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Research Article

The Influence of Influencer Credibility on Brand Loyalty with Brand Trust as a Mediating Variable (Study on Make Over Lipstick Product Customers in Denpasar City)

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Abstract: Competition in the cosmetics industry in Indonesia is getting tougher, prompting local brands to develop effective marketing communication strategies to increase consumer loyalty. Make Over, as one of the popular local lipstick brands, leverages collaboration strategies with credible beauty influencers, such as Tasya Farasya, to build positive perceptions and increase consumer engagement. This study aims to analyze the influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty and examine the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship. This research was carried out in Denpasar City by involving 180 respondents who were consumers of Make Over lipsticks. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with certain criteria to ensure the relevance of respondent participation. Data collection was carried out through questionnaires that were distributed online and offline. The collected data was analyzed using path analysis techniques with the help of SPSS software version 29.0.2.0. The results of the analysis show that influencer credibility has a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty and brand trust. In addition, brand trust has been proven to have a positive and significant influence on brand loyalty. Another important finding is that brand trust partially mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and brand loyalty, suggesting that the influence of influencer credibility on loyalty is not only direct, but also through the formation of trust in the brand. Thus, this study confirms that collaboration with influencers who have high reputation, expertise, and credibility can be an effective strategy to increase consumer trust and loyalty towards cosmetic brands. Therefore, choosing the right influencers is essential in a marketing communication strategy to build long-term relationships with consumers.

Keywords: Influencer Credibility, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty, Digital Marketing, Local Cosmetics.

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1. Introduction

Self-care and appearance maintenance have become essential aspects of the modern lifestyle. Cosmetic products, particularly lipsticks, are increasingly favored due to their effectiveness in providing a finishing touch that accentuates the user's personality. Data from the Compas Market Insight Dashboard indicates that in the first quarter of 2024, 74% of Indonesian consumers preferred local brands, while only 26% opted for global brands (Compas, 2024b). The national cosmetics industry has also experienced significant growth, with revenues rising by 48%, from US\$1.31 billion in 2021 to US\$1.94 billion in 2024 (Statista, 2024).

Lipstick is one of the fastest-growing cosmetic categories, recording a 54% increase in sales from January to September 2024 (Compas, 2024c). Make Over, a local brand produced by PT Paragon Technology and Innovation, has become a dominant player in this market. Since its establishment in 2010, Make Over has received several awards, including the Women's Health Choice Indonesia in 2013 and the Make Over Rising Star in 2016 (IDN

Times, 2019). Its flagship product, Powerstay Glazed Lock Lip Pigment, ranked first among Make Over's best-selling products (TribunShopping, 2024). Make Over also won the Best Lip Gloss/Oil award at the Popbela Beauty Awards (Popbela, 2024).

The presence of the Make Over brand throughout 2023 is evident from its achievement of ranking within the Top 10 local lipstick brands based on market share. In the following year, 2024, the Compas Market Insight Dashboard reported that Make Over secured the 2nd position in the Top 10 Local Lipstick Brands list, holding a market share of 6.9% and outperforming several other local brands (Compas, 2024a). However, Make Over's performance in the Top Brand Index remains relatively low. In 2023, Make Over was not listed, appearing only in 2024 with a score of 2.80%, which then declined to 2.60% in 2025, failing to surpass competitor brands Top Brand Award (2023); Top Brand Award (2024); Top Brand Award (2025). This data indicates that despite high sales, strong brand loyalty has not yet been established. Consumer loyalty generally develops around tangible products and is recognized as brand loyalty, defined as commitment to a specific brand (Dewi & Suasana, 2014). Customers are considered loyal when they regularly make purchases or transactions at least twice within a certain period(Putra & Suparna, 2020).

To maintain a competitive position and strengthen consumer loyalty, implementing an optimal marketing communication strategy has become essential (Kumara & Suparna, 2024). Maulidiyah & Handoko (2024) highlight that creative and segmented digital marketing efforts, particularly through collaborations with credible social media influencers, can enhance brand appeal while retaining customers. Influencers not only help raise brand awareness but also build trust that influences purchasing decisions (Palupi et al., 2024). Coutinho et al. (2023) emphasize that customers who perceive influencers as credible figures are more likely to be attracted to the recommended products. Ahmed et al. (2024) and Diahandari et al. (2024) also note that the close relationship influencers maintain with their audiences is a key factor in fostering long-term brand loyalty.

In Indonesia, Tasya Farasya is widely recognized as the biggest and queen of beauty influencers, ranking first in the nomination of Indonesia's Top 10 Beauty Influencers in 2024 (Taslaud, 2024). Tasya's reputation has been further reinforced by the "Tasya Farasya Approved" label featured across her various product review contents. She has actively promoted Make Over lipsticks on social media, including content titled "Make Over Take Over with Tasya Farasya" shared on Make Over's official TikTok account (Makeoverid, 2024b). Additionally, Tasya participated in a series of Make Over events at Jakarta x Beauty 2024, where she personally recommended products to visitors (Makeoverid, 2024a).

Previous studies have demonstrated that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty (Jun & Yi, 2020; Pinto & Paramita, 2021; Emeralda & Kurniawati, 2022; Sudiatna & Dewi, 2023; Lacap et al., 2024). However, several other studies have reported contrasting findings, indicating that this influence is not significant (Chaudhary et al., 2015; Bari & Setiawan, 2023; Tarigan & Lumika, 2024). This inconsistency has led to the hypothesis that a mediating variable, such as brand trust, may bridge the relationship between influencer credibility and brand loyalty loyalty (Jun & Yi, 2020; Emeralda & Kurniawati, 2022). Trust is considered a fundamental prerequisite for establishing a healthy and sustainable relationship between a brand and its customers (Kotler et al., 2022:121). Brand trust refers to consumers' confidence in a brand to fulfill their needs and expectations as promised (Octaviani & Selamat, 2023). Consumers' trust in a brand also facilitates their decision-making process when engaging in transactions (Zadha & Suparna, 2023). Other research has further confirmed that brand trust mediates the effect of influencer credibility on brand loyalty (Erianti & Athanasius, 2019; Jun & Yi, 2020; Sudiatna & Dewi, 2023).

Based on the background outlined above, the study on the influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty, with brand trust as a mediating variable, focusing on Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City, is considered important to conduct.

2. Literature Review

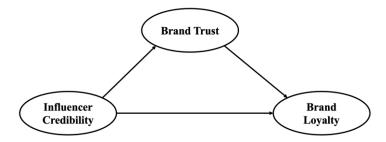
Model The consumer behavior model by Kotler et al. (2024:163) explains that marketing activities and various other stimuli lead to consumers' decision-making processes, ultimately generating specific buyer responses. In this study's context, influencer credibility serves as a marketing stimulus that influences consumers' cognitive processes. Brand trust is formed through perceptions of reliability and safety, which then manifest as loyalty characterized by repeat purchases and long-term commitment.

The Hierarchy of Effects Model describes the psychological process consumers undergo in stages, starting from the cognitive stage, which involves awareness and initial understanding of the brand obtained through marketing stimuli such as influencer credibility. This then develops into the affective stage, where consumers begin to like, form preferences, and build trust in the brand, followed by the conative stage, marked by actual actions such as purchasing decisions, usage, and sustained brand loyalty (Kotler et al., 2022:291). This model illustrates that loyalty is not formed instantly but through sequential stages where consumer reputation, perception, and conviction play key roles in mediating the impact of initial stimuli on loyal behavior.

Brand loyalty refers to how frequently consumers choose to purchase a particular brand, their tendency to remain loyal, and their commitment to consistent purchasing behavior (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019:138). This study adopts brand loyalty indicators modified from Ganesh et al. (2000); Nawawi & Riptiono (2020); Gazali & Ekawanto (2024), including brand attachment measurement; satisfaction measurement; switching cost measurement; resistance to competitor promotions; continuous repurchasing; and brand recommendation.

Source credibility indicates the degree of influence a source has in convincing the audience, based on assessments of expertise, honesty, and trustworthiness (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019:167). Promotion by credible sources, such as influencers, is an effective marketing strategy because influencers typically exhibit confidence, actively engage in social environments, and are accustomed to using the products they endorse (Kotler et al., 2022:81). This study measures influencer credibility using indicators adapted from Febriani et al. (2022); Sekar (2023); Suryati et al. (2024), namely: popularity, attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, endorsement, and similarity of taste.

Brand trust is the consumer's belief that a brand is reliable and has integrity, leading consumers to accept the resulting positive outcomes (Sucma & Sugiat, 2023). Building trust is a crucial step toward establishing a strong and healthy long-term relationship (Kotler et al., 2022:118). This study employs brand trust indicators modified from Shelly & Sitorus (2022); Kasiha et al. (2023); Saputri et al. (2023), including trust, reliability, safety, brand credibility, brand reputation, and brand competence.



Hypothesis

Social media enables influencers to shape consumer opinions, which ultimately fosters brand loyalty (Kotler et al., 2022:36). Research findings by Erianti & Athanasius, (2019); Jun & Yi (2020); Pinto & Paramita (2021); (Emeralda & Kurniawati, 2022); Sudiatna & Dewi (2023); Lacap et al. (2024); Abbas et al. (2025) demonstrate a positive and significant influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty.

H_1: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty.

Marketing strategies involving influencers engage individuals who have the power to positively promote a brand (Kotler et al., 2024:167). Several studies Pratiwi & Suasana (2018); Kemeç & Yuksel (2021); Mahardini et al. (2022); Sholikah (2023); Gracelia & Indriani (2023);

Fitri (2024) have demonstrated that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

H_2: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

Brand trust is a fundamental prerequisite in marketing for establishing a healthy and sustainable relationship between brands and consumers (Kotler et al., 2022:1). Research conducted by Shin et al. (2019); Padmawati & Suasana (2020); Vernadila & Realize (2020); Bozbay & Baslar (2020); Prawira & Setiawan (2021); Nasib et al. (2021); Huo et al. (2022); Alfia & Dwiridotjahjono (2023); and Ali et al. (2023) consistently shows that brand trust has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty.

H_3: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty.

Many companies on social media have effectively managed consumer decisions, creating strong, trust-based, and loyal relationships between consumers and brands (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019:191). Studies by Erianti & Athanasius (2019); Jun & Yi (2020); Sudiatna & Dewi (2023) and Febriatmoko et al. (2024) provide evidence that brand trust can mediate the influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty.

H_4: Brand trust mediates the effect of Influencer credibility on brand loyalty.

3. Methods

Research design determines the success in achieving valid and useful results. This study employs a quantitative associative design. The research was conducted in Denpasar City. The population consists of consumers of Make Over lipstick products in Denpasar. Non-probability sampling with purposive sampling technique was used due to the unknown population size. Not all population members had an equal chance of being selected and had to meet specific criteria. The sample criteria included residents of Denpasar aged at least 15 years, who are familiar with or follow content by Tasya Farasya, and have purchased Make Over lipstick at least twice in the last six months. A total of 180 respondents were selected, distributed across all districts of Denpasar. Data collection was conducted via surveys using both online questionnaires (Google Forms) and offline face-to-face methods, measured on a Likert scale. Data analysis employed path analysis techniques, Sobel test, and Variance Accounted For (VAF) test.

4. Results

The description of respondents' responses regarding the variables in the study is carried out by classifying the average score of respondents' answers on a measurement scale that has been set into five categories. This category is formulated in an interval range using the measurement categories in Table 1.

No	Average Score Interval	Criteria
1	1,00 – 1,79	Very Low
2	1,80 – 2,59	Low
3	2,60 – 3,39	Fairly High
4	3,40 – 4,19	High
5	4,20 – 5,00	Very High

Table 1. Respondent assessment categories

There are three variables analyzed in this study, namely the influencer credibility variable (X), the brand trust variable (Y_1), and the brand loyalty variable (Y_2). Furthermore, the description of each variable can be described as follows.

Description of influencer credibility variable (X)

The following are the results of the description of influencer credibility variable, presented in the form of percentages and average values (mean) in Table 2.

N o	Items		Response Frequency (People)					Criteria
		1	2	3	4	5		
1	X.1	0	0	15	79	86	4,39	Very High
2	X.2	0	2	40	87	51	4.04	High
3	X.3	3	5	64	68	40	3,76	High
4	X.4	1	15	55	61	48	3,78	High
5	X.5	0	4	21	79	76	4,26	Very High
6	X.6	12	18	53	73	24	3,44	High
Average							3.94	High

Table 2. Description of Respondents' Perceptions of influencer credibility variable (X)

Table 2 presents respondents' perceptions of the influencer credibility variable, with an average score of 3.94, categorized as high. The indicator with the lowest average score is Similarity in Taste (X.6), which scored 3.44 still within the high category but lower than the other indicators. This suggests that respondents do not fully perceive sharing the same taste as Tasya Farasya in selecting Make Over lipsticks. The indicator with the highest average score is Popularity (X.1), with a score of 4.39, categorized as very high, indicating that respondents generally recognize Tasya Farasya as a highly popular beauty influencer.

Description of brand trust variable (Y_1)

The following are the results of the description of brand trust variable, presented in the form of percentages and average values (mean) in Table 2.

								,
N	Items	Response Frequency (People)					Mean	Criteria
0		1	2	3	4	5		
1	Y ₁ .1	0	4	49	87	40	3,91	High
2	Y ₁ .2	4	11	72	79	14	3,49	High
3	Y ₁ .3	0	3	59	76	42	3,87	High
4	Y ₁ .4	0	0	58	75	47	3,94	High
5	Y ₁ .5	0	0	26	78	76	4,28	Very High
6	Y ₁ .6	4	26	56	79	15	3,42	High
Average							3.81	High

Table 2. Description of Respondents' Perceptions of Brand Trust Variable (Y_1)

Table 3 shows that the brand trust variable has an average score of 3.94, which falls into the high category. The indicator with the lowest average score is Brand Competence (Y_1.6) with a score of 3.42, still classified as high but the lowest among all indicators. This indicates that, in general, respondents perceive that Make Over has been able to provide quality products that meet customer needs. The indicator with the highest average score is Brand Reputation (Y_1.5) with an average score of 4.28, categorized as very high. This suggests that respondents generally have strong trust in Make Over's good reputation within the beauty industry.

Description of brand loyalty variable (Y_2)

The following are the results of the description of brand loyalty variable, presented in the form of percentages and average values (mean) in Table 4.

N	Items	Response Frequency (People)					Mean	Criteria
0		1	2	3	4	5		
1	Y ₂ .1	1	7	36	92	44	3,95	High
2	Y ₂ .2	1	5	51	75	48	3,91	High
3	Y ₂ .3	4	33	58	61	24	3,38	Fairly High
4	Y ₂ .4	11	32	93	31	13	3,02	Fairly High
5	Y ₂ .5	3	24	67	65	21	3,43	High
6	Y ₂ .6	0	7	39	74	60	4,04	High
Average							3,62	High

Table 4. Description of Respondents' Perceptions of Brand Loyalty Variable (Y_2)

Table 4 shows that the brand trust variable has an average score of 3,62, which falls into the high category. The indicator with the lowest average score is Resistance to Competitor Promotions (Y_2.4) with an average score of 3.02, still classified as high but the lowest among all indicators. This indicates that, in general, respondents demonstrate a fair level of commitment to continue choosing Make Over lipstick despite attractive promotions offered by competitors. The indicator with the highest average score is Willingness to Recommend the Brand (Y_2.6) with an average score of 4.04, categorized as high. This suggests that, overall, respondents exhibit brand loyalty toward Make Over lipstick, as reflected in their willingness to recommend it to others.

Hypothesis Testing

H_1: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty.

The analysis results show that influencer credibility yields a positive beta value of 0.312 with a significance value of 0.000, thus hypothesis H_1is accepted. This indicates that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The higher the influencer credibility leveraged by Make Over in its marketing strategies, the higher the level of brand loyalty demonstrated by Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City.

H_2: Influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand trust.

The analysis results reveal that influencer credibility produces a positive beta value of 0.681 with a significance value of 0.000, which confirms that hypothesis H_2 is accepted. The results of hypothesis testing show that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. This indicates that the higher the influencer credibility leveraged by Make Over in its marketing strategies, the greater the level of brand trust perceived by Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City.

H_3: Brand trust has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty

The analysis results indicate that brand trust yields a positive beta value of 0.452 and a significance value of 0.000, leading to the acceptance of hypothesis H_3. The results of hypothesis testing show that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The higher the level of brand trust perceived by customers as part of Make Over's marketing strategies, the higher the level of brand loyalty demonstrated by Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City.

H_4: Brand trust mediates the effect of Influencer credibility on brand loyalty.

The analysis results show that the calculated Z value (Z count) of 5.68 is greater than the Z table value of 1.96, and the VAF is 0.495 or 49.5 percent, indicating a partial mediation, thus hypothesis H_4 is accepted. The results of hypothesis testing, as indicated by the Sobel test and VAF test values, show that brand trust partially mediates the effect of influencer credibility on brand loyalty. This means that the higher the brand trust perceived by customers in response to influencer credibility, the stronger their tendency to remain loyal to the brand. Partial mediation indicates that, in addition to the direct influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty, there is an additional effect through brand trust, which mediates the relationship between these two variables.

5. DISCUSSION

The Effect of Influencer Credibility on Brand Loyalty

The results of hypothesis testing indicate that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty. The higher the credibility of the influencers leveraged by Make Over in its marketing strategies, the higher the level of brand loyalty demonstrated by Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City. Influencer credibility was measured through six indicators: popularity, attractiveness, expertise, trustworthiness, respect, and similarity, with popularity achieving the highest average score. This shows that customer loyalty is more strongly influenced by the recognition and prominence of credible influencers.

These findings align with consumer behavior theory, which states that stimuli derived from influencer credibility can directly influence purchasing decisions and brand loyalty. Based on the Hierarchy of Effects Model, the impact of influencer credibility triggers the awareness and knowledge stages, influences liking and preference, and ultimately drives purchase behavior and sustained loyalty. The dominance of popularity as an indicator demonstrates that consumers tend to trust widely known figures with strong reputations. This study is consistent with empirical evidence from Erianti & Athanasius, (2019); Jun & Yi (2020); Pinto & Paramita (2021); (Emeralda & Kurniawati, 2022); Sudiatna & Dewi (2023); Lacap et al. (2024); Abbas et al. (2025), which found that influencer credibility has a significant impact on brand loyalty.

The Effect of Influencer Credibility on Brand Trust

The hypothesis testing results indicate that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand trust. The higher the credibility of the influencers utilized by Make Over in their marketing strategy, the greater the brand trust perceived by Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar City. Influencer credibility in this study is measured through six indicators. Among these, popularity received the highest average score, suggesting that consumers' trust in the Make Over brand is strongly influenced by the influencer's widespread recognition and reputation. This implies that a credible influencer with high popularity can effectively enhance consumer perceptions of the brand's reliability, thereby increasing the potential for brand trust formation.

These findings align with consumer behavior theory, which explains that brand trust formation is part of the cognitive and affective responses consumers have toward marketing stimuli. Influencer credibility acts as an external stimulus that shapes positive consumer perceptions and belief in brand quality. From the perspective of the Hierarchy of Effects Model, influencer credibility influences consumers gradually, beginning with awareness and knowledge, progressing to liking, and culminating in conviction, a stage where consumers form strong trust in the brand. This conviction serves as the foundation for developing brand trust. Therefore, the results demonstrate that influencer credibility significantly strengthens consumer conviction, leading to higher levels of brand trust. This study is consistent with previous empirical research showing a positive and significant impact of influencer credibility on brand trust, including findings by studies Pratiwi & Suasana (2018); Kemeç & Yuksel (2021); Mahardini et al. (2022); Sholikah (2023); Gracelia & Indriani (2023); Fitri (2024).

The Effect of Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty

The hypothesis testing results indicate that influencer credibility positively and significantly affects brand loyalty. The higher the brand trust perceived by Make Over customers, particularly regarding the brand's reputation, the stronger the brand loyalty exhibited by Make Over lipstick consumers in Denpasar City. Brand trust in this study was measured through six indicators, with brand reputation achieving the highest average score. This suggests that customers' trust in Make Over's strong reputation plays a critical role in fostering customer loyalty. Trust is a fundamental prerequisite for establishing a sustainable and healthy relationship between a brand and its customers.

These findings align with consumer behavior theory, which recognizes brand trust as a key psychological factor influencing consumer attitudes and loyal behaviors. According to the Hierarchy of Effects Model, brand trust corresponds to the conviction stage, where consumers develop strong confidence in the brand's quality and reputation before committing to repeat purchases or loyalty. The sense of security, satisfaction, and emotional attachment arising from brand trust ultimately drives the formation of long-term brand loyalty. These results are supported by prior empirical studies that demonstrate a positive and significant effect of brand trust on brand loyalty, including those by by Shin et al. (2019); Padmawati & Suasana (2020); Vernadila & Realize (2020); Bozbay & Baslar (2020); Prawira & Setiawan (2021); Nasib et al. (2021); Huo et al. (2022); Alfia & Dwiridotjahjono (2023); and Ali et al. (2023).

The Mediating Role of Brand Trust in the Effect of Influencer Credibility on Brand Loyalty

The analysis reveals that brand trust can positively and significantly mediate the effect of influencer credibility on brand loyalty among Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar, with a partial mediation effect. The higher the level of brand trust perceived by customers as a response to influencer credibility, the greater their tendency to exhibit loyalty to the brand. This partial mediation suggests that besides the direct influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty, brand trust plays a crucial role in strengthening the relationship between these two variables.

This finding supports consumer behavior theory, which highlights the critical role of psychological factors such as trust in shaping consumers' attitudes and loyalty toward a brand. Within the Hierarchy of Effects Model framework, influencer credibility serves as a stimulus that triggers consumer awareness and comprehension of the brand, subsequently evolving into a strong conviction regarding the brand's quality and reputation. This conviction, reflected as brand trust, forms the essential foundation for consumers to make repeat purchases and develop long-term loyalty. Consequently, the partial mediation observed in this study suggests that brand trust not only acts as a mediator but also enhances the positive influence of influencer credibility on brand loyalty. Moreover, these results are consistent with previous empirical studies that highlight the significant mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between influencer credibility and brand loyalty. Notable studies include Erianti & Athanasius (2019); Jun & Yi (2020); Sudiatna & Dewi (2023) and Febriatmoko et al. (2024).

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that influencer credibility has a positive and significant effect on brand loyalty, meaning that higher credibility of influencers used in promoting Make Over lipsticks correlates with increased customer loyalty in Denpasar. Additionally, influencer credibility positively and significantly influences brand trust, where more credible influencers enhance customers trust in the Make Over brand. Brand trust itself also positively and significantly affects brand loyalty, demonstrating that greater trust leads to stronger customer loyalty. Furthermore, brand trust partially mediates the relationship between influencer credibility and brand loyalty, indicating that the positive impact of influencer credibility on loyalty is strengthened through increased brand trust among Make Over lipstick customers in Denpasar.

7. Limitation

For future researchers, it is recommended to enhance the quality of studies by expanding the scope of research to include additional variables that can deepen the understanding of brand loyalty, such as customer satisfaction, customer engagement, digital word-of-mouth (e-WOM), and others. Furthermore, it is suggested to test the proposed model in other cosmetic companies as well as in different industries to explore its applicability and relevance across various contexts.

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