

## **Research on The Influence of Opinion Leaders on Young People’s Decision to Watch Vietnamese Movies at Cinema**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*From wartime propaganda cinema, Vietnamese films have transformed into a diverse industry, preserving cultural identity. To study the influence of opinion leaders on young people’s decisions to watch Vietnamese films at cinema, the research team used a quantitative research method based on data analysis collected from a survey of 267 Vietnamese adolescents, of whom 263 adolescents who had watched films at cinema were included in the image factor analysis. The research team used SMARTPLS software to process the collected survey data. The research results show that, among the five factors influencing “the decision of young people to watch Vietnamese films in cinema” (DC), the factor of “Brand fit” (BF) has the highest influence (0.329), followed by “Audience similarity” (AS) (0.203), “Expertise of opinion leader” (EX) (0.158) and “Trustworthiness of opinion leader” (TW) (0.138). The factor of “Attractiveness of opinion leader” (AT) is not statistically significant. The research provides a scientific basis for filmmakers and film distributors to take advantage of the power of social networks to promote Vietnamese films; at the same time, contributing to the theory of cultural consumption behavior in the context of digitalization in Vietnam.*

**Keywords:** influence, opinion leader, choice, Vietnamese film, cinema, youth

### **1. Introduction**

The Vietnamese film industry has witnessed fragility in recent years, with the great contribution of young carpenters (news.vn, 2025). From a propaganda cinema, Vietnam has now developed into a diverse film market. Cinema is one of the important genres, a popular model in Vietnam. This is largely due to the unique experience of space, sound, and light at the cinema

(viewdata.vn, 2023). Statistics from Box Office Vietnam (2025), the country currently has about 1,200 screens in 212 cinema complexes. Of these, CGV leads with 83 cinema complexes, and 478 screens and holds about 45% of the market share (news.vn, 2025). Lotte Cinema accounts for 26%. In addition, there are several other brands such as Galaxy Cinema, BHD Star, Cineplex, Cinestar, and Beta Cinemas. Galaxy Cinema accounts for 10%, BHD Star accounts for 5.5%, Beta Cinemas accounts for 8%, while state-owned cinemas only accounts for 2%.

Data from Statista (2025) shows that the total revenue of Vietnamese feature films in 2023 increased by more than 30% compared to the pre-pandemic level (2019), from 62.3 million USD to 80.5 million USD. Revenue is expected to continue to increase in the next five years (2024-2029) with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of about 4.9% and could reach 110.7 million USD in 2029. This revenue level only corresponds to about 6 - 8 million people, less than 10% of the population (Statista, 2025). In this case, the theater market still has tremendous growth potential.

Buying tickets to the cinema is a popular form of entertainment for many different age groups (tieudungplus.vn, 2019). In particular, young people go to the cinema the most, concentrated in the age group of 16-29. These are people who have more time, are exposed to culture quickly and early, have better economic conditions, and have higher entertainment needs (tieudungplus.vn, 2019). Considering the factors that influence the decision to watch movies at the cinema, with 78.9 million internet users and 98% of adults from 15 years old owning a smartphone by 2024 (Cimigo, 2025), social networks such as TikTok and Facebook become important tools to shape entertainment preferences. Movie review information is the most influential reference channel in choosing movies to watch in the cinema (tieudungplus.vn, 2019). Opinion leaders can influence or change the behavior of others in the digital environment. According to the theory of Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), opinion leaders can spread information and influence the attitudes and behaviors of followers, especially in the digital age. With their closeness and easy access to many platforms and devices, opinion leaders have become a form of marketing with great potential in brand communication (Minh., D.T. & Linh., L.T.H., 2022)

These influencers not only play the role of introducing and evaluating films but also shape and create trends in the online community. In this context, studying the influence of opinion leaders in the film industry on young people's decision to choose to watch Vietnamese films in cinema is a matter of concern and needs to be raised to better understand the consumer behavior of this group. From there, the study provides a scientific basis for filmmakers and marketers to leverage the power of social networks to promote Vietnamese films; at the same time, it contributes to the theory of cultural consumption behavior in the context of digitalization in Vietnam.

## **2. Theoretical basis**

### **2.1. General overview of opinion leaders**

#### ***2.1.1. Concept***

Opinion leaders are individuals who can shape the attitudes and behaviors of others through social interactions (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955). In the context of the digital age, their role is expanded through platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram, especially for the younger generation.

According to Influencity (2018), opinion leaders are individuals who possess specialized knowledge and influence in their field or industry. In addition, they build a large social network, attracting a large number of followers (Abidin, 2016). On digital platforms, they can act as KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders), influencers, bloggers, or experts.

Previous studies have demonstrated the importance of opinion leaders on consumer behavior. Zou & Peng (2019) studied their influence on the fashion industry, while Fakhreddin & Foroudi (2022) analyzed their impact on purchase behavior on Instagram. Regarding entertainment consumption, Lin, Bruning, and Swarna (2018) proposed that online opinion leaders can enhance the utility and entertainment value of products, including movies.

Social media opinion leaders often attract young people thanks to their authentic “review” content, which meets consumer needs based on reviews from other users. In contrast, young people tend to rely on “reviews” from TikTokers and YouTubers to make decisions before consuming. The decision of Vietnamese youth to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema is no exception to that trend.

#### ***2.1.2. Characteristics of opinion leaders***

The ability to influence public awareness and behavior through information transmission and creating trends of opinion leaders comes from the following characteristics:

**(i) Influence on social networks:** Influence can be assessed through the following criteria:

- **Followers:** Individuals with tens of thousands to millions of followers on platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram.

- **Frequency of interaction:** Measured through the number of likes, comments, shares on posts, review videos, or analyses.

- **Ability to create viral content:** Some individuals can make content become a trend on social networks.

**(ii) Expertise and reputation in the film industry**

Some opinion leaders are not only influential on social networks but also highly specialized, especially in the film industry. This group includes:

- **Film critics, directors, and producers:** They have extensive knowledge and influence the audience's perception through in-depth articles or interviews on media channels

- **Film researchers:** Individuals with research works and articles in prestigious academic journals or newspapers.

- **Recognized prestigious people:** People who have received film awards or acted as advisors in major events such as the Vietnam Film Festival.

- **Content creators:** Individuals who have in-depth, authentic film reviews or analyses, and have interesting ways of conveying them, contributing to orienting the audience's tastes.

**(iii) Ability to orient the tastes and decisions of young audiences to watch movies (Audience Taste Influence)**

The decision of young people to choose to watch Vietnamese movies at the cinema is a matter of consumer behavior. Consumer behavior is the way young people make decisions about watching movies, including searching for information, evaluating options, and taking action to consume movie-viewing services. Opinion leaders often understand the psychology of young audiences, and use creative content to encourage them to go to the cinema to watch Vietnamese movies. According to the factors that influence opinion leaders on behavior and social awareness proposed by Minh., D.T. & Linh., L.T.H., (2022), the ability to orient young audiences' tastes and movie viewing decisions is demonstrated through:

- **Influence on perception:** Influencers can affect the public's thoughts and opinions about a film. They help audiences access information by introducing new movies, evaluating content quality, offering personal analysis and feelings, and comparing domestic and international films.

- **Impact on purchasing decisions:** Viewers tend to trust influencer reviews more than official advertisements.

- **Creating trends and movements:** Influencers can initiate or amplify new trends, such as hashtags or challenges related to the film on platforms like TikTok and YouTube, encouraging audiences to go to the cinema.

## **2.2. Research overview**

### **Two-Step Flow Theory**

The two-step flow theory, proposed by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) and developed by Katz (1957), describes how information flows from the mass media to opinion leaders, who then transmit it to less active groups in society. This process occurs in two steps: (1) the message from the media is transmitted to the opinion leader, and (2) the opinion leader interprets and shares the message with his or her followers. This theory, also known as the “Multi-Step Flow Model” (Katz, 1957), has become especially important in the digital age, when social media allows anyone to become an opinion leader. In Vietnam, platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook have amplified this role, especially in shaping young people’s movie-viewing choices (Wikipedia, 2025)

Recent research, such as Minh., D.T. & Linh., L.T.H. (2022), emphasizes that social media has amplified the influence of opinion leaders, especially in the context of entertainment consumption culture, including watching Vietnamese movies in cinema. In the digital age, social media has expanded the reach and impact of the two-step flow theory. Platforms such as TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook allow opinion leaders to quickly share reviews, trailers, and recommendations through short-form content such as videos or reels. This is especially important in Vietnam, where young people often follow KOLs on these platforms to make movie-viewing decisions. Thanks to technology platforms, the influence of digital engagement metrics, such as likes and shares, enhances the impact of influencers, complementing traditional factors such as credibility and expertise Minh., D.T. & Linh., L.T.H. (2022).

### ***Influence factors of opinion leaders***

Many factors determine the influence of opinion leaders on young people’s movie-viewing decisions, including:

- **Credibility:** Credibility is defined as the level of honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness as perceived by the audience (Aaker, D. A., (1987). Marketers often choose widely recognized opinion leaders, such as film critics or KOLs, to represent movie brands, enhancing trust. Lou, C., & Yuan, S., (2022) research explores the credibility of social media influencers (SMIs) and the impact of brand trustworthiness perceptions on young consumers’ purchase intentions. The results show that valuable information content and authenticity of influencers enhance parasocial

relationships, thereby promoting purchase intentions. Cheung, M. L., et al. (2022) focused on how influencer credibility on social media platforms in China affects young people's interaction. The results showed that credibility, expressed through honesty and credibility, is an important factor driving interaction behavior. In the context of movies, the credibility of KOLs (such as movie critics) can influence young people's decision to watch movies through trust in their reviews.

- **Expertise:** Expertise is the extent to which an opinion leader is considered a valuable source of information (Aaker, D. A., 1987). Ohanian, R. (1990) added that expertise includes competence, experience, knowledge, and skills. Expertise (knowledge, skills) is an important factor driving consumption decisions. In Vietnam, this study by Thuy., D.C., et al., (2024) examines the role of KOLs' expertise on social media in shaping young consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. This is consistent with the influence of film critics or directors on young people through in-depth analysis.

- **Charisma:** Charisma theory, based on social psychology research, suggests that message effectiveness depends on the familiarity, likability, similarity, and physical attractiveness of the endorser. Ohanian, R. (1990) emphasized that the physical charisma of a brand endorser, such as a celebrity, can influence young audiences. Rajput, A., & Gandhi, A. (2024) explored how the physical charisma and social presence (social presence) of social media influencers affect young consumers' attachment and purchase intentions in the fashion and beauty industry. Although not directly related to films, the results suggest that charisma does not always create lasting attachment but must be combined with authenticity. In the context of the study, it can be applied to famous actors promoting films.

- **Brand/product congruence:** Congruence between the influencer and the movie/brand is considered an important factor for effective advertising (Jamil, A., 2014). Congruence between the influencer and the vulnerability image enhances credibility and authenticity (Kim., H., Park., M., 2023). When an individual promotes a movie that fits their style or genre. For example, a famous actor appears in the movie trailer, which fits the image of the movie.

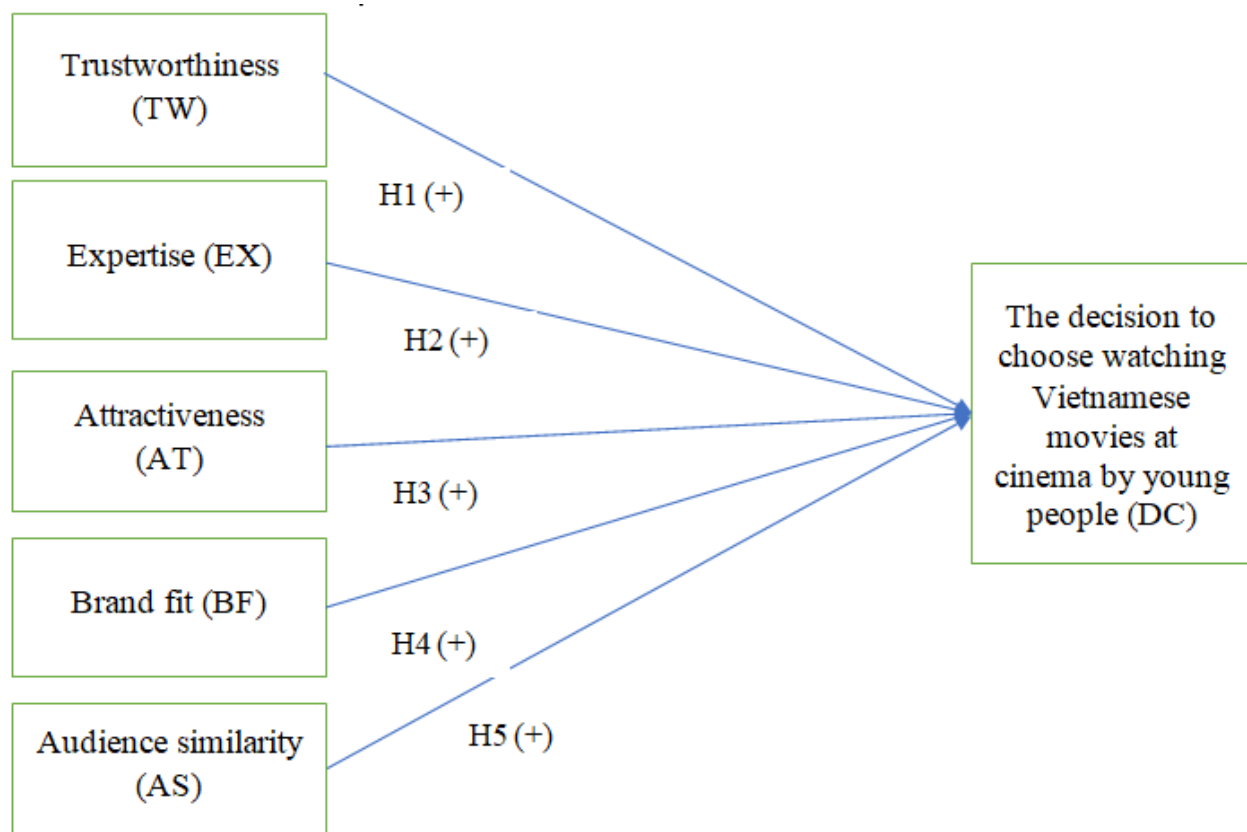
- **Prosthetic congruence:** Congruence is the degree of harmony between the influencer and the fictional, gender, or lifestyle (Liu., X & Zheng., X, 2024) This study shows that congruence (likeness) between the influencer and the fictional, based on values, attitudes, and appearance, increases social affinity and purchase intention. Audiences are easily influenced by leaders who have something in common, such as interests or lifestyles.

- **Purchase/service usage decisions:** are understood as the result of behavioral intentions, in which intentions are defined by Ajzen (1991) as "indicators of the extent to which people are

willing to try, of the level of effort they intend to expend” to perform a purchase action. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), behavioral intentions play a central role and are the main predictors of purchase behavior (Ajzen, 1991). At the same time, Mirabi et al., (2015) consider purchase intentions as the motivation that provides consumers with the choice to purchase a product or service in a specific shopping context.

**2.3. Research model and hypothesis**

**Research model:**



*Source: Proposal of the authors*

**Dependent variable:** Young people’s decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema

**Independent variable**

- *Trustworthiness of opinion leaders:* The level of trustworthiness of opinion leaders is assessed through honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness as perceived by the audience.

- *Expertise of opinion leaders*: The level of expertise of opinion leaders is measured through knowledge, experience, and capacity in the field of cinema.

- *Attractiveness of opinion leaders*: The attractiveness of opinion leaders in terms of appearance, personality, and similarity to the audience.

- *Brand fit*: The level of fit between opinion leaders and the style, values , and messages of Vietnamese films.

- *Audience similarity*: The degree of similarity between opinion leaders and audiences in factors such as age, gender, interests, and lifestyle.

**Research hypothesis:**

*H1: Trust in opinion leaders (TW) has a positive impact on the decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema of young people (DC).*

*H2: Expertise of opinion leaders (EX) has a positive impact on the decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema of young people (DC).*

*H3: Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) has a positive impact on the decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema of young people (DC).*

*H4: Brand fit (BF) has a positive impact on the decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema of young people (DC).*

*H5: Audience similarity(AS) has a positive impact on the decision to watch Vietnamese films at the cinema of young people.*

**Table 1: Research scale**

Variable	Encryption	Scale	Source
<b>Trustworthiness- TW</b>	TW1	I was attracted to the personality of this opinion leader.	Lou, C., & Yuan, S., (2022) Cheung, M. L., et al. (2022)
	TW2	I feel that the opinion leader I follow is trustworthy.	
	TW3	I trust opinion leaders’ movie reviews.	
<b>Expertise- EX</b>	EX1	I think the opinion leaders I follow	(Aaker, D. A.,

		have knowledge and experience in cinema.	1987). Ohanian, R. (1990)
	EX2	Their comments on Vietnamese films have a solid professional basis.	Thuy., D.C., et al., (2024)
	EX3	I believe that the opinion leaders I follow understand the quality of Vietnamese films.	
<b>Attractiveness- AT</b>	AT1	I was fascinated by the appearance of the opinion leader I was following.	Ohanian, R. (1990)
	AT2	I was attracted to the personality of this opinion leader.	Rajput, A., & Gandhi, A. (2024)
	AT3	I feel they have an impressive personal style when reviewing movies.	
<b>Brand fit- BF</b>	BF1	I feel like the opinion leaders I follow are consistent with the style and message of the Vietnamese films they are reviewing.	Jamil, A., (2014). (Kim., H., Park., M., 2023).
	BF2	The Vietnamese films they review often fit their image.	
	BF3	The content of the Vietnamese movies they introduce is related to their style.	
<b>Audience Similarity- AS</b>	AS1	I find opinion leaders have a lot in common with me (age, interests, lifestyle, etc.).	Liu., X & Zheng., X, 2024
	AS2	I easily sympathize with their opinions because they are like me in	

		some aspects.	
	AS3	I feel like this opinion leader has the same taste in movies as me.	
<b>The decision to choose watching Vietnamese movies at cinema by young people (DC)</b>	DC1	Opinion leaders influence my decision to see a movie.	Ajzen, (1991) Mirabi et al., (2015)
	DC2	I will continue to use opinion leaders' information before deciding to watch a movie.	
	DC3	I will share with friends/relatives the information that opinion leaders provide to help them make decisions together.	

*Source: The authors proposed*

### **3. Research methodology**

#### ***Data collection method***

Based on the literature review, the influence of opinion leaders on young people's decision to choose Vietnamese films at cinemas will be determined. The survey questionnaire was developed using a 5-point Likert scale.

After developing the survey questionnaire, the research team conducted in-depth interviews with 08 individuals. Following revisions based on the feedback from the interviewees, the research team conducted a random pilot survey with 15 people. The preliminary survey results helped in identifying the factors to be included in the research model. Subsequently, the research team finalized the survey questionnaire and conducted a large-scale survey via Google Forms: <https://forms.gle/CKgEqNe8kEZ5sQDC9>

The data collection method employed by the research team was based on convenience sampling and the "snowball" method (where the next subject is found based on suggestions or introductions from the previously interviewed subject) to ensure a sufficient sample size as required. A total of 267 questionnaires were collected, of which 263 individuals (corresponding to 98.4%) who had previously watched a movie in cinema continued to answer questions about the factors influencing young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinema, as influenced by opinion leaders.

### ***Data processing method***

Quantitative research methods were used to process the data collected from the survey. The PLS-SEM software was employed to test hypotheses and assess the impact level of the factors.

#### ***Step 1: Evaluating the quality of observed variables in the measurement model***

The measurement model was evaluated by examining the values of observed variable quality (outer loadings), scale reliability (Cronbach's Alpha), convergence, and discriminant validity.

#### ***Step 2: Assessing the impact level through the structural model***

After the measurement model met the requirements, the structural model was evaluated through the relationships of impact, path coefficients, overall coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and effect size ( $f^2$ ).

## **4. Research results**

### ***4.1. Overview of the development of Vietnamese cinema***

Vietnamese cinema has undergone a long journey of development, closely linked to the country's history, deeply reflecting social, cultural, and human changes through each period. From the early 20th century to the present, the Vietnamese film industry has marked its presence through ups and downs and has gradually affirmed its position.

- Formation Period (before 1975): Vietnamese cinema originated during the French colonial period with documentary films made by the French (1910). The first film, "*Kim Van Kieu*" (1923), was produced through French-Vietnamese cooperation but mainly served colonial propaganda. After the August Revolution of 1945, revolutionary cinema emerged, focusing on the resistance war and patriotism.

- Unification and Subsidy Period (after 1975): After 1975, Vietnamese cinema was unified under state management, with a focus on propaganda, depicting post-war life and socialist ideals. Prominent films include "*Canh dong hoang (The Abandoned Field)*" (1979) and "*Bao gio cho den thang Muoi - When the October comes*" (1984) – the first Vietnamese film to receive international recognition.
- Renovation Period (Doi Moi, 1986): Vietnamese cinema diversified its themes, ranging from war to everyday life such as love and family. From 2000 to the Present: Vietnamese cinema has developed strongly with the participation of private film studios and young filmmakers. Vietnamese audiences increasingly prefer local films that reflect their culture, humor, and social issues. Films depicting the contemporary life of Vietnamese people, folk culture, or historical events tend to be popular. According to forecasts, the Vietnamese film

market is expected to grow with a projected revenue of USD 17.86 million in 2024 and reach USD 20.33 million in 2028 (Statista, 2025).

The 2022 Cinema Law was enacted as a legal framework designed to regulate and promote the development of the film industry. On the other hand, consumer behavior in the Vietnamese film industry has undergone significant changes in recent years, due to shifts in demographics, increased disposable income, and greater exposure to global media (The-shiv.com, 2024). These factors have contributed to the diversification of audience preferences and an increase in cinema attendance, shaping the direction of the industry.

**4.2. Description of survey respondents**

The survey link received 267 responses, with the following details regarding gender, occupation, age, and monthly income:

**Table 2. Descriptive statistics of survey participants**

Job			Age group		
Gender	Number of people	Percentage (%)	Age group	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Male	82	30.5%	Under 18 years old	177	66.1%
Female	185	69.5%	18 to 24 years old	63	23.7%
Prefer not to specify	0	0%	25 to 30 years old	27	10.2%
Total	267	100%	Total	267	100%

*Source: Survey Results*

The gender of the survey participants was predominantly female, with 185 individuals accounting for 69.5%, while 82 individuals (30.5%) were male.

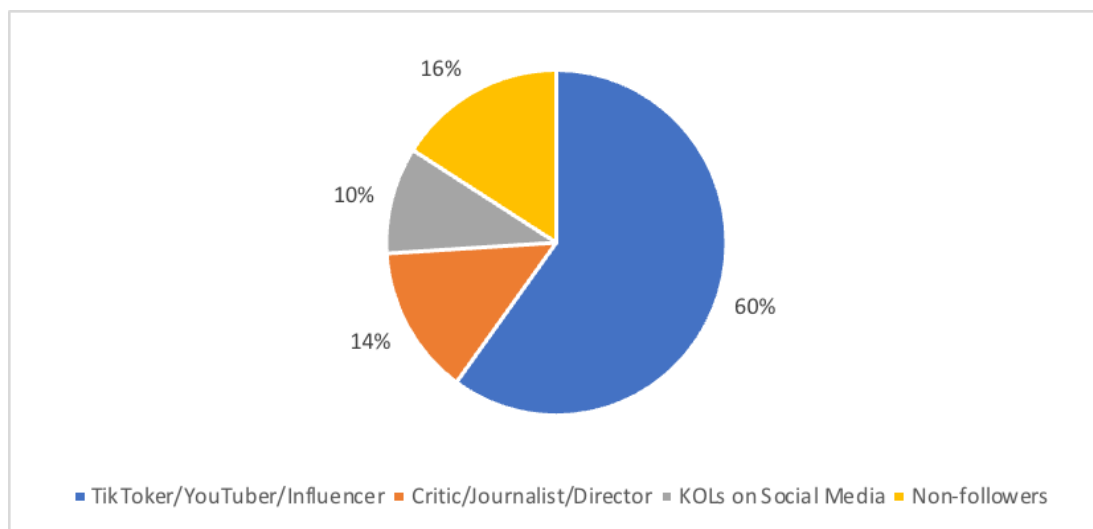
The survey participants were primarily young people, with the age distribution showing that the majority were under 18 years old (177 responses, 66.1%); 63 responses (23.7%) were from individuals aged 18 to 24; and 27 responses (10.2%) were from those aged 25 to 30.

Regarding the question “Do you regularly watch movies in cinema?”, the most common responses were “occasionally” (monthly) at 45.8%, and “rarely” (a few times a year) at 49.2%. Only 3.4% reported watching “very regularly” (weekly), and 1.6% had never watched a movie in cinema. The 263 individuals (98.4%) who answered that they had watched a movie in cinema continued to answer questions about the influence of opinion leaders, while the 4 individuals (1.6%) who had never watched a movie in cinema did not proceed with the rest of the survey.

Among those who had watched movies in cinema, the proportion who had watched Vietnamese films was 88.1%, with only 11.9% having never chosen to watch a Vietnamese film. When asked about the “Reasons for not choosing to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas,” the results indicated that the main reasons were “choosing other films” (42.9%), finding them “not suitable” (28.6%), and simply “not liking them” (14.3%).

To understand which film-related opinion leaders the survey participants followed, the answers are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Most followed groups of film opinion leaders**



*Source: Survey Results*

The most followed groups of film opinion leaders include:

**TikToker/YouTuber/Influencer:** accounting for 60%, these individuals often have many followers and high engagement, wielding significant influence on TikTok with short review videos that create trends among young people.

**Critics/Journalists/Directors/Actors:** accounting for 14%, these individuals typically possess professional credibility, influencing long-term perception but having less immediate impact on young people through social media.

**Prominent Viewers (Key Opinion Leaders - KOLs) on Social Media:** accounting for 10%, these are non-expert users who have significant influence within their communities.

**Do not follow anyone:** accounting for 16%.

### 4.3. Survey results

#### 4.3.1. Testing the variables of the model

The quality of observed variables was assessed through outer loadings. The quality of the influential observed variables is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Outer loadings of the influence of opinion leaders on young people’s decision to watch Vietnamese films at cinema**

	AS	AT	BF	DC	EX	TW
AS1	0,930					
AS2	0,868					
AS3	0,904					
AT1		0,883				
AT2		0,879				
AT3		0,890				
BF1			0,909			

<b>BF2</b>			<b>0,881</b>			
<b>BF3</b>			<b>0,890</b>			
<b>DC1</b>				<b>0,890</b>		
<b>DC2</b>				<b>0,855</b>		
<b>DC3</b>				<b>0,823</b>		
<b>EX1</b>					<b>0,842</b>	
<b>EX2</b>					<b>0,861</b>	
<b>EX3</b>					<b>0,835</b>	
<b>TW2</b>						<b>0,888</b>
<b>TW3</b>						<b>0,899</b>
<b>TW1</b>						<b>0,922</b>

*Source: Research Team's testing results*

The results from Table 3 show that the outer loadings of all the correlation coefficients of the composite variables of the measurement scales for the influence of opinion leaders on young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas are all > 0.7 (Hair & etal, 2016), indicating that the observed variables are significant.

***Testing the reliability of the measurement scales***

The reliability of the measurement scales for the influence of opinion leaders on young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas was assessed using PLS-SEM through two main indicators: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR).

**Table 4. Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach’s Alpha) and Composite Reliability of the influence of opinion leaders on young people’s decision to watch Vietnamese films at cinema**

	<b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>AS</b>	<b>0,884</b>	<b>0,891</b>	<b>0,928</b>	<b>0,812</b>
<b>AT</b>	<b>0,860</b>	<b>0,861</b>	<b>0,914</b>	<b>0,781</b>
<b>BF</b>	<b>0,873</b>	<b>0,875</b>	<b>0,922</b>	<b>0,798</b>
<b>DC</b>	<b>0,818</b>	<b>0,823</b>	<b>0,892</b>	<b>0,733</b>
<b>EX</b>	<b>0,802</b>	<b>0,803</b>	<b>0,883</b>	<b>0,716</b>
<b>TW</b>	<b>0,887</b>	<b>0,890</b>	<b>0,930</b>	<b>0,815</b>

*Source: Research Team’s Testing Results*

According to Table 4, after analyzing the reliability using Cronbach’s Alpha, the results for each factor are as follows: Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW) achieved 0.887; Expertise of opinion leaders (EX) achieved 0.802; Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) achieved 0.860; Brand fit (BF) achieved 0.873; Audience similarity(AS) achieved 0.884; Decision to watch Vietnamese films at cinema (DC) achieved 0.818. Thus, all measurement scales satisfy the condition of being > 0.7 (DeVellis, 2012) and do not violate any rules requiring variable removal. Therefore, no variables were removed, and the reliability is acceptable.

The Composite Reliability (CR) of all observed variables is also > 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) (Table 3). Therefore, the measurement scales are reliable, significant for analysis, and can be used in subsequent factor analysis.

***Convergent Validity***

According to the data analysis results in Table 4, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each factor is as follows: Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW) achieved 0.815; Expertise of opinion leaders (EX) achieved 0.716; Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) achieved 0.781; Brand fit (BF) achieved 0.798; Audience similarity(AS) achieved 0.812; Decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas (DC) achieved 0.733. Thus, the Average

Variance Extracted (AVE) for all variables is > 0.5 (Hock & Ringle, 2010), indicating that the model satisfies the conditions for convergent validity.

***Discriminant Validity***

The results in Table 5 regarding the Fornell-Larcker criterion for the research model on the influence of opinion leaders on young people’s decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas (DC): Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW); Expertise of opinion leaders (EX); Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT); Brand fit (BF); Audience similarity(AS) all ensure discriminant validity because all square root values of AVE on the diagonal are higher than their off-diagonal values. Therefore, in terms of discriminant validity, both criteria – cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criterion – have been satisfied (Fornell, D.F. Larcker., 1981).

**Table 5. Fornell-Larcker Criterion of the Research Model on the Influence of Opinion Leaders on Young People’s Decision to Watch Vietnamese Films in Cinemas**

	AS	AT	BF	DC	EX	TW
AS	0,901					
AT	0,779	0,884				
BF	0,802	0,856	0,893			
DC	0,762	0,762	0,798	0,856		
EX	0,720	0,727	0,725	0,714	0,846	
TW	0,783	0,818	0,806	0,757	0,750	0,903

*Source: Research Team’s Testing Results*

**f<sup>2</sup> Effect Size Values**

The f<sup>2</sup> value represents the magnitude of the influence of a construct (factor) when removed from the model. The f<sup>2</sup> values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 correspond to small, medium, and large effect sizes (Cohen, 1988) of the exogenous variable, respectively. If the effect size is < 0.02, it is considered to have no effect.

**Table 6. Summary Table of f<sup>2</sup> Values**

	AS	AT	BF	DC	EX	TW
AS				0,040		
AT				<b>0,006</b>		
BF				0,077		
DC						
EX				0,031		
TW				<b>0,016</b>		

*Source: Research Team's Testing Results*

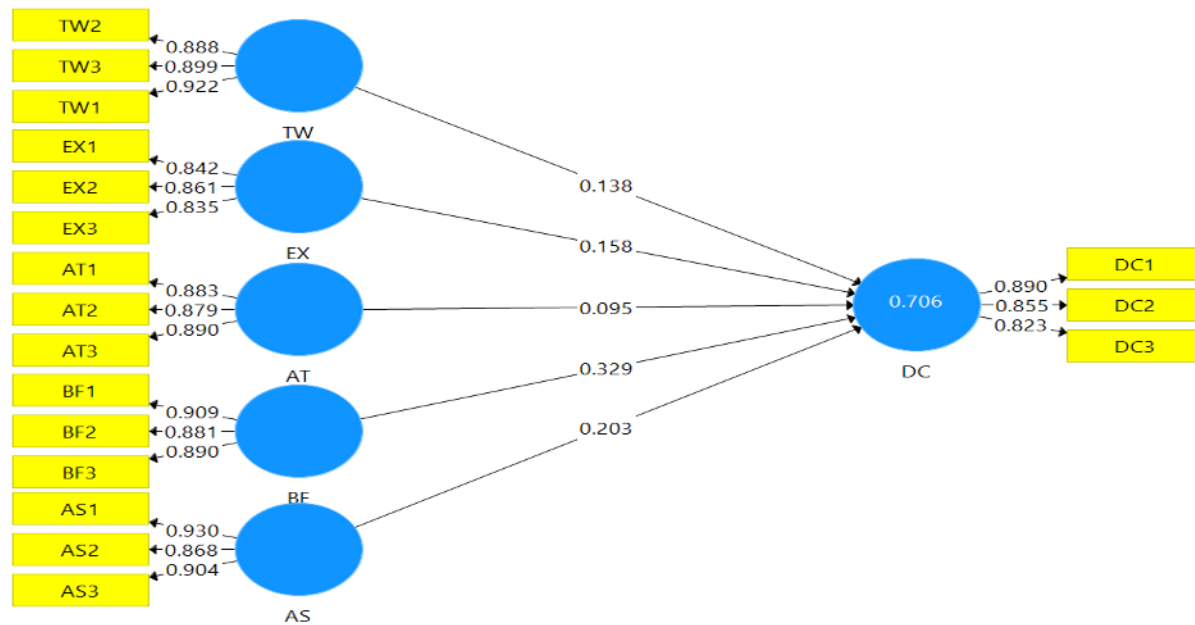
In this model, as seen in Table 6, the factors are: Expertise of opinion leaders (EX) achieved 0.031; Brand fit (BF) achieved 0.077; Audience similarity (AS) achieved 0.040. These factors all have  $0.02 < f^2 < 0.15$ , indicating a small effect on young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas (DC). The factors: Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW) achieved 0.016, and Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) achieved 0.006, have an effect size  $< 0.02$ , which is considered to have no effect on young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas (DC).

**4.3.2. Results of Assessing the Level of Influence using the Structural Model**

***Evaluating the Influence Relationships***

The relationships and the level of influence of opinion leaders on young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas on SMARTPLS are shown in Figure 3.

**Figure 3. Influence of opinion leaders on young people’s decision to watch Vietnamese films at cinema**



Source: Research Team’s SMARTPLS Testing Results

The results of the Bootstrap analysis to evaluate the influence relationships are shown in Table 6. Accordingly, the variables: Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW); Expertise of opinion leaders (EX); Brand fit (BF); Audience similarity(AS) have an influence on “Decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas by young people (DC)” as these factors have P Values < 0.05 (Hypotheses H1, H2, H4, and H5 are all accepted at a significance level of 5%). The factor Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) has a P Value of 0.25 (Hypothesis H3 is not accepted).

**Table 7. Path coefficients of the structural model**

	Path Coefficient	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Statistics (TDEV)	P-values
DC	0,203	0,200	0,079	2,570	<b>0,010</b>
DC	0,095	0,096	0,082	1,152	<b>0,250</b>

DC	0,329	0,326	0,086	3,845	<b>0,000</b>
DC	0,158	0,158	0,056	2,795	<b>0,005</b>
DC	0,138	0,141	0,066	2,097	<b>0,036</b>

Source: Research Team’s SMARTPLS Testing Results

The results of the testing in Table 7 show that with a 95% confidence level, the factor “Brand fit (BF)” has the highest level of influence on “Decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas by young people (DC)” with an influence level of 0.329; followed by the factors: “Audience similarity(AS)” with an influence level of 0.203; “Expertise of opinion leaders (EX)” with an influence level of 0.158; and “Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW)” with an influence level of 0.138. The factor “Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT)” is not statistically significant enough to conclude about its influence on the dependent variable “Decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas by young people (DC).” Thus, we have the following regression equation:

$$DC = 0.329*BF + 0.203*AS + 0.158*EX + 0.138*TW$$

**Evaluating the overall coefficient of determination R<sup>2</sup> (R square)**

The results of the PLS Algorithm analysis provide the R<sup>2</sup> value, which reflects the degree to which the independent variables explain the dependent variable. The R<sup>2</sup> index measures the overall coefficient of determination (R-square value), which is an indicator to measure the model’s fit to the data (the model’s explanatory power). According to Hair & al. (2010), R-square values of 0.75, 0.50, or 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, or weak, respectively.

**Table 8. Coefficient of determination of independent variables for the dependent variable (R square)**

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
DC	0,706	0,700

Source: Research Team’s Testing Results

The results from Table 8 show that the R<sup>2</sup> value for the DC factor is 0.706, and the adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.700, which is suitable for this research. This indicates that the independent variables in the model explain 70.6% of the “Decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas by young people (DC).”

## **5. Discussion of research results and recommendations**

The research results indicate that among the five factors influencing young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas (DC), the factor "Brand fit (BF)" has the highest level of influence (0.329), followed by "Audience similarity(AS)" (0.203), "Expertise of opinion leaders (EX)" (0.158), and "Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW)" (0.138). The factor "Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT)" was not statistically significant.

### ***(i) Brand fit (BF)***

With the highest impact coefficient (0.329), the factor of Brand fit (BF) plays the most important role in influencing young people's decision to watch a film. This suggests that opinion leaders have the greatest influence when the content of their reviews aligns with the style and message of the film. When this review content is consistent with the film's genre, themes, and intended values, young audiences tend to trust it more and are more likely to decide to watch the film.

### ***(ii) Audience similarity (AS)***

The research results show that Audience similarity(AS) has an influence level of 0.203, ranking second among the factors affecting young people's decision to watch films. This factor reflects the tendency of audiences to trust and be more influenced by opinion leaders who share their style, preferences, and perspectives on films. KOLs with lifestyles, interests, and film evaluation methods similar to young people easily create empathy, encouraging the audience to trust their reviews.

This is entirely consistent with the current behavioral trends of young people. They often seek out individuals with similar viewpoints, interests, and tastes to consult before making consumption decisions. Opinion leaders who adopt an approachable style, use language similar to the target audience, or have a style consistent with the audience group will have a significant influence on them.

### ***(iii) Expertise of opinion leaders (EX)***

The factor of expertise of opinion leaders (EX) has an impact coefficient of 0.158, indicating that the level of expertise of opinion leaders does affect the decision to watch films, but it is not the most dominant factor. This can be explained by the fact that young audiences often not only care about in-depth professional analysis but are also influenced by emotional and entertainment factors, as well as personal connections with opinion leaders. For art films or films with high academic value, opinion leaders with deep knowledge of cinema still play an important role in

shaping public opinion. However, to reach young audiences, highly specialized opinion leaders need to adjust their content delivery to be more accessible.

***(iv) Trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW)***

The influence level of trustworthiness towards opinion leaders (TW) is 0.138, lower than other factors. In today's media landscape, trustworthiness is no longer the sole decisive factor in young audiences' decision to watch films. Instead, they tend to consider many other factors such as entertainment value, personal emotions, or personal connections with opinion leaders. KOLs who build a neutral, objective, and reputable image within the community will have an advantage in influencing audiences' film-watching decisions.

***(v) Attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) is not statistically significant***

A notable finding from the research is that the factor of attractiveness of opinion leaders (AT) was not statistically significant enough to conclude that it influences young audiences' decision to watch films. This may reflect that in the film industry, audiences are not overly concerned with the appearance, personal charm, or style of opinion leaders. Instead, they focus more on the content that these individuals convey. This result also suggests that while an opinion leader may have a large following due to their looks or personal appeal, if the content they provide does not offer real value to the audience, their level of influence on film-watching decisions will not be high.

**Some recommendations**

***- Enhance the congruence between opinion leaders and film content:*** Since Brand fit(BF) has the strongest influence on film-watching decisions, filmmakers and distributors should collaborate with opinion leaders whose review styles are compatible with their film genres. For example, art films may need in-depth film critics, while commercial films need popular opinion leaders. KOLs should build a personal image consistent with the types of films they usually review, helping to increase connection with the public.

***-Leverage similarity with the audience:*** Opinion leaders who share similarities with the audience in terms of lifestyle, interests, and cinematic experiences have a stronger connection and influence. Film promotion campaigns can utilize KOLs whose followers share demographic characteristics with the film's target audience. At the same time, opinion leaders should develop a communication style that is close to the target audience, using appropriate language and sharing perspectives that can resonate with the public.

**-Improve the expertise of opinion leaders:** However, opinion leaders providing in-depth reviews of film content, filmmaking techniques, and artistic meaning based on clear criteria will help increase their credibility. The key is to combine this factor with an understandable and friendly approach to attract various audience groups.

**-Strengthen trust through objective content:** Opinion leaders should focus on providing objective reviews, offering neutral viewpoints, and avoiding bias or being influenced by commercial factors to maintain trust from the audience. Film producers can collaborate with highly reputable KOLs in the industry to increase the credibility of their promotion campaigns.

## 6. Conclusion

The study has shed light on the factors influencing young people's decision to watch Vietnamese films in cinemas. Brand fit and Audience similarity are the two most important factors. Meanwhile, the attractiveness of opinion leaders does not have a significant impact. These findings help filmmakers, distributors, and KOLs optimize their communication strategies to attract more young audiences to Vietnamese films in cinema. However, the number of questionnaires collected in this study is limited (267). Moreover, the model assumes that everyone tends to react similarly to environmental stimuli. However, in behavioral research, there are differences between individuals based on age, gender, occupation, and place of residence. Future research models can approach this by examining the differences in the influence of opinion leaders on young people's decisions to watch Vietnamese films.

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