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THE ROLE OF INFLUENCER MARKETING AND ONLINE CUSTOMER REVIEW ON BRAND ATTITUDE IN INCREASING BRAND LOYALTY, BRAND AWARENESS, AND PURCHASE INTENTION IN FASHION BRANDS IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of influencer marketing on consumer attitudes, including brand attitude, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM), in shaping purchase intentions within Indonesia's fashion industry. As social media continues to transform consumer behavior, understanding the role of influencers in marketing strategies becomes increasingly important. This research aims to evaluate the effectiveness of influencer credibility, attractiveness, involvement, and influencer-brand congruence in influencing consumer perceptions and purchasing decisions. A quantitative approach was employed, collecting data from 300 respondents through online surveys. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to analyze the relationships between influencer marketing attributes and consumer behavior. The findings indicate that while influencer credibility, attractiveness, involvement, and influencer-brand congruence do not significantly impact brand attitude, online reviews and brand-consumer congruence play a crucial role in fostering brand loyalty, increasing brand awareness, and driving purchase intention. These results highlight the importance of managing online reviews and aligning brand identity with consumer values to enhance marketing effectiveness. The study provides valuable insights for fashion marketers in selecting appropriate influencers and leveraging eWOM strategies to strengthen consumer engagement and brand performance in the competitive fashion industry.

Keywords: Attractiveness, Fashion Industry, Influencer Marketing, Brand Awareness, Credibility, Brand Loyalty, Purchase Intention, Online Customer Reviews, *and* eWOM.

Introduction

The technological revolution and the internet have changed global consumption patterns, creating a borderless marketplace where consumers can easily purchase products from various digital platforms (Yeo et al., 2022). Social media such as Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok, along with e-commerce, are playing an important role in this change (We Are Social, 2023). As of January 2023, internet users in Indonesia reached 213 million people, with 88% using Instagram, making the platform highly relevant for marketing strategies targeting Gen Z and Millennials, a demographic group that is heavily influenced by social media in their purchasing decisions (Statista, 2024a)(Market Research, 2024).

The global and local fashion industry is showing significant growth. The global market value of fashion is estimated to reach USD 742 billion in 2024, while the Indonesian fashion market will reach USD 20.7 billion in 2023 (Cognitive Market Research, 2024)(Macheka et al., 2023). This growth is driven by increasing purchasing power, a young fashion-conscious population, and the popularity of e-commerce

(Cognitive Market Research, 2024; Marketing Hub, 2021). In the midst of fierce competition, digital-based marketing strategies such as influencer marketing and online customer reviews are important in capturing consumers' attention and building brand loyalty (Katadata, 2023)(Marketing Hub, 2024)(Statista, 2024b).

Influencer marketing plays a big role in driving the growth of the fashion industry, especially through platforms like Instagram and TikTok (Arief et al., 2023). Decline Djafarova & Rushworth (2017), influencer credibility, appeal, and engagement are proven to influence consumer purchasing decisions (Aaker, D. A., 1991),. In addition, the fit between influencers, brands, and consumers increases the effectiveness of marketing campaigns (Buil et al., 2019). Brands that successfully capitalize on these relationships can increase loyalty and sales, making influencers a key pillar in their marketing strategy (Buil et al., 2019),.

In addition to influencer characteristics, brand elements such as brand-consumer congruence and brand authenticity also influence purchasing decisions (Dick & Basu, 1994). Brands that are considered authentic and relevant tend to build strong emotional connections with consumers (Matzler et al., 2020). This authenticity can be strengthened through collaboration with influencers who share the same values and vision, creating greater trust among the audience (Kumar & Shah, 2004).

Online customer reviews (eWOM) are another important factor that affects consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). With 75% of consumers reading reviews before buying a product, brands need to actively manage their online reviews to maintain their reputation (Liu et al., 2024). In addition, eWOM serves as a marketing tool that strengthens consumer trust in products, encourages repeat purchases, and expands the customer base (Bhatt & Bhat, 2020). This research aims to provide insights for fashion companies in designing more effective marketing strategies by leveraging the power of influencer marketing, online reviews, and brand authenticity in the digital era.

This research offers a more comprehensive approach to the influence of *influencer marketing* in the Indonesian fashion industry. Unlike previous studies that were often isolated on one or two variables, this study will simultaneously analyze the complex interactions between *influencer* credibility, attractiveness, online reviews, *congruence*, engagement, and brand authenticity. The main objective of this study is to understand how the combination of these factors can increase *brand loyalty*, *brand awareness*, *eWOM* and *purchase intention*. Thus, it is hoped that it can reveal deeper patterns and relationships and make new contributions to existing literature. Specifically, this study will explore the role of *influencer* aspects (credibility, dance power, engagement, *influencer-brand suitability,* influencer-consumer *suitability*), *brand* aspect (*brand-consumer suitability*, and *brand authenticity*) and information from other parties (*online customer review*) in the process of forming consumer attitudes and increasing *brand awareness*, *brand loyalty*, *eWOM* and *purchase decision*. The study will also use the latest data from social media platforms and consumer surveys to test the hypothesis proposed, thus, the results of this research are expected to make a significant contribution to academics and practitioners in the field of marketing.

In the study of the influence of digital marketing strategies in the fashion industry, there are several relevant previous studies. First, research by Arief et al. (2023) shows that influencer marketing significantly influences consumer purchasing decisions in the fashion sector, emphasizing the importance of influencer credibility and attractiveness. Second, research by Liu et al. (2024) examined the impact of online customer reviews

(eWOM) on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions, finding that positive reviews can increase consumer trust and loyalty to brands. However, the novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive approach, which not only analyzes one or two variables separately, but also explores the complex interactions between influencer credibility, attractiveness, online reviews, brand fit, and brand authenticity simultaneously.

This study aims to analyze the influence of marketing strategies through influencer marketing, online customer reviews, and brand authenticity on consumer purchase intention in the Indonesian fashion industry, by considering the mediating role of brand attitude, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and eWOM. The focus of this research includes the influence of influencer marketing elements (credibility, attractiveness, involvement, brand congruence, and consumer congruence), online customer reviews, and brand authenticity on brand attitude, as well as how brand attitude affects brand awareness, brand loyalty, and eWOM, which ultimately has an impact on purchase intention. This research is expected to provide theoretical insights for academics regarding the influence of marketing strategies on consumer behavior and practical benefits for fashion companies to design marketing strategies that are more effective, targeted, and able to increase competitiveness, consumer loyalty, and purchase intention through the use of influencer marketing and online reviews.

Research Methods

This study uses a survey-based quantitative design to test the influence of influencer marketing, online reviews, and brand authenticity on consumer purchase intention in the Indonesian fashion industry. Respondents are active Instagram users who follow influencers who collaborate with five leading fashion brands. Data was collected through purposive sampling using a questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale, with a minimum of 300 respondents. Before the main data collection, wording tests and pre-tests were carried out on 30 respondents to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Data analysis was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method through Smart PLS, including convergent validity tests, discriminatory validity, internal reliability, determination coefficient, effect measure, and model predictability. The results of the analysis are expected to provide an in-depth understanding of the relationship between credibility, attractiveness, influencer engagement, and influencer suitability with consumers and brands towards brand attitude, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and eWOM, which further affects purchase intention. The study also leverages theoretical models from previous research to integrate key variables, such as congruence, authenticity, and online reviews, to make theoretical and practical contributions to the development of influencer-based marketing strategies. Normality tests, data distribution, and frequency analysis are used to ensure data quality prior to structural model testing, while indicators such as VIF, R^2, f^2, and Q^2 are used to evaluate collinearity, explanation of dependent variables, and predictive capabilities of the model. The findings are expected to help companies develop effective and relevant marketing strategies in the digital era.

Results and Discussion

Wording Test

After the questionnaire was completed, *a Wording Test* was conducted on seven people to ensure that the questions were easy to understand by prospective respondents. The purpose of *this test* is to measure the respondent's understanding of all sentences in

the questionnaire and the duration of filling. While the researchers were counting the time and recording the input, they were asked to fill out a questionnaire. The results showed that seven people surveyed completed the questionnaire within five to twelve minutes. Researchers then use this information to make adjustments. This is done to improve the questionnaire before the pre-test.

Pre Test

The second step is *pre-test.* After passing the *wording test stage,* the *pre-test* test was carried out to 39 respondents who had similar characteristics to the respondents in the main test. *The pre-test* was carried out by distributing an online questionnaire which was distributed through social media. The *pre-test step* was carried out to test the validity and reliability of all research indicators and variables. This test is carried out before deploying the main test. The results of the test of these two things determine whether the variable item is strong enough to continue in the main test. Reliability and validity testing was carried out using *IBM SPSS 26 software.*

Frequency Distribution of Respondent Profiles

This study succeeded in collecting data from 349 respondents through the distribution of questionnaires aimed at active followers of *Instagram* accounts of *influencers who* promote five fashion brands, namely *Adidas, H&M, Converse, Uniqlo*, and *Nike.* However, of these, as many as 41 respondents did not meet the criteria because they did not follow one of the influencers or never bought the specified brand. In addition, 9 other respondents were disqualified for giving monotonous or uniform answers to all questions. After going through the selection process and cleaning the data using *recheck questions*, as many as 299 respondents were declared valid and worthy of further analysis.

Frequency and Descriptive Distribution Analysis

Descriptive analysis is a statistical method used to summarize and describe the characteristics of data in a simple and informative form. It involves measures such as mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation. The goal is to provide a clear initial picture of the data before moving on to more complex analysis (Malhotra et al., 2017). Frequency and descriptive distribution analysis from data obtained from 299 respondents who actively participated in the *influence* of *Instagram* and make purchases on the brand *fashion* that has been determined to provide significant insights into various variables that affect consumer behavior. The following are the results of frequency distribution and descriptive data analysis:

Table 4. 1 Frequency Distribution and Descriptive Data Analysis

Variable	Indicator	N	*Range*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*Total Mean*	*Std. Deviation*
Influencer credibility	CIC1	299	4	1	5	4,20	4,22	0,708
	CIC2		4	1	5	4,34		0,708
	CIC3		4	1	5	4,10		0,805
	CIC4		3	2	5	4,22		0,724
Influencer Attractiveness	CIA1	299	4	1	5	4,70	4,52	0,632
	CIA2		4	1	5	4,57		0,727
	CIA3		4	1	5	4,54		0,681
	CIA4		4	1	5	4,39		0,776
	CIA5		4	1	5	4,42		0,731

Variable	Indicator	N	*Range*	*Min*	*Max*	*Mean*	*Total Mean*	*Std. Deviation*
	CIA6		4	1	5	4,52		0,677
Internet Celebrity Involvement	HERE1	299	4	1	5	3,42	3,20	1,060
	HERE2		4	1	5	3,08		1,194
	HERE3		4	1	5	3,18		1,153
	HERE4		4	1	5	3,12		1,245
Influencer Marketing-Brand Congruence	CIP1	299	4	1	5	4,28	4,31	0,746
	CIP2		3	2	5	4,29		0,703
	CIP3		3	2	5	4,28		0,683
	CIP4		3	2	5	4,39		0,689
Influencer Marketing-Consumer Congruence	CCI1	299	4	1	5	3,81	3,68	0,900
	CCI2		4	1	5	3,70		0,935
	CCI3		4	1	5	3,53		1,072
Brand Authenticity	BA1	299	3	2	5	4,00	4,16	0,764
	BA2		3	2	5	4,28		0,729
	BA3		4	1	5	4,20		0,778
Brand-Consumer Congruence	CCP1	299	4	1	5	4,16	4,06	0,791
	CCP2		4	1	5	3,96		0,845
	CCP3		3	2	5	3,98		0,800
	CCP4		3	2	5	4,15		0,754
Online customer reviews	OCR1	299	3	2	5	4,39	4,30	0,731
	OCR2		3	2	5	4,31		0,701
	OCR3		4	1	5	4,20		0,783
	OCR4		4	1	5	4,34		0,730
	OCR5		3	2	5	4,24		0,728
Brand Attitude	ATT1	299	3	2	5	4,18	4,23	0,713
	ATT2		3	2	5	4,30		0,711
	ATT3		4	1	5	4,23		0,766
	ATT4		4	1	5	4,23		0,748
Brand awareness	BRA1	299	4	1	5	3,89	4,12	0,920
	BRA2		4	1	5	4,15		0,754
	BRA3		4	1	5	4,32		0,800
Brand loyalty	BLO1		4	1	5	3,60	3,79	0,993
	BLO2	299	4	1	5	3,79		0,936
	BLO3		4	1	5	3,89		0,880
	BLO4		4	1	5	3,87		1,011
Electronic word of mouth	EWOI1	299	4	1	5	3,92	3,86	0,790
	EWOI2		3	2	5	4,06		0,753
	EWOI3		4	1	5	3,86		0,846
	EWOI4		4	1	5	3,58		0,991
	EWOI5		4	1	5	3,83		0,870
	EWOI6		4	1	5	3,91		0,818
Purchase Intention	PIN1	299	4	1	5	3,74	3,79	0,958
	PIN2		4	1	5	3,90		0,873
	PIN3		4	1	5	3,77		0,939
	PIN4		4	1	5	3,75		0,948

Source: Data Processing Results Using SPSS 26

Based on the results of the analysis, *the Influencer Credibility* variable shows a total mean of 4.22, with indicator values ranging from 4.10 to 4.34, which shows that respondents have a positive view of *influencer* credibility. This shows that the credibility of *influencers* plays an important role in building consumer trust in the promoted brand.

Furthermore, *Influencer Attractiveness* has the highest total mean of 4.52, with the highest score of 4.70 on the CIA1 indicator, indicating that influencer attractiveness is the main factor that affects consumer attention and interest in *fashion* products. In this context, *influencer* appeal can increase engagement and interaction with the audience.

Internet Celebrity Involvement has a lower total mean, which is 3.20, indicating that respondents' involvement with internet celebrities is still in the moderate category. This becomes an area that needs more attention, as higher engagement can increase *influencer* influence on consumer attitudes. This may indicate that while *influencers* have influence, deeper engagement with *influencers* is not always reflected in consumer behavior.

Influencer Marketing-Brand Congruence has a total mean of 4.31 This shows that respondents feel that the *influencers* they follow are in line with the brand being promoted, which can increase trust in the brand. *Influencer Marketing-Consumer Congruence* has a total mean of 3.68, indicating a gap in the perception of compatibility between *influencers* and consumers, which can affect marketing effectiveness. The compatibility between *influencers* and brands, as well as the compatibility between *influencers* and consumers, plays a role in building a positive relationship between the two. This conformity is important to ensure that the message conveyed by *the influencer* is relevant and in accordance with the values held by the consumer.

The Brand *Authenticity variable* shows a total mean of 4.16, which reflects the importance of brand authenticity in building strong relationships with consumers. This is in line with the concept that consumers tend to be more loyal to brands that are considered authentic and honest. *Brand-Consumer Congruence* with a total mean of 4.06 shows that the conformity between brands and consumers also contributes to consumers' positive perception of brands. Meanwhile, *Online Customer Reviews* had a total mean of 4.30, which shows that online reviews play a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes towards brands, providing social proof that can influence purchase decisions.

Brand Attitude with a total mean of 4.23 shows that consumers' positive attitude towards brands contributes to brand loyalty. In this case, *Brand Awareness* has a total mean of 4.12, indicating that high brand awareness can increase the likelihood that consumers will choose a particular brand when making a purchase. *Brand Loyalty* with a total mean of 3.79 shows that despite perceived loyalty, there is still room for improvement in building long-term engagement with consumers.

Finally, *Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)* and *Purchase Intention* have a total mean of 3.86 and 3.79, respectively, indicating that recommendations from others online and purchase intent are strongly influenced by positive interactions and experiences with *influencers* and brands.

Data Normality Analysis

In the normality test, the data will be seen whether it is normal or not based on the value *skewness* and *kurtosis*. *Skewness* and *kurtosis* is a measure to evaluate the distribution of data compared to the normal distribution. *Skewness* measure the degree of symmetry of the distribution, where values outside the range of -1 to +1 indicate a very skewed distribution, both to the right (*positively skewed*) or to the left (*negatively skewed*).

Meanwhile, *kurtosis* Assess the level of sharpness or width of the distribution peaks, with a value of more than +1 indicating that the distribution is too sharp, and a value of less than -1 indicating that the distribution is too flat. The distribution is considered normal or close to normal if *skewness* and *kurtosis* are in the range of -1 to +1, although deviations are frequent in studies, which require a specific statistical approach to address non-normality (Hair, 2017). The following are the test results *skewness* and *kurtosis* In the current research:

Table 4. 2 Data Normality Analysis

Variable	Indicator	*N*	*Skewness*	*Kurtosis*
Influencer credibility	CIC1	299	-0,702	0,947
	CIC2		-0,948	1,156
	CIC3		-0,806	0,841
	CIC4		-0,689	0,274
Influencer Attractiveness	CIA1	299	-2,794	10,042
	CIA2		-1,917	4,247
	CIA3		-1,793	4,738
	CIA4		-1,197	1,173
	CIA5		-1,270	1,779
	CIA6		-1,483	2,723
Internet Celebrity Involvement	HERE1	299	-0,294	-0,480
	HERE2		-0,067	-0,948
	HERE3		-0,318	-0,729
	HERE4		-0,177	-0,967
Influencer Marketing-Brand Congruence	CIP1	299	-0,940	1,064
	CIP2		-0,644	-0,100
	CIP3		-0,492	-0,533
	CIP4		-0,887	0,315
Influencer Marketing-Consumer Congruence	CCI1	299	-0,622	0,244
	CCI2		-0,415	-0,116
	CCI3		-0,436	-0,332
Brand Authenticity	BA1	299	-0,318	-0,439
	BA2		-0,699	-0,084
	BA3		-0,889	1,079
Brand-Consumer Congruence	CCP1	299	-0,909	1,161
	CCP2		-0,771	0,757
	CCP3		-0,393	-0,386
	CCP4		-0,581	-0,055
Online customer reviews	OCR1	299	-1,019	0,521
	OCR2		-0,759	0,253
	OCR3		-0,883	0,793
	OCR4		-1,193	2,344
	OCR5		-0,609	-0,177
Brand Attitude	ATT1	299	-0,608	0,282
	ATT2		-0,727	0,119
	ATT3		-0,959	1,376
	ATT4		-0,883	1,057
Brand awareness	BRA1	299	-0,762	0,473
	BRA2		-0,628	0,364
	BRA3		-1,190	1,544

Variable	Indicator	*N*	*Skewness*	*Kurtosis*
Brand loyalty	BLO1	299	-0,421	-0,230
	BLO2		-0,564	0,057
	BLO3		-0,534	-0,056
	BLO4		-0,748	0,071
Electronic word of mouth	EWOI1	299	-0,432	0,066
	EWOI2		-0,385	-0,366
	EWOI3		-0,538	0,321
	EWOI4		-0,625	0,177
	EWOI5		-0,653	0,641
	EWOI6		-0,418	0,076
Purchase Intention	PIN1	299	-0,447	-0,207
	PIN2		-0,688	0,404
	PIN3		-0,488	-0,264
	PIN4		-0,606	0,124

Source: Data Processing Results Using SPSS 26

Table 4.7 shows the *skewness* and *kurtosis* results of the current research data. It can be seen that there are some data that show *skewness* and *kurtosis* values above +1 or below -1, so it can be said that the data is not distributed normally. Therefore, the next stage in data processing in the current research will continue using *PLS-SEM* with *SmartPLS*.

Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model)

In the *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM), Measurement model (also called Outdoor models or *outer model*) describes the relationship between the observed indicator (variable) and the underlying construct (latent variable). This model is an important part of the *path model* which is used to evaluate relationships between constructs. The measurement model serves to evaluate the validity and reliability of the indicators used to measure latent variables. In this context, the analysis *internal consistency, convergent validity*and *discriminant validity* being very important (Hair et al., 2019)

Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model)

While the structural model is a model that researchers use to find out whether latent variables have a relationship with each other with the model that has been formed. The test using this method is also used to find out which trajectory on the diagram has the most influence on the other. Once the measurement model is confirmed to be valid and reliable, the researcher can proceed to the analysis of the structural model. The structural model aims to test the hypothetical relationship between latent variables in the study. This model helps researchers to understand how latent variables are interrelated and affect each other

Hypothesis Analysis

This study analyzes the influence of influencer marketing, online reviews, and brand authenticity on consumer purchase intention in the Indonesian fashion industry, taking into account the mediating role of variables such as brand attitude, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). The results of the

study show that although elements such as credibility, attractiveness, and influencer engagement do not significantly affect brand attitude, influencer suitability with consumers as well as brand authenticity have a significant positive impact on brand attitude. Positive attitudes towards brands have been proven to affect brand awareness, brand loyalty, eWOM, and purchase intention, while online reviews also play a significant role in strengthening brand attitudes and consumer purchase intentions. From a managerial perspective, this research highlights the importance of choosing influencers who align with brand values, create relevant content, and build authentic emotional relationships with consumers. The limitations of the research include the heterogeneity of respondents, the dynamics of the fast-changing fashion industry, and the lack of a mechanism for verifying respondents' data. For future research, it is recommended to use a longitudinal approach, more specific demographic segmentation, stricter data validation, and integration of social media analytics to better understand the relationship between influencers, brands, and consumers.

Conclusion

This study examines the influence of influencer marketing, online reviews, and brand authenticity on consumer purchase intention in the Indonesian fashion industry, by paying attention to the mediating role of variables such as brand attitude, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). The findings show that although some elements of influencer marketing such as credibility, attractiveness, and influencer engagement do not have a significant effect on brand attitude, the influencer's suitability with consumers and brand authenticity have a significant positive impact on brand attitude. A positive attitude towards the brand then affects brand awareness, brand loyalty, eWOM, and ultimately purchase intention. Online reviews have also proven to have a significant effect on brand attitudes, which strengthens consumers' purchase intentions. From a managerial perspective, these results emphasize the importance of choosing influencers who have value alignment with the brand, create relevant content, and build authentic emotional connections with consumers. However, this study has limitations, such as the heterogeneity of respondents, the dynamics of the fast-changing fashion industry, and the lack of a mechanism for verifying respondents' data. Therefore, further research is recommended to use a longitudinal approach, more specific demographic segmentation, stricter data validation, and integration of social media analytics data to provide a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between influencers, brands, and consumers in the digital age.

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