

Digital Content Quality and Brand Engagement: Evidence from SKIN1004's TikTok Followers in Indonesia

Yabes Edmund Macario Siburian¹, Menati Fajar Rizki²

^{1,2} Department of Public Relations and Digital Communication, Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, Jakarta, Indonesia. Email: yabesedmundd@gmail.com¹, mfajarrizki@unj.ac.id²

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: June 23, 2026

Revised: July 30, 2026

Accepted: July 31, 2026

DOI

<https://doi.org/10.52970/grmilf.v6i3.2465>

ABSTRACT

Despite reaching more than 724,000 followers, the official TikTok account of SKIN1004 Indonesia (@skin1004_indonesia) shows a persistent gap between video views and audience interaction, with some uploads generating engagement rates below 0.1 percent. This gap raises the empirical question of whether digital communication content quality explains the low level of follower engagement, a relationship that remains underexamined for South Korean skincare brands operating in the Indonesian TikTok market. This study aims to examine the influence of SKIN1004's digital communication content quality on brand engagement among the followers of its TikTok account. A quantitative explanatory survey method was employed, with a sample of 100 respondents selected through purposive sampling and the Slovin formula (10 percent margin of error) from a population of 724,668 followers. Content quality was measured across five dimensions (relevance, originality, interaction, consistency, and emotionality), while brand engagement was measured across three dimensions (cognitive, emotional, and behavioral). Simple linear regression showed that content quality significantly and positively predicted brand engagement ($Y = 5.421 + 0.517X$; $t = 15.720 > t\text{-table } 1.984$; $p < .001$), with a very strong correlation ($r = 0.846$) and 71.6 percent explained variance ($R^2 = 0.716$). Originality emerged as the weakest content dimension, while behavioral engagement was the weakest engagement dimension, pointing to specific, actionable priorities for skincare brands seeking to convert passive viewership into deeper follower engagement on TikTok.

Keywords: Brand Engagement, Content Quality, Digital Communication, Skincare, TikTok.

I. Introduction

The skincare industry in Indonesia has grown rapidly alongside rising public awareness of skin health as part of a broader wellness lifestyle. This growth has coincided with a fundamental transformation in marketing communication, in which social media has shifted the relationship between brands and consumers from one-way broadcasting to two-way, participatory interaction, particularly among the younger demographic that constitutes the primary market for skincare products (Hernawo, 2025). Digital-era consumers no longer function solely as passive recipients of promotional messages; they actively search, compare, and evaluate brand-generated content before making purchase decisions (Mawardah et al., 2026). This behavioral shift compels brands to produce digital communication content of sufficient quality to capture attention and cultivate meaningful audience engagement rather than mere exposure. TikTok has become one of the primary platforms through which skincare brands build digital communication with their audiences, owing to its short-video format and algorithm-driven recommendation system that facilitates virality,



creativity, and rapid content dissemination (Yuliono & Rochmaniah, 2025). Indonesia represents one of TikTok's largest national markets, with 106.52 million users, of whom the 18–24 age group accounts for 41.26 percent (Mahardika & Susilowati, 2025), making the platform strategically important for skincare brands seeking to reach younger consumers.

SKIN1004, a South Korean skincare brand built around *Centella Asiatica*-based formulations, actively manages its official Indonesian TikTok account (@skin1004_indonesia) as a central channel for digital communication. According to profile data accessed through TokCounter, the account had accumulated 724,668 followers as of March 17, 2026 (TokCounter, 2026), indicating substantial audience reach. Prior research on SKIN1004's Indonesian TikTok Shop presence has linked price, brand image, and electronic word of mouth to purchase decisions for the brand (Utami & Mubarak, 2025), underscoring the account's commercial relevance even as engagement patterns remain underexamined. However, observation of content published between January and March 2026 reveals a persistent disconnect between reach and interaction. A video uploaded on February 9, 2026, for instance, garnered 4.6 million views but generated only 978 interactions (likes, comments, saves, and shares combined) approximately 0.02 percent of total views. A similarly wide gap appeared in content uploaded on January 15, 2026, where 1.7 million views produced an interaction rate of roughly 0.20 percent. These figures indicate that a large follower base and high view counts do not automatically translate into deep audience engagement, and they motivate the central empirical question this study addresses: to what extent does the quality of SKIN1004's digital communication content on TikTok explain the level of brand engagement among its followers?

This question sits within a broader and still-unsettled body of literature on content quality and social media engagement. Several Indonesian studies have established that content quality positively predicts audience response across a range of platforms and product categories: Putra and Prabayanti (2026) found content quality to positively influence brand awareness on TikTok ($\beta = 0.714$); Lestari and Prabayanti (2025) reported that skincare promotional content quality explained 75.8 percent of variance in cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement; Putri and Asnusa (2025) confirmed that creativity, relevance, and consistency significantly shaped engagement on Instagram and TikTok; and Rosita and Darlin (2024) found content quality to explain 34 percent of customer engagement variance for a fashion brand on TikTok. Beyond Indonesia, comparable evidence has emerged for AI-mediated and user generated content formats: a recent meta-analysis synthesizing 124 empirical studies found that AI-driven marketing interactions positively affect brand engagement in 68 percent of the studies reviewed, contingent on personalization quality and system responsiveness (Aulianda et al., 2026), while a TikTok-based study of Gen Z skincare consumers found that user-generated content alone did not significantly influence purchase intention, whereas electronic word of mouth did (Ningrum & Hayuningtias, 2026), suggesting that not all content adjacent constructs translate uniformly into audience response.

Despite this accumulating evidence, three gaps remain. First, the magnitude of content quality's influence on engagement varies considerably across product categories and platforms from 34 percent to 75.8 percent of explained variance in the Indonesian studies cited above, yet no study has systematically examined why this variation occurs, particularly whether skincare, as a high information need product category, produces a distinctively stronger content engagement relationship than lower-involvement categories such as fashion. Second, empirical attention has concentrated on domestic and regional skincare brands, leaving the dynamics of a South Korean skincare brand operating specifically within the Indonesian TikTok ecosystem underexamined, despite Korean beauty brands' substantial and growing market share in Indonesia. Third, most prior studies measure content quality or engagement as unidimensional constructs, which limits their diagnostic value for practitioners; fewer studies operationalize both variables multidimensionally, content quality through relevance, originality, interaction, consistency, and emotionality, and engagement through cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions in a way that can pinpoint precisely which aspects of content and which layers of engagement are strong or weak.

This study addresses these gaps by examining the influence of SKIN1004's digital communication content quality on brand engagement among the followers of its Indonesian TikTok account, using a

multidimensional operationalization of both constructs. The novelty of this study lies in three contributions. Theoretically, it tests the joint applicability of Rosita and Darlin's (2024) five dimension content quality framework and the three dimension brand engagement framework attributed to Islam and Rahman (2016, as cited in Gulo & Kusmayadi, 2025) within a previously untested context, South Korean skincare brand's TikTok presence in Indonesia, thereby extending the boundary conditions under which these frameworks have been validated. Empirically, it provides a case-level explanation for why content quality appears to exert a stronger influence on engagement in the skincare category compared to categories such as fashion or mental health services, an explanation grounded in the information-intensive nature of skincare purchase decisions. Practically, the dimension-level findings offer skincare brand managers specific, actionable priorities, rather than a single aggregate conclusion for improving content strategy and community management on TikTok. The remainder of this article is organized as follows. Section II reviews the relevant literature on digital communication, content quality, and brand engagement, and develops the study's hypothesis. Section III describes the research method, including the sampling procedure, instrument development, and data analysis technique. Section IV presents the results and discusses their theoretical and practical implications. Section V concludes with the study's contributions, limitations, and directions for future research.

II. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Digital Communication through Social Media

Digital communication refers to the process of transmitting messages through internet-based media that enables individuals, organizations, and brands to interact with broad audiences quickly and interactively. Marketing communication, as defined by Kotler and Keller (2016), constitutes the means by which firms inform, persuade, and remind consumers, directly or indirectly, about the products and brands they sell; this traditional conception has evolved into digital marketing communication as internet technology enables more interactive, measurable, and targeted messaging. Social media operationalizes this shift most visibly, functioning not merely as a broadcasting channel but as a relational space where brands and audiences co-construct meaning through dialogue (Widyaswari et al., 2025). Empirically, this relational function has measurable consequences: marketing communication delivered through social media significantly shapes followers' interest in a brand's offerings (Wulandari & Purworini, 2023). Within this study, digital communication refers specifically to the entirety of SKIN1004's message delivery on TikTok, video, text, visual elements, and the interactions these generate, with content quality serving as the primary lever through which this communication becomes more or less effective at capturing attention and building engagement.

2.2. Digital Communication Content Quality (Variable X)

Rosita and Darlin (2024) conceptualize social media content quality as the extent to which content fulfills its intended communicative purpose, operationalized across five dimensions: relevance (alignment with audience needs and current interests), originality (uniqueness and creative distinctiveness), interaction (capacity to prompt likes, comments, and shares), consistency (regularity of posting schedule, visual identity, and tone), and emotionality (capacity to evoke positive affective responses such as joy, inspiration, or desire). This five-dimension framework has accumulated convergent empirical support across different platforms and objects: Putra and Prabayanti (2026) found it positively predicted TikTok brand awareness ($\beta = 0.714$, adjusted $R^2 = 52.6$ percent); Lestari and Prabayanti (2025) found it explained 75.8 percent of variance in cognitive, affective, and behavioral engagement toward skincare promotional content; content quality incorporating creativity, relevance, and consistency has similarly been shown to significantly shape engagement levels on Instagram and TikTok (Putri & Asnusa, 2025); and social media's role within the broader marketing communication mix has itself been shown to significantly affect strategy effectiveness when implementation quality is accounted for (Saraan et al., 2025). Taken together, these findings position content quality not as a

matter of aesthetic polish but as a strategic determinant of audience response, yet the studies also reveal a pattern that has not been systematically interrogated: the explained variance ranges widely, from 34 percent (Rosita & Darlin, 2024, studying a fashion brand) to 75.8 percent (Lestari & Prabayanti, 2025, studying skincare), a nearly forty-percentage point spread that existing literature has documented but not explained. This study returns to this unresolved variation in its discussion of results.

2.3. Brand Engagement as the Dependent Variable (Y)

Brand engagement describes the degree of a consumer's psychological and behavioral involvement with a brand, a state of engagement triggered by stimuli that make the consumer feel connected to the brand (Gulo & Kusmayadi, 2025). Islam and Rahman (2016, as cited in Gulo & Kusmayadi, 2025) decompose this construct into three dimensions: cognitive engagement (attention to and comprehension of brand-related information), emotional engagement (affective attachment, enthusiasm, and trust toward the brand), and behavioral engagement (observable actions such as liking, commenting, saving, sharing, and recommending). On social media specifically, this multidimensional structure allows engagement to be traced from initial attention through affective bonding to concrete action, a progression that matters because the three dimensions are not interchangeable proxies for one another; a follower can attend to and understand branded content (cognitive engagement) without translating that understanding into affective attachment or observable action, and it is this potential disjuncture between dimensions that a unidimensional engagement measure would obscure. Using all three dimensions jointly therefore yields diagnostic value beyond what an aggregate engagement score alone provides, since it identifies precisely where in the attention-to-action pathway a brand's audience is disengaging.

2.4. Prior Research and Critical Synthesis

Table 1 summarizes five studies most directly relevant to the present research in terms of variables, method, or object of study:

Table 1. Comparison of Relevant Prior Studies

Author (Year)	Method & Object	Focus	Key Result
Rosita & Darlin (2024)	Quantitative survey; 100 followers of Queensha Shop (fashion) TikTok	Content quality (X) → customer engagement (Y)	Significant effect; $R^2 = 34\%$
Putra & Prabayanti (2026)	Quantitative survey; 100 followers of @rucas.official TikTok	Five-dimension content quality → brand awareness	$\beta = 0.714$; adj. $R^2 = 52.6\%$
Lestari & Prabayanti (2025)	Quantitative explanatory; skincare promotional content on Instagram	Content quality → cognitive, affective, behavioral engagement	$R^2 = 75.8\%$
Martha et al. (2024)	Quantitative survey; Somethinc TikTok audience	TikTok social media engagement → brand image	$R^2 = 62.7\%$
Wulandari & Purworini (2023)	Quantitative survey; mental health service followers	Social media marketing communication → follower interest	Significant positive effect

This body of work converges on a directional conclusion, content quality positively predicts audience engagement, but it does not converge on magnitude, and the existing literature has treated this variation

descriptively rather than analytically. A closer reading of the five studies suggests the variation is not random but patterned by product category. The two skincare-adjacent studies in Table 1 (Lestari & Prabayanti, 2025; and, as will be shown in this study's results, the present SKIN1004 case) report substantially higher explained variance than the fashion-focused study (Rosita & Darlin, 2024, at 34 percent) or the mental-health-service study (Wulandari & Purworini, 2023). A plausible theoretical account, developed further in Section IV, is that skincare purchase decisions are comparatively high involvement and information dependent, consumers must evaluate ingredient safety, skin-type suitability, and efficacy claims, so that content quality carries more predictive weight than in categories where purchase decisions are driven more by aesthetic preference or subjective taste, as in fashion. This study is positioned to test that account directly, since it examines a skincare brand using the same five-dimension content-quality and three-dimension engagement frameworks validated in the studies above, while extending them to a previously unexamined case: a South Korean skincare brand's TikTok presence in the Indonesian market. Two further gaps this study addresses, beyond the magnitude question, are noted in Section I: the underrepresentation of Korean beauty brands in this literature despite their commercial significance in Indonesia, and the comparative rarity of studies that operationalize both content quality and engagement multidimensionally within a single model.

2.5. Conceptual Framework and Related Research

Building on the theoretical grounding above, this study positions digital communication content as the stimulus that followers process and respond to along the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral pathway described by Islam and Rahman's (2016) framework. Content that is relevant, original, interactive, consistent, and emotionally resonant is theorized to generate a more meaningful audience experience, which in turn is processed by followers into attention, affective attachment, and ultimately action toward the brand. This conceptual link, illustrated in Figure 1, forms the basis for the study's hypothesis.

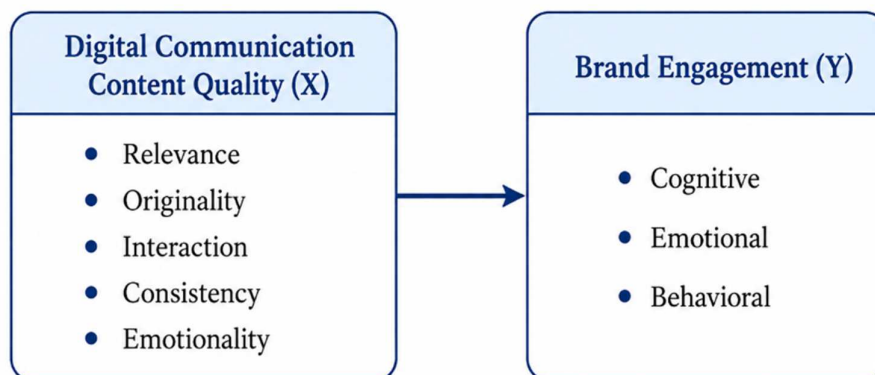


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on this theoretical relationship and the convergent empirical evidence reviewed above, the hypothesis proposed in this study is as follows:

H1: Digital communication content quality has a positive and significant effect on brand engagement among the followers of SKIN1004 Indonesia's TikTok account

III. Research Method

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach grounded in positivist epistemology, in which variables are measured numerically and hypotheses are tested through statistical procedures (Sugiyono, 2019). This approach was selected because the research objective was to measure the magnitude of digital communication content quality's influence on brand engagement in a way that is both quantifiable and generalizable to the broader population of SKIN1004 Indonesia's followers, rather than to explore the phenomenon interpretively. Specifically, an explanatory survey method was used, which aims to clarify the relationship between variables through hypothesis testing (Bungin, 2017). This design choice reflects a deliberate separation between the unit of phenomenon observation and the unit of analysis: the initial phenomenon, an apparent gap between view counts and interaction rates, was identified through direct observation of account level content performance, whereas the research variables were subsequently measured through a questionnaire capturing individual followers' cumulative perceptions of the account's content as a whole, rather than through content analysis of the four illustrative posts discussed in the introduction. This distinction matters methodologically because it clarifies that the regression model tests followers' aggregate perception of content quality against their engagement, not a content-level analysis of specific videos.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population comprised all followers of SKIN1004 Indonesia's official TikTok account (@skin1004_indonesia), numbering 724,668 as of March 17, 2026, according to profile data accessed through TokCounter (TokCounter, 2026). This population is geographically unbounded, as followers are dispersed throughout Indonesia. Respondents were required to meet three criteria: (1) being a follower who had viewed the account's content at least three times during January–March 2026, ensuring that judgments of content quality were based on cumulative exposure rather than a single encounter; (2) being aged 17–35, a range justified by evidence that this age group is the most responsive to digital content for high-perceived-risk product categories such as skincare (Haikal et al., 2025), consistent with engagement patterns documented in prior Indonesian TikTok skincare studies within a comparable age bracket (Arnetta & Haryono, 2025), the documented dominance of younger users among Indonesian TikTok audiences (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2025), and comparability with the age-based sampling criteria used in Maulana and Isyanto's (2025) study of TikTok and Instagram digital marketing content; and (3) actively using TikTok at least once per week.

A nonprobability purposive sampling technique was used because no sampling frame, that is, no accessible list of the account's individual followers exists that would allow random sampling with equal selection probability for every population member (Sugiyono, 2019). This is a common and methodologically accepted constraint in social media audience research, since platforms do not expose follower identity lists to third parties. The Slovin formula was nonetheless applied to determine sample size, since the total population size was known with precision ($N = 724,668$); it is important to clarify that Slovin's formula and purposive sampling serve distinct, non-conflicting functions in this design. The formula determines how many respondents are needed given the population size and an acceptable margin of error, while purposive sampling determines which respondents are selected based on the eligibility criteria above. The formula is expressed as:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the margin of error, set at 10 percent (0.10). This margin of error rather than the more conservative 5 percent common in probability-based designs,

was adopted because, given a population of 724,668, a 5 percent margin would require an impractically large sample (approximately 400 respondents) for a purposive, non-random design that already trades some generalizability for respondent relevance; a 10 percent margin is a standard and widely accepted convention in social-science survey research using Slovin's formula under similar constraints (Sugiyono, 2019), and it balances statistical precision against the practical feasibility of recruiting followers who meet all three eligibility criteria. Applying the formula yields:

$$n = 724,668 / (1 + 724,668 \times 0.1^2) \approx 99.98, \text{ rounded to } 100$$

Accordingly, 100 respondents were recruited. This sample size and margin of error should be read as an explicit limitation on generalizability rather than a methodological weakness to be concealed: findings are interpreted as characterizing the sampled followers with an acceptable but non-trivial margin of error, and broader population-level claims are made cautiously, a point revisited in Section V.

3.3. Data Collection and a Note on Sampling Bias

Data were collected primarily through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, disseminated through multiple online channels, the comment sections of the account's TikTok content and direct messages. A screening question at the outset of the questionnaire confirmed that respondents were indeed followers of @skin1004_indonesia who had viewed its content during the January–March 2026 period, filtering out ineligible responses before they entered the dataset. This voluntary, online, self selected recruitment method is a standard and practical approach for reaching a geographically dispersed social media audience without an accessible sampling frame; however, it is also a source of potential self selection bias that should be acknowledged directly. Respondents who chose to complete the questionnaire may differ systematically from the broader follower base for instance, by being more digitally engaged, more favorably disposed toward the brand, or more willing to spend time on unsolicited surveys in ways that could inflate the observed engagement levels relative to the true population average. This limitation is addressed further in Section V and should be considered when interpreting the study's findings, particularly the high mean scores reported for both content quality and engagement. Secondary data were additionally gathered through library research, academic journals, textbooks, and official documents to construct the theoretical foundation, develop the research instrument, and strengthen the analysis and discussion of findings.

3.4. Research Ethics

Participation in this study was voluntary. The questionnaire's introductory section informed respondents of the study's academic purpose, the estimated time required for completion, and their right to withdraw at any point before submission without penalty; proceeding to complete and submit the questionnaire was treated as respondents' informed consent to participate. No personally identifying information beyond the screening and demographic items necessary for sample, characteristic reporting (Tables 3–8) was collected, and individual responses were analyzed only in aggregate. Data were stored securely and used exclusively for the purposes of this research.

3.5. Operational Definition of Variables

Digital communication content quality (X) was operationalized following Rosita and Darlin (2024) across five dimensions, relevance, originality, interaction, consistency, and emotionality, each measured with four indicator items, for a total of 20 items. Brand engagement (Y) was operationalized following Islam and Rahman (2016, as cited in Gulo & Kusmayadi, 2025) across three dimensions, cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement, measured with 12 items. All items used a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree

to 4 = agree strongly), omitting a neutral midpoint to compel respondents toward a directional judgment, following the revised instrument developed after pilot testing (described below).

3.6. Instrument Validity and Reliability Testing

Instrument testing proceeded in two stages. In the pilot stage, the initial 32-item questionnaire was tested on 35 respondents sharing the target population's characteristics, using Pearson product-moment correlation with a critical value of $r = 0.334$ ($df = 33$, $\alpha = .05$); all items exceeded this threshold and were retained. In the main study, validity was re-tested on the full sample ($n = 100$), using a critical value of $r = 0.196$ ($\alpha = .05$); all 32 items again exceeded the threshold (item-total correlations ranging from 0.325 to 0.597 for the content-quality scale and comparably above threshold for the engagement scale), confirming that the revised instrument remained valid when applied to the substantive respondent pool. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with both scales exceeding the 0.60 threshold for acceptable internal consistency at both the pilot and main-study stages (Ghozali, 2018).

3.7. Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27 in three stages. First, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) characterized respondent demographics and variable distributions (Ghozali, 2018). Second, classical assumption tests normality (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) and linearity (Test for Linearity via ANOVA, with the criterion that the Deviation from Linearity significance value exceed .05) were conducted prior to regression to confirm the model's estimates would be unbiased and validly interpretable. Third, hypothesis testing employed simple linear regression, given the study's single independent variable, followed by the t-test for partial significance, the F-test (ANOVA) for overall model significance, and the coefficient of determination (R^2) to quantify the proportion of variance in brand engagement explained by content quality.

IV. Result and Discussion

4.1. Respondent Characteristics

One hundred followers of @skin1004_indonesia participated in this study. The sample was predominantly female (82 percent versus 18 percent male), consistent with the female-dominated skincare consumer market and indicating that the account's content reaches a largely female audience. Most respondents were aged 17–22 (65 percent), followed by 23–28 (33 percent) and 29–35 (2 percent), a distribution consistent with the documented youth-dominant profile of Indonesian TikTok users (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2025). Respondents were predominantly students (81 percent), consistent with the age distribution above. Geographically, respondents were concentrated in DKI Jakarta (35 percent) and West Java (21 percent) but spanned multiple provinces, indicating the account's followers are not confined to a single region. Most respondents had followed the account for four to six months (40 percent) or one to three months (32 percent), indicating adequate exposure to judge content quality, and the entire sample (100 percent) reported having purchased a SKIN1004 product, meaning all respondents evaluated the account's content as actual brand customers rather than passive observers.

4.2. Instrument Validity and Reliability Test Results

At the pilot stage ($n = 35$, $r\text{-table} = 0.334$), all 20 content-quality items and all 12 brand-engagement items produced item-total correlations exceeding the critical value (ranging from 0.337 to 0.922 for content quality and 0.444 to 0.956 for engagement), confirming validity. Re-testing on the full sample ($n = 100$, $r\text{-table} = 0.196$) confirmed all items remained valid (correlations of 0.325–0.597 for content quality), and Cronbach's alpha for both scales exceeded 0.60 at both stages, confirming reliability (Ghozali, 2018).

4.3. Descriptive Results: Content Quality and Brand Engagement

Table 2. Recapitulation of Dimension Means for Content Quality (X) and Brand Engagement (Y)

Variable	Dimension	Mean	Category
X	Relevance	3.47	Very High
	Originality	3.35	High
	Interaction	3.39	High
	Consistency	3.45	Very High
	Emotionality	3.44	Very High
	Overall mean	3.42	Very High
Y	Cognitive	3.46	Very High
	Emotional	3.40	High
	Behavioral	3.33	High
	Overall mean	3.40	High

Overall, followers rated SKIN1004's digital communication content quality as very high (mean = 3.42), with relevance as the strongest dimension (3.47) and originality as the weakest (3.35). Brand engagement was rated high overall (mean = 3.40), with cognitive engagement highest (3.46) and behavioral engagement lowest (3.33). This pattern engagement strongest at the attention/comprehension layer and weakest at the action layer, indicates that followers understand and pay attention to the brand's content more readily than they act on it, a gap examined further below.

4.4. Classical Assumption Test

The regression residuals were normally distributed (One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test statistic = 0.084, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.076 > .05), satisfying the normality assumption. The linearity test confirmed a significant linear relationship between X and Y (Sig. Linearity < .001) with no meaningful deviation from linearity (Sig. Deviation from Linearity = 0.074 > .05), satisfying the linearity assumption. Heteroscedasticity was assessed both visually, through a scatterplot showing residuals randomly dispersed around zero without a discernible pattern, and statistically, through the Glejser test, which found no significant relationship between the independent variable and the absolute residuals (Sig. = 0.575 > .05). All three classical assumptions were therefore satisfied, confirming the regression model's estimates are unbiased and validly interpretable.

4.5. Hypothesis Testing

Simple linear regression produced the equation:

$$Y = 5.421 + 0.517X$$

The constant (5.421) indicates a baseline level of brand engagement in the theoretical absence of content quality, while the positive regression coefficient (0.517) indicates that each one-unit increase in content quality score is associated with a 0.517-unit increase in brand engagement score. The standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.846) is, with a single predictor, mathematically equivalent to the Pearson correlation coefficient, indicating a very strong predictive relationship. The t-test for partial significance yielded $t = 15.720$, exceeding the critical t-table value of 1.984 ($df = 98$, $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed) with $p < .001$, leading to rejection of H_0 and acceptance of H_1 : digital communication content quality has a positive and significant effect on brand engagement among SKIN1004 Indonesia's TikTok followers. The F-test (ANOVA) corroborated this result ($F \approx 247.116$, mathematically equal to t^2 given a single predictor; $p < .001$), confirming the overall regression model's significance. The coefficient of determination was $R^2 = 0.716$ ($R = 0.846$), meaning content quality explains 71.6 percent of the variance in brand engagement, with the remaining 28.4 percent attributable to variables outside this study's model, such as product quality, price, brand image, influencer effects, or customer experience. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.846$, $p < .001$) confirmed a very strong positive relationship between the two variables.

4.6. Discussion

a. Theoretical Interpretation

These results reinforce Rosita and Darlin's (2024) five-dimension content-quality conceptualization: all five dimensions proved measurable, valid, and reliable in the context of a skincare brand's TikTok account, with every dimension rated high to very high (Table 2), and their combined construct emerged as a very strong predictor of audience engagement ($r = 0.846$, $R^2 = 0.716$). This supports the argument that content capable of delivering a meaningful audience experience is a central determinant of digital communication effectiveness (Rosita & Darlin, 2024). The results also support Islam and Rahman's (2016, as cited in Gulo & Kusmayadi, 2025) three dimension engagement framework: the observed gradient cognitive (3.46) > emotional (3.40) > behavioral (3.33) is theoretically consistent with the notion that engagement is sequentially layered, with attention and comprehension forming first, followed by affective attachment, and finally manifesting as concrete action. In SKIN1004's case, it is this final layer that remains least developed. Theoretically, the relationship between the two variables can be explained through content's function as the primary stimulus of digital communication: content that is relevant, original, interactive, consistent, and emotionally engaging generates a meaningful experience that followers process into attention, feeling, and ultimately action toward the brand—a causal pathway hypothesized in the conceptual framework (Figure 1) and empirically supported by the significant, positive regression coefficient ($b = 0.517$, $p < .001$).

b. Dimension Level Analysis

Within content quality, relevance was the strongest dimension (mean = 3.47), plausibly because @skin1004_indonesia's content centers on product education, ingredient information, and application tutorials that directly address its young, skin-health-conscious audience's informational needs. Originality was the weakest dimension (mean = 3.35), particularly on the novelty-of-information indicator (X7, mean = 3.14). This weakness cannot be attributed solely to external market saturation the proliferation of similarly formatted skincare content across TikTok, but also reflects internal content-management patterns observable in the account's output during the study period. Two specific patterns stand out. First, format repetition and delayed

trend adoption: the account's content is dominated by recurring product-review and testimonial formats emphasizing similar benefit claims, particularly around Centella Asiatica's soothing properties, without adapting to TikTok's rapidly shifting trend cycles—a pattern reflected in the gap between the trend-alignment item (X3, mean = 3.42) and the topic-appeal item (X2, mean = 3.54), suggesting the topics are perceived as inherently interesting but not freshly presented. Second, minimal interactive calls to action: content during the observation period functioned largely as one-directional product promotion rather than a conversation starter, rarely inviting followers to comment on favorite products or share application experiences—a gap that plausibly contributes to both the comparatively lower interaction dimension score (mean = 3.39) and the low behavioral engagement scores on save (Y10, mean = 3.17) and share (Y11, mean = 3.34) items, which require a higher threshold of audience intent than passive viewing.

c. Why Does the Effect Size Differ from Prior Studies? A Critical Evaluation

A central question this study set out to address, following the pattern identified in Section II, is why content quality's explanatory power for engagement varies so widely across prior studies from 34 percent (Rosita & Darlin, 2024, fashion) to 75.8 percent (Lestari & Prabayanti, 2025, skincare), with this study's skincare case at 71.6 percent and a related TikTok engagement study at 62.7 percent (Martha et al., 2024). This is not merely a matter of comparing R^2 values across studies with different samples and instruments a caveat that should temper any strong causal claim, but a pattern specific enough, and consistent enough across the three highest R^2 studies all involving skincare or closely related high-involvement categories, to warrant a substantive theoretical explanation rather than dismissal as sampling noise. The explanation proposed here rests on product involvement and information dependency: skincare purchase decisions typically require deeper deliberation than categories such as fashion, because they involve evaluating ingredient safety, skin-type suitability, and efficacy claims that carry real consequences for the consumer's skin health. Under these conditions, educational content functions as the primary information source guiding purchase decisions, which plausibly explains why content quality carries disproportionate predictive weight in this category. This account is consistent with Rosita and Darlin's (2024) argument that content quality delivering a meaningful audience experience drives engagement, but it suggests that this mechanism is amplified in high-information-need categories and comparatively muted in categories such as fashion, where decisions are driven more by subjective taste, aesthetic preference, and personal style, leaving a larger residual share of engagement variance to be explained by factors other than content itself. It should be acknowledged that this explanation, while theoretically coherent and consistent with the available cross-study pattern, is inferred from between study comparison rather than tested directly within a single model containing product category as a moderating variable; a direct test of this moderation hypothesis is a natural and important direction for future research, discussed further in Section V.

Interpreted through Islam and Rahman's (2016) three dimension engagement lens, this pattern carries a practical implication: the strength of content quality's influence in the skincare category means cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in this category are more tightly coupled to content quality than in lower involvement categories, which affords skincare brands such as SKIN1004 greater leverage to build engagement through content strategy alone, but simultaneously raises the bar for content depth, credibility, and freshness. That behavioral engagement remains the weakest dimension even under very high perceived content quality reinforces this point: skincare audiences appear to demand not merely good content in a generic sense, but content specifically worth acting on. This finding aligns directionally with Putra and Prabayanti's (2026) TikTok brand awareness study ($\beta = 0.714$) and Putri and Asnusa's (2025) confirmation that content creativity, relevance, and consistency significantly shape Instagram and TikTok engagement, even though those studies examined different dependent variables and platforms. Collectively, this study does not merely reconfirm the general content quality to engagement relationship established in prior literature; it contributes a category specific explanation for why that relationship's strength varies, and identifies originality and behavioral engagement as the precise points distinguishing content that is merely watched from content that genuinely engages its audience.

d. Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to digital communication scholarship by empirically demonstrating that Rosita and Darlin's (2024) five-dimension content quality framework, combined with Islam and Rahman's (2016) three-dimension engagement framework, jointly predict engagement within a previously untested combination: a South Korean skincare brand's TikTok presence in the Indonesian market. The 71.6 percent explained variance reinforces content quality's position as a key variable in digital marketing communication research and demonstrates that multidimensional measurement yields a more complete picture of engagement than a single-aspect measure would. Practically, the findings offer SKIN1004 Indonesia specific directions for improvement. First, because originality is the weakest dimension and the underlying issue lies in informational novelty rather than visual identity, the brand should reduce repetitive review formats and identical benefit claims, developing genuinely original content such as a series following Centella Asiatica's sourcing journey from Madagascar, uncommon product experiments, or storytelling from fresh narrative angles. Second, because behavioral engagement particularly saving is the weakest engagement dimension, content should be designed for higher "save value," such as concise, revisitable skincare routine guides, paired with clear calls to action for saving and sharing. Third, comment responsiveness should be strengthened through active community management, including replying to comments and converting follower questions into content ideas, so that TikTok's two-way communication affordance is more fully leveraged to build brand engagement.

e. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

This study's limitations should inform how its findings are interpreted and extended. First, the research examined a single brand (SKIN1004 Indonesia), limiting generalizability to other skincare brands. Second, it covered a single platform (TikTok), leaving follower behavior on other platforms unexamined. Third, it tested a single independent variable, whereas brand engagement is plausibly shaped by multiple factors; the unexplained 28.4 percent of variance points directly to this. Fourth, the purposive sampling technique, the 10 percent margin of error, and the voluntary online recruitment method discussed in Section III jointly imply that findings should be generalized to the broader follower population cautiously, since self-selected respondents may not fully represent followers who did not choose to participate. Fifth, content observation was limited to January–March 2026, so content dynamics outside this window are not captured.

These limitations point toward specific future research directions. Cross sectional design itself is a limitation this study shares with most of the literature reviewed in Section II: because content quality and engagement were measured concurrently through a single questionnaire, causal direction is inferred from theory rather than demonstrated through temporal precedence, and reverse or reciprocal causation in which already engaged followers perceive content more favorably cannot be ruled out. A longitudinal design, tracking the same followers' perceptions and engagement across multiple content cycles, or an experimental design that manipulates content-quality dimensions (for instance, varying originality while holding other dimensions constant) and measures resulting engagement, would substantially strengthen causal inference beyond what this cross-sectional survey can support. Future studies should also directly test the product category moderation hypothesis proposed in this discussion, ideally within a single comparative study spanning multiple product categories rather than relying on between-study comparison as this study necessarily does. Additionally, researchers should examine other variables that may explain brand engagement's remaining variance, such as influencer marketing, brand trust, brand image, or customer experience; expand sampling across multiple skincare brands to improve generalizability; test the model on other platforms such as Instagram or YouTube Shorts; and consider qualitative or mixed-method approaches to explore the mechanisms underlying content quality's influence in greater depth than a purely quantitative design allows.

V. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of SKIN1004's digital communication content quality on brand engagement among the followers of its Indonesian TikTok account. Three conclusions follow from the results. First, followers rated SKIN1004's digital communication content quality as very high overall (mean = 3.42), with relevance as the strongest dimension (3.47) and originality as the weakest (3.35), particularly regarding informational novelty. Second, brand engagement was rated high overall (mean = 3.40), with cognitive engagement highest (3.46) and behavioral engagement lowest (3.33), reflecting weaker follower participation in saving and sharing content relative to attention and comprehension. Third, digital communication content quality exerted a positive and significant effect on brand engagement, evidenced by the regression equation $Y = 5.421 + 0.517X$, a t-value of 15.720 (exceeding the t-table value of 1.984, $p < .001$), and a very strong correlation ($r = 0.846$), with content quality explaining 71.6 percent of engagement variance ($R^2 = 0.716$) and the remaining 28.4 percent attributable to factors outside this study's model.

This study extends the empirical validity of Rosita and Darlin's (2024) five-dimension content-quality framework and Islam and Rahman's (2016) three dimension brand-engagement framework to a previously untested context, a South Korean skincare brand's TikTok presence in Indonesia and offers a category specific explanation, grounded in product involvement and information dependency, for why content quality's explanatory power for engagement varies across product categories in the wider literature. For SKIN1004 Indonesia and comparable skincare brands, the findings point to three priorities: strengthening content originality by reducing repetitive formats and delivering genuinely novel information; increasing behavioral engagement through save worthy content formats and clearer calls to action; and improving comment responsiveness through active community management. Brands should also preserve the relevance and consistency strengths already evident in current content while addressing these specific weaknesses.

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