

The Influence of The Booktok Media Community on The Book Purchasing Decision Behavior of Thai Readers¹

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Abstract

The BookTok community has emerged as a significant phenomenon shaping book discovery and purchasing behavior. This study investigates BookTok's impact on book purchasing decision behavior among Thai readers by integrating Media Ecology, Technological Determinism, and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). Drawing on a quantitative survey of 400 Thai TikTok users who had accessed BookTok content, the study examines how TikTok usage, BookTok community participation, and TikTok's digital technology components influence attitude and perceived behavioral control, how TPB constructs influence behavioral intention toward book purchasing, and how BookTok participation and technological components exert direct and indirect effects on behavioral intention. The results revealed that TikTok usage behavior, BookTok community participation, and TikTok's digital technology

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components significantly influenced attitude and perceived behavioral control. In addition, TPB variables significantly predicted behavioral intention, explaining 57.4% of the variance. Path analysis further indicated that TikTok usage and BookTok engagement exerted both direct and indirect effects, whereas digital technology components influenced behavioral intention indirectly through attitude and perceived behavioral control. The study demonstrates that BookTok functions as a digital media ecosystem where technology operates as an enabler rather than a direct motivator, offering implications for community-connected strategies to enhance book discovery among Thai readers.

Keywords. BookTok, Book Purchasing Behavior, Theory of Planned Behavior, Media Ecology, Algorithmic Recommendation, Digital Consumer Culture

The Thai publishing industry provides a compelling context for examining these dynamics. From 2014 to 2017, the industry's economic value declined substantially from 29.3 billion to 12.5 billion baht, the lowest in a decade (NALISA, 2021). Despite adaptation efforts through e-books and online distribution channels, sales continued decline until post-pandemic recovery, reaching 474 million baht by 2025. Recognizing the industry's strategic importance, the Thai government and Thailand Creative Culture Agency (THACCA) designated publishing as one of 13 creative industry sectors for national soft power development in 2024 (THACCA, 2024). This policy recognition, combined with Thailand's high social media penetration rates and TikTok's rapid adoption among younger demographics, positions the Thai market as particularly relevant for understanding BookTok's influence within Asian contexts.

Amid this industry transformation, BookTok has emerged globally as a significant force reshaping how readers discover and purchase books. Originating during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, this TikTok-based community has accumulated over 126 billion views with more than 19 million related posts worldwide (OKMD Knowledge Portal, 2023). The phenomenon has demonstrated measurable economic impact: according to NPD Bookscan, U.S. print book sales increased from 758 million units in 2020 to 825 million units in 2021, a 9% growth widely associated with BookTok activity. TikTok (2025) reports that BookTok content has generated over 370 billion cumulative views with 52 million book-related videos, prompting major retailers including Barnes & Noble to create dedicated BookTok display sections. This community-driven ecosystem has demonstrated remarkable capacity to resurrect backlist titles and propel previously unknown authors to bestseller status, thereby challenging conventional publishing marketing paradigms.

In the Thai context, BookTok's influence has become increasingly evident through distinctive platform characteristics and algorithmic content curation. The hashtag #อ่านตาม TikTok (Read Along TikTok), prominently visible since the 2023 National Book Fair, has generated over 128,000 posts with 604 million views, while Thai readers demonstrate 1.6 times higher book purchasing rates among community participants (Forbes Thailand, 2025). With TikTok's Southeast Asian user base exceeding 623 million accounts, the platform's algorithmic recommendation system enables rapid dissemination of emotionally driven content including short reviews, memorable scene narratives, and trending formats that bring both new releases and backlist titles to renewed attention. Interactive features such as Duets and video replies foster conversational engagement distinct from image-focused communities like #BookStagram, establishing BookTok as a participatory digital space where users discuss,

exchange experiences, and construct shared reading identities. This ecosystem effectively connects authors, readers, distributors, and reading communities within an integrated digital space.

Investigating the BookTok media community phenomenon is important because it represents an emerging force within the contemporary digital book market that shapes consumer decision-making processes through information exposure, trend-driven participation, and the sharing of reading experiences across social media environments. This study therefore examines the influence of TikTok platform usage behavior, BookTok community participation, and digital technology components on the book purchasing intentions of Thai readers. The investigation is framed through the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), specifically examining attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control as determinants of behavioral intention toward book purchasing. The findings are expected to provide implications for publishers, authors, bookstores, and communication strategists seeking to develop marketing approaches aligned with contemporary digital consumer behavior.

The research objectives are: (1) to examine the influence of TikTok usage and BookTok community participation on attitude and perceived behavioral control; (2) to investigate the influence of TikTok's digital technology components on attitude and perceived behavioral control; (3) to analyze the influence of TPB constructs on behavioral intention toward book purchasing among Thai readers; and (4) to determine direct and indirect effects of BookTok participation and technological components on behavioral intention.

Despite increasing scholarly attention toward BookTok, existing studies have primarily focused on Western audiences and descriptive analyses of platform culture, reader identity, and online literary engagement. Although previous research has demonstrated BookTok's influence on reading culture and book consumption, limited research has examined the

specific mechanisms through which BookTok influences purchasing intention. Few studies have investigated how BookTok community participation and TikTok's technological components jointly shape consumer decision-making processes. Moreover, Existing research has rarely integrated these community and technological factors with psychological mechanisms to explain purchasing intention within a single explanatory framework. Therefore, this study integrates Media Ecology Theory, Technological Determinism, and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to examine how BookTok participation and TikTok's technological components influence Thai readers' book purchasing intentions through attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control.

Literature Review

The BookTok Phenomenon

BookTok emerged organically on TikTok as users began sharing book recommendations, reviews, and reading-related content using the #BookTok hashtag. The community originated during the COVID-19 pandemic in April 2020, gaining recognition through author Chloe Gong's video promoting "These Violent Delights," which became a bestseller and established TikTok as a significant force in contemporary literary culture. Content within BookTok spans diverse formats, including recommendation videos, emotional reaction recordings, aesthetic book displays, reading vlogs, and author interactions.

The influence of BookTok on publishing has been extensively documented. In 2021, BookTok contributed to driving over 20 million book sales, with an increase of more than 50% the following year. Numerous titles have experienced dramatic sales increases following viral BookTok exposure, with some books such as "The Song of Achilles" achieving bestseller status

years after initial publication. Publishers have increasingly recognized BookTok as a critical marketing channel, adjusting publication strategies and cover designs to appeal to the community's aesthetic preferences. Major retailers including Barnes & Noble have created dedicated BookTok display sections (Balling and Martens, 2024). Supporting these industry trends, Culberson (2024) found that 72.89% of users were likely to purchase books after seeing recommendations on social media, while 32.37% had already purchased books based on such recommendations.

Scholarly analysis of BookTok has examined multiple dimensions of the phenomenon. Reddan et al. (2024) demonstrated that social media platforms like #BookTok and #Bookstagram transform reading from a private activity into a social one, where users build communities, express identities, and exchange experiences through book-related content. Dera (2024) further described TikTok not merely as an entertainment platform but as a “behavioral ecosystem” that integrates user-generated content, influencer culture, algorithmic recommendation systems, and sales mechanisms such as TikTok Shop into a unified system, resulting in consumer behavior driven by social pressures including fear of missing out (FOMO) and trend imitation.

In addition to the community dimension of BookTok, content presentation has been identified as an important factor influencing user engagement. Guiñez-Cabrera and Mansilla-Obando (2022) found that BookTokers employ diverse strategies including reviews, summaries, and book-related humor, with emotions and unique personal storytelling being crucial factors in attracting viewer engagement. Consistent with this perspective, Okhrimenko and Fedoruk (2024) explained that the BookTok community serves as a strategic marketing channel through which authors and publishers can adapt communication methods to align with new reader interests and consumption patterns.

Taken together, previous studies suggest that BookTok functions as both a participatory reading community and a technology-driven media environment that influences reader engagement, book discovery, and purchasing behavior. However, existing research has focused primarily on describing these characteristics, while limited attention has been given to explaining how community participation and technological components jointly influence purchasing intention through underlying psychological mechanisms.

Media Ecology Theory

Media Ecology Theory provides a foundational perspective for understanding how media environments shape human experience and behavior. Originating in the work of Marshall McLuhan and further developed by Neil Postman and Lance Strate, media ecology examines media as environments rather than merely channels of communication (Postman, 2000; Strate, 2004, 2008).

Postman (2000) articulated media ecology's central concern as understanding "how media of communication affect human perception, understanding, feeling, and value." This perspective positions media technologies as ecosystems that establish the conditions under which human thought and action occur. McLuhan's seminal concept "The Medium is the Message" (1964) emphasizes that each medium type changes human thinking and perspectives: books create individual reading experiences, while television creates collective viewing experiences, producing different behavioral outcomes despite conveying similar content.

Strate (2004, 2008) elaborated the media ecology approach, emphasizing the study of media as media attending to the characteristics of media technologies themselves rather than treating them as transparent conduits for messages. Media functions as a "cultural environment" that inevitably transforms social structures. Lum (2000) extended this

perspective to the digital era, noting that humans inhabit worlds constructed by media, such as social media spaces that shape users' thinking and perception. Online platforms are viewed as “cultural infrastructure” enabling continuous content production. This perspective is particularly relevant to social media platforms, where technological design and communication environments influence how users interact with content and one another.

Applied to BookTok, Media Ecology Theory suggests that TikTok functions as a media environment that shapes how users encounter, interpret, and engage with book-related content. Through its communication ecosystem, users, content, and platform structures interact to create shared meanings and reading experiences. The social media ecosystem comprises key components including users, content, and platforms, which interact in complex ways and mutually influence each other (Zhao et al., 2016). This perspective provides a useful framework for understanding how the BookTok media environment shapes readers' experiences, interactions, and perceptions related to book discovery and purchasing.

Technological Determinism

Technological Determinism posits that technology serves as a primary driver of social and behavioral change. McQuail (1994, as cited in Mongkolprasit, 2022) summarized four key characteristics: (1) communication technology constitutes the foundation of every society; (2) each technology type suits different social structures; (3) the production and use of communication technology determine social change; and (4) each communication technology revolution leads to social revolution.

McLuhan (1987, as cited in Supitayapornsapong, 2008) extended this perspective by arguing that media represents an “Extension of Experience.” Rather than functioning merely as a tool for conveying messages, media acts as an environment that shapes human thinking,

behavior, and perceptions of the world. McLuhan emphasized the form of media usage over content, as each media type creates new experiences for consumers, affecting lifestyles, relationships, and human ways of living. The key question in communication shifted from “what do humans perceive?” to “How do humans perceive?” emphasizing that the form of perception is crucial to understanding media effects.

This perspective emphasizes how specific technological affordances, such as algorithmic recommendations, content discovery mechanisms, and interactive features, shape user behavior, content exposure, and engagement patterns within social media platforms. TikTok’s algorithmic recommendation system employs machine learning to personalize content feeds based on user engagement patterns and preferences. The For You Page (FYP) algorithm enables content to reach large audiences without prior following, a phenomenon described as “algorithmic imaginary” by Low, Ehret, and Hagh (2023), referring to how algorithms predict user interests from their experiences rather than direct technical understanding. This algorithmic process is particularly relevant to BookTok, where content visibility and user engagement are largely shaped by recommendation systems rather than existing social networks.

For BookTok, technological determinism highlights the role of TikTok’s affordances in facilitating community formation and content virality. Features such as Duets, Stitches, and comment sections enable community interaction patterns distinct from image-focused communities like #Bookstagram, transforming individual reading practices into socially connected reading experiences shaped by emotion, expression, and shared interpretation. Guehring (2023) noted that BookTok serves as a cultural storytelling space with algorithms as the central driving mechanism through short video formats emphasizing emotional expression

and reader experiences. Overall, these studies suggest that TikTok's technological affordances play an important role in shaping content exposure, user engagement, and participation within the BookTok community. This perspective supports the examination of technological components as a key factor influencing readers' purchasing intentions in the present study.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen from 1985 to 2002 as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by Ajzen and Fishbein, addresses limitations regarding behaviors that individuals cannot control through intention alone. TPB explains that behavior results from "intention" to perform that behavior, which is determined by three key factors (Ajzen, 1985, as cited in Chuchuen, 2014).

Attitude toward the behavior refers to the individual's evaluation of a behavior by considering potential outcomes, both positive and negative. If individuals perceive positive outcomes from performing the behavior, they develop favorable attitudes and increased behavioral tendency. Conversely, if they evaluate negative outcomes, unfavorable attitudes toward performing that behavior will emerge. In the context of book purchasing, attitude encompasses evaluations of the benefits, enjoyment, and value associated with purchasing books discovered through BookTok.

Subjective norms capture the individual's perception of expectations or social pressures affecting decisions to perform or not perform behaviors. Sources of influence may include close individuals such as parents or spouses, or broader social circles such as colleagues or supervisors. If individuals perceive that reference groups want them to perform the behavior, the tendency to perform increases; conversely, if individuals perceive that others disapprove of the behavior, the tendency decreases. Within BookTok, subjective norms

manifest through community expectations, influencer endorsement, and the perceived reading and purchasing behaviors of valued community members.

Perceived behavioral control refers to the individual's belief in their own potential to perform the behavior and direct outcomes as expected. If individuals perceive that behavior can be performed easily and is within their control, the likelihood of behavioral performance increases. Conversely, if the behavior appears difficult to perform or its outcomes cannot be controlled as desired, the likelihood of performing that behavior decreases. For book purchasing, perceived behavioral control includes perceptions of accessibility, affordability, and capability to make informed purchasing decisions.

These three factors work together to create intention, which ultimately leads to behavior (Ajzen, 1985, as cited in Chuchuen, 2014). Consumer behavior research has extensively applied TPB to understand book purchasing decisions. Kotler et al. (2012, as cited in Kiatjaroonsiri, 2019) explained that consumer purchasing behavior is influenced by three main factors: cultural factors that determine values, beliefs, and social norms affecting attitudes and reading behavior. Environment and marketing factors, such as promotions, flash sales, and book fairs play important roles in stimulating purchases, particularly among readers who value the tactile experience of physical books (Teerattanakul, 2022).

Following TPB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are proposed to influence behavioral intention toward book purchasing. In this study, TPB provides the psychological mechanism for explaining how BookTok participation and TikTok's technological affordances may shape readers' intention to purchase books. This perspective also reflects the non-linear nature of contemporary consumer journeys, in which book purchasing decisions may result from the interaction of personal evaluation, social

influence, technological affordances, and media environmental factors (Khueansri, 2022). Accordingly, TPB provides an appropriate framework for examining the psychological mechanisms through which BookTok participation and TikTok's technological components may influence readers' purchasing intentions.

Conceptual Framework

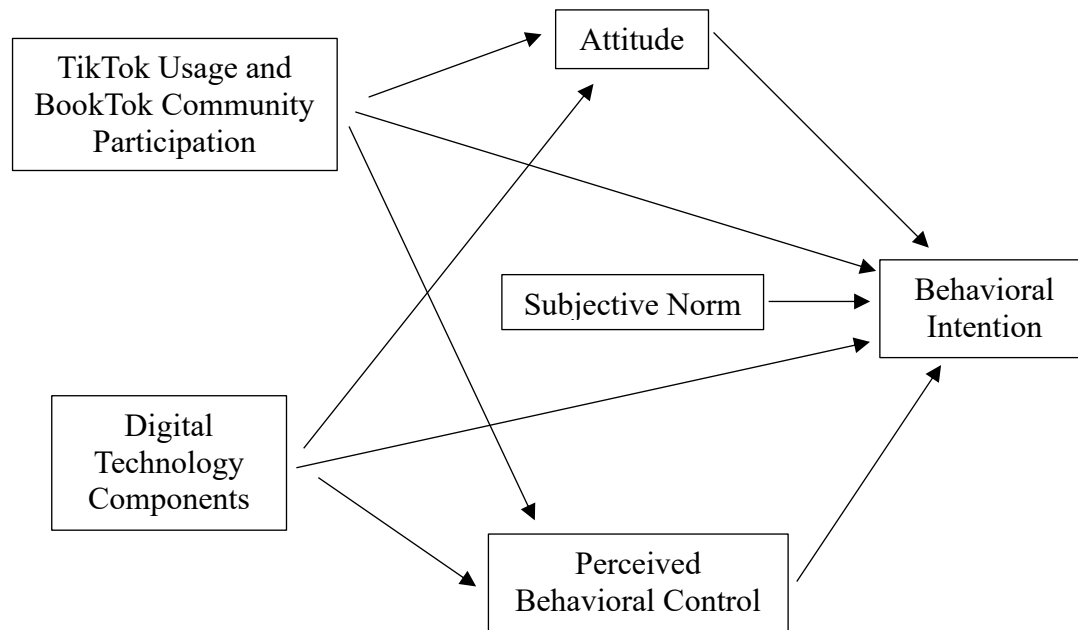
Integrating Media Ecology Theory, Technological Determinism, and the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study proposes a conceptual framework examining how BookTok participation and TikTok's technological components influence Thai readers' behavioral intention toward book purchasing. Media Ecology Theory frames BookTok as a digital media environment in which community interaction and shared reading experiences shape users' perceptions, while Technological Determinism explains how platform affordances facilitate book discovery, evaluation, and purchasing-related decision-making.

Within the proposed framework, TikTok usage and BookTok community participation are expected to influence attitude and perceived behavioral control by exposing users to book recommendations, peer experiences, community enthusiasm, and reading trends. Similarly, digital technology components are expected to influence attitude and perceived behavioral control by making book-related information more personalized, accessible, and actionable.

Following TPB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are proposed to influence behavioral intention toward book purchasing. The framework further examines whether BookTok participation and technological components influence behavioral intention directly or indirectly through TPB constructs, with attitude and perceived behavioral control serving as potential mediating variables.

Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework



Research Questions

Based on the conceptual framework, this study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How do TikTok usage and BookTok community participation influence attitude and perceived behavioral control toward book purchasing among Thai readers?

RQ2: How do TikTok's digital technology components influence attitude and perceived behavioral control toward book purchasing among Thai readers?

RQ3: How do TPB constructs, including attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control, influence behavioral intention toward book purchasing among Thai readers?

RQ4: What are the direct and indirect effects of TikTok usage, BookTok community participation, and digital technology components on behavioral intention toward book purchasing?

Methodology

This investigation employed a quantitative research design utilizing a cross-sectional survey methodology. This approach was selected for its capacity to enable systematic measurement of theoretical constructs and statistical testing of proposed relationships through regression-based techniques. The cross-sectional design permitted efficient data collection from a substantial sample while providing the statistical power necessary for multiple regression and path analysis procedures.

Population and Sampling

The target population comprised Thai TikTok users who had been exposed to book-related content within the BookTok community. Given the absence of a comprehensive frame for this population, purposive sampling was employed to recruit participants meeting specified inclusion criteria. Because the study employed non-probability purposive sampling through online recruitment channels, the findings may not be fully generalizable to all Thai readers or TikTok users.

Inclusion criteria required participants to: (1) be Thai nationals or permanent residents of Thailand; (2) be active TikTok users with accounts on the platform; (3) have viewed or interacted with BookTok content or content associated with the hashtags #BookTok #bkkBookTok and #อ่านตามTikTok (Read Along TikTok) at least once; and (4) be at least 18 years of age. These criteria ensured that the defined population had direct relevance to the reading phenomenon within the TikTok platform context, thereby accurately reflecting book reading and purchasing behavior within digital platform environments.

As the exact population size is unknown, sample size was calculated using the formula for unknown populations (Wanichbuncha, 2017, as cited in Sangatikom, 2023) at a 95% confidence level with 5% margin of error:

$$N = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16$$

The minimum required sample size was determined to be 385 respondents. To account for potential incomplete responses, the researcher targeted a minimum of 405 questionnaires. Data collection yielded 446 completed questionnaires, and following screening for accuracy and completeness, 400 valid responses were retained for analysis.

Instrumentation

Data was collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire developed specifically for this investigation. The instrument comprised multiple sections designed to measure the study's key constructs:

Section 1: Demographic characteristics. This section collected information regarding respondents' age, gender, educational attainment, occupation, and average monthly income.

Section 2: Reading behavior. This section examined respondents' reading patterns, including reading frequency, number of books read, preferred book genres, book formats, book discovery channels, book purchasing channels, and factors influencing purchasing decisions.

Section 3: TikTok usage and BookTok community participation. Items in this section measured the frequency and intensity of TikTok usage, extent of engagement with BookTok content (viewing, liking, commenting, sharing), participation in BookTok community participation, and perceived connection to the BookTok community.

Section 4: Digital technology components of TikTok. This section assessed respondents' perceptions of TikTok's technological features relevant to book discovery, including algorithmic recommendations, interface usability, content discovery mechanisms, and personalization effectiveness.

Section 5: Theory of Planned Behavior constructs. Scales in this section measured the four TPB constructs: attitude toward book purchasing based on BookTok recommendations, subjective norm regarding book purchasing within the BookTok community context, perceived behavioral control over book purchasing decisions, and behavioral intention to purchase books discovered through BookTok.

Overall, Sections 1 and 2 employed closed-ended questions to gather demographic and reading behavior data, whereas Sections 3 to 5 used a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to measure the study's key constructs.

Instrument Validation

The questionnaire underwent rigorous validation procedures to ensure content validity and measurement reliability.

Content validity was established through expert review. Three experts with expertise in consumer behavior, digital marketing, and media ecosystem evaluated all questionnaire items for relevance, clarity, and appropriateness. Items were assessed using the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC), with scores calculated as the proportion of experts rating each item as congruent with its intended construct. Following established guidelines, items achieving IOC scores of 0.67 or higher were retained, while items falling below the threshold were revised or eliminated.

Reliability was assessed through pilot testing with a sample of 40 respondents matching the target population characteristics. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The overall instrument achieved a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.955, substantially exceeding the conventional threshold of 0.70 and indicating excellent internal

consistency. Individual subscales demonstrated acceptable to excellent reliability, with all Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding 0.80.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee of Srinakharinwirot University (project approval number SWUEC-682691).

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted online during March 2026. The questionnaire was administered through a digital survey platform accessible via web browsers and mobile devices. Participant recruitment employed multiple channels, including social media promotion on TikTok and Facebook; sharing within online reading communities; and snowball referrals from initial participants. Potential respondents encountered an initial screening page verifying eligibility against inclusion criteria. Eligible participants then reviewed an informed consent statement describing the study's purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and confidentiality protections. Only participants providing informed consent proceeded to the main questionnaire. Completed responses were automatically recorded in a secure database. Data collection continued until the target sample size of 400 valid responses was achieved.

Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded through several stages employing IBM SPSS Statistics software. Descriptive statistics were computed to characterize the sample and describe variable distributions. Measures included means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages as appropriate to variable measurement levels.

Multiple regression analysis was employed to test proposed relationships between independent variables and dependent variables. Separate regression models examined: (1)

TikTok usage and BookTok participation predicting attitude and perceived behavioral control;
 (2) digital technology components predicting attitude and perceived behavioral control; and
 (3) TPB constructs predicting behavioral intention.

Path analysis was conducted using standardized regression coefficients to estimate the direct and indirect effects of TikTok usage, BookTok participation, and technological components on behavioral intention. This procedure enabled examination of the mediating roles of attitude and perceived behavioral control within the proposed conceptual framework.

All statistical tests employed a significance level of $\alpha = .05$.

Results

Correlation Analysis

Prior to conducting regression analysis, Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to examine the relationships among the study variables. The results revealed that all variables were positively and significantly correlated at the .01 level. Correlation coefficients ranged from .511 to .718, indicating moderate to strong positive relationships among TikTok usage and BookTok community participation, digital technology components, attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and behavioral intention.

Table 1.

Pearson Correlations Among Study Variables

Variables	TikTok usage and BookTok Community Participation	Digital Technology Components	Attitude	Subjective Norm	Perceived Behavioral Control	Behavioral Intention
TikTok usage and BookTok Community Participation	1.000	.674**	.591**	.534**	.511**	.604**
Digital Technology Components	.674**	1.000	.658**	.540**	.671**	.598**
Attitude	.591**	.658**	1.000	.632**	.718**	.639**

Table 1.

Pearson Correlations Among Study Variables (Contd.)

Variables	TikTok usage and BookTok Community Participation	Digital Technology Components	Attitude	Subjective Norm	Perceived Behavioral Control	Behavioral Intention
Subjective Norm	.534**	.540**	.632**	1.000	.630**	.633**
Perceived Behavioral Control	.511**	.671**	.718**	.630**	1.000	.654**
Behavioral Intention	.604**	.598**	.639**	.633**	.654**	1.000

Note. ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

Overall, the findings provide preliminary support for the proposed conceptual framework, suggesting that both community-related and technological factors are associated with readers' book purchasing intentions. Furthermore, none of the correlation coefficients exceeded .80, indicating multicollinearity was unlikely to present a serious concern for the subsequent regression analyses.

Influence of TikTok Usage and BookTok Participation on Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control

The first research question examined the influence of TikTok usage and BookTok community participation on attitude and perceived behavioral control. Multiple regression analysis revealed significant relationships for both dependent variables.

For attitude, TikTok usage and BookTok participation demonstrated a significant positive effect ($\beta = .591$, $p < .001$), indicating that greater engagement with TikTok and the BookTok community is associated with more favorable attitudes toward book purchasing.

For perceived behavioral control, TikTok usage and BookTok participation similarly showed a significant positive effect ($\beta = .511$, $p < .001$), suggesting that community participation enhances readers' sense of capability and control over book purchasing decisions.

Table 2

Influence of TikTok Usage and BookTok Participation

Dependent Variable	β	S.E.	R ²	P-Value
Attitude	.591	.042	.349	< 0.001
Perceived Behavioral Control	.511	.045	.261	< 0.001

Influence of Digital Technology Components on Attitude and Perceived Behavioral Control

The second question examined digital technology components' influence on attitude and perceived behavioral control. Results indicated significant effects for both constructs.

Digital technology components exhibited a significant positive effect on attitude ($\beta = .658$, $p < .001$), demonstrating that perceptions of TikTok's technological features are strongly associated with favorable attitudes toward book purchasing.

Similarly, digital technology components showed a significant positive effect on perceived behavioral control ($\beta = .671$, $p < .001$), indicating that platform affordances enhance users' sense of control over book discovery and purchasing.

Table 3

Influence of Digital Technology Components

Dependent Variable	β	S.E.	R ²	P-Value
Attitude	.658	.035	.433	< 0.001
Perceived Behavioral Control	.671	.037	.451	< 0.001

TPB Constructs and Behavioral Intention

The third question tested the influence of TPB constructs on behavioral intention. Multiple regression analysis confirmed that all three TPB variables significantly predicted behavioral intention to purchase books.

Attitude demonstrated a significant positive effect on behavioral intention ($\beta = .135$, $p = .012$). Subjective norm exhibited a significant positive effect ($\beta = .234$, $p < .001$). Perceived behavioral control demonstrated the strongest effect among TPB constructs ($\beta = .255$, $p < .001$).

The overall model explained 57.4% of the variance in behavioral intention ($R^2 = .574$), indicating substantial predictive power.

Table 4

TPB Constructs Predicting Behavioral Intention

Predictor	β	S.E.	R^2	P-Value
Attitude	.135	.063	.574	.012
Subjective Norm	.234	.052	.574	< 0.001
Perceived Behavioral Control	.255	.058	.574	< 0.001

Path Analysis: Direct and Indirect Effects

The fourth question examined direct and indirect effects through path analysis. Results revealed distinctive patterns for BookTok participation and technological components.

TikTok usage and BookTok participation exhibited both direct and indirect effects on behavioral intention. The direct effect was .232, while the total indirect effect was .210, consisting of an indirect effect through attitude of .080 and an indirect effect through perceived behavioral control of .130. Together, these effects produced a total effect of .442. This indicates that community participation influences purchasing intention both directly and through its effects on attitude and perceived behavioral control.

In contrast, digital technology components showed a non-significant direct effect on behavioral intention ($\beta = .056$, $p = .291$). However, they exerted indirect effects through both

attitude and perceived behavioral control. Specifically, the indirect effect through attitude was .089, while the indirect effect through perceived behavioral control was .171, producing a total indirect effect of .260. When the non-significant direct effect was included, the total effect was .316. This finding suggests that technology operates as an enabler that shapes TPB constructs rather than directly motivating purchasing behavior.

Table 5

Path Analysis Results

Variable	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect via Attitude	Indirect Effect via PBC	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
TikTok Usage & BookTok Participation	.232	.080	.130	.210	.442
Digital Technology Components	.056 ns	.089	.171	.260	.316

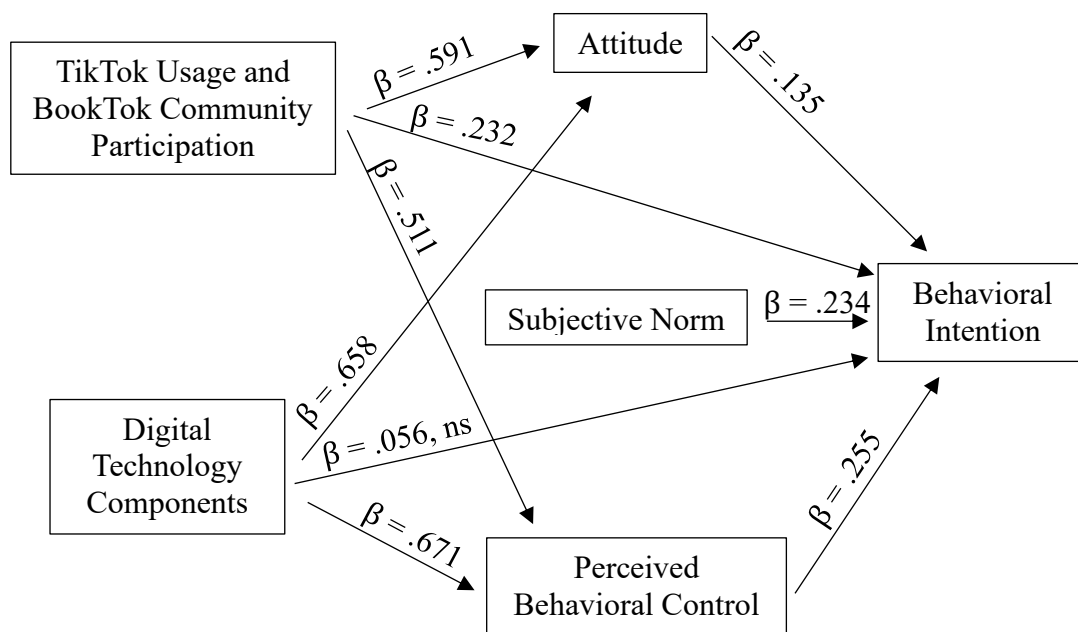
Note. ns = non-significant direct effect. The direct effect of digital technology components is reported for completeness, but interpretation emphasizes the indirect pathways.

To provide a clearer visual representation of path analysis results, Figure 2 presents the standardized path model among TikTok usage and BookTok community participation, digital technology components, TPB constructs, and behavioral intention. The figure illustrates how BookTok participation and technological components influence behavioral intention both directly and indirectly through attitude and perceived behavioral control. While TikTok usage and BookTok community participation demonstrated a direct path to behavioral intention, digital technology components showed their influence mainly through mediated pathways. This visualization therefore supports the interpretation that BookTok functions as a digital

media ecosystem in which community participation and platform technology jointly shape readers' purchasing intentions.

Figure 2

Path Analysis Model with Standardized Coefficients



Discussion

The findings of this study provide empirical support for the conceptualized relationships among BookTok participation, technological components, TPB constructs, and book purchasing intention. Several key insights emerge from these results.

BookTok as a Digital Media Ecosystem

Consistent with Media Ecology Theory, the results demonstrate that BookTok functions as a digital media ecosystem that shapes Thai readers' perceptions and decision-making processes (Postman, 2000; Strate, 2004). The significant influence of BookTok participation on both attitude and perceived behavioral control indicates that the community

environment creates conditions conducive to favorable evaluations of book purchasing and enhanced feelings of capability in making purchasing decisions.

The substantial effect sizes observed for BookTok participation ($\beta = .591$ for attitude, $\beta = .511$ for perceived behavioral control) underscore the power of community-based media environments in shaping consumer psychology. These findings align with research documenting BookTok's influence on publishing trends and consumer behavior in Western markets (Balling and Martens, 2024; Dera, 2024), while extending this understanding to the Thai context.

The findings support Media Ecology by suggesting that BookTok functions not simply as a source of information but as a communication environment that structures how readers encounter recommendations, participate in discussions, and construct meanings around books.

Technology as Indirect Influence

A particularly noteworthy finding concerns the indirect-only effect of digital technology components on behavioral intention. While technological features exhibited strong effects on attitude and perceived behavioral control, path analysis revealed that these effects operate entirely through TPB mediators rather than directly influencing purchasing intention.

This finding has important theoretical implications. It suggests that technology, consistent with moderate interpretations of Technological Determinism, operates as an enabler that shapes the conditions under which behavioral decisions are made rather than directly determining behavior. Although TikTok's recommendation systems and content discovery mechanisms increase users' exposure to book-related information, exposure alone does not automatically translate into purchasing intention. Instead, users evaluate the information they receive, develop attitudes toward recommended books, and assess their ability to make

purchasing decisions before forming behavioral intentions. Platform affordances such as algorithmic recommendations enhance users' sense of control and contribute to attitude formation, but the decision to purchase books ultimately flows through psychological constructs rather than being technologically determined. This finding helps explain why technology alone may be insufficient to influence consumer decision-making and highlights the importance of psychological processes in translating technological exposure into purchasing intention. This pattern supports the mediating role of TPB constructs in explaining how technological influences are transformed into consumer intentions.

Perceived Behavioral Control as Key Predictor

Among TPB constructs, perceived behavioral control emerged as the strongest predictor of behavioral intention ($\beta = .255$), although only slightly stronger than subjective norm ($\beta = .234$). This finding suggests that Thai readers' book purchasing decisions are particularly influenced by their sense of capability and control over the purchasing process.

Within the BookTok context, this implies that features enhancing users' ability to discover, evaluate, and access books such as clear recommendations, easy navigation to purchase options, and confidence in recommendation quality are particularly important in driving purchasing behavior. Both community participation and technological components contribute substantially to perceived behavioral control, highlighting the complementary roles of social and technological factors.

Social Influence and Community Dynamics

The findings revealed that subjective norm exerted a significant influence on behavioral intention ($\beta = .234$), reflecting the important role of social influence within the BookTok community. Perceptions of community expectations, reading trends, and visible

consumption practices contributed meaningfully to users' purchasing decisions. The community-oriented nature of BookTok including the sharing of reading experiences, collective enthusiasm for titles, and visibility of others' reviews and purchasing behavior, contributes to the formation of social norms surrounding book consumption.

However, the findings also indicate that BookTok's influence does not operate solely through normative pressure. The platform additionally promotes favorable attitudes toward reading and enhances users' perceived behavioral control in discovering, evaluating, and accessing books effectively. This interpretation aligns with the model analysis results demonstrating that attitude and perceived behavioral control play more significant roles in shaping behavioral intention than subjective norm alone. Consequently, BookTok may be conceptualized as a "participatory digital media environment" where community influence, technology, and psychological processes work together to shape readers' consumption behavior, rather than merely serving as a space that pressures users to conform to social expectations.

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of the BookTok media community on book purchasing behavior among Thai readers, employing an integrated theoretical framework combining Media Ecology, Technological Determinism, and the Theory of Planned Behavior. The findings demonstrate that BookTok functions as a digital media ecosystem with substantial influence on readers' attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and ultimately, purchasing intentions. TikTok usage and BookTok participation significantly influenced attitude and perceived behavioral control, while digital technology components exerted strong indirect effects through attitude and perceived behavioral control. Furthermore, attitude,

subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control significantly predicted behavioral intention, with the model explaining 57.4% of the variance.

This study contributes to the growing BookTok literature by providing evidence from Thailand, a context that has received limited scholarly attention despite its high social media penetration and expanding digital reading culture. By integrating communication, technological, and behavioral perspectives, the study extends existing BookTok research beyond predominantly Western settings and demonstrates how community participation and technological affordances influence purchasing intentions through psychological mechanisms in a Southeast Asian context.

These findings offer implications for publishers, marketers, and content creators. BookTok should be recognized as an important channel for reaching readers through community participation and content-driven strategies. The indirect role of technological components suggests that investments in meaningful content creation and community interaction may be more effective than relying solely on technological features. Future research should explore longitudinal patterns of BookTok influence, conduct cross-platform comparisons, and investigate actual purchasing behavior alongside behavioral intention.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study employed purposive sampling and therefore the findings may not be generalized to all Thai readers. Second, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to draw causal inferences from the observed relationships. Third, the study focused exclusively on TikTok and the BookTok community, while readers may also be influenced by other social media platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and X. Finally, the study examined behavioral intention rather than actual purchasing behavior, which may differ from realized consumer actions.

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