large portion of the audience participating in these virtual communities belongs to Generation Z, individuals born between 1997 and 2012, who are already immersed in an advanced digital environment (Flood, 2021).

In the market, the online literary community has gained prominence, being credited with influencing the significant participation of young people and book consumption at events such as the 2022 São Paulo International Book Fair and the 2023 Rio de Janeiro edition. The combined influence of the social media platform and BookTokers is capable of propelling books into the spotlight, often placing them directly on bestseller lists (Sousa, 2022). The platform itself has celebrated this encouragement of reading and participation in public events, highlighting the emotional well-being fostered by engagement with literature,

creativity, and mental health (TikTok, 2023). BookTokers are also increasingly recognized as significant agents of social change. The influence of these opinion leaders is reshaping youth habits, bringing audiences closer to authors and their works. Such influential power can transform a book with limited sales into a bestseller through the dissemination and viralization of informative digital content (Machado, 2024).

In 2024, for example, influencer Courtney Henning Novak created a video about the work *The Posthumous Memoirs of Brás Cubas* by Machado de Assis. Her recommendation and emotional experience while reading the book went viral on TikTok, leading to a significant increase in demand for the title in bookstores and online book retailers (Dias, 2024). During the period when the video went viral, Machado de Assis's work topped the sales rankings on the Amazon.com platform (Uol, 2024). Author Colleen Hoover also exemplifies this influence. In 2022, she managed to place seven of her books on the global bestseller lists, and in 2024, her work *It Ends with Us* ranked as the second best-selling book, reaching sales of 43,000 copies; additionally, in 2024, *Coffee with God the Father* by Júnior Rostirola gained significant attention due to the influence of digital content created by influencers, which sparked interest in associating spirituality, everyday well-being, and self-help (Toledo, 2024).

BookTokers also have the ability to popularize books that portray diverse cultures. This is exemplified by South Korean author Han Kang, who won the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2024. Due to extensive media coverage, her work gained prominence both on physical and digital bookshelves (G1, 2024). Consequently, the literary market has become more accessible, and the dynamic content produced by digital influencers plays a fundamental role in this dissemination process, reaching an estimated 200 billion views annually (Pecinato, 2023).

Despite recognition of the impact that digital influencers have on the attitudes and behaviors of their followers (Silva *et al.*, 2020; Silva *et al.*, 2025), few studies have sought to understand the dynamics of BookTokers' influence within literary consumer communities (Martens, Balling & Higgason, 2022). Based on recent literature, studies have increasingly focused on understanding the BookTok phenomenon and its implications for both content creators and their followers. The use of TikTok to share literary content is not only associated with the platform's ease of use and the efficiency of its algorithm but also with the enjoyment derived from content creation, the social support received, and the strengthening of bonds within the reading community (Guiñez-Cabrera & Mansilla-Obando, 2022). Among readers themselves, there is evidence that BookTok exerts a stronger appeal on young individuals who already cultivate reading habits, although it also sparks the interest of less engaged students, especially when integrated into the school context (Dera, Brouwer & Welling, 2023). Moreover, school librarians have also been exploring the use of online literary communities to engage with young readers (Moore, Evans & Schultz-Jones, 2023).

Despite the growing academic interest in the BookTok phenomenon, most existing studies remain focused on qualitative analyses with small samples or on specific groups, such as librarians or high school students, who are not always active users of the platform (Dera, 2024). As noted in Dera's review (2024), there is a significant methodological gap due to the scarcity of empirical research employing large-scale surveys among members of the BookTok community. In this context, the present study is justified by its aim to address part of this gap through the application of a survey based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), seeking to analyze the influence of BookTokers on their followers' intention to consume literary content.

In light of this, the present study aims to extend the Theory of Planned Behavior by investigating how attitudes toward BookTokers' recommendations, subjective norms,

perceived behavioral control, and the influence of the BookTokers themselves collectively impact users' intentions to consume literary content.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is based on the idea that human behavior results from an individual's intention to perform a specific action (Ham *et al.*, 2015). The theory was originally developed by Ajzen (1991) as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), with perceived behavioral control being the key component distinguishing the two theories (Armitage & Conner, 2001).

According to the assumptions of the TPB, an individual's intention to perform a specific behavior is the primary determinant of that behavior (La Barbera & Ajzen, 2020). Intentions, in turn, are influenced by three main factors: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). According to Ajzen, attitude refers to the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior; subjective norms involve the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior. Finally, perceived behavioral control pertains to the individual's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 2011).

The TPB is widely used in studies investigating consumer behavior, as it effectively explains the reasons underlying specific behaviors (Godin & Kok, 1996). Previous research employing the TPB has aimed, for example, to examine factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions regarding influencer-created brands (Magrizos *et al.*, 2021), behavioral intentions related to travel (Dash, 2021; Shen & Shen, 2021; Ragab, 2022; Mohammed *et al.*, 2023), the purchase of sustainable fitness services (Hafyana & Alzubi, 2024), cervical screening consultations (Fielden & Holch, 2022), and fashion consumption (Brandão & Costa, 2021; Lira & Costa, 2022; Tiwari *et al.*, 2024).

Attitude toward the consumption of books recommended by BookTokers

Attitude is shaped as a mental disposition acquired through experience (Allport, 1962), constituting a psychological tendency expressed by an individual through a favorable or unfavorable evaluative statement about an object, person, or event (Beck & Ajzen, 1991). In the context of a specific behavior, each belief links the behavior to a particular outcome, whether as a consequence or attribute, such as the cost of performing that behavior. These attributes are pre-evaluated as positive or negative, thereby shaping the consumer's attitude component (Ham *et al.*, 2015).

Attitude is the primary predictor of consumer buying and selling behaviors (Kataria *et al.*, 2013). Thus, consumer attitude is recognized as one of the main criteria for understanding the overall evaluation that consumers make of a product and brand (Kwun, 2021). It is defined as the summative evaluation of a product or service that guides behavioral intentions as well as actual consumer behaviors (Kwun, 2021). If consumers hold positive attitudes toward a product, their purchase intention will be higher (Kwun, 2021).

Ajzen (1985), who proposed the Theory of Planned Behavior, states that consumer attitude is shaped by both perceived risks and benefits as individuals engage in behavior that determines behavioral intention (Yoon & Chung, 2017). Choi *et al.* (1998) also found that consumers who perceived risks associated with street food were less likely to purchase it. Furthermore, risk and benefit perceptions regarding street food influence both consumer attitude and behavioral intention. (Yoon & Chung, 2017).

Attitude can be formed by positive or negative feelings developed by an individual toward a behavior or the intention to perform it (Rahadjeng & Fiandari, 2020). In the context

of social influencers, followers tend to hold a positive attitude toward the digital influencers they follow, placing trust in their recommendations (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016). Their loyal audiences perceive them as attractive, authentic, and knowledgeable, which increases followers' confidence in their endorsements (Kapitan & Silvera, 2016). Thus, consumers who hold more favorable attitudes toward influencers' posts are more likely to adopt a positive attitude toward the recommended product (Zhang *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, we propose that a positive attitude toward the recommendation contributes to the intention to consume the item promoted by the influencer. Based on this, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: The attitude toward BookToker recommendations influences the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers.

Subjective norms

As human beings, we are inherently influenced by subjective norms—unwritten rules and societal expectations that guide how we should behave. These norms affect a wide range of aspects in daily life, including our consumption behavior (Manning, 2009).

Subjective norms refer to the belief that a person or social group exerts influence over a given behavior and are determined by the perceived social pressure for an individual to behave in a certain way (Ham *et al.*, 2015). Ajzen (2020) explains that these norms are shaped both by what others expect us to do (injunctive beliefs) and by what we observe others doing (descriptive beliefs), thereby influencing the intention to perform—or not perform—a specific behavior.

Subjective norms represent a set of social influences that affect an individual's decision-making (Raut *et al.*, 2018). In a study conducted by Rahadjeng and Fiandari (2020), these influences were found to originate from various sources, such as peers and family. When these sources provide positive information, they encourage the individual's intention to adopt the behavior. Xie and Madni (2023) indicate that subjective norms influence people's behavior through social interactions, and that social pressure can alter purchase intentions by prompting individuals to adopt behaviors more aligned with the social expectations of their reference groups.

H2: Subjective norms regarding recommendations positively influence the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers.

Perceived behavioral control

Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) is characterized as an individual's belief regarding how easy or difficult it is to perform a given behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This definition is often compared to Bandura's concept of self-efficacy, which refers to a person's belief in their ability to carry out the actions required to achieve a specific goal (Sparks, Guthrie, & Shepherd, 1997).

In the context of digital influence, PBC is reflected in followers' perceptions of how easy it is to adopt behaviors recommended by influencers, such as purchasing promoted products or services (Chetioui, Benlafqih, & Lebdaoui, 2020). For an individual to engage in such behavior, both internal (skills, competencies) and external factors (time, opportunities, reliance on others) must be considered, as these elements directly shape the perception that influences the intention to perform a specific action (Ragab, 2022). Consequently, followers who believe they possess the necessary resources and capabilities to carry out a given action tend to feel more confident in executing it, thereby increasing the likelihood of actual behavioral change (Veckalne *et al.*, 2025). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Perceived Behavioral Control positively influences the intention to purchase books recommended by BookTokers.

Influence of BookTokers

TikTok is an application launched in 2016 by the Chinese company ByteDance, and it has become one of the most widely accessed social media platforms in the world (Silva, 2020). Within this platform, BookTok has emerged as a specific segment where readers share book recommendations, reviews, and literary reactions (Gomes, 2023). It functions much like a book club, featuring short videos that often highlight reading suggestions and personal book collections (Führ, Rauber, & Barth, 2023).

On this platform, the hashtag used by the community (#BookTok) brings together individuals who share their book reviews and recommendations (Mashiyane, 2022). Some of these users become opinion leaders, influencing readers' consumption of certain books. Book sales are driven by influencers' videos, often reigniting interest in older titles, such as *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller, whose hashtag #BookTok has accumulated over 23.6 billion views (Roberts, 2021).

BookTokers face a social reality marked by a decline in young people's interest in reading habits and reading comprehension (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). However, certain aspects of these influencers may contribute to shifting this scenario, such as the pedagogical potential they adopt to create accessible reading spaces for their viewers (Martens *et al.*, 2011). This element is further reinforced in the construction of the videos shared by BookTokers, which are often characterized by a playful aesthetic designed to elicit and showcase spontaneous reactions among members of the community (Reddan, 2022). The content also aims to strengthen the group by providing it with a sense of social identity and fostering connection among individuals (Merga, 2021).

BookTokers promote reading as a pleasurable, free, voluntary, and recreational activity (Krashen, 2004). Unlike academic reading, these influencers encourage emotional reading and empathetic engagement (Asplund & Olin-Scheller, 2021). Therefore, Jerasa and Boffone (2021) argue that participation in digital literary communities constitutes a valuable literacy practice and an important means of literary dissemination, particularly because, in some cases, it brings forgotten literary classics back into the spotlight. Consequently, there is also a growing increase in book consumers at bookstores and a heightened demand for popular books among members of this community (Chaudhry, 2022).

BookTokers, like other digital influencers, are perceived by the public as more credible and authentic sources of information (Silva *et al.*, 2020; Silva *et al.*, 2025). Consequently, followers hold positive perceptions of these agents, leading them to consider their opinions and recommendations. In the case of BookTok, influencers may increase the likelihood that their followers feel motivated to consume the recommended books (Euzéby, Passebois-Ducros, & Machat, 2024). Beyond this rational and social aspect, users who engage with poetic content on TikTok experience feelings of identification, emotional support, and even personal transformation, indicating that these influencers can act as sensitive mediators of literary experiences (Dera, 2025). This, in turn, encourages the audience to seek to relive the same emotions described by the BookToker while reading specific books, thereby generating engagement (Pretel-Jiménez, Del-Olmo, & Ruíz-Viñals, 2024). Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: BookTokers positively influences the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers.

The formation of positive attitudes toward BookTokers' recommendations can be influenced by how these influencers are perceived by their followers, where a favorable perception of the influencer and their content contributes to the development of a positive attitude toward their reading suggestions (Pretel-Jiménez, Del-Olmo, & Ruíz-Viñals, 2024). The more positively a follower perceives a BookToker in terms of authenticity, passion for reading, and spontaneous communication, the greater the likelihood of following their recommendations and consuming the books they suggest, thereby creating a positive attitude toward their endorsement and trust in their content (Segarra-Saavedra & Torres-Huamanyauri, 2023). As previously discussed, digital influencers, when positively perceived, significantly impact the formation of favorable attitudes toward the products and behaviors they promote (Long, Zaidin, & Mai, 2024).

By establishing a trustworthy and expert image of the influencer, followers tend to evaluate not only the influencer but also their recommendations positively, developing a more receptive and favorable attitude toward consuming those recommendations (Veckalne *et al.*, 2025). The impact of digital influencers on consumer attitudes is recognized as a central factor in shaping purchase intention, with perceived influencer credibility comprising attributes such as expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. These factors exert a direct influence on the formation of favorable attitudes toward the recommended behaviors (Elmoussa, Yee, & Cheah, 2024). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: BookTokers positively influences attitudes toward their recommendations.

The formation of a positive perception of BookTokers can influence subjective norms, as these content creators assume the role of social references by forming active communities of readers and encouraging the exchange of opinions and recommendations. They thus contribute to the creation of social pressures favorable to literary consumption, reinforcing the desired behavior among their followers (Roig-Vila, Romero-Guerra, & Rovira-Collado, 2021). Influencers are seen as trustworthy social agents and can affect the social judgment of individuals who follow them, shaping their perceptions of what is expected or accepted in terms of consumption (Long, Zaidin, & Mai, 2024).

The establishment of trust and social recognition bonds allows the suggested behavior to be perceived as socially expected or valued within the individual's reference group (Veckalne *et al.*, 2025). On social media, this influence intensifies, as constant visibility and interaction increase the perception that certain behaviors are desired or socially approved (Ling, Phang, & Salleh, 2024). The perception of social expectations arising from the interactive environment with influencers directly impacts both consumers' attitudes and intentions. In digital communities, where active participation and social validation are prominent elements, the perceived influence of content creators can strengthen followers' subjective norms, thereby promoting greater alignment with recommended behaviors (Elmoussa, Yee, & Cheah, 2024).

Therefore, it is assumed that the more positive the perception of BookTokers, the greater the perceived social influence on subjective norms; thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: BookTokers positively influences subjective norms.

A positive perception of content creators can contribute to increasing followers' confidence in their own ability to act on the recommendations provided (Long, Zaidin, & Mai, 2024). By fostering trust in the influencer, followers tend to believe they possess the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to follow the recommendations (Veckalne *et al.*,

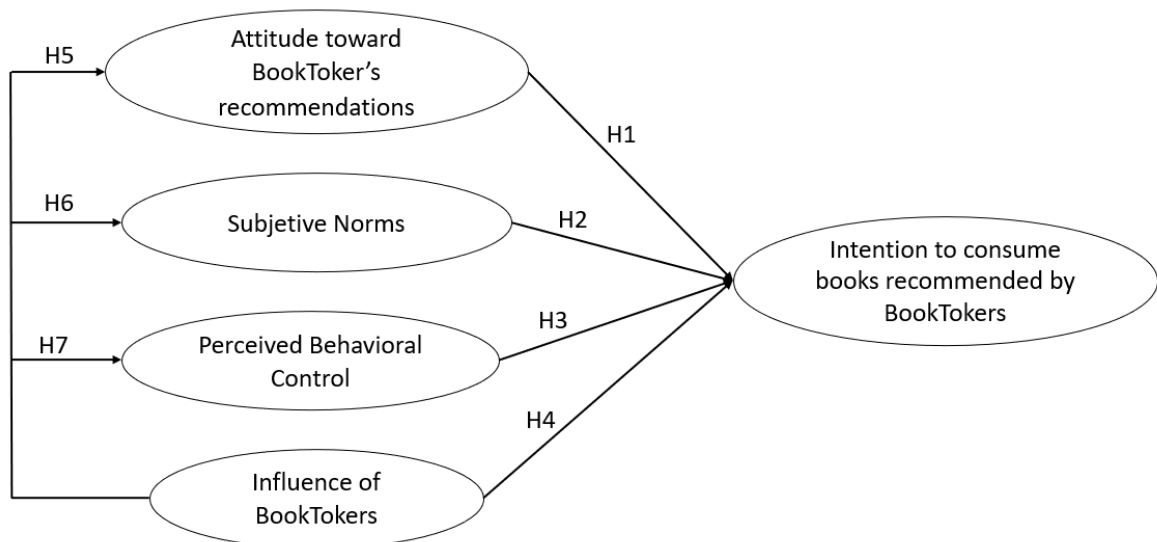
2025), thereby adopting a sense of autonomy to carry out the suggested behavior, reducing uncertainties and strengthening perceived behavioral control (Long, Zaidin, & Mai, 2024).

Perceived behavioral control is strengthened in the digital environment by factors such as easy access to information provided by influencers and familiarity with interaction platforms; this perception of autonomy and ease in following the recommendations proposed by the influencer increases consumers' confidence in their own ability to act (Mariam, 2022). Furthermore, a positive perception of the content creator can not only shape followers' intention to engage in consumption but also reinforce their individual belief in performing such behavior (Adaba, Mwainyekule, & Frimpong, 2025). Putri and Tandiono (2025) report that perceived behavioral control is enhanced when individuals feel they have adequate resources, autonomy to decide, and transparent access to information. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7: BookTokers positively influences perceived behavioral control.

Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical model proposed in this study.

Figure 1. Theoretical Research Model



Note. Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

METHOD

To test the research model, this study adopted a quantitative approach, utilizing numerical data analyzed through statistical methods (Gay & Airasian, 2002). Data collection was conducted using the survey methodological technique (Fowler, 2011). A non-probabilistic convenience sample was employed, comprising individuals over 18 years of age who consumed literary content in digital environments and followed at least one BookToker.

The cross-sectional data collection was conducted through an online questionnaire hosted on Google Forms, which consisted of scales for each construct measured using a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scales were adapted from previous literature on attitude (Ragab, 2022), subjective norms (Ragab, 2022), perceived behavioral control (Ragab, 2022), influence of Booktokers (Hafyana & Alzubi, 2024), and consumption intention (Pop, Săplăcan, & Alt, 2020; Rathnayake & Lakshika,

2022) (Table 1). In addition to the scales, the collection instrument had a section to identify the demographic profile of the sample.

Table 1. Adapted Scales

Construct	Scale Source	Adapted Item	Code
Attitude towards Booktokers (ATT)	Ragab (2022)	I think it is a good idea to rely on the posts of Booktokers when planning to buy books.	ATT1
		I find it helpful to use Booktokers' posts when deciding which books to buy.	ATT2
		Booktokers make me want to buy the books they recommend.	ATT3
		In general, I have a positive attitude toward using BookToker posts to make book purchasing decisions.	ATT4
Subjective Norms (NS)	Ragab (2022)	My friends/family/associates think I should rely on BookToker posts when choosing books.	NS1
		My friends/family/associates approve of my use of BookToker posts when deciding which books to buy.	NS2
		People whose opinions I value choose to use BookToker posts when deciding which books to buy.	NS3
Perceived Behavioral Control (CCP)	Ragab (2022)	The decision to rely on BookToker posts for book purchases is entirely my own.	CCP1
		I have enough time and opportunity to follow the information provided by BookTokers about books.	CCP2
Influence of Booktokers (BK)	Hafyana e Alzubi (2024).	My engagement on social media significantly influences my decision to purchase books recommended by Booktokers.	BK1
		I use social media to search for information about books recommended by Booktokers.	BK2
		I consider the information about books provided by BookTokers to be trustworthy.	BK3
		I consider the content of book recommendations made by Booktokers to be credible.	BK4
Consumption intention (INT)	Pop, Săplăcan e Alt (2020); Rathnayake e Lakshika (2022).	I am likely to buy books recommended by Booktokers.	INT1
		I will buy books recommended by Booktokers as soon as I can.	INT2
		I will recommend books recommended by Booktokers to others.	INT3
		I will tell others about books recommended by Booktokers.	INT4
		I want to know about a book after seeing content posted by an BookToker.	INT5
		I am interested in reading a book after seeing content posted by an BookToker.	INT6
		I consider buying a book after seeing content posted by an BookToker.	INT7
		I need to have a book after seeing content posted by an BookToker.	INT8
		I am motivated to buy a book after an BookToker appears in an advertisement about the book.	INT9

Note. Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

Prior to data collection, a pretest was conducted with 15 participants to assess whether the terms used in the questionnaire were appropriate and comprehensible. It was found that no modifications to the data collection instrument were necessary. Following the pretest, the questionnaire link was distributed to potential respondents via their social media platforms, and some BookTokers were asked to share the link within their communities. A total of 722 responses were collected between December 10, 2024, and February 20, 2025.

The data underwent a screening process to verify participants' alignment with the research objective and to identify any missing values or outliers. Of the total respondents, 58 were excluded for not following BookTokers, and 1 was excluded for not engaging with literary content. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 663 valid respondents. Sample profiling was performed using R, and analysis of the hypothetical model was conducted using SmartPLS 4.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

This section comprises the analysis of the sample profile, the measurement model, and the structural model. In addition, it presents the discussion of the proposed hypotheses.

Sample profile

Regarding missing values, a total of 15 cases were identified in the *age* variable. These missing values were replaced with the mean age (mean = 23.3). As expected, the mean age after adjustment remained 23.3 years (standard deviation = 5.7), indicating a predominantly young audience. Female participants represented the highest percentage of the sample (79%), followed by male participants (19%) and those who preferred not to disclose their gender (2%). This sample characteristic reflects Blackwell's (2025) argument that, globally, women are more likely to be avid readers, more likely to read daily, and more likely to have read more books in a given year than men. Consequently, they are more inclined to participate in digital book communities and follow BookTokers.

Table 2 presents data on the platforms used to access literary content, as well as respondents' income and occupation.

Table 2. Sample profile

Platform	<i>f</i>	%
Instagram	217	33
TikTok	213	32
YouTube	233	35
Individual Income*		
Less than 1 minimum wage	38	6%
Between 1 and 2 minimum wages	232	35%
Above 2 to 3 minimum wages	122	18%
Above 3 to 4 minimum wages	93	14%
Above 4 to 5 minimum wages	56	8%
Above 5 minimum wages	122	18%
Profession		
Student	323	49%
Public servant	38	6%
Employee under CLT	157	24%
Entrepreneur	39	6%
Informal employee	56	8%
Unemployed	50	8%

Note a: Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

Note b:* a minimum wage corresponds to R\$ 1,518.00 reais

Regarding the platforms through which respondents consume literary content, 35% (233) use YouTube, 33% (217) use Instagram, and 32% (213) access TikTok. This indicates

that BookToker content transcends the TikTok platform itself, as consumers seek recommendations from these opinion leaders across various digital channels. It is also noteworthy that the majority of the sample consists of students (49%)—individuals in training for whom reading can be particularly beneficial—who present a reasonably stable economic profile.

Measurement model

The analysis initially focused on item-level and construct-level discriminant validity, as well as convergent validity and measurement reliability. Item loadings were higher on their respective dimensions (Table 3), which confirms item-level discriminant validity (Chin, 1998).

Table 3. Cross loads

	Attitude	Booktokers	Perceived Behavioral Control	Intention	Subjective Norms
ATT1	0.789	0.527	0.306	0.488	0.403
ATT2	0.809	0.465	0.269	0.485	0.380
ATT3	0.776	0.485	0.348	0.568	0.344
ATT4	0.788	0.486	0.318	0.528	0.364
BK1	0.511	0.747	0.274	0.547	0.265
BK2	0.370	0.671	0.248	0.469	0.255
BK3	0.510	0.806	0.248	0.541	0.291
BK4	0.472	0.789	0.239	0.521	0.266
CCP2	0.354	0.310	0.873	0.305	0.199
CCP1	0.258	0.204	0.693	0.212	0.135
INT1	0.566	0.585	0.258	0.795	0.260
INT2	0.541	0.591	0.254	0.807	0.291
INT3	0.521	0.578	0.266	0.796	0.325
INT4	0.515	0.546	0.261	0.762	0.322
INT5	0.395	0.440	0.223	0.664	0.212
INT6	0.528	0.508	0.301	0.768	0.249
INT7	0.480	0.437	0.259	0.722	0.246
INT8	0.338	0.397	0.165	0.587	0.212
INT9	0.399	0.426	0.204	0.679	0.245
NS1	0.299	0.232	0.117	0.231	0.702
NS2	0.360	0.264	0.170	0.251	0.725
NS3	0.392	0.300	0.192	0.317	0.813

Note. Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

Regarding discriminant validity at the latent variable level, the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated and compared with the correlations between variables, following the criterion established by Fornell and Larcker (1981). The square root values of the AVEs exceeded the correlations among the constructs; therefore, discriminant validity at the latent variable level is confirmed (Table 4).

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker matrix

	Attitude	Booktokers	Perceived Behavioral Control	Intention	Subjective Norms
Attitude	0.791				
Booktokers	0.621	0.755			
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.394	0.334	0.788		
Intention	0.656	0.690	0.334	0.735	
Subjective Norms	0.471	0.357	0.217	0.360	0.748

Note a. Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

Note b: The values on the diagonal (in bold) represent the square roots of the AVEs, while the values below the diagonal correspond to the correlations.

Convergent validity was assessed through the AVE values. Since all AVE values exceeded 0.5, convergent validity was confirmed (Hair *et al.*, 2013). Reliability was verified using the composite reliability index (Table 5).

Table 5. Cronbach’s Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Cronbach’s Alpha	CR	AVE
Attitude	0,800	0,870	0,625
Booktokers	0,747	0,841	0,570
Perceived Behavioral Control	0,404	0,764	0,621
Intention	0,892	0,913	0,540
Subjective Norms	0,608	0,792	0,560

Note. Authors’ own elaboration, 2025.

Cronbach’s alpha (1951), commonly used to assess reliability, tends to be either inflated or deflated depending on the number of items in the latent variable (Green & Yang, 2009; Sijtsma, 2009). Composite reliability, on the other hand, is calculated based on the relative importance of each item to the factor. Although Cronbach’s alpha is reported in this study, the primary focus of the analysis is on composite reliability. The results indicate that all latent variables exhibit satisfactory internal consistency, as composite reliability values exceed 0.7 (Hair *et al.*, 2013).

Structural model analysis

The structural model analysis began with the assessment of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. According to Hair *et al.* (2013), VIF values should be below 5 to indicate the absence of multicollinearity issues. All results met this criterion, allowing the analysis to proceed to subsequent stages (Table 6).

Table 6. Testing of research hypotheses

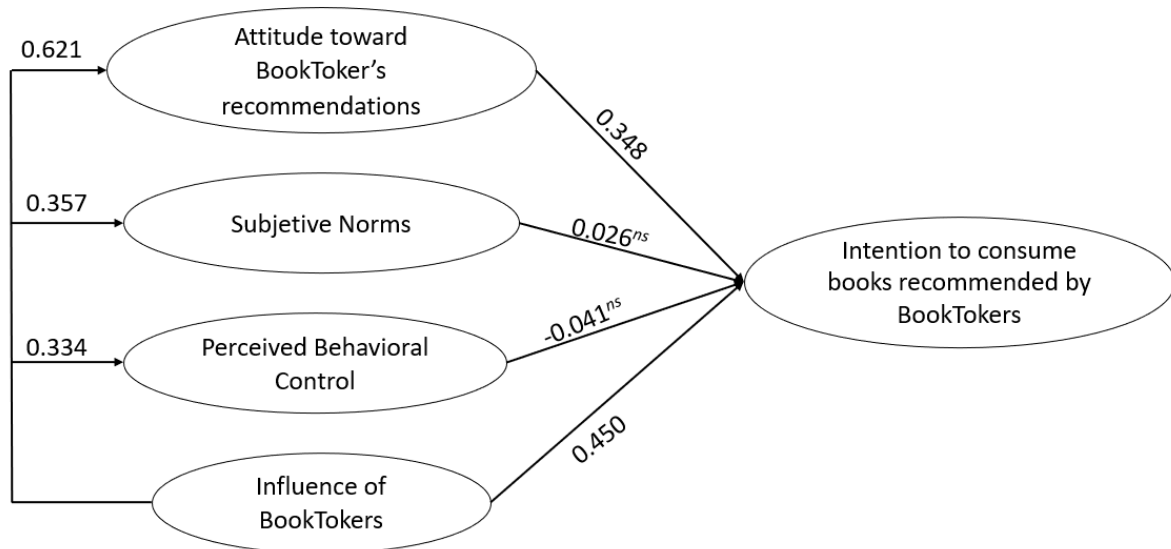
Hypotheses	VIF	f^2	B	DP	t -value	p -value	Supported?	R ² _{adjusted}
H1: Attitude → Intention	1.945	0.142	0.348	0.042	8.233	0.000	Yes	
H2: Subjective Norms → Intention	1.298	0.001	0.026	0.029	0.907	0.365	No	
H3: Perceived behavioral control → Intention	1.203	0.003	-0.041	0.029	1.412	0.158	No	55.9%
H4: Booktokers → Intention	1.668	0.277	0.450	0.039	11.597	0.000	Yes	
H5: Booktokers → Attitude	1.000	0.629	0.621	0.029	21.313	0.000	Yes	38.5%
H6: Booktokers → Subjective Norms	1.000	0.146	0.357	0.035	10.068	0.000	Yes	12.6%
H7: Booktokers → Perceived behavioral control	1.000	0.126	0.334	0.045	7.472	0.000	Yes	11%

Note. Authors’ own elaboration, 2025.

Next, a bootstrapping procedure was conducted using 5,000 resamples, with a bias-corrected confidence level, two-tailed tests, and a 5% significance level (Kock, 2015), to more accurately assess the path coefficients and the statistical significance of the hypothesized relationships. By evaluating whether the direction of the relationships aligns with the proposed hypotheses and whether the significance level is below 0.05, it was concluded that only hypotheses H2 and H3 were not supported (Table 6). Therefore, subjective norms ($\beta = 0.026$; $p > 0.05$) and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = -0.041$; $p > 0.05$) do not have a positive

influence on the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers. The remaining hypotheses (H1, H4, H5, H6, and H7) were supported (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Theoretical Research Model



Note a. Authors' own elaboration, 2025.

Note b. ns = not significant

Regarding the model's explanatory power, the adjusted R^2 values indicated that attitude toward BookToker recommendations and perceptions of BookTokers together explain 55.9% of the variance in the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers. BookTokers also explain 38.5% of the variance in attitude toward their recommendations, 12.6% of the variance in subjective norms, and 11% of the variance in perceived behavioral control. According to Cohen (1992), the first two R^2 values are considered large (greater than 26%), while the latter two are considered small.

Finally, the effect size was assessed using the f^2 index, as recommended by Hair *et al.* (2013). This index measures whether the removal of an independent variable has a significant effect on the dependent variable. The effects of removing attitude on intention ($f^2 = 0.14$), BookTokers on intention ($f^2 = 0.28$), on subjective norms ($f^2 = 0.15$), and on perceived behavioral control ($f^2 = 0.13$) are considered medium. The effects of subjective norms ($f^2 = 0.00$) and perceived behavioral control ($f^2 = 0.00$) on intention are null, while the effect of BookTokers on attitude ($f^2 = 0.63$) is large, as it exceeds the threshold of 0.35, following Cohen's (1988) guidelines (see Table 5).

Discussions

The objective of this study was to extend the Theory of Planned Behavior by investigating how attitudes toward BookToker recommendations, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and the influence of the BookTokers themselves collectively impact users' intention to consume literary content. Data collected from 663 respondents were analyzed, providing support for five out of the seven proposed hypotheses. This section aims to further explore and discuss these findings.

It was first identified that attitudes toward book recommendations made by BookTokers influence users' intention to consume books recommended by these influencers, thereby confirming Hypothesis H1. The Theory of Planned Behavior highlights attitude as a key variable in the formation of behavioral intentions, serving as a primary predictor for

understanding individuals' evaluations in their roles as consumers (Ajzen, 1991; Kataria *et al.*, 2013; Kwun, 2021). This study supports such arguments by affirming that positive attitudes toward specific recommendations enhance consumers' predisposition to adopt them. Considering that content shared by influencers often fosters emotional and cognitive connections with their followers (Gomes, 2023; Kwun, 2021), it is expected that these recommendations will be evaluated positively by the audience, thereby exerting a favorable influence on their content appraisal and behavioral responses.

Hypothesis 2, which posited a positive influence of subjective norms on the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers, was not supported. The Theory of Planned Behavior emphasizes the role of subjective norms by considering the various social sources that exert influence through interaction and group-based social pressure, shaping how individuals think and behave (Xie & Madni, 2023; Rahadjeng & Fiandari, 2020). In this study, the focus on BookTok highlights a subcommunity composed of readers who share literary interests and experiences (Mashiyane, 2022). Communities like this tend to diminish external normative pressures, as users are more inclined to value the opinions and behaviors of peers within their own virtual environment, expressing themselves through codes of belonging and cultural validation (Rahadjeng & Fiandari, 2020; Manning, 2009). Therefore, it can be inferred that subjective norms may not significantly impact the intention to consume books when such norms stem from groups external to these digital communities. Given that the digital literary community promotes reading as a free, recreational, and voluntary activity (Krashen, 2004), normative expectations from other social groups are likely to have a weakened or nonexistent influence.

Despite the lack of support for the hypothesis regarding the influence of subjective norms from external groups on the intention to consume books, the study identified the role of a key agent within the digital literary community—namely, the BookToker—as a significant social component influencing followers' consumption intentions. Among all independent variables in the model, the BookToker demonstrated the strongest effect on consumption intention ($\beta = 0.450$), thereby supporting Hypothesis 4. This finding contributes to the literature by highlighting the relevance of digital opinion leaders in shaping consumers' intention to engage with literary content. Thus, BookTokers may serve as intermediaries in promoting individual and social development indicators, such as reading habits, by fostering engagement in digital book communities. In doing so, they contribute to the enhancement of various educational, cognitive, emotional, and linguistic skills among groups drawn to literary participation through the content they promote.

BookTokers, moreover, were found to influence followers' attitudes toward their recommendations, as well as users' subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, thereby supporting Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7, respectively. These findings reinforce the argument that BookTokers function not merely as information intermediaries but as agents of social and cultural influence. They play a central role in shaping behavioral intentions and contribute to the construction of shared meanings surrounding the act of reading (Silva, 2020).

Regarding Hypothesis 5, it is proposed that perceptions about the influencer affect followers' attitudes toward the recommendations they provided. It is reasonable to expect that when BookTokers are perceived as credible and authentic sources (Silva *et al.*, 2020; Silva *et al.*, 2025), they elicit positive evaluations of their opinions, thereby increasing followers' confidence in adopting the influencers' suggestions. When content creators are perceived as enthusiastic, trustworthy, aesthetically aligned with their audience, and genuinely passionate about books, followers tend to internalize these sentiments, fostering a more favorable attitude toward reading (Pretel-Jiménez *et al.*, 2024).

Moreover, BookTokers contribute to shaping subjective norms perceived as valid by their followers (H6), as well as to individuals' perceptions of their own ability to engage with the recommended readings (H7). Therefore, beyond influencing the intention to consume the books they endorse, these agents act at both the social and individual levels to promote the behaviors they advocate, thereby expanding their impact throughout the theoretical framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior.

Finally, the hypothesis that perceived behavioral control influences the intention to consume books recommended by BookTokers was not supported (Hypothesis 3). Although the TPB posits that individuals' perceptions of the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior affect consumption intention (Ajzen, 2020), in the case of recommended books, this factor may not be perceived as decisive by members of the community. This could be due to the general availability and easy access to such books—often through accessible platforms—and the fact that the platform's user base is already embedded in a digitally literate environment (Almeida, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze how attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and perceptions of BookTokers influence the intention to consume books recommended by these influencers, under the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). By extending the original TPB model to include the influence of BookTokers, the study offers important theoretical, managerial, and social implications.

From a theoretical perspective, the article contributes to the literature by recognizing the impact of digital opinion leaders on the consumption intentions of products that shape the essence of online communities in which they operate. Based on the research findings, BookTokers are identified as agents of social and cultural mimicry, guiding reading practices among members of literary communities, encouraging them to seek out recommended books, and strengthening the social bonds within these groups. Furthermore, the findings suggest that reading behavior encouraged by BookTokers is less influenced by external social pressures or practical feasibility factors (such as time, money, and access) and more closely linked to internal motivation, individual reading enjoyment, and the sense of belonging generated by the community through shared literary preferences. Thus, the study offers a reconfiguration of the variables originally proposed by the classic Theory of Planned Behavior, adapted to the BookToker context, recognizing these influencers not only as drivers of consumption intention but also as shapers of the theory's core antecedents.

From a managerial standpoint, the article highlights BookTokers as effective endorsers of literary products. In collaboration with authors and publishing houses, they can boost book sales and help the literary sector reach audiences that have traditionally shown resistance to reading habits. In this sense, BookTokers may contribute to the evolution of the publishing industry in the face of new communication technologies, integrating with other entertainment formats (such as social media) to foster new reading habits and support the expansion of the digital literary market.

It is also essential to consider the role of BookTokers in promoting reading habits, particularly in societies where engagement with books remains critically low. These influencers may serve as key agents in addressing a troubling reality—such as that observed in Brazil—where more than half of the population identifies as non-readers, regardless of socioeconomic class or educational background (Lopes, 2024). BookTokers have the potential to foster a culture of reading in contexts where traditional educational or institutional efforts may have limited impact. By curating accessible content and framing reading as a pleasurable and socially shared activity, BookTokers can help reshape public perceptions of books—

transforming them from academic obligations into meaningful sources of entertainment, identity, and personal growth. In this way, BookTokers not only act as marketing allies to the publishing industry but also contribute to broader educational and cultural goals by helping to reduce reading disparities and spark interest in literature across diverse segments of the population.

Despite the aforementioned contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, respondents were not required to be active members of the BookTok community per se, but rather to consume content from influencers who operate—though not exclusively—within that space. As a result, the boundaries of group affiliation remain somewhat blurred. Future research could refine this focus by selecting participants who engage specifically with literary content on TikTok, thereby ensuring a clearer alignment with the platform that characterizes the BookTok community. Moreover, the study did not collect data on the participants' actual reading behaviors, such as the number of books read within a given time frame. Such information could have enriched the analysis by offering deeper insights into the reading profiles of the respondents. Future studies might adopt longitudinal designs to examine how users develop reading habits over time through continued engagement with BookTokers. Finally, further research is recommended to explore the types of literary works endorsed by these influencers and the communication strategies employed in their promotional content. Understanding these elements may be particularly valuable for publishers and marketers aiming to design more effective campaigns to promote books in digital and social media environments.

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